

Crozet Community Advisory Committee

Meeting Minutes from September 14, 2022

Members Present:

Joe Fore - Chair
Michael Monaco - Secretary
Mike Kunkel
Marc McKenney
Kostas Alibertis
Ken Thacker
Grace Remer
Sandra Hausman
Allie Pesch
Lonnie Murray, Planning Commissioner
Anne Mallek, Board of Supervisors

County Staff:

Tim Padalino, Chief of Parks Planning
Dan Butch, Parks Planner
Carolyn Shaffer – Clerk

Chair Joe Fore called the meeting to order at 7:02

August minutes approved with amendments to roster; motion by Sandra Hausman seconded by Marc McKenney. Motion carries.

Albemarle County Parks & Green Systems Presentation (60 minutes; Tim Padalino, Chief of Parks Planning)

Park planning > Funding > Development

Parks planning starts with the community, integrating comp plan and development plans. Projects require funding; this often requires a feasibility study. Often funding comes through Capital Improvements Program (CIP)
Then design, plans, permits, and easement/property acq. Property acq can happen any time. At construction phase, P&R turns it over to Facilities & Environmental Service Dept.

Countywide Project Updates

Updated Ivy Creek to ADA compliance
Simpson Park fitness trail, out near Esmont; Virginia Outdoors Foundation provided lion's share of funding
Darden Towe expanded offleash area, planted 37 native trees
Biscuit Run Park - phase 1 trails are being built now
Phase 1A - in the final phase of permitting the entrance on route 20. Bid in Fall, begin construction in Winter, aiming for opening Fall 2023.
Phase 1B - Will have headquarters for countywide trails crew, as well as a connector greenway to 5th St Station
Brook Hill River Park - adding a boat slide to make launching easier

Currently working with Thomas Jefferson Foundation to create a full greenway/blueway trail from Pantops to Milton Landing.

Ivy Creek - historic preservation of River View Farm

5th St Station "Trails Hub" - VDOT Smart Scale project for an SUP behind Wegmans connecting to the Rivanna trails in the city, then the county can pick up the trail to Biscuit Run from there.

Rivanna Village Park - private developer (Robinson Development Group) has worked with ACPR

Three Notched Trail - RAISE planning grant approximately \$2m

Project Updates in the CCAC Area

Western Park - Phase 1A

Dec 2021 installed playground

Next up is construction of 16x16 pavilion and 1000 ft of stone dust pathway around it

Crozet Trails - Crozet Connector Greenway

Working with Riverbend Development for Glenbrook greenway easement

The next segment is through Parkside Village, ACPR has opened contact with the PV HOA

Crozet Trails - Lickinghole Creek Greenway

Expressed gratitude to the Crozet Trails Crew - "a real highlight of volunteering in Albemarle County."

Did not get selected for funding re: grant application to VA DCR Rec Trails Program

County has easement at Corey Farm stream crossing, but it's a limited easement so the county has more negotiating to do

Coordinated with RWSA re: who is responsible for recreation at the LC reservoir

Crozet Plaza

Still happening - lots of potential

Q&A

Sandra Hausman - Any plans to add trees to Crozet park?

Tim Padalino: We have no plans. There's a development proposal; they'll have to meet the minimum standards, but since it's not owned by the county, it's a little outside their department plans. Western is the only one in the development area; Mint Springs and Beaver Creek just outside.

Joe Fore - Were there trees removed recently at Mint Springs?

Tim Padalino: Removed 51 trees, primarily for emerald ash borer. Working with UVA to match/replace those trees as much as possible, focusing on native species.

Sandra Hausman - Are there plans to acquire land in the Crozet development area?

Tim Padalino: No plans right now. That might happen later in the development process. When land is rezoned or otherwise redesignated, there might be opportunities there, but no plans right now.

Sandra Hausman - If someone gave land, the county wouldn't take it?

Tim Padalino: We're always eager to hear about the generosity in the community; we don't have a formal donation mechanism right now, but we are always available to respond to people when they approach us.

Marc McKenney - Westhall has a small playground managed by P&R; how can folks tee up through the county to get areas looked at for maintenance? We'd like to replace the grounding material (mulch) in addition to mitigating flooding at that park - what's the process here? What's the maintenance plan, and how do we influence that?

Tim Padalino: Will take that to Jim Barber to get a concrete maintenance schedule and how to modify that.

Lonnie Murray: How does bike route 76 relate to the planned Three Notched Trail?

Tim Padalino: Not sure. Should be in the scope of the planning study for the Three Notched trail.

Seems like a missed opportunity to bring cyclists to downtown Crozet, either through re-routing or alternate routing.

Sandra Hausman - Any conversation about the land above Mint Springs, re: it being logged?

Tim Padalino: Not talked directly to them

Supervisor Mallek: The logging is happening

Joe Fore - One thing we're missing is shade areas for kids - that Western Park is hot! Major need for outdoor rec areas - staying cool - shade, water access, spray pads, splash parks. Going forward, we need to ensure equitable access to shade/water/cooling. Lonnie Murray +1s.

Marc McKenney - Old Trail is great, but how can we upgrade existing structures? Eg the Westhall 20x20 canopy - replace the existing structures etc.

Allie Pesch asks - is it Parks & Rec or HOA? Answer: two playgrounds, one is HOA, one is P&R.

Tim Padalino: No firm line for CIP etc. There is money in the operating budget, including maintenance, replacement of materials.

Ken Thacker - On the future connecting trail at Lickinghole Creek, was there consideration for the bridge replacement on 240 that was recently completed?

Tim Padalino: No, because it was replacement there wasn't opportunity to to redirect/connect here. They are looking for good ways to connect over 240 there re: Greenway.

Dan Butch: VDOT prefers to implement ped improvements to meet infrastructure on either side of a road ped improvement, but trails often don't meet that.

Brad Diggans (attendee) - Crozet is so small it should be easy to get around on bike/foot; what's the county's take on those connectors linking Crozet? Has heard talk about it but no action.

Tim Padalino: We definitely share that vision. The two main East/West greenways are the two spines of the greenway connections. There's not an imminent plan to pave, but at least one should be.

Joe Fore - There is the Three Notched shared use path in the Master Plan; there's a portion in front of Wickham; part of the SUP was proffered by Montclair development. The other reference to Master Plan is the priority construction from Park Ridge connecting to downtown.

Tim Padalino: It really will take a blended network of facilities - paved SUPs along the road, greenways inside.

Brad Diggans - would prefer to see the 12-foot path in the Crozet connector trail

Allie Pesch - What's up with the storage building at Crozet Park? Has heard it's up for bid, is there an official update from P&R?

Tim Padalino: No idea. We don't own, we do financially support that project. No idea where it lies now.

Attendee: How could the community raise money - is it feasible to raise independent money to fund the Lickinghole Creek bridge trail through the county?

Tim Padalino: Short answer - yes, doable. Analogous to the property donation question earlier.

Brewing ideas of Parks Foundation, which is a bigger endeavor than just ACPR. Coordinating with other localities and Albemarle County Police Dept Foundation for lessons learned/process. No promises on that, but a Parks foundation seems like a really necessary component to getting this done - "utilize external resources" to get stuff done.

Supervisor Mallek - Clarifying which Lickinghole Creek bridge is being discussed?

Tim Padalino: Eastern Ave. Maybe a tiny connection at Northern Landing. The bridge connection

we're talking about is at Cory Farm, just downhill from the Sparrow Hill donation. Chesterfield, Sparrow Hill, Cory Farm, then county property, then bridge.

Supervisor Mallek - who will look after the nesting birds/raptors at Lickinghole Creek basin?

Tim Padalino: We'll write that down & connect with experts on that matter. It's a real hotspot for birding.

Eric Schmitz (attendee) - Earlier, talked about RWSA taking ownership of the LC reservoir - clarification?

Tim Padalino: RWSA would still own the reservoir. Dredging the basin isn't P&R bailiwick. But there's an opportunity to manage it in a passive way - trails, blinds, etc.

Dan Butch: RWSA reached out to us to clarify the recreational use and easements - there's currently no public agreement in place, so we need to clarify that for safety.

Committee Business (25 minutes; Joe Fore, CCAC Chair)

Updates on Montclair Development

Supervisor Mallek: We are waiting on delivery of documents from the Army Corps of Engineers. The project is on indefinite hold while this is figured out. Some history provided - back in the 80s and 90s, all streams had buffers, then in 2010 that was modified. Potential for an outside person coming in to verify whether or not the info the county was given was correct. Tons of emails in this year. There is breathing space because of the deferral.

Update from Eric Schmitz from Western Ridge:

Expresses thanks to Supervisor Mallek. Provides timeline of Supervisor Mallek's diligence:

Supervisor Mallek reached out for a written explanation of how the initial problem occurred; 9 months have passed with no clear answer. Supervisor Mallek met with Eric personally to understand the details, then brought other supervisors out to see the stream. Seven weeks ago, a watershed change of events - Army Corps of Engineers said it was a stream. This was provided to the Board of Supervisors and Planning Commission. The chair of the PC assured Eric that they would get to the bottom of this. Three weeks ago, asked that it return to the board agenda; Supervisor Mallek brought it to the agenda; the BOS still wanted a second opinion. Asked the county to commit to keeping the stream on the map if the Army Corps of Engineers says it's a stream. What the county wants now is to hire an "unjustified and unneeded consultant, using taxpayer money, outside the RFP process." Verbatim: "I don't know what it will take to do the right thing. [Supervisor Mallek] has done the right thing and tried as hard as she can. More pressure on [Supervisor Mallek] will not make this happen. She has fought the good fight. The county has written us off, and are not treating our Supervisor with the authority she has."

Supervisor Mallek reads aloud email update, to be circulated:

Staff recommended third party based on conflict of interest with ACE and abundance of caution.

Staff will await determination re: stream buffer

Staff needs intermittent/perennial determination

Joe Fore - What's the conflict of interest?

Supervisor Mallek - Not immediately evident.

Eric Schmitz - The Army Corps of Engineers determination was that it was a water of the United States, period. The reclassification they await is between intermittent/perennial - in Crozet, both are protected, so the study is moot.

Lonnie Murray - They use the North Carolina standard for stream scoring; different localities have adopted this through the Chesapeake Bay Ordinance. There is no objective score for intermittent/perennial - localities determine this definition. The ACE did determine the US waters designation; but when we abandoned the Chesapeake Bay ordinance through a "code cleanup" in 2014, we lost the guidance of DCR, which had very specific language on this issue.

Joe Fore - Why is the default to assume that it's not a stream? Why is the default not on the developer to put the work in here?

In-Person Meeting Procedures

Joe Fore - Is the CCAC able to hold digital meetings? Hybrid meetings? Can we get a hybrid meeting right now? It was valuable to have people log in.

Supervisor Mallek - It is a public body; 25% of your meetings in a year (3 or 4) could be all-virtual; no two successive meetings can be virtual.

Certain bodies are allowed to be combination. The county does need to have the staff and logistics to support the hybrid meeting, to make sure that hybrid participants can actually participate fully. All CACs were interested in being virtual if they so chose.

So: we cannot have all-virtual all the time; we could have streaming and call-in, but we don't have the infrastructure to support it.

Allie Pesch - can bring back the Gazette recording/streaming, perusing twitter for questions/comments.

Joe Fore commits to bringing name cards for everyone

Closing Material

Next meeting tentatively scheduled for October 12 at 7:00 pm, at the Crozet Library. Details will be posted on the County calendar on the website. <https://www.albemarle.org/community/county-calendar>

Kostas moves to adjourn; seconded; Joe Fore adjourned the meeting at 8:35 pm.