

Minutes

**PLANNING COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING  
October 13, 2020 – 5:30 P.M.  
Virtual Meeting**

**I. COMMISSION PRE-MEETING (Agenda discussion(s))**

***Beginning:*** 5:00 PM

***Location:*** Virtual/Electronic

**Members Present:** Commissioner Solla-Yates, Chairman Mitchell, Commissioner Stolzenberg, Commissioner Russell, Commissioner Heaton, Commissioner Lahendro, Commissioner Dowell, Commissioner Palmer

**Staff Present:** Patrick Cory, Missy Creasy, Joe Rice, Alex Ikefuna, Lisa Robertson, Matt Alfele, Letitia Shelton, Paul Oberdorfer

Chair Mitchell called the meeting to order at 5:00pm and began review of the agenda. Ms. Creasy clarified there are no consent agenda items and outlined the status of the minutes. Chair Mitchell asked staff for feedback on the best information to provide in reference to the Grove Street work session. It was asked if Valley Road would go under the railroad. Mr. Alfele noted that is potential for the long term but there is no funding at this time. It is outlined in the Bike Ped plan so no clarity as to if it would include vehicles. Commissioner Stolzenberg asked if the tunnel is in the Brandon plan and might UVA fund. Mr. Alfele noted that there had been discussion. Commissioner Russell noted that the applicant cited the Cherry Avenue plan in the materials and this site is not near that plan. Commissioner Dowell noted concern about the narrowness of Grove Avenue.

Ms. Creasy provided an overview of the family day home application.

Commissioner Stolzenberg raised concerns about the website. He wanted to make sure that links to the comp plan are transferred to the City. He also noted that the PDF's are not indexed on the city website by Google so items are hard to find.

**II. COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING – Meeting called to order at 5:30 PM by the Chairman**

***Beginning:*** 5:30 PM

***Location:*** Virtual/Electronic

**A. COMMISSIONER'S REPORT**

**Commissioner Russell** – I am currently the Assistant Director of Facilities and Planning at Monticello. I am from the eastern shore of Maryland. I lived in New Orleans for several years, lived in this area for ten years, and have lived in Charlottesville for eight years. I recently completed a renovation of a 101 year old house in Belmont. My educational background is in historic preservation from Mary Washington. In 2013, I graduated from the Urban Environmental Planning Program at UVA. I serve on several boards that are dedicated to housing. For two years, I have been a big sister an amazing 12 year old girl, who is in the county school system. I am really looking forward to shaping a more equitable community that offers opportunities for all residents. As a planner, we have

a duty to recognize that land use, historic preservation, and building practices have had negative impacts, especially on people of color. I do strongly believe in the power of community engagement and the duty of elected and appointed officials to act in the best interests of the community. I come from a preservationist background. I believe in the power of place, stories, and the value of the built environment. We don't have to think in Jeffersonian being the only historic architecture that has merit. Older housing stock is part of the affordability and sustainability conversation. I am looking forward to having those conversations in regards to the Comprehensive Plan update. I am excited to work with my fellow commissioners, council, staff, developers, and this community to see Charlottesville live up to its full potential.

**Commissioner Stolzenberg** – I had a few meetings in the past month. One was my first meeting with the TJPDC where we discussed a few things. The big one is the COVID rental relief program. They received another round of funding from the state. More people can get rental relief. If you need rental relief, go to their website. We got some interesting stats on applications coming in. Applications coming in from the city are also getting funds from other programs. It has been a fairly successful program so far. PLACE is also continuing to meet to agonize over its future. We had a meeting last Thursday to see what the future of PLACE is after some resignations of the chair and vice-chair. Everyone came to the realization that with the end of several major projects, it has been a little bit visionless recently. We are trying to come up with some ways the committee can be helpful as a brain trust of talented individuals, who work in the architecture industry to help the city achieve its goals.

**Commissioner Solla-Yates** – The Cville Plans Together discussed land use ideas and housing ideas including some that you will see later tonight.

**Commissioner Lahendro** – The Board of Architectural Review met on September 15<sup>th</sup>. We had four Certificate of Appropriateness applications granted. Two were deferred after we requested more information. We had two preliminary discussions on future projects. We had a follow up to a very unusual house on Hartmans Mill Road to inspect an out building being proposed for demolition. The house has a long and checkered history. The Tree Commission met September 23<sup>rd</sup>. We spent most of the time reviewing metrics for the past three fiscal years. Those metrics were telling us that we have missed our annual goal of planting 200 trees a year. We have only planted about 110 on average. At the same time, the city has removed a little over 100 trees. We are going nowhere fast. Over the ten year period ending in 2014, we have lost 5% canopy from 50% to 45% tree canopy. That 5% equates to about 420 acres of trees. Looking at neighborhoods, we identified Starr Hill and 10<sup>th</sup> and Page as neighborhoods that have less than 20% tree canopy, which is a critical high stress level of lack of tree canopy. 40% is healthy. It has repercussions, not only on health, but also economic repercussions. The health deficits are severe.

**Commissioner Dowell** – On October 1<sup>st</sup>, the CDBG application process opened up. If anybody is interested in applying for those funds, please go to the city website. The application is available. On October 22<sup>nd</sup>, we have our annual CIP Committee meeting from 1 PM to 3 PM that I will be attending. That is for the school board. I will be attending the Ridge Street Task Force meeting on October 28<sup>th</sup> from 4 PM to 5 PM.

**Commissioner Heaton** – I attended the citizens transportation advisory committee for the Thomas Jefferson Transportation District. They reviewed smart scale funding applications that they are

collaborating regionally with VDOT and hoping the city becomes a recipient of some of those funds. There a lot of discussion over how COVID has affected streetscapes with restaurants encroaching on previously non-pedestrian areas. There were no actions taken. It doesn't look like that is going to end anytime soon. There were no actions taken that effect the city directly.

## **B. UNIVERSITY REPORT**

**Commissioner Palmer** – There was a pretty good collaboration between facilities management with the University and the city facilities management to provide some additional COVID-19 social distancing signage on The Corner. I wanted to thank the city for the help with getting that done. We have been on hold with our update to The Grounds Plan. It was last done in 2008. We are starting to get that moving again. We have continued the comment-interaction with the Emmet Street Smart Scale team and the Fontaine Avenue Smart Scale team. The next Board of Visitors meeting is in December.

## **C. CHAIR'S REPORT**

**Chairman Mitchell** – The Parks and Recreation hasn't met in months. Last week at the Virginia Recreation and Parks Conference, we got a major award. The award was for the best new facility. It was for the skate park. I want to thank the entire parks and recreation team for the work that they did to get this award. On September 15<sup>th</sup>, the budget staff hosted a meeting. That meeting was attended by councilors Snook and Magill. We learned that there is about \$129 million that we are looking to spend on capital improvements during 2022 to 2027. We are looking at allocating about \$50 million of that \$120 million to the school system. The rest of the money will be used to work down the backflow of existing things that have already been approved by Council. The thinking is that we will not have any new projects until we get a chance to work down our backlog. There was a second meeting with other members of Council. At that meeting, the thinking is working down the existing backlog of projects. In the COVID-19 environment, we want to be very cautious about adding new things until we get our hands on what is going on with that. We have \$80 million of road projects in the backlog that we need to work down.

## **D. DEPARTMENT OF NDS**

**Ms. Creasy** – The CIP is going to be a bit different this year. We have a shortened scoping. The main idea is to focus on the items that were approved in last year's CIP and only make small adjustments as needed to that. Given that it took a little bit longer to get to this point, the hearing for the CIP this year will be in December. Budget staff provide the CIP overview at the hearing rather than a work session. We will have a brief session with Commission Russell to bring her up to speed on the basics of the CIP. The budget staff will give the presentation in December. It appears that things are going to look very similar to what they looked like last year from a CIP standpoint. It will be trying to get a handle on the things that we have now. On November 10<sup>th</sup>, we are going to have a joint work session with City Council on our regular day. We have one public hearing for that meeting. We anticipate the rest of the meeting to be dedicated to a joint public hearing with our consultants on the Housing Plan. The Housing Plan of the C'ville Plans Together Project has a good draft. That should be out for public

consumption in the next week or so. At that point in time, they are going to be reaching out to different groups and taking them through the draft and receiving comments. One of those opportunities will be on November 10<sup>th</sup> with the Planning Commission and City Council to get some feedback with the goal of taking the Housing Plan to Council later this year for endorsement. The next steps are making sure the chapters, goals, and objectives that come through that will speak to that next document. There will be some timeframes provided on how that is going to work. The consultants will talk about that a little bit tonight. We do have a lot of behind the scenes things going on. Chairman Mitchell and I met with representatives from the county. We are talking through some potential for conversations from a joint standpoint. We will let you know how that is coming together. We have site plan conferences virtually. A number of those have been scheduled. There are a lot of mailings and virtual opportunities to participate in that process that are going on. We are back up to speed on different applications. Everything in the office is moving forward. We anticipate that at the first of the year, we will start to have more robust agendas.

#### **E. MATTERS TO BE PRESENTED BY THE PUBLIC NOT ON THE FORMAL AGENDA**

No Comments from the Public

**The meeting was recessed by the Chairman until 6:00 PM for the one public hearing.**

#### **III. JOINT MEETING OF COMMISSION AND COUNCIL**

**The Planning Commission was called back to order at 6:00 PM with a quorum from City Council.**

**Councilor Hill called the City Council to order for the one public hearing.**

*Beginning:* 6:00 PM

*Continuing:* Until all public hearings are complete

*Format:* (i) Staff Report, (ii) Applicant, (iii) Hearing, (iv) Discussion and Motion

1. **ZT20-10-02**– (Family Day Home) A proposed amendment to the text of Chapter 34 (Zoning Ordinance) of the City of Charlottesville, 1990, as amended, to provide updates to family day home uses to include Section 34-420, 34-480, and 34-796 Use Matrixes to allow family day home (1-4 children) as a by-right use in all zoning districts which allow residential use, to allow family day home (5-12 children) as a provisional use in all districts which allow for residential use, to update Section 34-1200: Definitions under “Family day home” to confirm a lawfully established residential use prior to implementing a family day home and under “Occupancy, residential” to clarify that the family day home (1-4 children) use is considered residential occupancy, and to add a Section to Article IX. Generally Applicable Regulations, Division 9. Standards for Provisional Use to provide regulations for family day home (5-12 children) by provisional use. The purpose of the amendments is to provide updates to family day home use which comply with current State code requirements and provide allowances for provisional use permit requirements for Family day home (5-12 children). A copy of the proposed zoning text amendment is available for public inspection on line at <https://www.charlottesville.gov/268/Zoning>. Persons interested in this application may contact Assistant Director Missy Creasy by email [creasym@charlottesville.org](mailto:creasym@charlottesville.org)

**i. Staff Report**

**Missy. Creasy, Assistant Director of NDS** – This is a proposed zoning text amendment to provide updates to the use matrices, definitions and add a new section to the zoning ordinance to provide revisions for the Family day home use. The Commission brought this forward as an item for us to work through and review. We brought a draft to the Planning Commission in August. We have made some revisions based on some of the comments and discussion that was held at that point in time. I do want to give an overview of the changes that are being proposed for this code. In addition, I am a resource for this. Our Zoning Administrator, Read Brodhead is on the call and will be able to assist with questions. He and the Assistant Zoning Administrator spent a lot of time putting together information on this. They spend their time enforcing these things. There are a number of updates to the matrices that would take place. Updates to the Use Matrixes to allow family day home (1-4 children) as a by-right use in all zoning districts which allow residential occupancy and to allow family day home (5-12 children) as a provisional use in all other districts which allow for residential occupancy. These numbers are based on the state legislation changes that occurred. It will allow for some clarity for moving forward. Update Section 34-1200: Definitions under “family day home” to confirm that the residential use must be lawfully established prior to an allowance for the family day home use. That makes it clear that you have to be a resident. Update Section 34-1200: Definitions under “Occupancy, residential” to clarify that the family day home (1-4 children) use is considered residential occupancy. We added a section that is specific to the Provisional Use Section that relates directly to Family Day Home. It has a number of provisions that one would have to adhere to in order to do that. A Provisional Use Permit means that if you can adhere to all of the code regulations that are laid out, you fill out an application, you turn it in, it is analyzed and you can move forward with your use. Right now in order to do this for the 5 to 12 range, you have to go through a Special Use Permit process. It is costly and requires a lot of time. There was a thought of something that is a little more straightforward that notes what the rules are and if you can adhere to the rules, then you can move forward. There are also state licensure requirements for family day homes that are 5 to 12. There are a number of things that someone is already having to do in order to become a provider. There are a number of public input opportunities as part of this process also. There is still a public process that is involved to allow the neighbors to know what is being requested to happen. One of the big things that was a discussion point for you in August was working out hours of operation. This is an additional item in a neighborhood and trying to be conscious of allowing it as well as having some parameters for the community were pretty important. We started the meeting in August with the boundaries that we have for our home occupation for some of our other items. Through discussion with the Commission, item 3 was updated (No clients or employees shall be allowed to visit the property on which a family day home is conducted earlier than 6 AM or later than 11 PM. The family day home may operate up to 12 hours within each 24 hour period.) It allows for a flexible timeframe. This is a use that is in addition to your standard residential use.

**Commissioner Stolzenberg** – Some places had 5 to 12 child day home as by right before. Under this change, they will change to provisional use permits. I get that provisional use is not a very high burden. What was the driver behind adding that additional step in the districts?

**Ms. Creasy** – It was for consistency. Since the numbers change from our current codes. Our current codes has 1 to 5 and then 6 to 12. It is not in line with where the state is. In the process of aligning those numbers, it made sense to do that. It wouldn't be an onerous burden on someone. They are having to do many more things in order to get their state licensure. It will just be one more opportunity, mainly for tracking and understanding where these locations may be. We had a conversation about how to handle that. That was the consistency part. It's a lot less confusing.

**Councilor Snook** – When I had childcare, one of the big problems was how someone, who needed extended hours would cope. The discussion often dealt with people, who worked night shifts and needed someplace to keep their kids all night. Under this scheme, it is not going to be permitted in either 1 to 4 or 5 to 12. Is that still a significant need in the community? Are we meeting it successfully? Should we be doing something to make it easier for people with that need to get useful childcare?

**Ms. Creasy** – We spent quite a bit of time talking about that as well. That was part of the discussion with the commissioners in August concerning multiple shifts that individuals might have and trying to accommodate that as well as trying to account that this is an additional use in a residential area, and trying to buffer between the two of those things. The 1 to 4 is allowable by right. Anybody can do that. There is no time restrictions on that. If you have something that is very small and you have the need for an overnight opportunity, that wouldn't be something we would be regulating at all. Once you start getting into having 5 to 12 children, you have additional impacts that are coming into the neighborhoods. Having a consistent timeframe when those things may be occurring would be important.

**Councilor Snook** – What are the rules that would apply to a child center? Are they subject to hourly requirements and limitations like this?

**Ms. Creasy** – Some of the daycare centers in the city are by Special Use Permit. They have time limitations that are built into the Special Use Permits. Some are older and have been there a long time and may not have those same limitations. It would be a completely different category than the family day home use, which is focused on being compatible with residential use.

**Councilor Snook** – I am curious how that need is being met and by whom is it being met?

**Ms. Creasy** – Antidotally, UVA has a program that does work with people, who are on that night shift from a daycare standpoint. There are smaller opportunities within the community. We haven't been made aware of a contingency of people concerning that need. It is something that could be revisited at another time if we find that there is a significant need for that.

**Commissioner Dowell** – That was one of the questions and concerns that I had when we talked about this last time: the hours of operation for those people, who are essential workers, who don't get off until 11:00 or are working the overnight shift. Since it is a Special Use Permit, if a care provider was finding they needed to be able to provide those hours to their clients, is that not something that they could come back to the city and request?

**Ms. Creasy** – If this moves forward by provisional use permit, they would be within the parameters of what the code gives. The code provides for 5 to 12 children. It would provide for any 12 hours that they chose between 6 AM and 11 PM timeframes. They would have some flexibility. The person, who is doing the family day home, would provide us with what their plan for how they would work through that. If they decide that isn't what is working, they can give us a new plan. This is mainly just trying to understand where these locations are. They are also going to be regulated by the state. The 5 to 12 children day home is regulated by the state. They are going to have to go through all of the state requirements at that point in time. We spent a lot of time trying to troubleshoot all of these different types of scenarios. This is one we spent a lot of time on. We know we have a lot of people in the community that do have shifts that are different. We thought that leaving it completely open ended was not a good way to do it to start. If someone was to have daycare overnight, it would more likely be the 1 to 4 child range, which is by right. If we found that there was something significant occurring in the community where we needed to revisit that at some other point in time, we could look at it through that lens. We haven't had discussion or concerns from people specific to that. We wanted to put in a large parameter, which allowed a lot of flexibility for the providers and yet have some parameters so that they would be moving forward with a plan.

**Councilor Snook** – The definition of 'family day home' talks about serving 1 to 12 children exclusive of the providers' own children and any children, who reside in the home. Is there a similar definitional phrase that would apply to 5 to 12?

**Ms. Creasy** – That's correct. That is an added flexibility that is built into the definition.

## ii. **Public Hearing**

No Public Comments

## iii. **Discussion and Motion**

**Commissioner Solla-Yates** – What really opened my eyes on this was a New York Times article describing the issue. We already had significant childcare provision problems when things were normal and fine. Things are now harder. My hope in initiating this was to find a useful way to solve this problem. From what I see, this solves that problem.

**Motion – Commissioner Solla-Yates - I move to recommend approval of this zoning text amendment to the text of Chapter 34 (Zoning Ordinance) of the City of Charlottesville, 1990, as amended, to provide updates to family day home uses to include Section 34-420, 34-480, and 34-796 Use Matrixes to allow family day home (1-4 children) as a by-right use in all zoning districts which allow residential use, to allow family day home (5-12**

children) as a provisional use in all districts which allow for residential use, to update Section 34-1200: Definitions under “Family day home” to confirm a lawfully established residential use prior to implementing a family day home and under “Occupancy, residential” to clarify that the family day home (1-4 children) use is considered residential occupancy, and to add a Section to Article IX. Generally Applicable Regulations, Division 9. Standards for Provisional Use to provide regulations for family day home (5-12 children) by provisional use on the basis that the changes would serve the interests of public necessity, convenience, general public welfare and good zoning practice.

Motion was seconded by Commissioner Dowell. Motion passed 7-0.

#### IV. COMMISSION’S ACTION ITEMS

##### 1. Work Session – 1613 Grove Street (60 minutes)

**Matt Alfele, City Planner** – Justin Shimp, P.E. (Shimp Engineering P.C.), representing Lorven Investments, LLC (owner) is proposing to develop the properties at 1613 Grove St. Ext. (TMP 230135000), 1611 Grove St. Ext. (TMP 230133000), and 0 Grove St. Ext. (TMP 230133000) (Subject Property) outside the current by-right land use designation. The Subject Property is approximately 0.65 acres with road frontage on Valley Road Ext. and Grove Street Ext. (Grove Street Ext is a platted but unimproved right-of-way). The proposal calls for a twenty (20) unit residential development within four (4) individual buildings. The development would have eight (8) four (4) bedroom units, and twelve (12) two (2) bedroom units for a total of fifty-six (56) bedrooms. Twenty-eight (28) parking spaces would be required by code for a development at this count and the max height would not exceed forty-five (45) feet. To achieve the type of development proposed within the application materials, the applicant will need to:

- Rezone the Subject Property from R-2 family to R-3 multi-family. The city cannot impose any conditions on rezoning requests. The applicant may offer proffer conditions that they desire. At this time, no proffers have been put forward by the applicant. The applicant has put forward a development plan related to the rezoning, which is tied to the development.
- Receive a Special Use Permit to increase the density from a by right 21 DUA to 30 DUA and adjust setbacks. The city can impose restrictions on granting a SUP. These conditions should mitigate the impact for the increased density.
- Receive a Critical Slope Waiver to impact critical slopes on site. If you look on page 5 of the staff memo, you see the red shaded areas that indicate critical slopes as defined by the zoning ordinance

The applicant is currently working with the city engineering department to ensure this information on that map is correct. The applicant will give a presentation and provide you with more background information. This is very early in the process and the applicant has yet to hold the required community engagement meeting.



**Justin Shimp, Shimp Engineering** – The zoning will be R2. Across the railroad tracks are higher density zoning districts. This is one of the few undeveloped parcels left in that neighborhood. This is our site plan. The colored buildings represent the footprint that overlap the parking. We are trying to get additional green space and usable recreational space for our tenants by occupying some of that impervious area. We are proposing four “fiveplexes” missing middle housing type which is hard to find a home for. We end up with zoning districts with mixed use types. Those are 4 or 5 story apartment buildings. There is a need for this sort of housing product. We viewed this site as one we could give a try. There are some setback modifications. The main modification is that there is a 50 foot building setback from any structure in R3 to a low density residential. We are talking about heights just above the R2 by right. We are asking for a reduction of that down to 14 feet on one side. On the side towards the railroad tracks is a city right of way. It would normally have a 25 foot setback. We are looking for a 5 foot setback. That’s part of our Special Use Permit. The housing type is not different from the more traditional things that you have seen. I looked at the Stribling Avenue plan that you have already seen. There is a series of townhomes. A three unit townhome is 60 by 40 with 2400 square feet. Our building is 2200 square feet. A duplex might be 1500 square feet. We are in between those, but we house five units in place of three in a pretty similar structure size. These are some rough perspectives on these. The treatment along the stream on the front of the property - Our vision for that would be to build a retaining wall on the building side and restore the other side with some new plantings that would improve and stabilize the stream bank. The stream has a variety of old concrete boulders and other things. There is a fair amount of width on the street side to work with. These structures are trying to fit in that missing, middle frame. There is parking underneath. They are three stories. It’s a little taller than your normal Park Street large house. It’s not dissimilar in form from a large single family house. We just happen to fit in five families or individuals into the structure. Between the two buildings, we have a covered community space. There are other recreational spaces around. This gives you a perspective of the buildings behind in the cul de sac. The cross sections are the most helpful to illustrate how this fits in this location. Section A is looking from Valley Road Extended. There is such a grade drop that we cut the units into the hillside and we will lose a whole story in the retaining wall in the back. Compared to the units behind, we sit 20 feet lower in grade. We don’t have any overshadowing effects, which could be the case of a different plot. We’re talking about 40 feet versus a 35 foot normal maximum height. It’s not a big difference but they are larger. We recognize that’s a potential impact. We think that this site lends itself very well. There is a traditional duplex to the right. It’s a decent distance away. It also sits up on the hill. That gives you some idea of the scale of that structure. We would imagine building a wall on one side at the edge of the stream bank. We would widen out the stream bank and stabilize the other side. If you look at the staff report, staff had a few questions. One of the questions was about the density and the form. I have grown to really dislike density. It has been a tool used for a lot of ‘evil’ purposes at times over the history of zoning. We have never really changed the buildable footprint of a site based on density. The lower the density, the more money people have to live there. When I look at something like this, it is above the comprehensive plan number. That’s a number. Does the form and purpose fit with what the comprehensive plan is trying to get at? That is housing for a broad range of people in the community. I think this does that. Another question was the environmental impacts. As illustrated from the pictures, the stream will come out as a far better development than what is there now. I am interested in your opinions as we move forward with this.

**Chairman Mitchell** – Is the way they organize the entrances going to work and meet the requirements?

**Mr. Alfele** – In what regards? As far as width or number of entrances?

**Chairman Mitchell** – All of the above. The way they have managed the entrances and exits.

**Mr. Alfele** – That would fall within the code.

**Commissioner Dowell** – You know that my main concern is where is the affordability of this project? Who are you marketing this to for this project?

**Mr. Shimp** – We haven't gone through what price point each unit is at. The idea is to provide some variety. I think this would be a one or two bedroom. It is designed for people working. There are four bedrooms that are more student oriented. I do think that there will be mix in this building. There is certainly opportunity for other people to be housed in the area. We haven't pinned down a proffer or an affordability component yet. We understand that will be a discussion moving forward. We have not gotten to a set committed level on that at this moment.

**Commissioner Dowell** – I do have concern knowing that we have a housing crisis and you are about to ask for a Special Use Permit for student housing. That causes me a little pain. UVA has the structure for their residents. As a city, we should be focusing on housing the people of the city and not necessarily providing new housing for students that is off grounds.

**Commissioner Russell** – One thing that stuck out to me was that you referenced the Cherry Avenue Small Area Plan. That was a document developed reflecting the plan requesting the vision of those in the Cherry Avenue vicinity. That study focused on the Cherry Avenue Corridor. There were some items that you pulled from that report around affordability, elements of the comprehensive plan that are not really relevant to that area of the Cherry Avenue Master Plan. That was tertiary to that report. If we were to look into the Cherry Avenue Area Plan, you will see the residents commenting on their desire that new development be in keeping with the existing development patterns. Building heights should be limited. Setbacks should be respected. Density should be maintained. It doesn't talk about a desire for UVA student housing.

**Mr. Shimp** – We don't have an objection to really limiting four bedrooms and increasing our density. It will be a higher number and the exact same number of bedrooms. That's not at all objectionable to us. Because there is still inadequate infrastructure for students, they do trickle out to a lot of the neighborhoods. It takes away housing from others. The University will hopefully provide adequate housing for all of the students. Until that happens, it is always going to be an issue. If our design focus should be more towards families and non-students, that's not an objection to us. I understand the small area plan didn't really address this area. There really is a desire for people to form a development within their neighborhood. What we are trying to do here is push that boundary to get some more density and more housing supply

in areas where it works without building up an 8 story building where it overshadows a neighborhood. If the takeaway is pushing away from student housing design, that's something that we can take to heart.

**Commissioner Russell** – In that site plan, I was curious if it was unusual design. I have not seen that overhang parking strategy. Is there any local precedence for that? I am curious about aesthetic implication of that.

**Mr. Shimp** – I think there probably are a fair number of structures where that happened. You don't see it as much. I have done a cut section showing that. I do think a few small, more student oriented places that have parking underneath it. It is becoming more normal. When you get into the densities, you want to go that way if you want to preserve some green space around the lot.

**Commissioner Heaton** – Did you call it 'tuck under' parking?

**Mr. Shimp** – Yeah. That is what I refer to it as since you pull under the edge of the building in your car.

**Commissioner Heaton** – You see lot of that in the tidewater and beachy areas where the houses are elevated. I was also curious about that. I don't see a lot of that in this area.

**Commissioner Stolzenberg** – Lambeth Lane is a great example of that over at Kappa Kappa Gamma redevelopment that we looked at a couple of months ago.

**Mr. Shimp** – To be clear, there are units on the first floor. This whole building is not parking underneath. There are first floor units with a small piece where you park.

**Commissioner Stolzenberg** – To be honest, I am surprised that you are even thinking about this as student housing. Geographically, it's not that far. Unless there is that pedestrian connection underneath the railroad, it is extremely far. When you say student housing, do you mean undergrad? Do you mean grad students? Are you banking on that pedestrian tunnel happening?

**Mr. Shimp** – That will be great to see. I don't know if that is going to happen immediately. You will probably see more grad students. We are always encouraged to do four bedroom units in the way that the code is written. We're happy to provide more kitchens to people and get away from that 'shared space.' The zoning code works against you. I am not opposed to making that shift if people feel that's more appropriate.

**Commissioner Stolzenberg** – There is a fixed amount of students. We know how many students there are going to be. If there are enough beds near UVA, they will gravitate towards those and they won't spill out. An apartment will become a regular housing apartment. If we don't let there be enough beds near UVA, they will spill out and take up more space. They will either take up existing homes or they will take up new ones. I don't view a 4 bedroom as being student housing. Almost every young renter is going to find roommates and find a 3 or 4

bedroom and split the cost of it. I see that as appealing to people in their 20s as it does to a student. This seems relatively far in terms of travel. If there is a tunnel, it becomes a prime spot.

I notice that there are some new duplexes across the street that appear to be 3 stories. Do we know what the dimensions of those are? Massing wise, I am not too concerned about this.

**Commissioner Lahendro** – One of the first things that I started to pay attention to was the massing and the site development and its context to the neighborhood. Mr. Shimp has done a very good job in breaking up the building into four pieces that have a cohesiveness to them. Because they sit in this depression, the height isn't as noticeable as it would be if it was on the top of a hill. It responds well to the site and the context and the size of the buildings. I am pleased with that part. This doesn't have anything to do with parking and 4 bedroom units. There are lots of other cars on that street. The duplexes seem to have way more than 2 cars associated with them. It looks like a very busy street. I am just reacting to the visuals of the building itself.

**Commissioner Solla-Yates** – This is such a strange site. It's either the edge of Fifeville or it is the connection between UVA and Fifeville. Those tell very different stories on transportation, cars, traffic, and how many units are appropriate. Without that tunnel, I can see an argument for it. It's strange because it's at the end of the street. With that tunnel, it may even be too small. I am interested to hear your thoughts on connections between UVA and Fifeville.

**Mr. Shimp** – One of the things that we have looked at is that there is no right of way for Groves Street going back towards Fifeville. It goes past our property. I believe it was terminated at some point between us and the next street. You can walk down Ninth Street and then up to the hospital. We originally looked at that route. That could be a trail that we could contribute to our build to get people in that direction. I am not sure that is going to be possible with right of ways taken out. We would have to investigate that a little more. It's going to be people biking or going out to the bus if they want to use an alternate route of transportation. I think that the bus stop is at the end of the street. There are some alternate modes of transportation. We don't have a tunnel. We don't have the direct pedestrian connections that we would like. We are still exploring that idea of connection along the edge of the railroad tracks down to Groves. That would get you a pretty decent connection to Fifeville.

**Commissioner Heaton** – I agree with the whole approximation to transportation and the presumption that students are going to be the primary target for this.

**Commissioner Palmer** – It's good to see the opening up of that rock creek drainage way. We have done a lot upstream from there to provide storage and quality improvements to the water that we put into that watershed through our work. It's great to see that continued improvement. There is a lot you can do with the stream channel meander versus punch bowls. There is a lot of engineering within the waterway that is beneficial. The density is fine. I don't know what to say with regards to student versus non-student use of this eventual development. I don't know if a lot of students currently live in that neighborhood. They are probably looking for lower cost of housing that they can get elsewhere. I think it's more realistic to think of it as

something for young professionals, grad students, or a small family that might be working at UVA. The thing that did come up that I need to mention is the tunnel, which is on the bike and pedestrian plan. When we took over control of Branden Avenue and redeveloped that, one of the city requests was that we look at and do study of the feasibility of the location for a tunnel like that. There is a lot of topography differences along that stretch. We did that in coordination with the city. Through our work with that, we came up with a recommendation that the best place for that tunnel would be connecting Monroe to the north with Patton Street. It's a little to the east of where we are looking at here. The reason for that was that the type of tunnel that you build could be a lot cheaper than what you would have to do at the Valley Road Extended location. It would be a lot shorter potentially. It connects better with the health system to do it a little to the east. Density wise, I think that it's good.

**Chairman Mitchell** – The only thing that I would add is that I would let the tunnel factor in my thinking. It's in our vision, not in our budget. Getting the right of way easement for the railroad is going to be a nightmare. There are a number of things that I like about this. I like what you are doing to protect Rock Creek. Getting rid of the invasive vegetation would be a big boon for that neighborhood. No problem with the height. I think the way landscape sits and the massing is not a problem. I like that you are adding the city's housing supply. This does that. Hopefully, by adding to the housing supply, we begin to bring down the prices elsewhere in the city. The one thing that does concern me is the very narrow street and adding more traffic in that area is going to be problematic. That's something you will need to think about as you move forward with this.

**Commissioner Stolzenberg** – You talked about punching from Groves Street Extended to regular Groves Street. Did you say that there was a right of way?

**Mr. Shimp** – There was a right of way. Our property fronts on the residue of it. As I chased it down to the east, it looks like the city abandoned a piece of it. I have to go on the railroad parcel. We would like to make that and I will keep chasing it down. My hunch is we are going to run into a wall with someone's private property. They may not want a trail back there.

**Commissioner Stolzenberg** – Is the only option to go through the railroad or potentially talking to the 2 or 3 homeowners to see if they will let the back of their yards be a trail?

**Mr. Shimp** – There's a number of homeowners. There is still an option to do that. One house is pretty close to the back. Depending on who is in there, they might not want a trail twenty feet off the back of their house. It's a possibility, but we are relying on people to cooperate. It doesn't mean that it can't be attempted.

**Commissioner Stolzenberg** – Is there an informal pedestrian way to get across the railroad tracks?

**Mr. Shimp** – I used to walk along the tracks to Shamrock. I would take a little shortcut.

**Councilor Snook** – I was talking with some people, who own a lot of apartments that cater specifically to students. They're very concerned that the University's expressed desire to house

more students on Grounds is going to put a real damper on their business to the extent that they are likening it to Longwood. Longwood said that they would housing students on campus and those that own apartments in Farmville went ‘belly up.’ Their business model was so oriented towards students. Without knowing what the future is going to hold, you may not want to get too locked into a particular design that is going to have to cause you a lot of problems if you decided you wanted to make it more hospitable towards non-students. With regards to the tunnel, I have talked to a number of people, who live over in that area. Their big problem right now is that the people doing all of the construction work at the University, park in their neighborhood. They go over the railroad tracks. If you are going to put a tunnel through there, it’s not going to be universally welcomed. There are going to be a lot of people, who are going to decide that they can park in that area where there is no permitted parking and park all day. The people, who live there, can’t park there. There are some challenges there that Council and the Planning Commission are going to have to address no matter how we go. I say it to the councilors and Planning Commission. That’s a neighborhood that is really having a lot of pressure from people, who work at UVA, and find that’s the only place they can park for free. It’s causing a lot of problems in that neighborhood.

**Councilor Payne** – The idea, in concept, of preserving that creek is a very positive thing. I am curious to see a lot more details. From what I have seen, I am not too worried about the height or massing. This missing middle is good and is an interesting way to get there. I do understand the concerns, who will be occupying this development and a question of whether it is meeting the biggest needs. Our zoning code certainly encourages development that’s not meeting those needs. I attended some of the Cherry Avenue Small Area Plan meetings. Some of the conversations were whether these would be occupied by students versus young professionals. In some of those conversations, it’s not just UVA students, but young professionals moving into neighborhoods, who are displacing residents, who have lived in the neighborhood for years, and not being able to live there anymore. In thinking about housing needs, there is still that tension that exists with young professionals and not UVA students thinking about income level, the type of housing they are going to live in, and the type of housing that families need and occupy versus someone in their 20s getting ready to make \$50,000/\$60,000 a year. I also know that was part of the conversation in some of those meetings.

**Commissioner Russell** – Mr. Shimp, you are someone, who thinks creatively. I appreciate that. I appreciate the thought that you gave to this site and the restoration of Rock Creek. I am a little perplexed as to why we aren’t talking about affordability in every single development that comes before us. I don’t think this is what we feel. It sounds like we are saying “Let’s have the development happen and let the market forces figure out, who is going to live there.” What we are saying is that there is a housing problem and an affordability problem. How do we incentivize developers to help us with that? We have to think creatively too. I would think that since Mr. Shimp is asking for a Special Use Permit as it relates to the density. We should really be thinking about how we can meet the charge of adding affordability.

In regards to the street, I think it’s important to know that while there are sidewalks proposed on the development proposal there are no sidewalks on the rest of that street. It would be a sidewalk to nowhere. We could maybe find out a little more about what, if any long term, street improvements are planned in that area.

**Mr. Shimp** – Your description of how the housing market works is quite accurate for around here. Housing is built. Depending on the flow of UVA students, new jobs, or what else may be occurring, people come and go into those as the market decides. In all of my discussions around other projects that I have done, affordability is definitely part of it. I would be happy to see the University house everyone. It would mean a lot of investor developer class people would lose some money in the immediate future. It would provide a much better housing for the community if that dynamic was changed. To have affordable housing, you have to have help with a land trust or a Virginia housing type group that can subsidize that difference. The banks are looking for you to maximize profit on your project. When going that route, it's hard to get something built and approved that doesn't. It's a fault of the system. There are ways around it. We do try to think about those things. That's an important consideration here. We will definitely think about how we address that moving forward.

**Commissioner Palmer** – The Groves Street Extended right of way is apparently there. It's cut off on one end. I am wondering if there has been thought about how that right of way might pair up with this project in a way that the city could get something like more affordability. Mr. Shimp could get something that he would like such as more units.

**Commissioner Stolzenberg** – That's a really good point, especially if there is no way to connect it to anywhere. Let me push back a little bit on the Virginia housing loans. As I understand them, those tend to be for 80% AMI projects. We are looking for affordability at deeper income levels. We all think about implicitly. We all expect you, Mr. Shimp, to come in with a concrete proposal with affordability.

**Councilor Payne** – I think it highlights the fact that at these deeper affordability levels, the market is not going to provide it. The free market is not capable of providing it and it won't provide it. The only way we will get there is with partnerships with nonprofits in public subsidy and land trust model as well. That permeates everything. It is a challenge that we have to rise to and go far beyond thinking about just what the market dynamics are. The market is going to be part of the solution as well with greater density. It's not going to get us that deeper affordability level.

**Commissioner Dowell** – I am not saying that we have to always dive deep into the 0% to 30%. I am saying that as someone, who is serious about affordable housing, I want to see housing available to the people, who serve the community. Our teachers need to be in the neighborhoods. Our firefighters and police officers need to be in the city and not in the outlying counties. Sometimes, it is not about 10%, 20%, or 30 % AMI. If you are building at 80% AMI, I do not feel comfortable approving that Special Use Permit.

**Mr. Shimp** – Virginia housing does have 50% AMI programs. It is out there and it is a good program. It is very difficult to get into those lower incomes. I would love to see affordable housing projects built that way. It can't get built if they don't have some component marketability and profit. That's the world we live in. We will certainly try to do what we can in terms of affordability. I did not hear any strong objection to scale or density. It sounds like I

need to focus on what this is geared towards and how we make that the most successful it can be.

**Chairman Mitchell** – The only thing that you may be missing is working with the neighborhood density and what the traffic patterns are going to look like. There are no sidewalks in that neighborhood beyond what your development is going to look like. I am certain that you are going to get some feedback from the neighborhood regarding what it is going to do with traffic and safety issues.

**Commissioner Lahendro** – If those four bedroom units are set up as the normal prototype with each bedroom having its own bathroom, that's going to be students or professionals. That's not going to be a family. Doing more two bedrooms provides the opportunity of families getting those units. The four bedrooms are going to be students, and maybe young professionals. I would guarantee all four bedrooms will have somebody that has to have a car.

**Commissioner Stolzenberg** – I do have to question that. I would think that most families would want more than two bedrooms if they have kids.

**Chairman Mitchell** – The bathroom configuration will influence that quite a bit too. You don't want a master bedroom in every room if you want to encourage a family.

**Commissioner Lahendro** – It depends on how it is designed. From what I have seen, the individual bedrooms will have their own bathrooms.

**The Chairman recessed the meeting for 5 minutes.**

## 2. Cville Plans Together – (90 minutes)

**Ms. Creasy** – We have another opportunity to talk with our consultants from the Charlottesville Plans Together project. There a lot of exciting things going on. We have had lots of discussions working with the consultant on our end. We have a number of steps that are coming up. You will see how the schedule is moving along as part of this discussion. We are getting into 'high speed' on this. We definitely want people to be as engaged as you can be. There will be some opportunity for gaining feedback. All of this is going to continue to be building over the next couple of months.

**Jennifer Koch, Cville Plans Together** – On the agenda, we included links to meeting materials and engagement summaries that we might reference throughout our discussion today. They are there for people to look through. We also include throughout the presentation references where people can find the slides for tonight. They are on our website. The key items that we wanted to discuss with you are going through some project updates/draft schedule updates. We are going to go on to some proposed guiding principles/themes for the comprehensive plan and some proposed initial revisions to the vision statements that lead off each of the chapters of the plan. We know that many of you were really involved in those discussions in 2017 and 2018. We started with those drafts where they are available. I wanted to make sure that we are walking through those updates with you so



you can plan anything for us. We want to make sure that we didn't cut out anything. That's a big focus of the discussion.

When we met in August, we walked through some draft findings from our May and June engagement activities. Since then, we have finalized the engagement summary and sent out a notice to our email list and others about that. The summary form and the survey data are posted on the website. We have been working on refining the draft housing recommendations and potential comprehensive plan revisions in anticipation of the next community engagement checkpoint. We will be discussing all of that in more detail. We held two steering committee discussions on August 24<sup>th</sup>. Our meeting focused on initial discussions about potential comprehensive plan revisions. On September 10<sup>th</sup>, we had a work session where we used Zoom breakout rooms and broke down the draft housing recommendations in small groups with the steering committee. Their input from that meeting has been taken forward and incorporated into the draft housing plan. We are just undergoing some staff review of that right now. That will be ready to go out for public comment in the coming weeks.

The other thing that we wanted to mention was some proposed updates to the schedule. During the first community input stage, it was meant to kick off earlier than it did. We had to delay it due to COVID. We also ended up extending that original community point from that delayed point because we were finding it more difficult to reach people during that timeframe. All of that has pushed things back. The amount of data that we received at the first input point meant that it was great. We wanted to take time to look at all of that. All of that led to a bit of a delay analyzing those early stages. What we have done is this schedule that you are looking at reflects a one month shift in the final draft of the comprehensive plan. There are some small tweaks within each of those bars. We are looking at the endpoint. Among the adjustments we made was in those key community input points at the bottom. This proposed schedule combines what we were showing as the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> community checkpoint and pushes back this combined 2<sup>nd</sup> period a month. That second bubble is showing what we are going to be talking about in the next month. We want to get your input on this overall schedule. This is a very ambitious schedule. There is a lot to be done. Things do take a bit longer in our current situation. This schedule assumes that review of the draft housing plan in October and November leads to clear community input, community based conclusions with all of the direction for some of the significant land use changes. We will get to the land use piece in early 2021 if those land use discussions go fairly smoothly. We are proposing that we move forward with this or we tweak it with some of it with your input tonight. After the next community input checkpoint, we have a check-in. We will revisit the schedule at the end of the year.

**Chairman Mitchell** – The zoning update will be done by the beginning of March?

**Ms. Koch** – Once we have received some final input on the housing piece, the zoning team will start their diagnostic report of what is in the housing plan. This is what will need to be changed in the zoning. We are laying out what their processes will be and what they will be looking at as far as zoning. They will not dig into the draft text and map until we have the comprehensive plan finalized.

**Chairman Mitchell** – What is the actual deliverable that we are going to get in the middle to end of February? What deliverable are we getting?

**Lee Einsweiler, Code Studio** – The thing that we promised contractually is that we would prepare guidance by looking at what is proposed and determining whether your existing code can produce that. If it can't, then what needs to change in the existing code in order to be able to produce it and what are those steps that we would take to get there? It is a diagnostic of not just best practices but looking directly at what you wanted. In order to get to that, you need these kinds of changes in the code. We would begin drafting those changes. It is a way to check in one more time. By the time it gets into the zoning, you better really mean it.

**Chairman Mitchell** – By the end of February we will have gotten through the diagnostic phase. In March, you start the actual work to fix the zoning problems.

**Commissioner Solla-Yates** – This is not a zoning update. We don't like our zoning. We want to replace the zoning entirely based on the RFP.

**Mr. Einsweiler** – It is anticipated to be a replacement. The extent of the replacement will be determined in that diagnostic process. It will recommend the path forward. It could be that there are certain districts today that actually remain functional. The development standards may be inappropriate in those districts and we change those. There may be some fundamentals, which continue to be acceptable moving forward. We will be looking at every line of text and trying to figure out whether it is worth keeping in the new system or not.

**Alex Ikefuna, Director of NDS** – The appropriate wording is rewrite.

**Ms. Koch** – I wanted to give some brief updates on the affordable housing plan. We have a draft plan that is incorporating information from the steering committee, review of the recommendations from the work session, and is now going through staff review. We are not planning to discuss the plan or the recommendations in detail today. It will be coming out for full review in the coming weeks. We will be meeting with you and Council to discuss that plan in mid-November. We wanted to let you know that. I also wanted make sure that it is clear that the affordable housing plan is going to be connected to the comprehensive plan. That also includes the future land use map and the next steps for the zoning rewrite. While the affordable housing plan does not cover the full breadth of the topics covered in the housing chapter, it covers a lot of it. We wanted to note how those goals and recommendations in that plan are going to be incorporated into the comprehensive plan. There is a vision for affordable housing. That is stated in the plan. We have used and revised that vision statement for the housing chapter in the comprehensive plan. There are also several recommendations in the affordable housing plan that will be incorporated into the housing chapter of the comprehensive plan as goals and strategies. Four of those recommendations in the affordable housing plan have a timeline and action steps for those actions. Those will be utilized in the implementation chapter of the comprehensive plan. That also includes steps for our team as we move forward for the comprehensive plan and for the zoning rewrite. You will see in the affordable housing plan some explicit notes on how we will be incorporating the housing plan into the comprehensive plan. When it comes to the future land use map, the affordable housing

recommendations related to land use with some specific guidelines around how different strategies or tools related to land use and zoning how those might be geographically focused and targeted around the city based on certain criteria and guidelines. The affordable housing plan does not contain specific maps that show those areas. After we have had a discussion with the community about the housing plan, these guidelines, and these priorities in the plan, we want to take that input and translate that into the future land use map. We want to talk more about high level thinking about how we should prioritize those changes.

**Commissioner Stolzenberg** – When I read the draft recommendations, it looked like there were some maps in there. Are those going to be struck? Are those for discussion?

**Ms. Koch** – If you look through the steering committee materials, there were some maps in there. We added a note that they were just for discussion. We wanted to illustrate what it means if you are trying to focus on the transit corridors. The affordable housing plan and final draft does not include those maps.

With the comprehensive plan revisions, we are going to walk you through some of our initial ideas related to updating the comprehensive plan. We know that people are eager to look at the affordable housing plan and the future land use map. It's important that we establish the organizing principles before we start to get into that completely. That was reflected when we spoke with community members. They wanted to see a specific vision in place before we looked at the land use. I assume that most of you are familiar with the structure of the comprehensive plan. This is basic structure for the 2013 comprehensive plan. We will be narrowing it down to two topics tonight. All of these pieces will be thought about as we move forward in this whole process. What we are talking about tonight is the Community Values section and the Topic Specific Chapters, which is what we are calling those different chapters of the comprehensive plan as the titles you see. We are starting with Community Values. In the current 2013 plan, there are community values that come at the beginning of the document. It sets the stage for the rest of the document. On the right are the brief statements. There are more details after those statements in the plan. For the purpose of the 2013 plan, these values were in the City Council 2025 vision statements. There have been different ways that guiding principles have come out for the comprehensive plan sometimes in partnership with the Council and sometimes separately from Council. One thing we wanted to think about, as we are thinking about potential revisions to the comprehensive plan is that we think there is a way you can use these initial statements at the beginning of the plan to tie together some connections between goals and strategies for the rest of the document. Clear connections can be made if you dig into the plan between different strategies. One of the things we heard in the community engagement process was that people recognize the connections between many of the topics in the comprehensive plan. They want to see that reflected directly in the document. We are proposing creating a set of guiding principles that are specific to the comprehensive plan. They would be a set of overarching priority areas for the plan. They can clarify different connections between topics and goals. There was interest from the steering committee with this thought having a table up front that lists the community guiding principles for the comprehensive plan. It says which strategies check the box for each of them. We have done some initial thinking on what the themes might be for these guiding principles. We tried to make sure that they were all overarching. We didn't focus on any one topic. They didn't

connect to just one specific chapter topic area. They were all crosscutting. In a final document, the structure laid out for the community values was useful. It had a short phrase and a slightly longer explanation. They are streamlined for our discussion.

**Chairman Mitchell** – I do want to be certain that we haven't lost the environmental concerns. I guess they are in the Resilience or Balance & Sustainability.

**Ms. Koch** – It comes out in both of those. It could even come out in connections in the different green areas or open spaces. The way we are thinking about it is that Resilience would focus on the capacity to change and innovate in the face of issues that come up. Balance & Sustainability would be the traditional balancing the pieces that you need to keep things running. Balancing environments, economy, equity, social equity, and all of those pieces are making sure that those are considered as you move forward.

**Chairman Mitchell** – The way I am reading this is that it seems to me that we are actually looking at tradeoffs. There could be environmental tradeoffs or economic development. We are willing to make those tradeoffs to get the greater economic development.

**Ms. Koch** – When talking about balances and making sure those are being weighed, you're taking a look at how we might be impacting these other areas in the plan as you move forward. It's considered in the process.

**Chairman Mitchell** – I don't think the old school focus on the green city is the right way to word that. I still think that there is value in having some emphasis on the environment that's more clearly articulated. It looks like it has taken a back seat based on what I see in these guiding principles.

**Ms. Koch** – That is certainly not our intention. We could work to make that more clear.

**Commissioner Solla-Yates** – That was immediately clear to me from what I am seeing. I am thinking about health and how that connects to people. I think that talking about health, healthy opportunities, and healthy lifestyles.

**Chairman Mitchell** – I am not just thinking about health. I am thinking about health tomorrow and what we do today impacts the environment that my grandkids are going to inherit.

**Commissioner Heaton** – Is the idea that each one of these bullets that you proposed will have bullets underneath them with more specific best practices?

**Ms. Koch** – Yes. They would have at least a few sentences. We don't want a huge page for each of them. Having a few sentences to clarify what we mean would certainly be the intention there.

**Chairman Mitchell** – I do like that you have reduced the number of bullets. I just don't want the focus on our water, streams, and reduced carbon footprint lost.

**Commissioner Dowell** – It has definitely been streamlined. I feel that looking at the proposed themes for guiding principles that I get anything from that. I completely understand the themes on the left. It's very distinct on the left and it's very wide open for interpretation on the right. I just don't want the "meat and potatoes" to get lost in the visual.

**Commissioner Russell** – I absolutely agree. It's saying everything and then losing something in that. The idea is that each of the topics tie into these guiding principles. I understand that a little better.

**Commissioner Heaton** – A comprehensive plan is a planner's document. The words that you are using are more like a promotional brochure about Charlottesville. If we are looking at it as a planning document, it can be more specific. If we are also realizing that the public is going to read this, they may not recognize the city we're describing.

**Commissioner Dowell** – I feel like we are in it. We have been in it for a while. I am having a hard time visualizing. Think about somebody, who knows nothing about planning, it would be a turnoff. I feel that if I have put too much effort into something with many bullet points, I am not going to be intrigued to want to know more for it be effective. I am already at a roadblock.

**Commissioner Heaton** – As planning commissioners, are we really trying to create a document that guides the policy and the zoning of the staff and professional planners more than we're trying to create a PR piece.

**Commissioner Dowell** – I don't think we should be creating a PR piece. It should definitely be something where citizens know exactly what is going on. That's where some of the questions and discrepancies are coming now. The public can't understand the jargon. I appreciate them to trying to make it more public accessible. If you're looking at the left column and comparing to the right column, you're able to understand. I am not able to easily equivocally put those bullet points to the new ones.

**Commissioner Stolzenberg** – I completely agree. Whether it is for the implementers or for the public, you benefit from having clarity and accurate summaries of the things. Otherwise, you are diving into whatever the details are anyway. Anytime you have guiding principles, you're balancing between them. It seems a little odd to specifically hedge with that one, the environment. I don't know or understand why that would be, particularly leading with it. With Resilience, I have no idea what that means. On the left, we have Smart, Citizen-Focused Government, which is something that I think we are quite bad at right now. I don't know if that needs to be a theme or if it should be in the Strategic Plan instead.

**Commissioner Dowell** – That hits the nail on the head on my point of needing smart citizen-focused government. I do feel that we are not perfect. We are moving the needle to try to that. There is no way I would pick that up in these proposed draft guiding principles.

**Ms. Koch** – I understand what you all are saying. I think we need to have some context with these. We just don't want to give statements. We just need to give some more consideration to

the phrasing and making sure that we don't want to lose these points of emphasis. We didn't want to have some of these be a focus because they come out in the topics for the vision statements. We will try to adjust these comments.

**Chairman Mitchell** – I wouldn't throw out the work that you have done. I think verbiage around that would be of great value.

**Commissioner Lahendro** – I am curious about the genesis of the guiding principles. Do these come from just a consultant's experience with all cities? Or are they tailored towards what the consultants have found out about Charlottesville?

**Ms. Koch** – I think a little bit of both. All of these came out as things that are important in the conversations that we had earlier this year. We started with what we had heard and went from there. When we give more context to it, we can try to be more specific or make sure there is more of a direct focus to them.

**Commissioner Lahendro** – This is not a stock document that can be applied to any city. It is tailored towards the needs of Charlottesville and what the consultants have found out about Charlottesville and those needs.

**Ms. Koch** – I haven't heard any sort of pushback against this idea of having some kind of guiding principles that we can tie to certain sections of the document. I will assume that we should continue with that idea.

**Commissioner Dowell** – I like the guiding principles. I just want to make sure that everyone can understand those principles.

**Ms. Koch** – We will switch to talking about those topic specific chapters. Looking at the bubbles on the right, this is what we are referring to as the topic specific chapters, the 'meat' of the comprehensive plan. We have highlighted two in green to note that those were not updated. They were not drafts from 2018 that we have reviewed in terms of having gone through the whole review process with you. The Community Engagement chapters will be a new chapter as well. We wanted to point those out before we get into the discussion.

Our charge was to start from the 2018 drafts and really give some focus on equity, affordability, and have discussions with the community and see how we can make sure that is incorporated into these documents. We didn't change the intent of statements where they had gone through a really rigorous process or removed key elements that came out of the 2017-2018 process. These vision statements for each of these topics really set the stage for each of the chapters. The vision leads to specific goals related to that vision. Within each goal under that vision are strategies for achieving that goal. This is a layered structure within each of the chapters. Within this, there are three different updates we are going to be looking at throughout this process. One type of revision that we are looking at are the chapter names. Make sure those boxes in the previous bubble are clear about what is in the plan or there are ways that we can tweak those for clarity. Looking at the vision statements themselves is the most significant edit we are going to talk about today. We have reviewed them for content related to equity,

affordability, and things that have come out in the discussions we have been having with the community and with our steering committee. We are also trying to review them for focus and clarity. There is a lot of good information in those statements and within the chapters. We tried to center in and focus in certain areas. It will be good to hear your thoughts on those. The third piece, which will be a future discussion, is the goals and strategies that come after the vision. Those will be updated in the next phase along with the land use map.

I want to point out one specific change we want to talk with you about. That would be looking at the Land Use chapter and the Historic Preservation & Urban Design chapter and potentially taking the Urban Design out of Historic Preservation chapter and putting it with the Land Use chapter. The reason we are suggesting that is because it will help to streamline some of the recommendations that we will be using for the zoning rewrite. Land Use and Urban Design can be tied more closely together if they are in the same chapter. There is a lot of overlap that will come out in those future phases. We have talked with staff about this. We certainly understand why there was some connections between staffing in these areas. That's the reason why they are connected. Any thoughts on this idea of restructuring the Land Use and Historic Preservation/Urban Design chapters?

**Commissioner Lahendro** – Will the title change to Land Use and Urban Design? You would be able to find the Urban Design. I am a little bothered by the implication that historic preservation doesn't have anything to do with urban design or separating it and losing that connection. I feel that historic preservation is more than the preservation of individual buildings. There is an essential, critical component that has to do with the context of historic districts and their urban characteristics. I would like to think about this more and look back at that chapter and see what the specific impacts would be in separating those two.

**Commissioner Russell** – I echo those statements. I have specific comments on the historic preservation side. I think we are losing something in what historic preservation can do in regards to urban design and in regards to land use and if it becomes too small of a chapter. It's losing some of its importance.

**Ms. Koch** – When we went through it that there are elements of the historic preservation chapter that could still include design. Our concern was having urban design split out from land use, you might look at the land use chapter and wonder why there is not more about form in there or some elements of urban design. Maybe it's more difficult to find that connection if you are looking in the historic preservation/urban design chapter. There might be a way to include some land use and urban form and have some elements of that in that chapter and keep some of the design pieces in historic preservation.

I want to give some context where the revisions came from. They incorporated input from the August 24<sup>th</sup> steering committee meeting. We went through and showed the current vision statements. We had a 'brainstorm' on what people thought they would like to see included in the vision statements. It also incorporates the input we got in the May and June engagement processes. We would love to get your feedback on content, meaning, and potentially unclear words.

**Commissioner Dowell** – Is there a reason why we are using ‘Urban’ instead of ‘environmental sustainability?’

**Ms. Koch** – That was the title of the draft chapter. I don’t know if someone wants to speak to that from the last process. We are actually proposing a change to that title.

There was not a new draft of the text. We started with the 2013 statement, which is shown on the left. On the right, you can see our initial thoughts about revisions in bold. All of these are some key statements we wanted to pull out. We are happy to have your view of all of this.

**Commissioner Russell** – I am glad that the human activities went away. I don’t really understand that sentence.

**Ms. Koch** – That was part of what we were looking at in these revisions. We have all gone through this. We think about the wording a lot. We adjusted it. There were reasons why certain words or phrases were used. Our intent was to try to clarify that. We may not have done so. That will be good for you to point out to us in the revised statements as well.

**Commissioner Solla-Yates** – Move to strike “and density in appropriate areas.” With “neighborhood characteristics are to be celebrated,” I would like something specifically about diversity. We have neighborhood diversity and that is worth celebrating.

**Ms. Koch** – Is there a specific diversity in design within neighborhoods or with people in neighborhoods?

**Commissioner Solla-Yates** – Yes.

**Commissioner Heaton** – I am going to state the obvious in the racial and economic inequities. I am assuming that is what we are referring to as the community values from the previous 2013. We are just spelling out what those community values are.

**Ms. Koch** – That was not a direct replacement of that sentence from 2013. We were trying to announce what we heard from the community. We are trying to say what we thought the community was saying to us about what they wanted to see in that future land use vision. Our time was not necessarily to replace community values from the 2013 statement with that sentence.

**Commissioner Stolzenberg** – I like it as a whole. I would like to hone in on the support provision and use of expanded transportation clause. Expanded transportation options seems vague. Maybe we should say “sustainable and efficient transportation options.” Or as explicit as non-automobile.

**Commissioner Solla-Yates** – I think we want mode shift. We don’t want people to have choices. We want to see better results.



**Ms. Koch** – I think some of that comes out in this idea of mode shift and in transportation options, it comes out in the transportation chapter. There are obvious connections with land use. We talked about that in those overarching values. That should come in the statement as well.

**Commissioner Lahendro** – On the right, the bold last sentence, the word ‘considered’ seems to have very ‘little teeth’ to it. I would love to see that replaced with ‘preserved.’  
 “Neighborhood characteristics are to be celebrated and preserved as communities integrate new buildings, development, and uses.”

**Commissioner Russell** – Or “retained” is another word.

**Commissioner Heaton** – How do you preserve something when you’re developing new things?

**Commissioner Stolzenberg** – I might even go with “enhanced.”

**Commissioner Lahendro** – I don’t want it to be considered and then disregarded.

**Commissioner Russell** – There isn’t just development and then just preservation. We are seeing them as two different things. This sentence says that we should respect and be sensitive to the historic characteristics of certain neighborhoods.

**Chairman Mitchell** – The only caution that I would offer is how the word “preservation” and “not in my backyard” relate to one other.

**Commissioner Lahendro** – I don’t mean preservation in terms of historic preservation. I am meaning it in terms of preserving the character and the unique neighborhood characteristics.

**Chairman Mitchell** – The preservation of characteristics lends to the resistance to increased density.

**Commissioner Heaton** – You’re talking about aesthetics, not necessarily the past values or inequities.

**Commissioner Lahendro** – Explain to me what unique neighborhood characteristics are.

**Commissioner Dowell** – If in our comprehensive plan, we always talk about preserving Charlottesville’s character and those things that make us special to Charlottesville. The prime example is that we have developments that we approve that do not preserve the character of the neighborhood. It is constantly changing. Do we need to redefine what the character of Charlottesville is? I do not feel a lot of the decisions that we have made lately have preserved the character of what I perceive Charlottesville to be. A part of that could be that we need to get away from some of that character. It seems that if we hold onto all of it, we are definitely moving forward when we are talking about racial and economic inequalities and segregation. I think this is a hard wording because, as a planning commissioner, we had someone come in

front of us where his proposal looks like nothing that is already in the neighborhood. When we say that we are preserving character and we want to preserve certain neighborhoods, it can't only be in the historic districts. It has to be throughout the whole city.

**Commissioner Lahendro** – I disagree. He did break the site into four buildings and had a lot of similarity to the large duplexes across the street and up the street, instead of coming in with an 8 story brick high rise.

**Commissioner Dowell** – It's similar, but it does not preserve the character. Do we want to preserve the character because most of our houses that are of the older stock in Charlottesville will not hold the capacity of what we need for our housing market? This is a double edged sword.

**Commissioner Stolzenberg** – The connotation is North Downtown is from Market on up. The specific design and buildings is 9 story apartment building. That phrasing has historically been used to say nothing should be allowed here. I like the word "respect" that Commissioner Russell said. I like the word "enhanced" in terms of making them a more positive, forward looking statement.

**Commissioner Lahendro** – I am fine with either one. I just want something more impactful than "considered."

**Commissioner Russell** – I am also thinking of protecting neighborhoods that are subject to forces of gentrification. Those more modest and historic housing residents have lived for generations should not be threatened by being forced out by these larger, newer developments. Using that "preserve" character actually counteracts the market forces that might change the nature of that neighborhood in a way we wouldn't want to see.

**Ms. Koch** – We have some clear ways we can look at that.

I propose we go onto the next one. This one is housing. We have called out some of the points of emphasis here. We have used some of the statements that are found in the affordable housing plan.

**Commissioner Stolzenberg** – I like these a lot. One thing I might consider as missing here is something I really learned and didn't know going into this gig. Across the city, we already have these very diverse housing forms in every single neighborhood. I am wondering if there's an opportunity to call out that diversity in housing form or housing types. It already exists and should be enhanced.

**Commissioner Dowell** – I was wondering if you had talked to City Council about the strategies for Charlottesville making clear steps addressing affordability and displacement of people from their neighborhoods.

**Ms. Koch** – Some of that comes out in the affordable housing plan. That will be in whatever follows after this vision statement. It will come out in the rest of the chapter in that affordable

housing plan or strategies for that. We have a couple of Council members on the steering committee. We have spoken with different members of Council about this in various ways. We will be talking with Council and you more on November 10<sup>th</sup>.

**Commissioner Dowell** – When we talk about affordability and displacement of people from their neighborhoods, something I would appreciate you bringing to Council is when you have new development in an older neighborhood, your property assessment goes up. If I go to the bank and I get a loan based on my income for my property, why is it when new development comes in my neighborhood, my assessment goes up and I can no longer afford it? I am being assessed at the income level of the person who moved down the street. When I want to go apply for a loan for the house down the street, the bank would say I couldn't afford it. That is something that we have to keep in mind if we are going to make clear steps to address displacement of people from their neighborhoods. I don't think that is on you to decide that. I would appreciate you bringing that up to them as a high importance and topic of conversation.

**Ms. Koch** – The housing affordability plan document will be a lot more detailed and has some of that background information. It's likely incorporated in there. We definitely heard that.

**Commissioner Solla-Yates** – With number 2, it might be helpful to include sexual identity and expression.

**Ms. Koch** – I would suggest we move onto the next one. I will be talking more about these as we move forward with this process. This is the historic preservation/historic design. We propose to separate historic preservation/urban design. We have renamed it here Preservation of Community History & Legacy. We can talk more about what you think.

**Commissioner Russell** – That language is a bit jarring for me. It seems that could go a way we don't want it to go in Charlottesville.

**Ms. Koch** – I think our intent was to pull out what that should mean in terms of community history and legacy and expanding that to all people in Charlottesville. Recognize that neighborhoods have different histories. People have different histories and that should be considered. We want to make sure that intent would come out in the title. We will look at ways to adjust that.

**Commissioner Russell** – It's an important conversation to have. It's something that the preservation community is grappling with at large. It's traditionally been a movement that is honored only and offered incentives because of the honoring for a narrative that historically has left out a lot of people. Historic preservation needs to do better in that. I believe that the values that older houses offer are worthy of talking about. In regards to what older housing stock does for the affordable housing fixture. For the sustainable not contributing to new building construction but preserving what we have. I don't think everyone thinks of preservation through that lens. I don't think we make that connection. You talked earlier about making those connections between the different chapters.

**Commissioner Heaton** – In trying to compare what we are envisioning for Charlottesville to other cities that have historic significance, I don't think we're shooting for Williamsburg. We do have a historic district. These words would be for the whole city. This is not just describing a historic district. That is maybe a big picture issue that this comprehensive plan can truly help Charlottesville decide if we are trying to be a Williamsburg. Or do we see ourselves as a vibrant city that acknowledges the wonderful history? Is it trying to be history? I would love to read something like that. Where are we going Charlottesville?

**Commissioner Stolzenberg** – I wonder if we should take more of a direct focus on architecture and the built form itself rather than history as a general concept. It seems that in terms of historic preservation, you seem to offer two different things. In the context that we are talking about it, we're talking about old buildings and the built form of downtown. Most architects think is far superior than most of the built forms that we now build. To lose some of that baggage would be better to take that explicit focus on what we are looking to preserve in this chapter. We have the Historic Resources Commission, who is trying to look at actual history or history of people in the community. I think it is important. I don't know to what extent that really is reflected in the text of the plan. It's a much more difficult and nuanced discussion where you can fall into these dangerous traps of celebrating the wrong things.

**Commissioner Heaton** – We can't forget that this is a planning document. To aim it at tangible structures, I think is important for a document to use the way this document is going to be used. It doesn't mean we can't reference intangibles. It's really not helpful to a planner, who is trying to interpret it 7 years from now. We need to help this document do what it is designed to do.

**Commissioner Lahendro** – I would like to propose a counter argument that the architecture of any period is tied to the culture that created it. What you are proposing is to separate the visual aesthetics from the culture that created it. Unless you understand the culture that created it, you don't really understand the piece of architecture you are trying to preserve and respect in new development.

**Commissioner Heaton** – Say more about how it relates more to an established historic district. Is the historic district the place where that is defined, described, and understood? Or is it the comprehensive plan?

**Commissioner Lahendro** – Both.

**Commissioner Dowell** – If we are going to dig deep to say that the architecture defines the history of the people, their thoughts, and who is making it, I don't know if I can feel comfortable with moving forward saying that I want to preserve that history. A lot of the historical buildings that are in place do not reflect my existence or my existence being important. I am not saying that is where you were going.

**Commissioner Lahendro** – There is a wonderful, rich African American history that is here. History doesn't just mean white privileged men.

**Commissioner Dowell** – If we are going to use that statement, then we need to be careful about the statement. Some of the historical buildings of Charlottesville do not reflect everyone, who is now here. If we are trying to move forward, then we need to be cognizant of that. I never said that we don't have good, rich black history. I only said that if we are going to use the statement, that the building reflects the architecture thought during that time period, we don't have a great history of us being reflected in those time periods. Hence, as to why when we were just in the other chapters, we had to mention we want equity. We want racial equity. We can't have it in some chapters and then make these blanket statements and think that it's not going to be an issue.

**Commissioner Lahendro** – It's not a statement of intent, it's a statement of fact.

**Commissioner Dowell** – A statement of fact would also be I cannot support an architecture or history that does not include me or all people in this city.

**Commissioner Lahendro** – I don't know why you think that it does not include you.

**Commissioner Dowell** – It's not representative of who I think we want to be if we are moving forward. That's a clear representative of our past that we clearly should not keep wanting to move forward with.

**Commissioner Solla-Yates** – We have had decades of urban renewal. Everything that John West "breathed on" is gone. Everything that Jefferson "breathed on" is there. We have told one story. It is a little late to start preserving the other story because we tore it all down.

**Commissioner Russell** – It's not too late because we haven't chosen to protect certain areas. We have not chosen to put local design controls on areas like 10<sup>th</sup> and Page, Fifeville, historically African American communities that are recognized at the national level as being historic. At the local level, we do not impose design regulations in the same way that we do with North Downtown. Those areas are safe from demolition. They maybe stay single family zoning, while other areas are necessarily burdened with developmental pressure. That is inequity that if preservation applied correctly could help remedy. It can help preserve what stories and physical architectural history that we do have reflects a different story and a broader view of the history of our community.

**Commissioner Dowell** – I just want to make sure that we are careful with our words. I can interpret it one way and you can interpret in another way with anything. It could be that we come from two different perspectives. We definitely need to be very cognizant of the words that we use and what we are trying to portray with those words.

**Commissioner Russell** – I absolutely agree. If we backed up a little and start with: What does sensitive design offer? It offers all of the things that when we walk through a well-designed historic neighborhood, we feel a certain way because it has these things that everyone in new development is trying to do: Human scale, a relationship to the street, front porches that offer conversations. I think this is all important conversation. I am so glad that we are having it. If we backed up, what is the role of respecting the qualities that the older neighborhoods offer to

residents and how do we make efforts to keep those? That's what I think the role of the preservation chapter should reflect.

**Ms. Koch** – We are going to rework this. I appreciate all of these comments. We did get too far away with this, especially in the first statement from the design intent with this. That reflects the conversations we were having with the community. We wanted to see all sorts of narratives reflected in the city. We want to think about ways to keep that. We are looking to address this.

We talked earlier about splitting historic preservation and urban design. Are there thoughts after looking at this about whether we're open to bringing urban design into the land use chapter? Whether we bring all of this into the land use chapter and expand that? Whether we have some elements of design in both chapters?

**Commissioner Russell** – I think I need to see more of the proposed goals and strategies. It will maybe then become clearer. I don't if I am pushing it down the road.

**Commissioner Lahendro** – I agree. This is just the very top. The devils is in the details. I would like to see what the details are farther down the strategies and the supporting information.

**Commissioner Solla-Yates** – I was against the idea when I first heard about it. I am “falling in love” with it. History, design, and land use are all dealing with the same issues. Maybe we should treat them all together.

**Commissioner Heaton** – I am thinking the same thing. These are old terms. Words that I have seen in comprehensive plans of other places. I like the idea. Go ahead and own the ghosts that they all carry. With the details and the bullets points that follow, we really need to be specific about what we mean when historic districts and preservation of character.

**Commissioner Lahendro** – I am coming to the viewpoint that this conversation shows that preservation is interpreted to be one specific thing when actually it is far more than that. It effects the entire city and it effects urban design. It's not just historic buildings or landmarks.

**Commissioner Heaton** – Ms. Koch, are you aware of another municipality that has tried to “broad stroke” these three ideas?

**Ms. Koch** – I don't have a specific example right now. I will see what I can find.

**Mr. Einsweiler** – As a point to keep in mind as you work through this particular issue, when we have zoning and a toolkit to implement this plan, it will have a spectrum of tools. It will have dials that are turned up and down that do different things. Total preservation is at one end of the spectrum and transformation is at the other end of the spectrum. We will be coding for every point in between. One of the important things to think about is trying not to box these things too much into being a different conversation when they are, in many ways, part of that same conversation. Historic preservation could be about the preservation of a use of land, not

even a structure. They all end up on this same spectrum. What we need help with is how we are going to be turning those dials as we move forward and how many we give you. How incremental do you want them to be? That will be part of that conversation coming out of the diagnostic before drafting can begin. This is a project in which the drafting has to happen principally once. We definitely need the strength of these vision statements working down into the lower levels so that the plan can provide us that clear guidance about how to build that toolkit.

**Commissioner Solla-Yates** – We have done the most recent work on West Main and Downtown. It's not perfect, but it's the strongest that we have. If you are going to consider keeping anything, please consider that.

**Commissioner Stolzenberg** – I can't get away from that dichotomy between what we are looking for with historic preservation. I am looking at a map of our historic districts. There are certainly some that are preserved because of their form. They have good land use patterns. I am looking at Park Street and they have garbage urban forms. Some rich, white people once lived there. They built some cool houses. Maybe we want to keep those for the architectural qualities. There is a really big difference between whether we are preserving things for their old urban form that can't be built anymore because we have a bunch of regulations that require accommodating automobiles and whether we want to preserve a building because Jefferson ate there. I don't know how you square that circle. To me, we applied the exact same zoning tool towards both of them.

**Ms. Koch** – What I am hearing is that we should look at combining the land use chapter with this historic preservation/urban design chapter.

**Commissioner Heaton** – I am really interested in a new tool or using a tool in a different way. We are in a different time. When it comes out, you can't throw it back. You have to let that first draft stand with roots all of the way into the documents. I don't have the answer for that. I do like the idea of bringing urban design and preservation together and breaking it out later.

**Ms. Koch** – There is room for that in the structure of the plan. There are often subsets within many of these chapters under different headings.

**Commissioner Lahendro** – I am open to the idea of exploring it. I am not wanting to make a decision right now.

**Ms. Koch** – Moving forward to the next phase of community engagement, we need a path to follow for that to propose for people to weigh in on so that we can have some review of these initial statements in the coming weeks. We will need to take one direction on it for now. It doesn't need to be the final in the end.

This next one is really important to look at because there is not an existing community engagement chapter. That was part of our charge going into this to create one.

**Commissioner Stolzenberg** – In that third paragraph, I would put this. A big part of community engagement needs not to be just about soliciting feedback input, but about broadcasting what is happening. What I find walking around the city and talking to people is that they have no clue what is happening here. They barely know that this stuff exists. They don't know what zoning is. They certainly don't know that we had a work session tonight on a proposal in Fifeville. Having a really robust system to communicate that information out there goes hand in hand with transparency, openness, and clarity. Really being clear about what is happening and having things available and easily accessible so that people can go see for themselves.

**Commissioner Solla-Yates** – One concern that we got out of the 2018 comprehensive plan in trying to change the way we did engagement is that we found that it is much harder to talk to some people than other people. With some people, you do a public meeting and they will come and tell you. Some people won't come. You have to go to them. Clarifying that we are willing to do that work would be helpful.

**Commissioner Dowell** – One thing the city is going have a change with is trying to figure out how we captivate that audience, who doesn't know and in their mind doesn't care. They don't think that it is important. I think that is a lot with our younger people where you have that disconnect. In their mind, it doesn't matter. It's not important. It directly doesn't affect me. That's why we have you here. We already attempted to try to connect to those people. We weren't able to. It's a matter of having to be creative. What ways and means can we come up with to try to engage people not so much because we want to tell you that your opinion matters, but to start from step one in saying that this is important. I know for a lot of young people that public policy was not important. That's a challenge that we are all facing. No matter how much you put it out there, if you can't get a person to understand why the meeting is important or why they need to be involved, we're still going to be spinning wheels.

**Commissioner Heaton** – I would also put in there that it seems to be easier to get reactive input. With people, who are disenfranchised or dissatisfied, you are going to be able to get data from. With people, who are content, we are going to have to come up with a mechanism to engage or create some re-activity. That's what I believe about the silent people. They don't want to engage in the discomfort of talking about things they're not comfortable talking about. It's exciting to think we are in a time where we really want to do that. We don't want the satisfied people to remain silent. We want to invite them into the conversation.

**Commissioner Russell** – I disagree with you, Mr. Heaton. Advocacy and involvement is a privilege when you have time to do that. It's the job of planners and government staff to work and engage with those that have historically not had a voice. That voice has been overlooked. It's a real challenge. I don't know how to solve that. What is encouraging about having it as a vision statement in your comprehensive plan is that someone can point to that and say this is why we need to hire this position. Our comprehensive plan says we value this in our community. What the comprehensive plan can offer is a start.

**Commissioner Heaton** – One of the things that I am thinking about is when we were doing the entryway to the University and how we tried to get input from students. We tried several,



creative ways. I don't we were ever that successful. We acknowledged that this is a real challenge to get input from everybody, especially those that have their distractions. I don't think we did well at all with getting input from students. We have to come up with some way to jostle people.

**Commissioner Stolzenberg** – They got zero students and they never took the suggestion of going to the dining hall that was right there. Something I am thinking about in terms of this is the recent Tenth and Grady Smart Scale proposal. It seemed to blindside a lot of people that it was even happening. They had no idea it was happening. As soon as they found out, a lot of people mobilized, talked to each other, and engaged. In some ways, reactivity is something of a good thing that we can play off. If you're getting the information out there sufficiently, someone will hear eventually and will react to it.

**Ms. Koch** – I think all of those are good points. I don't think necessarily of wanting people to weigh in, even if they are satisfied. They can be satisfied and still support the changes. From my perspective, we want to hear from everyone, whether you like what we are proposing or don't like what we are proposing. We need to know either way. We need to be able to reach people so they know what is going on and understand what is going on so they can tell us what they think. We will work to make that more clear in this.

**Commissioner Stolzenberg** – I would also add that we need to reduce the barrier to engagement. If it is going to Council, that is a privilege for people with time on their hands. If it is responding to a text that got blasted out or an online survey, it's a lower barrier to entry. Any time that you were looking for input from people, who aren't angry. If you have a barrier to entry, you need people to both react strongly enough that they care and get over that barrier and have the privilege of having the expendable time and effort to do that. If you lower the barrier, you will get people who are more OK with it or ambivalent.

**Commissioner Dowell** – I think having the time is a privilege. If you make people feel that their voices are actually going to be heard and there is going to be a reaction from the work that they have put in, they will find the time. They will make the time. If it is important, you're going to make the time for it. We have to find a way to present this information to make people understand that it's important to them. Whether it's our regular citizens or UVA students, I think we are in a time where the circumstances are it doesn't seem that prevalent. Why am I going to make the time if it's not prevalent to me? That's where we are. How do we make this information important? How do we get that message out to our public?

**LaToya Thomas** – There is also that issue of accessibility combined with the expectation of coming out and investing the time. There is also the question of talking into a "silent microphone." Am I only showing up because somebody wants my face there? We certainly heard a lot of the criticism, critique, and skepticism from people around whether it is worth their time to engage in the public process. Whether that is for something for short term, like going to a meeting and feeling like they are going to leave the meeting frustrated. Or if it is something more long term where they are invested in the planning process and being jaded by the last several decades and not really sure if this process is going to really result in an outcome once this document is in final form. It's especially things that we heard on the ground

in the first part of the year. It really is a very comprehensive approach we need to take and thinking about how we are talking about engagement in the comp plan. It goes on both sides. It goes on the sides of getting the people to the table. It also goes on the side of what might need to shift on the public process side to make it a more welcoming, inviting, and accessible space for people to actually enter into. Whether they are coming to the table themselves or you are bringing the table to them.

**Commissioner Russell** – Do you think it is worth in this section acknowledging or capturing that understanding that this hasn't always been achieved in the past? It seems that we have talked about a whole lot of things here. They aren't all captured in this text about righting some past wrongs. I am speaking generally. I understand that community engagement is difficult. This is our vision statement.

**Ms. Koch** – There is room to do that. We want to focus on the future. With that we can reflect on the past and say what we are looking to address as we move to the future.

**Commissioner Russell** – All of this is achieved by building trust. It is a process of continuously of building trust in our relationship with the community.

**Commissioner Lahendro** – Maybe it is enough to say: In recognition of the fact that past engagement by the city has been limited and ineffectual or something like that, we are wanting to find new ways. The devil is going to be in the strategies associated with these statements. What does that mean? Advocating for creative ways, methods and who does it. Which of these boards and commissions does it? How does it filter down? Who is going to be charged with coming up with these creative ways of getting citizen engagement?

**Ms. Koch** – I think that can come out in some of those specific strategies. How do we implement this vision?

This is the community facilities chapter, which was one of the first that we adjusted the title on. It was a simple title change. It seemed necessary because community facilities was not necessarily really clear to people about what was in the chapter. We have proposed some changes here in bold. One thing I want to point out is part of what is included in the community facilities chapter is community safety, including police, fire, and EMS. We were getting feedback in May and June of this year. We were having a lot of discussions around the relationship of the police department with communities. We got a lot of input related to that in the survey. We have reflected that here in terms of talking about community oriented public safety standing on existing statements that were in the chapter about having one of the best community response systems but clarifying what that could mean based on what we had heard. I would like to hear your thoughts on: Is this the purview of the comprehensive plan? Are there ways that we can better define that in this plan?

**Commissioner Solla-Yates** – I think it would be irresponsible to not address the issues of the moment.

**Ms. Koch** – If you read through the engagement summary, it was one of the things we heard the most from people. We do want to make sure it is reflected in some way when we are thinking about the future of the city. In terms of this chapter or other chapters, we just want to make sure we are including it in the right way for the comprehensive plan. That continues to be our goal.

**Commissioner Russell** – I think this was discussed in one of the steering committee sessions. A question about where recycling. Is that in the solid waste stream? Where is any sort of reduction of waste?

**Ms. Koch** – It did come out in some of those conclusions. We included it in solid waste in the last section. I think that needs to be clearer with what we mean with that.

**Commissioner Russell** – I had one thought. It had to do with the very last sentence, which talks about areas in the city. It would probably be important to recognize environmental and water effort that goes downstream. We are thinking about these things in terms of the city, but being good stewards of the Earth.

**Commissioner Stolzenberg** – Water, waste water, and solid waste are all run by the RWSA and RSWA. It would make sense to call out the region. In the environmental and sustainability chapter, climate is really important. It seemed a little out of scope for this particular thing.

**Ms. Koch** – Calling out the regional makes sense. I certainly take your views about the downstream effects and being good stewards when we are thinking about this.

For this chapter of Economic Sustainability, we propose a title change. Right now it's Economic Prosperity and Opportunity. A lot of the revisions we proposed here are really emphasizing shared prosperity as there is economic growth in the city. That was something we really heard. People wanted to see more opportunities tied directly to resident opportunity with some of this economic growth.

**Commissioner Stolzenberg** – One thing I might add is talking about green businesses and the green economy. That's probably our strongest growing sector right now. I think a specific call out to promoting that would be good.

**Commissioner Solla-Yates** – Something that I have heard a lot of is a ladder of opportunity in making sure that there are ways to learn those things.

**Ms. Koch** – We talked about that with the steering committee. We tried to pull that out and reword it in the last sentence that is bold and pairing local economic growth with creation of employment training and other opportunities for residents and saying what that ladder of opportunity really is. We are certainly open to keeping that language in there.

**Councilor Payne** – Something to think about is the idea of community wealth building as part of the vision for this. I know there was the conversation briefly around assessments going up in a neighborhood and not having access to a loan and thinking about that kind of thing in

terms of a strategy, big picture vision of community wealth building in terms of financial institutions, land trust co-operations, community gardens, and how those inter-connect as part of a local economic ecosystem that is giving everyone benefits of the economic growth that we are seeing. It connects to the ladder of opportunity. I know there are a lot of cities across the country and organizations that are explicitly thinking about community wealth building and all of the institutions associated with it.

**Ms. Koch** – The next one was titled urban environmental sustainability. We have proposed a new title of Environment, Health, and Energy for that, recognizing that content already in that draft chapter from 2018, but also what we have been hearing from the community will be added to this chapter.

**Commissioner Stolzenberg** – Local carbon footprints is not going far enough. We need to be working towards carbon neutrality. Council has made pledges to do that for a 45% carbon footprint by 2030 and carbon neutrality by the city in 2050, which is towards the end of where this plan is thinking. A bolder statement there would be appropriate.

**Commissioner Russell** – I am not crazy about the phrase “green city.”

**Ms. Koch** – We pulled that from the previous version. We are open to change that.

**Commissioner Russell** – I have strong feelings when we throw around words like that. Everything after that is great.

**Commissioner Solla-Yates** – I had the same thought. It feels like 2018.

**Ms. Koch** – We can change that wording a bit. What comes after that explains what we mean by green city. I will look at changing that.

**Commissioner Heaton** – Climate resilience is a wonderful new phrase.

**Commissioner Stolzenberg** – Something like environmental leader to show that we intend to be better at the generic city, which is pretty bad. Resiliency is important. There is going to be climate impacts on Charlottesville directly. Ultimately, we are not coastal. We’re not in a particularly natural disaster prone place. We are going to have some impacts directly and we need to be resilient to that. Another huge part of adapting to this future climate change is accommodating changing climates in other places, climate refugees, and adapting as a city in terms of our population and in terms of our land use patterns to deal with that. The tidewater is going to be underwater by the end of the plan vision period.

**Commissioner Heaton** – If we are going to be as specific as to talk about green tree canopies, maybe we should be as specific about carbon neutral or carbon reductive. That seems every bit as specific as tree canopy.

**Ms. Koch** – I am fine with making some of those statements. I am thinking about climate refugees and accommodating climate change in other places, while addressing that there will be changes in Charlottesville. That can certainly be a piece of this.

We have kept the transportation title the same. We have pulled out some specific statements in bold as with the others, mostly focusing on connectivity and integration with land uses. We have also pulled in some statements about parking towards the end.

**Commissioner Heaton** – It should probably say something about integrating with the regional transportation plan. That is because I am on the transportation citizens advisory board.

**Mr. Koch** – That is something that came out in the discussions.

**Commissioner Heaton** – It could go in that second bullet.

**Commissioner Solla-Yates** – Is that last phrase “where necessary to support” necessary here? That seems like a supportive idea.

**Ms. Koch** – I think you’re right. That could come out in some of the strategies. I would be open to removing that section from here.

**Commissioner Stolzenberg** – I am a little confused what we are saying there. We are saying that the parking that remains should contribute to the quality of the public rail by being in back alleys or underground. Is that what it is? I agree that seems secondary.

**Commissioner Heaton** – Wouldn’t you prefer that there is some kind of tipping of the hat to the idea that we won’t always be using cars?

**Commissioner Stolzenberg** – I like the first part of the sentence. The things that we have seen in the Form Based Code about hiding the parking that does exist. That stuff is good. We should hide parking. The centrality of service parking everywhere really does impact form that makes the other goals impossible.

**Commissioner Solla-Yates** – Does this say that?

**Commissioner Stolzenberg** – Maybe we could say that more directly.

**Commissioner Solla-Yates** – I agree.

**Commissioner Heaton** – I think you could be a little more blunt.

**Ms. Koch** – The mention of how parking can impact the urban form in ways that might prohibit or inhibit achieving other goals.

**Commissioner Stolzenberg** – Flip that over. Follow “minimized” with “in order to achieve urban form.”

**Ms. Thomas** – Going to quickly highlight some of the activities that we are thinking about doing over the next few weeks. I am going to start with the goals and objectives that we are trying to get to between the end of October through the end of November into early December. We have been doing a lot of work behind the scenes to try to get to the point where we can go back out into the community. This next iteration going out is going to be a combination of reiterating or sharing what we learned and what we heard in our earlier engagement efforts. That includes the survey results, the many different conversations that we have had virtually, and really trying to make sure that people understand what the different voices and ideas were that came out of that earlier engagement process. We want to make sure that people get a good primer on what the comprehensive plan is, not just the content and the document, but as a tool, what it can do, what the purpose of the revisions and updates are and how that plays into Charlottesville life going forward. This will be a time for us to talk about the draft of the affordable housing strategy and to talk through the guiding principles and vision statements. The one common thread I want to mention here before we talk about the different tools that we will be using. In our team conversation, as we started looking at some of the draft affordable housing recommendations and strategies. The biggest thing for us is making sure that people understand how everything is tied together and how everything is tied to a lot of the feedback that people have been giving, not just to us in this process. Whether it is feedback that pertains to housing or economic development or transportation. With housing, we want to make sure we are not losing people in the jargon of the different housing tools that might get recommended. The big thing is to make sure that people understand. If you have a concern about housing affordability, this is how the proposed recommendations actually address that concern. We really want to make that link between what the feedback is, what the concerns are the people in the community have, and how that is being addressed with the housing strategy and the overall comprehensive plan. In terms of outreach, you see a couple of tools that we have used in our first round of engagement. Some of these will be re-purposed or re-designed accordingly. We're going to be using a variety of outreach methods. A lot of the tools that you are familiar with include the project website, a clearing house for people to get information, and for us to be able to share data. We will still be doing virtual engagement for the most part. We will be integrating some in person opportunities, which I will discuss. In terms of our virtual engagement, webinars and discussions will be focused on the comprehensive plan and the housing plan. We will have virtual meetings set up, which is just a page on the website that will give people information to walk through the process of the comprehensive plan. They will be able to provide feedback questions. We will also have some additional small group discussions, probably not as many the first time around with this effort. We still do want to have very targeted small group discussions with people who make up that hard to reach population. We will set up virtual office hours. Those will be opportunities when Ms. Koch and I can be on Zoom and be available to chat. Other members of our team can be available to people. They can call in on a hotline via a Zoom camera or phone and ask questions. We will probably have these office hours structured around particular topics.

**Commissioner Solla-Yates** – I don't know if this can done safely. The people who are hard to reach aren't going to get on Zoom. Is it possible to safely engage with those people in real space where they are?

**Ms. Thomas** – Aside from the virtual activities, we are going to do some very targeted in person pop up events starting later in October. These will be designed in such a way that they will be COVID safe events. We will be decked out in PPE. We will make sure people know that they are required to wear masks when they come to us. These will be very simple setups. We want to make sure that we are giving people some space, particularly people who may not have been involved previously to get information, to learn about this process, to be able to get an idea of what is being talked about, the vision statements in the comprehensive plan, what is being proposed as part of the affordable housing strategy, but to also be able to do so safely and quickly and to be able to leave knowing how they can continue to stay involved in the process. I have pop up events for another client. The pop up events are safe and sanitary that allow people to give really valuable input to the process. We are definitely going to be finalizing the location of where those pop up events are going to be in the next few weeks. We are planning to kick those off towards the last week of October going into November.

**Commissioner Solla-Yates** – How do you pull information back from that?

**Ms. Thomas** – Depending on the format we use. One format I have recently used actually involved having people respond to questions on butcher paper that we took back. If you imagine a long table, we had tables covered in butcher paper with questions. People had their own unique markers they received. They were actually able to write responses to questions on butcher paper and they moved through stations. That's a more intensive pop up style event than what we will do in Charlottesville. We will probably have some on a smaller scale that would involve written comments with materials and utensils that can be sanitized or people can take it away. Or having things where people can mark with stickers. There will be some level of verbal conversation as well to the extent we can also capture feedback in writing whether that's someone dictating something to us we can write on a shared board that people can see or they are receiving their own set of utensils they safely mark something down that we can take that information back and add it to our collective batch of information that we are getting.

**Commissioner Dowell** – One small recommendation that could help is that most of the people you are not getting feedback from all have to go to the grocery store. It may be advantageous to set up a table outside of a grocery store.

**Ms. Thomas** – Some locations we are considering include grocery store, barbershops, beauty salons, churches, and church parking lots. I would love to target the Latino families so that we can get more feedback from that group. We are trying to be very creative. Most of the people, who are not part of this process, are using these places on a day to day basis.

**Commissioner Stolzenberg** – That's a great idea. There is a whole bunch of Latino and oriental grocery stores that could be good too. If you are having events where you are handing out materials and hoping they come to give input. Try to grab their contact information.

**Ms. Thomas** – For most events, there is some kind of contact card that stays with us so that we can capture that information.

**Ms. Koch** – Thank you for staying with us.

**Chairman Mitchell** – This was very helpful.

**Adjournment**

**The meeting was adjourned at 9:39 PM.**