

Planning Commission Work Session

June 29, 2021 5:30 PM to 7:30 PM

Virtual Meeting

Members Present: Commissioner Lahendro, Commissioner Solla-Yates, Chairman Mitchell, Commissioner Russell, Commissioner Stolzenberg, Commissioner Habbab, Commissioner Dowell

Staff Present: Patrick Cory, Joe Rice, Missy Creasy, Lisa Robertson, Jack Dawson, Brennen Duncan, Alex Ikefuna, David Brown, Carrie Rainey, Matt Alfele

The Chairman called the work session to order at 5:31 PM.

The Chairman introduced Karim Habbab, the newest Commissioner to the Planning Commission to the public. Commissioner Habbab expressed his excitement in serving as a commissioner.

Summary of May-June 2021 Engagement Activities

Jennifer Koch, Cville Plans Together – The goal for tonight’s conversation is to share some information about this third community engagement period for Cville Plans Together, which ended on June 13th. We will go through a summary of the different activities we completed with the community. We will speak about some of the preliminary themes of the input that we received related to the draft chapters of the Comprehensive Plan and the draft Future Land Use Map. We appreciate all of the input that we have received. We received a lot of input. We have reviewed all of the comments. We will be taking time re-review everything, making sure we have captured everything accurately, and working to respond to some of those commonly asked questions. If somebody does not see their comment reflected in the presentation tonight, this represents a first level of review. We will be going through to review again. All comments are being considered as we move forward.

The engagement period ended on June 13th. This time for community review and comments originally opened May 3rd to May 31st. It was extended to June 13th. During this period, we shared draft chapters of the Comprehensive Plan and a draft Future Land Use Map, which is a piece of one of the chapters of the plan. We worked to build community awareness about this opportunity for review and comment in a variety of ways. You can see some of the advertisements that we used. This was our third engagement period for Cville Plans Together. We were building on earlier work completed by the Planning Commission from 2017 and 2018 with this Comprehensive Plan update process. We do have additional slides in the appendix. These are the variety of tools that we used for sharing and gathering information. We didn’t point anyone to any one of these tools in particular. Everyone has different ways they like to give feedback. We’re not emphasizing feedback by any of these methods. We are looking at it as a whole. We are also taking into account where we are hearing from neighborhoods and who we are hearing from in terms of demographics so we can really understand the feedback we are getting through all of these methods. We’re not getting detailed demographics on all of these. When we have it, we are trying to use it.

We did hold popup events. This was something we originally planned to do a lot of throughout this whole project. We’re glad we finally got a chance to do that and be out speaking with people. We held six popup events over two weekends, mostly between May 14th and May 16th. We had a lot of face to face conversations at these events. We gathered some comment form responses. We had at least 133 attendees. We felt these were great conversations we were able to have with people face to face.

We held two webinars. These were open events to anyone held on May 10th and May 25th with 76 and 179 participants respectively. We gave an overview of the Cville Plans Together process for those who may not have been familiar. We discussed these draft chapter updates and the Future Land Use Map. We encouraged everyone to submit their feedback. At each of these events, we had a Q&A session. Due to the high number of comments and questions received, we weren't able to respond to all of the comments at the meeting. We are looking to respond to some of those overarching comment-questions when we have the refined summary of this engagement period. In terms of webinar or larger meetings, we had two other meetings of note. One was a meeting with neighborhood representatives on May 18th. That provided a chance for some of those people to provide their comments and questions as well. We also had our steering committee meeting on May 19th. That was an opportunity for us to hear from the steering committee. It was also an opportunity to hear from some others in the general community as well.

This slide is an overview of the email and phone comments that we received. We have grouped these together. They are grouped together in the data analysis. We received over 1,130 emails. On the table to the right, you can see the neighborhoods that were represented in both emails and phone calls. We had 24 call-in sessions. When combined with emails, that is what is shown here in the table. There is something missing from the table, which is some of the other blank responses. We asked everyone, including you and the steering committee members who received emails, to send their responses to us. We made sure to capture everything. In our original number that we put out, that included some duplicate emails. That's why this number is slightly lower than what you might have seen at that point. This is a lot of email comments. That's a lot that we have received in previous phases. This is one of the things we want to go through again. Some of them were very detailed. We want to make sure we didn't lose any of those comments. There were a few larger scale petitions or campaigns that came through. The Charlottesville Low Income Housing Coalition had an email campaign. We received about 500 emails directly from that campaign through June 13th. There was a group of 11 neighborhood associations that submitted a statement. There was a group of community members who organized in support of that statement. They were Citizens for Responsible Planning. They gathered about 400 signatures through June 13th. There was a petition from the Barracks-Rugby Neighborhood called Slow the Vote. We received about 237 signatures on that. A smaller scale but coordinated effort was the Food Justice Network 24 comprehensive plan recommendations. We received 9 or 10 emails from them. When we go through the analysis of email comments, you will see where we got direct emails from these campaigns. They are reflected in the numbers. If we received an email with the list of names, they may not come through strongly in the numbers. We are considering that input here.

We also had an interactive map. If you go the link, you will be able to see all of the comments that were placed on the map. There were about 740 comments received from about 225 people. For each comment placed, they could choose whether they liked they saw, whether they had concerns about it, or whether they had questions or ideas they wanted to share. They could submit additional comments on that.

We had a feedback form/survey available. We received 430 responses to that. That includes 28 paper copies from the popup events. You can see the breakdown here showing who we heard from in terms of neighborhoods. We have some additional slides in the appendix with some more demographic information.

We really appreciate the substantial amount of comments/questions/ideas we received. We have established these themes you will see from the open ended comments we received on the map, survey, and emails and voicemails. We tag each comment with these themes, which was developed as we went through them. They were reflective of what we were seeing. The themes that you will see in this presentation are preliminary. We are going to continue review comments. We are going to make sure that when we put out the full engagement summary, it is really reflective of what we're hearing. I think the themes are accurate. Some of the numbers may increase. If you don't see your input directly reflected in this, please know that we are continuing to consider all of those comments, even if they are not shown here.

There are seven topic specific chapters in the Comprehensive Plan. In the fall, we reviewed with you and the community the draft guiding principles, which apply to the whole document as well as the draft vision statements, which are future ideas for each of these different topics. In May and June when we shared the draft chapters, we also added in draft goals and strategies. They were aimed at achieving these different chapter visions that were previously outlined. When we were getting feedback on the chapters, we were asking for feedback on these goals and these strategies that we had put out. We have a few slides with the chapters. In the tables, you will see some of the main themes that we have pulled out of the survey responses. In the bulleted list, you will see some of the things that came out of the emailed responses. People, who sent us emails; it was largely about the future land use map. That's why we're not quantifying a lot of the chapter comments for the emails. On the survey, we asked direct questions about the chapters. We were able to pull those out more directly. On this slide is anything that was above ten. The top comments that came out were people expressing potential concerns about the land use approach related community or neighborhood character, consideration for historic communities or buildings, and height/scale concerns of potential new development. The second highest comment we heard was general support for either the chapter or for more housing, affordability, and density. Those two things aren't directly opposed to each other. Often it does work out that way. We heard comments across the spectrum of input throughout all of these different mechanisms.

Looking at the housing chapter, a lot of the revisions we made in the housing chapter were focused on pulling in those recommendations from the Affordable Housing Plan. The main theme we heard was a general support for increasing housing density or intensity. Similar to the land use piece, we heard some concerns about what that potential increase in density/intensity would mean particularly related to community character. We heard support for affordable housing strategies but also some concerns that the approach/outline wouldn't necessarily create that affordable housing.

With transportation, what we heard was support for safer, more connected, more multi-modal transportation options. We pulled out where people wanted more connected sidewalks or more bike lanes. We pulled that into this category. We can look at breaking that down more. There was a lot of support for improved transportation throughout the city as well as the potential for more frequent bus service or expanded public transportation.

With the climate and food access chapter, there are fewer comments we pulled. They are all notable. They were reflected in some of the comments we got via email. We heard concerns about tree canopy, support for enhancement of the tree canopy, and potential concerns about what additional development might mean for the tree canopy. We heard support for climate and energy initiatives as well as support for food equity in local food.

With the economic prosperity and opportunity chapter, we did not hear from as many people on these chapters as we did on some of the others. In general, we did hear support for addressing wages in the city and looking at additional workforce development. We did hear some concerns that the planned strategies will adequately get us to the vision we established. We want to make sure we look at those comments closely.

With community facilities and services themes, we heard support for more parks and green space and concerns about storm water and some comments on policing and community safety. In general, there were fewer comments on the survey related to community facilities and services. In emails and on the wiki map, we didn't hear a lot of input about infrastructure and how infrastructure and development should be paired moving forward.

With Community Engagement and Collaboration, we heard that people wanted to see additional engagement around this process. Some people expressed they hadn't been previously involved in this process. They want to see additional engagement with this current process. We also heard general agreement with this chapter. It sets out goals around community engagement and collaboration, not only for this process, but for other planning processes. We heard good support for that.

Presentation on Future Land Use Map

Ron Sessoms, Cville Plans Together – The area/element of the Comprehensive Plan that we received the most comments was around the Future Land Use Map. This is the Draft Future Land Use Map that we shared with the public through the month of May and June for feedback. We have not changed the map. This is here for reference to give us all a sense of orientation as to what was reviewed as part of that review process. We did the same with organizing comments for the Future Land Use Map. I will start by going over the feedback we received from letters, emails, and phone conversations/voicemails. On the left, you can see the top categories of concerns. Across all the different methods that we obtained information that there are different things hitting on who responded to these different methods. For emails and phone comments, we received nearly 500 emails from the Charlottesville Low Income Housing Coalition. Those emails are reflected in the percentages. As we move through the different methods, some of the concerns shift into different categories. That's something to keep in mind as we move forward. For the letters, emails, and phone comments, 47% of respondents showed general support of the land use approach. There were concerns about displacement, particularly among black and low-income residents throughout the city. There was a desire for more density in historically exclusionary white communities. We received quite a few comments that this future land use map wasn't going far enough with equity. There were concerns around that. There was support for a general increase in the general residential category, which is our lowest intensity residential land use category that we have shown on the future land use map. We heard desires to consider 4 to 5 units per lot. Those top four themes highly reflect the input we received from the Charlottesville Low Income Housing Coalition efforts with the 500 emails. We did hear concerns very similarly to what we heard in the comments around the process and perhaps not having enough community engagement and view time to provide input. There were concerns around transportation and infrastructure. When considering the increase in density, there were concerns around traffic and how more people living in Charlottesville may contribute to more cars on the road and other negative impacts as far as transportation goes. There was support around transit and other alternative modes of transportation. That is reflected there. There was

quite a bit of concern around developer intentions with the implementation. Citizens are very skeptical of developers. There were concerns around whether developers would take advantage with the increase in density and have a negative impact on the community. We also heard concerns around property values, taxes, and property values decreasing, particularly with increased density. We also heard concerns around increased property values; particularly among low-income residents being pushed out of the communities that they love because of property values increasing as more development occurs over time. We also received feedback from the comment forms and survey. For these comments, the comments were more site specific. People were more focused in on ‘their backyards.’ Eleven percent of those comments reflect that theme. There was a general support. About 9% of respondents had that general support. There was quite a bit of concerns around character, form, and height, particularly around the medium intensity and higher intensity mixed use categories. People were concerned and wanted to make sure that the increase in density respects the character of existing neighborhoods. Property value was of great concern. There was 6% in opposition in the future land use map. The graph to the right shows who supported and where they live. The bars in green represent a general support of the future land use map related to one’s individual neighborhood. The blue/purple bar represents where respondents felt the future land use map was not appropriate for their neighborhoods. Neighborhoods that will be experiencing the most change had the most negative feedback. Communities like Barracks Road, Rugby, Greenbrier, Lewis Mountain, and north of downtown did have more negative sentiment around the future land use map. Other communities that are less impacted like Fifeville, Fry Springs, Martha Jefferson, and Rose Hill had mostly more support for the future land use map. You can geographically see where sentiments around the future land use map, as shown, differ throughout the city. We also asked, through the survey, very specific questions around whether respondents felt like the Comprehensive Plan and the Future Land Use Map addressed the planning objectives of the plan. We asked whether overall support of the overall concept of mixed-use nodes in corridors was a framework to be used to organize the Future Land Use Map. We also asked about whether respondents felt like the Future Land Use Map supports the overall vision of increasing housing diversity throughout the city. We also asked whether respondents believe that the Future Land Use Map will support affordable housing throughout the city. You can see from the responses that they’re pretty much flat across the board in many instances. Some with higher support were around the concept of mixed-use nodes in corridors and diversification of housing throughout the city. Across the board, it was evenly distributed. We also obtained demographic information from respondents. This is one of the sample demographic categories that we were able to analyze. We also included additional race and income demographics, which can be found in the appendix of the presentation. Looking at homeowner versus renter, there was a higher degree of support for the Future Land Use Map from renters and less support from homeowners, with homeowners siding with concerns around property values, community character and other concerns that directly impact the places that they live and own. Renters see that as an opportunity to diversify where they live within the city. There is perhaps more opportunity to rent in communities and neighborhoods that were traditionally out of reach. You can see the differences between homeowners and renters.

We also found an opportunity for citizens to directly map geographically where they have concerns. They were able to do that through an interactive online map. We received quite a bit of feedback in a very effective tool to enable people to really get down into the plan and be very specific with their concerns. The top 5 areas of comments that we received were very similar to the other things/methods that we tracked. Transportation and infrastructure concerns around growth and a desire to decrease density intensity and height. Site specific comments was number two in the things that we heard. Similar to that, we heard about community character, history, height, and scale. There were a lot of concerns around increased density and what it means for these existing neighborhoods. Residents don’t want

development that is out of scale and character to the places that they live. There is a lot of skepticism around what it means for the Future Land Use Map as shown and how it may affect community character. There was some support at 11% of respondents that generally like the plan as shown. There was also a desire to increase density intensity (11%), particularly around the desire to show more medium and high intensity residential on the map. We received over 745 individual comments from 245 unique IDs or users. We did recognize that some people placed more than one point. Some people really got into the map and really delved into the details and provided significant comments. We were also able to collect some demographics data. It was optional. Not everyone participated in that. Most people decided to be anonymous. We did offer that as an opportunity. We received a wide range of comments. They are organized into three core themes: land use development considerations and additional ideas. The black dots on the map to the right represent each of the individual comments that we received. We got comments for many areas of the city. There is a strong concentration around Lewis Mountain, Venable, Barracks/Rugby, and North Downtown areas. This is a snapshot of what we heard and who we heard from. The graph (to the left) shows the 745 points of information we received from 245 users. We heard the most from residents that live in communities that would experience the most change under the draft future land use map. Communities like Barracks Road/Rugby, Belmont, Carlton, Lewis Mountain, Rugby Hills, and north of downtown were areas where we had the most comments or most users to participate in the interactive map. On the right, you can see where each of the points were located as well as where the respondent lives. Generally, people commented within their neighborhood. There were some people that got into more of the details in the map and looked more holistically. Generally, people were concerned with what was being proposed in their neighborhoods.

We began to break down this wiki-map data into different categories. This map begins to reflect the desire to see fewer intensive uses. The blue dots were a general decrease in intensity. You can see around the Venable, Barracks/Rugby area a high concentration of blue dots. That's where we heard a lot of respondents say that they would like to see a general decrease in intensity than what is shown on the future land use map. We heard comments around where we were showing mixed use in several areas in the city. The places that we received the most comments were at the intersection of Barracks and Rugby Road where we were showing a neighborhood mixed use node. You can see that high concentration in purple. Up in the Greenbrier neighborhood, that mixed use node received a lot of attention. Along Rugby Avenue at the 250 interchange, we were showing some mixed use at that location. That was another area we heard a lot of concerns around having mixed use at those three locations. There was also some commentary around business and technology mixed use around the River Road corridor and the Harris Street corridor. We did get some comments around opening those areas for more types of mixed use; more residential use to create more complete districts at those locations. For general residential and single family residential, we heard from respondents that they would like to see that at those locations. We got a lot of those comments at Lewis Mountain, Venable, Barracks Road/Rugby Road, Rugby Avenue corridors, Fry Springs, and at North Downtown. We had the highest concentration of that general desire to reduce the residential intensity in those communities.

On the opposite end of that spectrum, we also heard desires to increase intensity in areas of the city. It is not as concentrated as we saw in the decrease intensity map. There are some notable patterns here. The blue dots represent general increase in intensity throughout the map. You can see those are scattered. An increase in intensity are the red dots. Those areas are around Fifeville, Belmont/Carlton, and some areas of downtown. We saw the areas of the highest concentration for the increase in intensity generally at those locations. There was a desire to increase mixed use intensity represented by the purple dots. There was no clear pattern, just sporadic at different locations throughout the city for that comment. We also

received comments around increasing residential intensity. The dark brown dots represent that comment. You can see that pattern in North Downtown, parts of Locust Grove, and a couple of dots at Tenth and Page and the Belmont/Carlton parts of the city.

With general development considerations, you heard these things through some of the other methods in feedback we received from respondents. Community character, scale, and character was a concern particularly in the Venable, Lewis Mountain, Barracks/Rugby, Greenbrier, North Downtown, and Martha Jefferson. There were concerns around where we were showing medium intensity. There was concern that intensity was too much for those locations. People are concerned how that intensity would fit into the existing character. Related to that was transitions; how buildings step down and the overall urban form. Development quality was a concern. Those are represented by the red dots. They are scattered around. We heard a lot of comments around transportation and infrastructure, particularly where we are increasing intensity. A common theme of Barracks/Rugby, Rugby Avenue, are where we see a lot of comments. Environmental concerns included tree canopy, flood plains, climate, pollution, and topography. We heard those in various locations throughout the city.

We heard comments around key issues related to affordability and displacement and getting back to concerns around property values. As redevelopment happens, there is that need for residents who live in these communities not to be pushed out. We heard a lot of those comments around Barracks/Rugby, Greenbrier, and some of the poor neighborhoods such as Starr Hill, Tenth and Page, Fifeville, and scattered in locations throughout the map.

With neighborhoods around UVA, we heard how increased density in those neighborhoods could attract student housing and other development concerns. Property value concerns are the red dots.

Ms. Koch – These are the general themes we pulled out. We took what fell at the top of those different methods and pulled them into here. We also considered what we heard at popup events or when speaking with people in the neighborhoods. Those were generally reflected in what we had heard on those other mechanisms we talked about. These are the general overarching themes we wanted to pull out. Everyone agrees that it is important to address affordability in the city. There is some disagreement on how it should be done and whether this land use, chapters, and the affordable housing plan can get us there. We appreciate all the comments we got. We have listed some of the main questions we are thinking about right now. How can this work in the implementation? How can this really lead to affordability and benefit the whole community? As we move forward, any decisions that are made about changes to the map, we want to be very clear about that. Those are things we will be keeping in mind.

Public Comments

Nancy Summers – You're talking density and intensity; not population growth. Everyone knows that Charlottesville is tiny at 10.4 square miles. I haven't seen any projection of the kind of population growth you imagine in our very small city. What about population growth? We could be a dense and populated city. What do you imagine for population growth? What is going on with growth projections?

Maddy Green – I wanted to comment where the comments came from. They came from a lot of communities that were exclusionary rezoned and had racial covenants in the houses. You can see the residents are still advocating for those same policies and racist policies. They also operate as economic policies. Saying you don't want affordable housing in your backyard or any density is saying you don't want people who make less money than you. I don't think Charlottesville wants to stand for that.

Considering you received over 500 emails from the Charlottesville Low Income Housing Coalition, you know where a lot of citizens planned on this point.

Jake Gold – I want to thank the Cville Plans Together team for pulling this analysis together. This process has been an enormous undertaking. Nearly half of the email messages that came in were in support of desegregating our community by putting more housing in exclusionary neighborhoods by ensuring that we are investing in economic opportunity for people. I think it is a smart approach and the right approach. I hope the Planning Commission will encourage the consultants to maintain that approach.

Josh Krahn – The main point I want to make today is that I support increased housing density, mixed use zoning for small commercial uses within neighborhoods and planning in general for humans, not cars. My neighborhood is 100% R-1 single-family detached houses. It is not a rich neighborhood. It is mostly white. North Avenue and the surrounding streets around us are mostly small, brick ranches that were built in the 50s. These were cheap starter houses for people who can get a mortgage. If land values continue to soar, these houses are going to be replaced with larger buildings of some kind. I also want to talk about walkability and bikeability. I am only a mile from the downtown mall. It is impractical. I would love to have a corner store and café/pub within walking distance. Those kind of retail amenities are illegal under the residential zoning code. I support the future land use map. It is a small step. I wish it went further. It is crucial if we want to move forward.

Mark Kavitt – The first thing we need to think about is how dense we want our community to be. That seems to be the number one question. Do we have the infrastructure to support the higher density? The bottom line from a presentation I attended at the Tom Tom Festival is that you are not going to achieve affordable housing by building new construction. New construction is expensive, inherently. You're not going to get affordable housing. It would be better to spend money on adding onto the existing housing or renovating some of the larger houses. A lot of people don't know what it means when you talk affordable housing. What is affordable housing? I am putting some data together on that. You need to look at this from the perspectives of Charlottesville, UVA, and Albemarle County. There is a lot of single-family homes and apartments being constructed on Rt. 29. This all needs to be taken into consideration. Not all these people are going to be driving into Charlottesville.

Kevin Hildebrand – I did provide an email response. It was a June 13th email in response to the request for comments. As an opponent to the general change of R-1 to medium density residential, I live in Johnson Village/Cherry Avenue neighborhood. It is ethnically diverse. It is a vehicle for wealth development. The idea of transitioning most of the city to apartments and multi-family dwellings is short sighted on the part of the city. I don't understand what employment opportunities the city projects over the next 10 to 20 years that is going to drive the need for this development change. If there is no economic growth in terms of employment, what are these people going to be doing? What jobs are being created that will pay a livable wage? I don't understand what is driving this intensity increase. The future land use map doesn't consider the topography of the city. There is a proposal to change residential neighborhoods into mixed use nodes on steeply graded streets.

Nancy Summers – I live in a home that had a covenant. It is from 1917. All of Charlottesville lived under these terrible Jim Crow laws. They were horrible, nightmarish laws. It just wasn't homes with covenants. Some of those homes are expensive. The whole place was segregated. I do have a perversion to scapegoating. I don't know why they put covenants on some of the homes. You shouldn't scapegoat covenants.

David Summers – Does the projected population for the City of Charlottesville yield the low-cost housing we want? Everyone I have heard is in favor of more low-cost housing. Does the growth of the City of Charlottesville promise to generate the low-cost housing that everybody wants? I don't think it does.

Ann Woolhandler – I would like to see a cost-benefit analysis. This plan costs a lot in terms of lost enjoyment to people in the developed neighborhoods. What are the benefits? I have been looking at the studies around general upzoning. They are not that promising for increasing affordability and equity. When you do upzoning, you often have some increases in transaction costs. Increasing affordability and equity has not been shown to be the case. The whole density notion is the general academic view out there. Recent studies are showing that it is not working. It causes losses to people who like their neighborhoods and does not increase affordability and equity.

Don Morin – I join in a lot of the comments that question this plan, which seems to equate density with affordable housing. Petitions have been submitted by our neighborhood association. There is no need for scapegoating. The entire city is on board with having affordable housing and making it more available. The question is how to do it. The Weldon Center says that the population is going to grow by 2500 people by 2040. I think it is a radical plan because the size of the change in the density across the entire city into all neighborhoods. If our population growth is projected at 2500 people over 20 years, what does this land use plan do in terms of density? How many housing units are going to be available? What is going to be the cost in terms of building the infrastructure? What are going to be the job creators in Charlottesville to support that population?

Carol Manning – I am very concerned that this is not based on data or data projections that this plan will work. Traffic is a huge problem. It is hard for me to imagine that we are doing this without working collaboratively with the county and UVA. We cannot do this alone. We should not even think about implementing a plan without having them on board. We also need higher paying jobs. I don't think enough attention has been paid to infrastructure and traffic. We don't want to live in a car-centric place. I don't think any attention has been paid to that. We all want affordable housing. We all want collaborative cooperation. We want to work together.

Elliott Casey – There doesn't seem to be much study on how UVA and UVA student housing has been growing into the surrounding neighborhoods. The plan seems to convert several neighborhoods occupied by Charlottesville residents into student housing. That's something we have been doing for the last 30 years. That plan hasn't done anything to increase affordable housing. If you convert residential housing into UVA student housing, UVA grows and adds more students. I am confused as to why we're demolishing entire neighborhoods and building structures with apartments in them to accommodate more students at UVA. I don't see anything in this plan that incorporates UVA as a partner into the plan.

Vern Buchanan – I bristle at the comment about the covenants being racist. The covenants for Greenbrier were in 1958. It was about the people coming down from the north and moving in and excluding the people from Charlottesville. I have no problem with different people moving into the neighborhood. I don't want overcrowding. I love it here. I don't want to tear it down for the sake of saying we're diverse. Let the place go diverse. It is going that way right now. We don't need to add more housing. There is multi-family designation in the future land use map in my backyard. I am not crazy about that.

Josh Carp – Climate has been in the news lately. A research group at UC Berkeley led by a climate scientist had been studying different options for cities to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and do

something about climate change. The single best thing you can do is to build more housing close to work and schools. Charlottesville is an oasis of low emissions surrounded by areas of very high emissions. If you move a family from Charlottesville to the county, their emissions increase by about 50%. If you move a family from the county to Charlottesville, their emissions decrease by a third. If you are living close to work, school, and amenities, you can drive much less and even walk. People need to be able to live close to where they work. That means living in the city. Most of the comments are coming from those who are white, wealthy, and own homes.

Jonathan Rice – I support your goals. What we really want to see is your advocacy and your inclusion of affordable housing. I don't believe density alone is going to bring about affordability. I think you must have legal binding guarantees. There have been several notable cases in Charlottesville of developers promising affordable housing and then 'weaseling' out of their commitment. This is not a good thing. I implore you to have reasonable guarantees and talk to low-income housing experts. This is what we really want. People are also concerned about preserving the tree canopy, keeping the roads from becoming overwhelmed by the traffic. I completely endorse the earlier comments about reducing the need for automobiles within the city.

Liz Sloan – Charlottesville is not just any city. We're the home of a great university and the home of a world heritage site. My neighborhood is adjacent to this world heritage site. We are the only neighborhood that has been completely changed from yellow to gold. It's just not in accordance with the University of Virginia and the great beauty of UVA. We have tourists walking through our neighborhood. Everyone in our neighborhood is in support of changing the zoning. I support the shift. I think the ADU units are very important to have. We just need more time. The work that has been done has been wonderful. We need to have more 'touches' with more people and more neighborhoods. The zoning changes are not going to support historical black neighborhoods. They are being changed from single-family residential to triplexes. Protect those historic neighborhoods.

Sean Mullane – There are two things meant by affordable housing. Those first type of affordable housing are for those who are under-employed or low income and cannot hope to afford a house. The other is affordable housing for the middle class. They both must be addressed in different ways. You can build a way to affordable housing for those people who are middle class.

Planning Commission Feedback and Questions

Commissioner Russell – I would like to start with questions raised by residents. One resident was questioning the results of upzoning that has occurred in cities like Minneapolis and Chicago. My understanding was that it is too soon to say. It sounds like there are some other reports out there. I am wondering if the consultants could provide some insight.

Ms. Koch – In looking at places that have done upzoning, some of those changes were done quite recently. We would be happy to look at additional examples we can pull any of that from.

Lee Einsweiler, Cville Plans Together – We don't have a lot of information that points to any one given solution being the answer to this question. All the ideas being presented begin to tackle the same problem. If you don't have to have a car, you can save \$8000 a year on average. If you can live in a smaller home, you are paying less for your total square footage. There are ways that these ideas begin to get at affordability, even if we don't achieve something that might be at 30% or 60% of AMI. We can certainly help people at the 80% to 100% AMI end of the scale.

Mr. Sessoms – Planning the long-term vision, it is going to happen incrementally over time. It is not going to happen overnight. As the development pressures increase, you will see this development in the future happen over time.

Commissioner Russell – Another speaker asked about inclusion of guarantees of affordable housing. I believe that the housing plan calls for tracking measures. I am not sure that it is possible to have a guarantee. I do want to confirm that part of the recommendation in the housing plan is to have metrics on the impacts.

Ms. Koch – In the affordable housing plan, they lay out a series of recommendations that include funding and other initiatives (land use) that can come together to address the housing need that was identified in the Housing Needs Assessment that was previously completed. They have identified what they are proposing to use that funding to get there. In the Comprehensive Plan, we have pulled in those recommendations. We have also started to lay out some metrics/ways we can measure success of these efforts. We will be looking at inclusionary zoning and other ways potentially to include requirements in the zoning when we get to that portion. I don't know if there are guarantees per se. We can look at making more robust measures to address how the city is doing.

Commissioner Russell – One of the speakers talked about the existing conditions on North Avenue. He stated that it would be better if those modest homes be replaced with multi-unit or more density rather than one large single family one. There is no guarantee that would happen in a proposed upzoning or with the zoning being proposed for there. Without a provision for affordability, someone could still build a single-family home with no guarantee of affordability. Hopefully, we will be talking more about possible tools like overlays in our input section.

I did have a question about ease of use in the interactive map. I have heard some concerns that the lack of diversity may be attributed to its lack of accessibility. Do you think that the tool fairly represents all concerns of our community?

Ms. Koch – We do have some information on the neighborhoods. We showed that map with the colored dots showing where people commented. There certainly are people we were not able to reach. Some of the neighborhoods are not represented through all the different methods. It is certainly possible. You mentioned the ease of use of the map. I know we have heard similar comments on the survey. There is a lot to get through. We put a lot out there to review. Someone could certainly be “turned off” by that as well. We tried to provide different methods for people to give comments. When you look at just the neighborhoods, we did hear from different people in each of the different methods.

Commissioner Stolzenberg – Going back to Commissioner Russell's question about studies on previous general upzonings. While it is too soon to say for the few cities (Minneapolis, Portland, and Charlotte) that have gotten rid of single-family detached only zoning and the effects of that, would you say that data from places that have had a more localized and not a municipality wide upzonings or new construction and have what we would expect with comparable effects. Is that available?

Mr. Einsweiler – I don't have any studies to share with you. It is a challenging question to look at natural affordability and how to induce that. It is principally what zoning can do. The inclusionary pieces and the funding pieces are ways to get beyond that. Fundamentally, we're looking for as much natural affordability as possible. I don't have a lot of examples. We are hoping to get HR&A back involved with the inclusionary zoning stage. If that was to happen, they are more likely than I to have

seen something that has hard numbers like that. We can certainly reach out to them whether anything “comes to mind.”

Commissioner Stolzenberg – Can you remind everyone who HR&A is?

Ms. Koch – HR&A Advisors are part of the Cville Plans Together consultant team. They led the development of the Charlottesville Affordable Housing Plan, which can be found on our website, cvilleplanstogether.com under the housing page and the documents page.

Commissioner Stolzenberg – We think a lot about the evidence we must support change. What data do we have on status quo? In the housing market this year with remote work, do we have data on turnover of homes/home flips/renovations and the effects on how we are doing with our current policies?

Ms. Koch – As part of the Affordable Housing Plan, HR&A Advisors did some analysis of existing conditions over time. You might recall looking at how household incomes have changed along with the median home price as well as looking at different changes in rental affordability over time. I don’t believe they did analysis on what you are talking about with changes and how land use might have changed and how that may have impacted affordability over time. We have done that separately. In terms of the status quo, the Affordable Housing Plan did lay out different types of data like housing supply, affordability, and displacement, which is a good baseline. You can find that on the Cville Plans Together website under the housing page.

Commissioner Stolzenberg – Looking at the future land use map, we have heard a lot of concerns from people of the idea that people could combine a bunch of parcels and build a much larger building. People could combine 10 parcels and build 120 units. My reading of the map is that it would be 12 units per parcel. If you combine parcels, you still only get 12 units. Is that how it is intended? Which way is it intended?

Mr. Einsweiler – You’re right. That’s how it was intended. Those are per lot. If more lots happen to be able to be created based on the lot size, you could perhaps get more. They will be buildings that contain no more than 12 units.

Commissioner Stolzenberg – In terms of mixed-use nodes, we heard a lot of concerns that they will be car oriented. I have heard them referred to as shopping centers. A couple of them are located near the bypasses. What is the intention for those nodes in terms of who they are meant to serve and how people are meant to get there?

Mr. Sessoms – The neighborhood mixed-use nodes are intended to be walkable mixed-use centers for neighborhood services serving retail services. They will be places for the community. They are in the areas that do have visibility and retail survives and thrives and does have visibility. We do have to put them in locations that have good vehicular visibility. We also want to maximize alternate ways to get to these locations through bicycle and pedestrian access as well. We have looked at it holistically. With the increases in intensity, we are calling for, particularly with the medium intensity areas, we do have places of convergence where we have more intensive mixed-use activity. We heard a lot of concerns around gas stations, shopping malls, and large parking lots out front. That is not our intention. We want good urban form, good urban design, walkable, bikeable, places in these communities. It would not be our intention to have those undesirable commercial uses. Zoning can regulate how and what is allowed and how that form takes place within these mixed-use districts.

Commissioner Stolzenberg – On the subject of student housing, some people have said the goal of this plan is to spread student housing to more neighborhoods. I saw some dots about student housing in Greenbrier and Fry Springs. What are the anticipated changes of housing availability in current, existing student areas in this plan? Is there intent to spread them out? What do you think the effects of the plan will be?

Ms. Koch – We have considered UVA as a unique hub of activity in the city. It's a huge employment center. We know neighborhoods near UVA have seen a lot of development that appears to be university oriented. If there are more people living closer to where they work and where they must go daily, that can help address some of those goals. We talked reducing vehicle mileage traveled and addressing some climate goals. We have looked at potentially providing additional opportunities for density in those neighborhoods near UVA, not only for students. Students need housing too. We are also looking at people, who work around there. We certainly don't have a goal to spread student housing into more neighborhoods throughout the city. We are looking at increasing opportunities for housing in neighborhoods throughout the city for the community in general.

Commissioner Stolzenberg – If UVA was to grow, is there nowhere for students to go but out? Is there a goal in this plan to let students “grow up” within existing student areas?

Ms. Koch – That would be the goal of increasing potential intensity in some areas, not only for students but for others. We are looking at potentially increasing the intensity of use on a piece of land. We can grow up and not so much out. We also know UVA is looking for ways to increase student housing on campus. That's a piece of this as well.

Commissioner Stolzenberg – I am thinking specifically about JPA and Rugby and whether there is an ability. Rugby is where students are south of Grady and whether there is the ability for more students in that area versus spreading it.

Ms. Koch – We have shown potential increase for intensity in those areas. If they are currently student dominated, that would increase the intensity of those uses, that would help increase the number of students in those areas to minimize potential spread to other neighborhoods.

Commissioner Habbab – Are there any metrics on how UVA students are affecting the housing in the city over the last couple of years?

Ms. Koch – We have not looked directly at that. If you look at the census data, you can see where student areas pop up because there are certain demographics who might be students. As part of the Affordable Housing Plan, we didn't look directly at what some of those quantitative metrics might be with the impacts of student housing. We have heard concerns about it.

Alex Ikefuna, NDS Director – There are no specified metrics. The housing needs assessment that was prepared by Partners for Economic Solutions indicated that one of the contributing factors in the affordable housing challenges the city is having was UVA. There was an analogy that was used. Because of a lack of affordable housing and demand exceeding supply, the people at the upper income belong to the middle income and the middle-income people belong to the low-income people. The students, for the most part, are competing with the low-income people within the city in terms of access to affordable housing. In terms of the metrics, they didn't provide any metrics. They did confirm that UVA is a contributing factor to the housing challenge within the city.

Commissioner Habbab – I was looking at the future land use map. Some of the uses mirror what exists today. Is there a way to overlay what we have today with the future land use map to highlight what is changing? I did have a general question on the light industrial use in the city, especially the downtown areas. Was there any consideration to what that could be? Why it would stay as light industrial?

Ms. Koch – In terms of looking at a comparison of the draft future land use map and the current land use map, it is the closest thing we have. The other thing we can compare it to is that we have done some mapping of the tax assessment data. What we did in the most recent community review was in the webinar where we had the comparison draft future land use map with the 2013 version. That is in the webinar slides. It gives some numbers in how they compare. In terms of the light industrial uses, we have shifted that to allow for some mixed uses, including some potential residential uses in some of those areas. In terms of your question, are you asking for our rationale for leaving them shown as this business and technology? We have talked with staff in this process including the Office of Economic Development. They feel strongly that there is a need for that type of land use in the city. We have identified some areas where we think we could switch over to a mixed-use node or corridor. We have kept those areas because of conversations we have had about the importance of those areas for jobs.

Commissioner Habbab – You had a lot of public comments. It seems people are concerned about these neighborhoods overnight becoming apartment buildings or multi-unit buildings. There is an intensive city process on the traffic studies and architectural review board processes that goes into an overlay on top of the future land use map designations. Is that on the table?

Ms. Koch – We have talked about the process when we talked about the land use map. This is a long-term vision for land use in the city. When we get to zoning, there are often other considerations that need to be considered. We have tried to make that clear as we talk about it. We will try to make it clear for people.

Commissioner Dowell – It was mentioned tonight during public comment that our residents are feeling the increased density and intensity that has been proposed is not going to solve our affordable housing crisis. What is your response to that?

Ms. Koch – We have tried to be very explicit when we talked through the webinar. Land use is not the solution on its own to affordability. It is great that people are recognizing that. We are trying to use land use allowing for an increase with intensity throughout the city or some mix of uses that will be paired with financial support and other support in other ways from the city. Land use, on its own, will not achieve all the affordable housing goals that are out there. I appreciate that people recognize that as well.

Commissioner Solla-Yates – Is this enough? Does this hit our numbers? Does this get to our 4000 in an acceptable amount of time?

Ms. Koch – In the affordable housing plan, HR&A Advisors laid out a series of financial incentives and programs that they believe could support the implementation of recommendations that would lead to hitting those goals for the number of units. A piece of that is land use related. We have tried to provide opportunities for both higher intensity residential uses with a mix of uses that could support some of those initiatives. Some of the other “soft density” increases throughout the city could better support the homeownership opportunities. I do believe it is sufficient if there is enough financial support. We have not put out specific numbers. This is looking at increasing intensity, potentially providing for those infill opportunities throughout the city. We’re not looking at wholesale development of undeveloped lots in

most cases. It becomes difficult to say such numbers. Combined with those initiatives and funding, we do think it should be sufficient to reach those goals.

Mr. Ikefuna – The land use is just a “piece of the pie.” I am encouraging the public to read the draft affordable housing plan, which is on the website. It spells out several recommendations. One is land use. Land use is just one of the few recommendations that is going to help us to move from point A to point B. You must have subsidies. When you talk about affordable housing, land use alone is not going to get it. The people you are looking at providing housing for is an expensive proposal. There must be a lot of government subsidies to prop up the developers to be able to leverage their resources with the city’s resources. You talk about tenant’s rights. If the city is providing the funding for the developments, sustainability and affordability become very critical. With the city’s investment, we will be able to accomplish that. You also talk about racial equity. That’s one of the issues we must address. It cuts across everything, including economic opportunity. There are several tools in that toolbox. Land use alone is not going to do it. Everything else will have to be in order to get from point A to point B.

Commissioner Solla-Yates – I have been talking about the implementation section for a long time. I get a lot of questions about sidewalks, protected bike lanes, off-street bike paths, and transit. How is that going to work?

Ms. Koch – The projects that you mentioned are transportation or mobility related. We will be working with staff to identify those projects. It is a piece of what needs to go into the Comprehensive Plan. We will be working throughout the topic specific chapters of the plan. This engagement period provided some high-level implementation information within there. We will be taking a lot of that and potentially adding additional information to that implementation chapter. We are going to be identifying some key priorities that need to rise to the top of the list.

Commissioner Solla-Yates – A big concern from 2017 was diverse representations, especially black and low-income representation. I am not seeing that in these numbers. What do we do?

Ms. Koch – The representation we got through the input period, at least the ways we can measure demographics, did not reflect the full diversity of Charlottesville’s residents. I think we did hear from a greater representation of people through email. There is a lower barrier timewise to send an email. We got a wide variety of levels of detail in the emails. It is something we continue to work on and partner with our steering committee and others in the city to grow that. We look forward to being able to be out face to face with people. We’re cautious about protecting our staff and the community residents during COVID. We didn’t send people door to door to talk with people. It is the best way to reach a lot of people. We worked with community partners to get the word out.

Latoya Thomas, Cville Plans Together – From some of the limited in-person activities that we have been able to do, there was some interesting feedback that we have gotten from the black residents we have spoken with. There is a lot of skepticism around the public process overall. There’s a lot of skepticism around the city. I see a lot of long-time frustration for what many people feel is a system that is set up to not serve them adequately. When you are seeing a large population of people who have that level of frustration, that is rooted in decades and decades of challenges. You’re going to have even more challenges getting people to participate in a public process. We have not been able to do a lot of in-person activity because of COVID. We have only been able to recently start doing that. I was able to get down to the Tenth and Page neighborhood during the engagement phase that closed in June. We were able to talk to some residents and share with them information about the process. Many have not previously heard about it. There is still a wide range of education that is happening at the ground level,

especially around people who have not been part of the public process or might be frustrated about engaging.

Commissioner Solla-Yates – We have had a lot of public comments about allowing four homes citywide. There is a lot of concern about this. Can you talk about the public health and safety costs and benefits of allowing four homes citywide?

Mr. Einsweiler – The reason for looking at the idea of four homes is that it is probably the maximum that a typical lot could accommodate. That would probably mean additional new construction on the site but potentially splitting up the original house as one of the ways to get two additional units. Four is a maximum. We wouldn't expect that on every site immediately. This is just a modest suggestion. When Seattle first implemented an accessory dwelling unit ordinance, it allowed for an additional unit in the backyard. In ten years' time, they had them in less than 5% of the lots that were allowed to place them there. There is a time factor associated with this. I think some of that can be supported by some ideas that may not have made it into the affordable housing plan. Ideas about how the nonprofits and others can support getting those units constructed. We are seeing communities across the country adopt 3 or 4 as the new "magic number" in single-family areas.

Commissioner Lahendro – The draft plan that the consultants have put forward has quite a few areas of what currently R-1 districts and detached single-family shown as being converted to medium intensity residential allowing up to 12 units and 4.5 stories. This seems like a drastic change that is a conflict. Help me understand, as professional planners, how this represents a comprehensive plan that is an adjusted and harmonious development based upon good, planned use practices.

Ms. Koch – As you noted, we are showing some areas of this medium intensity residential, which would allow potentially 4 to 12 units at 4 stories. We are showing that because we have heard an urge to have additional housing types available to people in some neighborhoods where they have not been available. We have decided to show it along corridors. We believe that can help to facilitate transit-oriented growth where we are potentially allowing additional density. It could also help to facilitate other infrastructure improvements that may be needed to go with that. Showing this corridors perspective was one way of trying to do that.

Mr. Sessoms – In the future land use map, it is very general. We have ranges and heights up to 4 stories up to 12 units per lot. That allows us greater flexibility to establish more defined zoning districts. Due to the general nature of the future land use map, we kept it in ranges as far as the intensity at this point. I recognize that it is certainly not appropriate to have 4 stories in every location that is showing medium intensity residential. It would be out of character and out of scale and it does not fit in that community fabric. We agree with that. It's not our intent that every medium-intensity residential district on the future land use map have the maximum development capacity. As a future land use approach, we will have to refine that going forward as we move into the next phase, which would be the definition of what these zoning districts will be. I refer to the existing 2013 future land use map, which has 4 or 5 land use categories. The zoning map has up to 30 different land use/zoning categories. You can see how those general districts begin to break down in the zoning phase; more definition of appropriateness established in that zoning phase. That will be what is next in the process. Taking the feedback, we are hearing for the future land use map. As we move to the zoning phase, breaking these districts down, understanding the fact, and beginning to make sure that these zoning districts fit the urban form that is in keeping with the community character.

Commissioner Lahendro – What tools are there to protect and preserve the African American communities and neighborhoods that have expressed their concern about being gentrified as a result of the draft plan?

Ms. Koch – A lot of the tools would be non-land use tools. A lot of those other tools that were identified in the affordable housing plan; providing tax abatement or support for owner occupied owner rehabilitation or support for people who may want to add an ADU. If it is allowed, it might be too expensive for them to do that. Some of those non-land use elements are included in there. Through the land use map, we are looking to protect some of these communities that have seen a lot of impact through the years by allowing opportunities for development in areas of the city that have not traditionally had a lot of opportunities for development or a wider range for opportunities for development. Some areas of downtown, traditionally African American areas have been focused areas for development. That’s one way we’re thinking about it.

Mr. Einsweiler – We are anticipating tools that might link affordability and preservation of existing homes for preservation. We will be looking into as many ideas as we can to retain the fabric of those communities, while balancing the opportunity to join those who already own homes in similar settings and climbing onto that ‘wealth ladder.’ There will be some balance necessary. We may not be offering the same bulk and mass. We don’t necessarily want to take these existing homes down. We will be looking at all those kinds of tools as we try to continue, as the description for soft density suggested, add additional units, which are simply helpful to strengthening the existing neighborhood, not replacing it.

Commissioner Lahendro – I agree with a prior comment made by one of the attendees. Charlottesville has a range of communities. There are some wonderful communities with very small houses and small lots that could help promote homeownership and allow affordability. Those places are important to help preserve.

You gave us all the analysis of the engagement comments. From the things you have seen, have you had discussions about what it is you might change about the draft future land use map that it is out there now?

Ms. Koch – It is always something we are thinking individually as we read through comments. We have not had any formal discussions about it. We haven’t yet touched it. We don’t have any formal recommendations. Partially, we wanted to hear from all of you. Partially, we want to go through everything again after we have absorbed what we have heard. There were a lot of thorough comments.

Commissioner Lahendro – I would certainly like to hear from you and your responses to these comments and the future land use map they are commenting on. I look forward to hearing you all give those recommendations.

Chairman Mitchell – After the discussion about the restrictive covenants, people would like to know more about the restrictive covenants and the way they impact what we do. Our chief legal officer wrote a pretty good opinion as it relates to the way they impact what we think. I propose to staff that we put that somewhere on the website so people can look at that and advise them where people can look at it.

Lisa Robertson, City Attorney – You can put it on the website or make it available for anybody that would like to read it.

Commissioner Input and Feedback

Commissioner Russell – I think that it is prudent that we talk about what might be feasible around the conversation of affordable housing overlays. I also would “throw in” there as an alternate addition/supplement a conservation/demolition overlay. What might these overlays offer?

Ms. Koch – There has been a proposal that has been discussed with the Housing Advisory Committee that will be discussed at the next Planning Commission meeting. That is what Commissioner Russell is referring to. In the land use chapter, we did provide recommendations about considering some sort of overlay in terms of affordability. In terms of what these overlays may offer, they could provide a way to require a certain level of affordability or several affordable units for any level of development above a certain level. There can be overlays on top of zoning that could provide some protections for different concerns that we have heard. We certainly look forward to those discussions.

Commissioner Russell – My input would be that I have concerns that density for density’s sake will not resolve what we are trying to achieve. Something like an affordable housing overlay could tip the scales in favor of affordable housing.

I am also interested in better understanding the conversation around equity building and how we would both preserve neighborhoods but also not tamp down wealth accumulation in doing that, lowering the intensity of use for preservation purposes. How do we do that with not limiting/capitalizing on possible increases in property value. I want to reiterate needing more in the toolkit. Land use can’t do it all. It is taking up all the oxygen in the room. I want to ensure that the affordable housing plan doesn’t get “put on a shelf.” There are so many other tools needed to supplement the land use changes.

Commissioner Stolzenberg – I read through every email, the spreadsheet of all the survey comments, and I think I looked at everything on the map. I heard some main themes; specifically, what people are worried about. It seems that we have three main sticking points. The first is going to be medium intensity (that light brown) with small apartment buildings across the city. With that, I heard few concerns. The first and foremost is height. That idea that 4.5 stories where the existing neighborhood fabric and the building in R-1 zoning is 35 feet. What I also heard from some people is that the way the international building code is written. To go to a fourth story, you need to add an elevator in an apartment building. To add three units to get to 12, nobody will do that. It would make sense to lower that to 3/3.5 stories for apartment buildings. My understanding as to why that is in there is to enable the stacked townhome format. It is a housing form we really don’t have in the city. We don’t see it reflected in this land use map. It is the most affordable housing form for homeownership. It is about 80% AMI at market rate. Preserving a height for stacked townhomes and lowering it for apartments makes sense.

Some neighborhoods feel they were singled out. They don’t understand why their street is light brown and the next street over is not. Lewis Mountain doesn’t understand why most of Lewis Mountain is light brown and others are not. A 12-unit apartment building, 6 plex, or 8 plex is small enough that it doesn’t really have appreciable adverse impacts on the neighborhood. A small building is not going to hurt you. There are concerns about physical constraints on lots. We have the site plan review processes to ensure that there is adequate infrastructure, sewer, and water. There won’t be traffic concerns. I think the framework proposed by the HAC makes sense. It’s less restrictive of places and lets the thorny details of how many units anywhere go up to the actual constraints of the actual lots. I like that approach. It makes sense.

With these novel mixed-used nodes in existing residential built out areas, it seems that we are throwing darts at the map. We are saying that this is going to change over time and not letting it happen organically. I am having a hard time understanding why we would pick specific places rather than let

commercial uses arise from scratch. My understanding is that it results from an analysis that let us know there are areas without easily walkable or access to nearby commercial uses. We should think more of a framework to allow small-scale, completely non-car-oriented, with strict limits on parking in front of accessory commercial units in people's yards for owner occupiers or long-term renter occupants to allow corner stores. I am thinking about the Rugby, Westwood, and Dairy ones.

I am thinking about the sensitive neighborhoods. I am a little weary of the idea of just saying "we're going to down-zone these to nothing and that is going to make it affordable." That hasn't worked in the past. I agree that they should be protected against rising prices. In that Cherry Avenue Small Area Plan, people want to see more affordable housing types in Fifeville, increased variety in housing type and form that accommodate residents across the income spectrum. My suggestion would be to crank that dial of affordability requirements under that framework and use that as the lever to make sure that projects can pencil in wealthy exclusionary areas. At the same time, the pressure for development in lower income areas is not as strong that prices rise.

Commissioner Habbab – I want to echo what was said earlier about the affordable housing overlay and what Rory just mentioned. What is the low density/sensitive density residential areas? We need to maintain the vulnerable communities in Charlottesville. I know it is multi-pronged approach with real estate tax relief and other programs as well as the future land use map interventions.

My other point is about focusing on equitable gathering spaces. You were supposed to study why people felt unwelcome in some areas or not. I am not sure what happened with that segment of the comprehensive plan.

Ms. Koch – At the end of the 2017/2018 initial updates, there was a survey completed that was identified. That was one of the questions asked of people. Do you feel comfortable on the Mall? We have taken the results of that survey. Early on, we reviewed that. That was included in some of our early thinking about the goals and visions for the comprehensive plan. We have not done initial analysis about that.

Ms. Creasy – I believe that was part of a survey that the mayor conducted. We have the raw data from that. That was about when we closed the first phase and went out to contact. There is a potential opportunity there.

Chairman Mitchell – Equitable gathering spaces was one of the top things. I think that is something we need to give some thought.

Commissioner Dowell – I want to echo Jody and Lyle to be sure we are making protections for our dominantly black neighborhoods and low-income neighborhoods. We do not want them to be gentrified out of the neighborhood. We also know to make sure we reiterate time and time again that homeownership does create generational wealth. We definitely want to do all that we can in this process to protect that.

One of the other things I would like to see is with the education component. I think it is very critical as we move forward that everyday common citizens understand not only the terminology but also the thought process behind where we came up with some of these decisions. I like the example Mr. Sessoms used earlier when someone asked him a question about the employment centers where the employment centers were based upon ease of access. If people are aware of the processes that goes into the decisions that are being made, it might be a little bit easier to understand where we started at and where we're going.

Another thing that is going to be beneficial is that the public understands what I asked about earlier. I have had a lot of face-to-face conversations where there is concern the new updated comprehensive plan does not give us the affordability that we're looking for with the increased density and intensity. Making sure that our residents are aware of the other tools that are going to be put in place to get us there is going to be important, so they don't feel like this is 'knee jerk.'

Commissioner Solla-Yates – A concern from long time homeowners with fixed incomes is that their homes will be even more expensive and get taxed out. There are caps on how valuable a home can be to benefit from tax relief. I would like to have a better story for those people. They are very anxious. A major concern I am seeing from very high-income people is traffic. Most people live in their cars. They are right. They are skeptical we are going to make a transition. Based on the past, they have a good argument.

A final concern is that renters are hungry. They are concerned. They know a change is coming. They are concerned that change is going to be bad for them. Any help we can offer them is going to be crucial.

Commissioner Lahendro – I would be interested in hearing the consultant's opinion on the engagement comments that they have received. I would also like to hear their opinion about the recent proposal that the HAC has put forward. I know it is too soon to have that now. I would like to get a professional's response to that. My biggest concern is the transition from R-1 to medium intensity residential. I would love to see that scaled back in what is currently being called for medium intensity residential or create another category so that the medium intensity residential is more targeted to specific areas. There is another category between general residential and medium intensity for a more gradual increase in additional units.

Chairman Mitchell – The most important for me is the protection of low-income communities. We have to protect them from gentrification as we go through the land use process and the rezoning process. The protection of that has to be written into this.

Another important thing is the HAC document. That document addresses what Commissioner Lahendro was talking about: the ability to protect low-income communities but a little bit more thoughtful in the way we increase density in places like Greenbrier and Lewis Mountain Road. I still want to do something there. The HAC document gives a lot of thought to that. I would like for you guys to take a look at that and give us some feedback on that.

The city can't do this by itself. It has to be done with the University and with the county. The University has already announced that they are looking to add 1000+ affordable housing units over the next few years. The county is under huge pressure with the urban ring. As we think through this, we need to make sure we're thinking through this. Speaking to it in our comp plan and speaking to it through our cooperation with UVA and what is happening in the county and how we can partner with the planning region we are in.

On NPR, they were talking about canopy equity. There is lots of canopy in the wealthy neighborhoods. In the lower income neighborhoods, there is not the type of canopy that we like to see there. Canopy does lend to wellbeing, health, and feeling better about your environment. We need to lend some thought to canopy equity as well. It ties into Commissioner Habbab's idea of location equity.

Commissioner Stolzenberg – In some of the comments, there were specific groups for the Hinton Avenue Memorial Church and the Park Street Christian Church asking for high density residential on

their properties to encourage the affordable housing projects they have for seniors and for people with developmental disabilities. Those are good changes to make.

For high intensity residential, in some of the areas especially the student areas, it might make sense to go a little more intense. Some of the discussions were contemplating 7 stories near JPA. It makes sense to keep students hemmed in their area for all the reasons. There are some tweaks that need to be made.

The meeting was recessed for five minutes.

Public Comments

Andrea Massey – I hope you will be continuing with centering racial equity as we go through the process in making sure that we create affordability in R-1 and predominantly white neighborhoods and prevent displacement in majority black neighborhoods. Making sure we do this is extremely important. Land use alone is not going to do this. I want to make sure we are being honest about this. We must be honest about where we are and how we got here. We must do better. I really hope the neighborhoods against this do not get prioritized again and again. We need to do better and I hope we can.

Julia Williams – Finally we are making some changes. I think the aim of bringing equity and affordable housing and displacement is important. I do have concerns about the land use plan and the overall draft chapters. I am not sure I am seeing enough attention to infrastructure. That includes mobility, transportation, schools, sidewalks, and lighting. They can't be given to the developers. That will raise costs that are big and not affordable. We need a real partnership with the city and the federal government. That's a huge concern. In one of the webinars, I heard that the parameters in general residential were based on an attempt to not encourage destruction of existing homes. I see conflict in the comments with people saying 'raise the density' to 4 or 5 units. These numbers were not just pulled out of a hat. They're based on information that is preserving some important things. I am encouraging the Planning Commission and consultants to be thoughtful as to why we have these numbers. I care about the intent. We need to be thoughtful about this map. I have not seen you reach out to neighborhood associations. This process is not functioning in reaching out to the neighborhoods.

Crystal Passmore – As a renter, it is frustrating to hear people, who own their homes, saying newer houses would benefit. Almost half the residents in the city rent. Their rents have been rising quickly and supply is very limited because of the current zoning plan. The supply cannot keep pace with the increase of workers within the city. The city artificially limits the number of houses we build in the city. Half of the residents would benefit from more housing, which would take pressure off the few units we do have. More housing would benefit people who work in Charlottesville who can't currently afford to live in Charlottesville. They live in Albemarle or the surrounding counties. We have a lot of people who commute in who would like to live in town. It is frustrating to hear people say increased density would increase traffic. Pricing people out of the city means people must commute farther distances. People are more likely to walk or bike if they live in the city near their jobs. If you want less traffic, you must let people live here where they work. The young professionals I work with would like to bike to work. It is an equity issue and quality of life issue. We can cut carbon emissions if we let people live near where they work. The plan doesn't go far enough. It's a step in the right direction.

Annie Kim – I am going to ask the Planning Commissioners to be in tune to the facts on the ground. I am a first-generation Asian immigrant. I attended UVA and work at UVA. I own a modest home of 1700 square feet in a modest neighborhood in Venable. It is Tunlaw Place. It is a street of four properties. Three are currently single-family homes and the other is a duplex rental townhouse. If you

walk down my street, you might mistake it for a driveway. It doesn't look like a city street. The street is so narrow that the dog walkers must hug one side of the street if a car passes by. There are parked cars along one side of this street. I am concerned how a street like Tunlaw Place can be upzoned if the future land use map is carried out into a zoning ordinance. I am not sure how the infrastructure would accommodate that. How can we park any more cars on this street? Are we trying to increase/spread student housing using the future land use map? That is not the intention according to the consultants. How is my street being put on the map after it wasn't on the map in March?

Jamir Smith – I have moved from Fry Springs to the county primarily to access more affordable housing. It wasn't being provided in the city. I imagine there are a lot of young professionals that want to stay in Charlottesville. We all know that Charlottesville is a place that is desirable and a place where people want to live. The largest employer, the University, is bringing the students back. That means that everyone is being brought back to work. One of the things people are going to want is to live close to where they work. One of the things that the community is concerned about is that their neighborhood is going to be upzoned and could allow for other people to live close to where they work. It is interesting that a lot of the communities are more worried about student encroachment. Along with my peers, we want to live within a 15-minute walk or a high frequency bus. Increasing density in that area could allow for transit options, which is what people want. If we want traffic to go down, more bike/pedestrian infrastructure, and more buses, you're going to want places for people to live. It is not going to come if the demand is not there. If the University is going to be the good neighbor, one of the things we're going to see is a possible opening of apartment complexes in that area. We're going to want to build high intensity residential.

Mark Owen – It was helpful to hear your questions to the consultants. Some of the things I was going to say were already addressed by you all. It is very important for the city, county, and UVA to be coordinated on this. The county is in the process of doing something like what we are doing. When you look at the map, there's a lot of grey areas on it. It is a piece of the puzzle that needs to be on there. That is paramount. There is a lot of opinions. Some are from people who are very experienced. Some are from people who have an equal right to their opinion. It is more subjective or anecdotal. It seems like there needs to be more data. One of the instruments that we are proposing here is multi-family housing. What is the current vacancy rate today? How many units are available today?

Kimber Hawkey – My concern with the radical density increase is how much yard is going to be left for people with these changes. There is a real concern of the linkage between the idea that the future land use map and the increases in density will lead to affordability. That is a broad misconception that can continue and propagated by the media. I am for affordable housing and equity. You say that we must protect this neighborhood from this plan. That means this plan is injurious. I don't understand that. It seems hypocritical. It was not easy to get to the online materials. A lot of people sent emails. I don't know how that information is being recorded. Many people did not contribute to those dots on the map. Defining affordable as 80% AMI is not affordable. With these commercial nodes, it has not worked in Belmont Center. People have been driven out. There has been a loss of faith in the city. I don't have faith in the system. Things have not worked. Businesses are violating their proffers, and nothing is being done.

Joan Albiston – I am concerned about the designation of properties from low density to medium density in the upcoming plan without consideration for the percentage of critical slopes, proximity to environmentally sensitive land, and vehicular access. I became aware of this in the plan when looking at the large parcel on the southeast corner of Fifth and Harris. I wondered if there were other similar

parcels in the city. A development plan for that parcel was proposed ten years ago and resubmitted seven years ago. It was denied both times due to a lack of safe and sufficient access onto Harris. There were concerns by the engineering staff of Albemarle County. Part of that parcel extended into Albemarle County. They were concerned that the grading would need to be severe for the high-density project to be built. At what point in the planning process would slope, environmental sensitivity, and vehicular safety be considered in determining if a parcel can be developed as recommended by the Comprehensive Plan? Will those concerns hold less weight? I was unable to leave a comment about that concern on the interactive map. My comment kept disappearing. There may be other people who were not able to have their voices heard.

Charlotte Meadows – I am from Charlottesville. I have been a witness to numerous changes. Increased density, discrimination, and prejudice. It is not limited to culture or color of skin. It is something that happens unfortunately with the things that are going on. I am concerned about infrastructure being properly developed and looked at. A main question that I am concerned about is why empty areas are being looked at critically to develop them first. We have these deserted shopping malls. They have the infrastructure. I would appreciate that being looked at more. I do not feel that residents have not been given adequate warning. We haven't had enough time to be able to review the information. There is so much information on there. It is discriminatory that people that may not have a computer to dig through all of this. If you are working full-time, you don't have the time. I think clarity and simplicity would be lovely. We are being compared with places like Chicago. We are a town. We are not a big city.

Chris Schopper – I would follow up on the comments made by others asking for additional density in the city. When I started my job in 2017, we were cost burdened due to the cost of rent here. These people were some of the more fortunate. We were able to get college degrees and get white collar work in the city. The lack of housing options is very constraining. It does make it hard for people to settle down and build a life in Charlottesville. Most of those people no longer live in Charlottesville. There are other communities, like the communities of color that have a much worse situation. They face systemic racism and discrimination in housing practices that need to be addressed. Upzoning is not going to solve the problem. I think it is a necessary condition through which we can start to solve the problem. I have heard concerns about community character. I understand that people want to live in a nice and beautiful neighborhood. Canopy equity is one thing that goes a long way into making a community seem more than a series of construction sites and a series of apartment complexes. I had previously lived on First Street at Charlottesville Towers. Both First Street and Altamount feature a variety of higher density housing types. They do so in a way that's very attractive to live in but allows people of different income levels to live together and get to socialize and interact with one another. As someone who has walked and biked to get around town, there is a huge opportunity for the city to invest more in bike and pedestrian infrastructure.

Kathy Freer – I have lived in Charlottesville for 40 years. It is impressive that through Zoom that you have moved it along. I am calling to ask for your empathy for the residents. For those frontline workers, this whole calendar needs to be slowed down and reconsidered. We have lost 15+ months. If you count the last month, it feels like we are coming out of the COVID cloud. There is a lot of adjustments. I don't think it should be ignored. It has come out in some commentary about the disappointment of not being able to do the education you would typically do. Even if it is entirely Zoom, we need more time. That is what I am asking for.

Paul Miller – I strongly encourage in-person engagement at a local, neighborhood level. I think most people have been engaged for the last 45 to 60 days. I would love for members of the Commission and

the consultants to get into the neighborhoods and tap into the neighborhood associations. I think what is under-discussed is the diversity of age. Diversity of age in fact-collecting and in terms of planning. We need to pay attention to age diversity. We should focus in on that. You need to come with better examples than Portland, Minneapolis, and Chicago for comparison. Find something that is a little closer to ten square miles. We must find some other reference points. It would be good to talk to a small business owner. Green equity, canopy equity, and all the things around that are important. Let's push on the University and county for collaboration.

Diane Dale – The examples of upzoning provided by the consultants (Austin, Portland, Minneapolis) were shown in a quick search. Austin has been in litigation for years. Minneapolis and Portland just recently finally approved their approach. They were at levels of 3 and 4 units per lot. There have been no examples provided for the densities of up to 12 units that are suggested for the medium residential. When the question came up, the consultants were not able to provide further citations of where this type of approach has been implemented. That is disconcerting. It is important that it is fully acknowledged and appreciated. The approach that is being proposed is somewhat experimental. There is no data on what it has delivered. It is the hope to achieve affordability. It doesn't mean it is not the right thing to do. We need to be clear. When the Planning Commission looks at this plan, they are acknowledging the experimental nature of the plan. The community should be given that transparency. There is a lot of density proposed. The impacts are yet to be understood. The plan also recommends these densities be given by right. I haven't heard of the consequences of that. Have you considered the implications of granting this new type of approach to zoning?

Walt Heineke – In 2017, the racists came to town. They came to town to celebrate those statues. They came to town because they knew about Charlottesville's racist history. It goes back to the covenants. We're still living with the implications of those covenants with inequity today. The City Council has woken up that Charlottesville needs to be an example. We tossed those racists out of this town and made a national example of how to stand up to them. We must translate that energy and spirit into long-term equity changes in housing. The City Council has done a great job of committing to affordable housing at deep levels over the last couple of years. The issue turns to how that energy will play itself out in zoning, the Comprehensive Plan, and the equity strategy. This is where we need you to join the cause. What we have done since 2017 gets translated into the future of a racially equitable Charlottesville. We understand that we are to be an example for the rest of the county. We have been working on how to make our community more equitable. It is time for us to figure out how to be exemplary in terms of zoning and equity for the rest of the country. We should be better than anyone else.

Elaine Poon – Most of my comment was what Walt had to say. Please center racial equity. Please lift the voices of black communities in our city. Don't let people gaslight you. Keep talking about racial equity. Don't get distracted with these demands for data. Upzoning can increase affordability. Is that what people are looking for? We have a lot of data points. This is not the springing of a plan that is "all of a sudden." We had a long CLICH survey. We did that in part because we know the data that people want to see of what the lived reality of many residents in this community has been for decades. It is rampant gentrification, rampant displacement, and being forced out of childhood homes. We have a housing needs assessment. This body has done several community engagements processes. There are a lot of comments. Keep talking about racial equity. Maybe this requires more public education. What does single-family zoning mean in this country? President Trump was combating a Fair Housing Act rule. You all continue to plow on this quest in integrating historically exclusionary neighborhoods. Continue to listen to black voices. I have clients and community leaders every day talk about their childhoods in Charlottesville. We have an opportunity to make a change in the positive direction.

Claire Griffin – I live in multi-family housing in Venable. I wanted to address some previous comments. Somebody asked for data points on vacancy rates. There is a rental vacancy rate of about 3.1% in Charlottesville in 2019. For comparison, Minneapolis was 3.8%. Austin was 5.2% and New York City was 2.1%. We have a very tight housing market for rental units. About 40% of housing units in Charlottesville are owner-occupied. Most housing units are rentals. The rental population here is substantial. We have heard comments about how Charlottesville is not Austin, Portland, or Minneapolis. I grew up in Austin about a mile from the University of Texas. I lived and worked in Minneapolis. I do see quite a few similarities between the cities. They have deep histories of redlining covenants and segregation that have impacts on property values, housing, and schools. These cities are trying to combat this. They are all home to major universities.

Vern Buchanan – How are we going to do affordable housing?

Brandon Collins – I grew up in the Rugby area. Growing up, I wondered why there were no black kids in my neighborhood. It took me a really long time to understand why that might be in Charlottesville to understand our history. It comes down to the data question. You have had the studies. You know where Charlottesville is. You know what we need. You know that racial covenants line up with single-family zoning in this town. We got there through comprehensive plans, zoning, and future land use maps of past years. We know that we are not getting the desired effect, unless the desired effect is what we have right now; gentrification, displacement, massive lack of affordable housing for our community, and racial segregation. Those are things that we are finally attempting to address. This plan is 3 years overdue. There have been opportunities to engage. The arguments of those who oppose this don't make any sense. Their arguments can be explained. There is a reason you have this future land use map. Growth is going to happen. We want to plan smartly. We want to provide infrastructure, protect the environment, and addresses racial segregation. I do support an affordable housing overlay. That might actually quell some concerns.

Valerie Washington – A lot of my family has been displaced from the historically black neighborhoods that we live in. As a single parent, it is hard not having my mom up the street and having a cousin watch my child. A lot of that has been due to gentrification of our neighborhoods. In certain neighborhoods where black people don't live, there is a lot of Black Lives Matter signage in the front. I find it contradictory to have these signs in yards where black people can't afford to live. People on this call being called racist is a conversation ender just shows that you're not ready to do that work. You're not ready to be in diverse neighborhoods and around people of color. That is sad to me. I hear a lot of Karens and Bills on this call. I don't hear a lot of black people who can speak to being in our neighborhoods. I don't feel the contractors have done their jobs in listening to our people.

Input and Feedback from Councilors

Councilor Snook – I appreciated having about 90 minutes of time with Jenny and others last week. In hearing the comments that people have made this evening, I want to touch on a couple of things. One is the question of population growth. There is a Weldon Cooper study out there that has estimated that Charlottesville will be roughly 53,000 people by 10 or 20 years from now. One of the deficiencies in the way that they do things is that they assume continuity of the most recent pattern. In 2016, they came out with an estimate that our city schools would have 5,000 students in them. In 2014 and 2015, there had been a discontinuity. There had been this increase in apartments on West Main Street, which led to students moving into those apartments, which led to people being able to move into the residences that had formerly been occupied by the students. That led to a great upswell of elementary school, middle school, and high school students. That didn't continue. We're looking at a decline again. My point is to

recognize the limits of their methodology. The reason that population has not risen in Charlottesville in the last few years is because there is no supply. There is no place to move to. One of the things that has led to it is overbidding on the asking price of houses on a regular basis. There is no supply. I know of several people who have tried to move into Charlottesville in the last 6 months and have not found a place. We are running the risk of becoming Palo Alto, California. Palo Alto is city where the median income is \$160,000 a year. It is a city where the median sales price is \$3 million. It is a city where an 850 square foot bungalow was bought for \$2.3 million to be torn down. It is 93% white and Asian. It is 6% poverty. That is who we would become if the only people who can buy houses here or rent here are people with \$150,000 incomes. We are in danger of becoming something we don't want to be. We want to be seen as welcoming to refugees and the people who make the city run. We need to do something at the comprehensive plan level to work towards that goal. I am a fan of this kind of proposal. I am concerned about a lot of the details. Whatever changes that are going to happen are going to happen very slowly over a period of time. What is the likelihood in the current market that somebody is going tear down a good house in a rich neighborhood? I don't see it happening right away. I think people are getting a lot more excited both for good and for ill.

Councilor Payne – I spoke with the consultants last week. A regional approach is necessary. The regional housing market and regional dynamics definitely involve Albemarle. I think ‘roping’ them into the extent possible to try to get upzoning and density increased in the urban ring is going to be very important. I am very interested in pursuing the idea of affordable housing overlay as something to possibly include in this process. I know the consultants have said they are working on inclusionary zoning as part of the zoning rewrite. That maybe encompasses the goal of the housing overlay. I am interested in pursuing that idea to promote as much affordability as possible. The reality is that Charlottesville is growing. There are market dynamics bringing in lots of wealthy young professionals to the city. Do we use the tools we have available to take that reality and try to use our land use/zoning to try and promote affordability and limit negative impacts in working class neighborhoods given those market dynamics? We can change nothing and we are going to get where we are now, which is everything people don't want; large by right office spaces that do increase population where new housing meets demand. We're going to see gentrification and displacement. We're going to see house sales that are cash only sell before they are listed publicly. We're going to see a lot of house flipping and density pushed into working class neighborhoods. Neighborhoods that have racial covenants and are exclusionary are going to continue to block the development of more affordable duplexes. That's something we are going to have to accept as a city. We're going to need to change that dynamic. Once we make these changes, there is a lot of fear. A lot of the doom and gloom that people have will not happen. It will just be a duplex/triplex in your neighborhoods that looks like a normal home. There's a lot less to fear than people might think. The ‘rubber is going to hit the road’ with the zoning rewrite. This land use map is part of the comp plan. The zoning rewrite actually results in changes. That's going to be a street by street, property by property that will get into a lot of the details that people are currently worried about. There's a lot more time in that process. How I am looking at this future land use map and zoning rewrite is necessary but not sufficient. It needs to happen to confront legacies of redlining, racial covenants, and development patterns in the city. If we are fundamentally going to start changing the development patterns leading to gentrification and displacement, land ownership is critical. We're going to need to put a huge emphasis on land ownership and using tools like land banks to get land under the control of neighborhoods, housing nonprofits, community land trusts, and create wealth building and put more affordable housing through land ownership. You can look at a lot of the cities that have used the land trust model in land ownership to get neighborhoods self-determination. It has been the most successful tool to stop gentrification and displacement.

Next Steps

Ms. Koch – The summary of the input that we got was preliminary. What we are putting together is like what we have with the previous two engagement phases. We will be working on that to share with you. We will meet with NDS tomorrow and define a more specific timeframe in getting that to you. The original schedule for the comprehensive plan had us taking a look at the feedback we have received, revising the plan, and finalizing it through the summer. I anticipate that will be extended to give enough time for checkpoints that need to happen and additional meetings. We will be working to make some revisions to the schedule. Our goal is to be transparent as we can.

Chairman Mitchell – Perfect should not become the enemy of the good. Let's get something out there. This is a living and breathing document. An extension should be really short. We have to get something out there.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 9:42 PM.