

**CITY OF CHARLOTTESVILLE, VIRGINIA
CITY COUNCIL AGENDA**



Agenda Date:	March 1, 2021
Action Required:	Resolution
Presenter:	Matt Alfele, NDS City Planner/ Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission, Consultant
Staff Contacts:	Alex Ikefuna, NDS Director, Missy Creasy, NDS Assistant Director, and Matt Alfele, NDS City Planner
Title:	Cherry Avenue Small Area Plan – Comprehensive Plan Amendment

Background:

The City’s 2013 Comprehensive plan calls for identifying specific areas of the city where planning and design issues or investment opportunities may warrant additional study through the development of small area plans. The small area planning process is intended to examine these areas anew and holistically, with the full engagement of the public, elected and appointed officials and planning professionals. The resulting small area plan will provide the basis for future planning, urban design, investment decisions, and possible changes to zoning and the future land use plan. The small area plan will be appended to the Comprehensive Plan and reviewed for possible changes every five years.

The Cherry Avenue Small Area Plan is a policy document for the City of Charlottesville, intended to guide the actions of local decision-makers and City staff. The plan should serve as a to-do list, helping to determine changes to local land use codes, capital investments, development of recurring programs, and adoption of one-time initiatives. The Small Area Plan is also intended to serve as a guide for neighborhood residents, businesses and Fifeville stakeholders. Many of the plan recommendations are neighborhood-driven efforts that will require new partnerships with nonprofits and other community groups.

In 2015, the Fifeville Neighborhood Association assembled a committee to conduct a visioning exercise for the Cherry Avenue corridor. In 2016, Fifeville’s community-driven effort convinced the City’s Planning Commission to invest in a small area planning process for the corridor. In the spring of 2017, Charlottesville’s Neighborhood Development Services (NDS) Department started talks with the Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission (TJPDC), defining them as the outside agency to develop the plan and manage public engagement with the official kick off to the planning process beginning in the fall of 2017.

The purpose of this plan is to determine what should be done in the future, in order to achieve the stated vision. As it is important to be thoughtful in determining those actions, the Cherry Avenue planning process was inclusive and intentional. The Fifeville Neighborhood Association assembled a Think Tank of residents that helped to engage the community and provide general

input. With the help of those neighbors, the TJPDC held two open house events; convened various focus groups; conducted front porch discussions with Fifeville residents; attended community events with informational displays; and, presented the final product at an open community event. In addition, there were several interviews and discussions with neighborhood residents, stakeholders and businesses.

TJPDC staff collected hundreds of community comments and cataloged each into a searchable database. Many of those comments were consistent with previous planning efforts, dating back to the 1980s. Staff created a narrative of those comments, developing an index of statements and recommendations, found in Chapter 2. Throughout the planning process, staff collected and analyzed data, which resulted in additional recommendations. That research is described in Chapters 3 through 7. Staff also looked to other communities that face similar challenges, to develop a list of best practices, also added to the list of plan recommendations. Through technical and public vetting, the plan finally came into focus with a list of clear actions that will help to bring positive change to the Cherry Avenue corridor and Fifeville Neighborhood.

Adoption of this plan does not mark the completion of the Cherry Avenue process. The community-driven effort, which resulted in the Visioning Report, essentially served as Phase I, with initial outreach and identification of community issues. The Cherry Avenue Small Area Plan functions as a Phase II, with additional outreach, data analysis and recommendations for next steps. Implementation, which will include additional studies and outreach, and progression to funding of capital improvements and programming will be the third phase for achieving the community's vision.

Discussion:

The Planning Commission held a virtual joint Public Hearing with City Council on January 12, 2021 on this matter. During the discussion, the Planning Commission gave a favorable impression of the Small Area Plan, but did have concerns with the following:

1. The document should reflect the need to address affordable housing and prevent displacement.
2. A refinement of the existing conditions analyses to better reflect the existing housing type.
3. A data appendix added to the document.
4. Additional data and data analyses related to renovations and teardowns in the study areas between 2010 and 2020. **Due to staffing changes at the City and the PDC, staff believes this additional analyses can be addressed more robustly after the document is incorporated into the City Comprehensive Plan with additional guidance from City Council and the Neighborhood.*

After the Public Hearing the consultant incorporated the Planning Commission's changes as outlined above, with the exception of #4, and they are reflected in the document before you tonight.

Alignment with City Council's Vision and Strategic Plan:

Approval of this item aligns with the City Council Vision Statements of: A great Place to Live for All of Our Citizens, A Connected Community, A Green City, and Quality Housing Opportunities for All. The Plan also supports several goals and objectives of the Strategic Plan: Goal 3: A Beautiful and Sustainable Natural and Built Environment, Goal 4.2: Attract and cultivate a variety of businesses; and Goal 4.3: Grow and retain viable businesses.

Community Engagement:

In addition to the expansive community engagement the consultant and City did during the planning process (see the Public Input and other Comments Received section of the Public hearing Staff Report), Planning Commission held a Public Hearing on January 12, 2021. Seven

members of the community spoke in support of the document and incorporating it into the City Comprehensive Plan.

Budgetary Impact:

This has no impact on the General Fund.

Recommendation:

The Planning Commission took the following action:

Mr. Solla-Yates moved to approve the attached resolution with amendments to amend the City's 2013 Comprehensive Plan to include the Cherry Avenue Small Area Plan, dated December 2020.

1. Page 67 should be updated to reflect the need to address affordable housing and prevent displacement in rezoning,
2. Correct data analyses of existing conditions on page 60, as well as textual references on page 34, 41, 60. Bring any references up to date as best as possible.
3. Add in data information for renovations and teardown generally between 2010 and 2020.

Mr. Lahendro seconded the motion

Mr. Lahendro, Yes
Mr. Solla-Yates, Yes
Ms. Dowell, Yes
Mr. Mitchell, Yes
Mr. Stolzenberg, Yes
Ms. Russell, Yes
Mr. Heaton, Yes

The motion passed 7 – 0 to recommend to amend the City's 2013 Comprehensive Plan to include the Cherry Avenue Small Area Plan dated December 2020 with amendments.

Alternatives:

The City Council has the following alternative actions:

1. by motion, vote to approve the attached resolution;
2. by motion, request changes to the attached resolution, and then approve it in accordance with the amended resolution;
3. by motion, defer action, or
4. by motion, deny the proposed Comprehensive Plan Amendment.

Attachments:

1. Proposed City Council Resolution
2. Certified Planning Commission Resolution
3. Link to Planning Commission/Council Public Hearing Documents:
<https://charlottesvilleva.civicclerk.com/Web/Player.aspx?id=413&key=-1&mod=-1&mk=-1&nov=0>
4. Direct Link to the Project Website: <https://tjpd.org/reports-archive/cherry-avenue-small-area-plan/>

**RESOLUTION
TO APPROVE AN AMENDMENT OF THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN FOR THE CITY
OF CHARLOTTESVILLE (2013) TO INCLUDE THE CHERRY AVENUE SMALL
AREA PLAN**

WHEREAS, on January 12, 2021, after notice was given as required by law, the Charlottesville Planning Commission and Charlottesville City Council conducted a joint public hearing on a proposed amendment to the 2013 Comprehensive Plan for the City of Charlottesville (“Comprehensive Plan”), to include the contents of the proposed Cherry Avenue Small Area Plan; and

WHEREAS, on January 12, 2021, the Planning Commission adopted a resolution recommending approval by the City Council of the Comprehensive Plan Amendment, and certifying a copy of the Comprehensive Plan Amendment to Council for its consideration; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED that the Charlottesville City Council hereby approves and adopts the Cherry Avenue Small Area Plan certified to this Council by the Charlottesville Planning Commission (February 2021) as an amendment to the City’s Comprehensive Plan.

**RESOLUTION
OF THE CHARLOTTESVILLE PLANNING COMMISSION
RECOMMENDING ADOPTION OF THE CHERRY AVENUE SMALL
AREA PLAN**

WHEREAS, on January 12, 2021 this Planning Commission and City Council jointly held a public hearing on the Cherry Avenue Small Area Plan proposed as an amendment of the City's Comprehensive Plan, after notice given as required by law,

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that this Planning Commission hereby recommends to the City Council that it should approve the Cherry Avenue Small Area Plan dated December 2020 as an amendment to the City's Comprehensive Plan. A copy of the Cherry Avenue Small Area Plan recommended by the Commission is attached to this Resolution and is hereby certified to the City Council for its consideration in accordance with City Code Section 34-27 (b).

Adopted by the Charlottesville Planning Commission, the 12th day of January 2021.

Attest: _____


Secretary, Charlottesville Planning Commission

Attachment: Cherry Avenue Small Area Plan (**Link:**
<https://tjpd.org/reports-archive/cherry-avenue-small-area-plan/>)