

Scottsville Planning Commission

Regular Meeting
Monday, November 7, 2022, 7:00 p.m.
Victory Hall
401 Valley Street
Scottsville, Virginia

Members:
Molly Angevine
Lisa Caltabiano, *chair*
Matthew Johnson
Dan Gritsko, *Council liaison*
Shannon Strassner, *vice-chair*

Agenda

1. Call to order, establish a quorum, and agree to agenda 7:00 p.m.
2. Review and approval of past meeting minutes: June 6, September 6, and October 3
3. Report on relevant actions by the Town Council 7:05 p.m.
4. Matters from the public 7:10 p.m.
5. Old business 7:20 p.m.
 - a. Comprehensive Plan process and engagement, UVA team
 - b. Zoning map amendment and special use permit, 800 Bird Street
 - Industrial to Commercial, with special use permit for multi-family residential
 - Public hearing, discussion, and action
 - c. Zoning text amendment, Planned Unit Development
 - Discussion and action
6. New business 8:30 p.m.
 - a. Special Use Permit, Arts & Education Center, Hardware Street
 - b. Zoning text amendment, Homestays
7. Adjournment 9:00 p.m.

In addition to accessible facilities at Town Hall, remote public access and participation is available [online at this link](#) or call 301-715-8592, then enter meeting ID 895 5443 5233 and pass code 1744.

The Town of Scottsville is committed to the letter and spirit of the Americans with Disabilities Act. Anyone who requires an auxiliary aid or service for effective communication, or a modification of policies or procedures to participate in a program, service, or activity of the Town of Scottsville should contact the Town Administrator at 401 Valley Street, Scottsville, VA 24590, telephone 434-286-9267, as soon as possible but no later than 48 hours before the scheduled event.

Staff Reports

5a. Comprehensive Plan process and engagement, UVA team

The Town has a long working relationship with UVA's School of Architecture. Dr. Frank Dukes teaches a Collaborative Planning course, introducing graduate students to concepts of teamwork and community engagement. A team of students is interested in a small case study project around the Scottsville Comprehensive Plan. They will briefly introduce themselves and discuss their work, and before the end of the year they will deliver some advice on how the Commission can involve the diverse community of Scottsville. **For discussion only.**

5b. Zoning map amendment and special use permit at 800 Bird Street, Echelon Resources

The commission held a public hearing in October after a first reading in September. A vote on the matter is in order now, or the commission must call a special meeting later in November (by ordinance, action is required within 90 days of application). A voting item is attached.

| Summary of Public Comment on Factory Redevelopment, September-October 2022 | | |
|--|-----------|-----------|
| | Positive | Negative |
| Written in advance | 8 | 1 |
| At public hearing | 6 | 11 |
| Total | 14 | 12 |

The parcel is 41 acres at the end of Bird Street, with split zoning between Public, Light Industrial, and Heavy Industrial. The rezoning request is to rezone the roughly 21 acre Industrial portions to Commercial, retaining the 18 acres of wetlands under conservation easement as Public. The special use permit request is for multifamily residential, being a proposal for up to 205 apartments.

The table at right shows the balance of public comments, both at the public hearing and in writing. Many of the comments also contained questions which ought to be answered before a decision is made.

Staff compiled answers to public questions, as well as a fiscal analysis, sent to the Commission as a separate file. The fiscal analysis showed adequate infrastructure capacity in all areas and no major obstacles to the factory renovation. The application would be fiscal positive to the Town, with \$62,000 in new projected revenue against \$35,000 in expenses, assuming the same tax rates and service levels. The largest revenue sources are meals tax and sales tax from the spending of new residents. Scottsville does not currently have a town real estate tax.

The application includes a proffer statement related to the project's impacts on transportation and

housing.

- The applicant proffers \$200,000 paid to the Town to help construct sidewalks and trails in the affected neighborhood.
- The applicant proffers 20% of the homes to be workforce affordable, reserved for families earning 60% or less of the area median income. In 2022, for example, that means an income of \$66,720 and a monthly rent of \$1,668.
- The applicant proffers three electric vehicle charging stations.
- The applicant proffers a covered bicycle parking area, with outlets for charging e-bikes.

Since the first reading in September, Timmons Group completed a professional engineering report on traffic impacts for the proposal. They calculate that the A or B grades for the town's existing streets would not be degraded by the new traffic. They do not recommend and turn lanes or stop lights. Town staff sent this report to VDOT engineers, who had no objections.

The Town's policy standard for judging traffic is application versus the by-right use. Heavy Industrial uses are by-right, and the residential scenario implies fewer heavy trucks, less rush-hour congestion, and more opportunity for walking and biking to replace car trips. This is one reason the Town began studying the factory's conversion with planning grants in 2018.

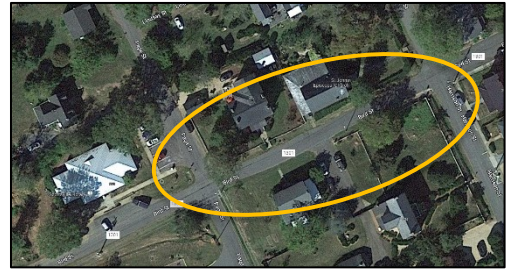
The public hearing included only brief mention of the environmental benefits of renovation and infill redevelopment versus sprawl. Local governments can consider national and international climate commitments when making land use decisions. The most recent report from UN Environment Program ([The Closing Window, 2022](#)) shows a role for subnational governments: "plan infrastructure and supporting policies that reduce travel demand" and "integrate low-emissions requirements in urban planning." This application has the support of Piedmont Environmental Council because it reuses old brick and steel and provides for a more walkable lifestyle than the alternative of suburban sprawl. A design that reduces driving helps the environment, as well as improving traffic safety and efficiency for all other drivers.

VDOT staff visited the project site several times in the past month, as the Town is already working on several traffic safety improvements. VDOT does not believe the factory application overloads the town's existing streets. Moreover, several possible projects could improve the existing conditions:

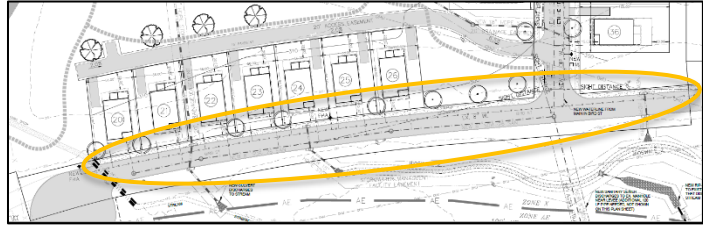
- **Valley-Bird curb extension.** A pilot project is active now, costing about \$300 and earning 92% positive feedback on a survey. As a medium-term solution and with VDOT approval, on-street parking could be repainted to improve sight lines, and cones or flower planters installed to enhance the crosswalk. The long-term solution of a raised crosswalk and concrete curb extension could be feasible with VDOT grant funding.



- **Bird street sidewalk** and crosswalk. The Town received a \$320,000 VDOT grant in 2020 but paused implementation during the Covid pandemic. Design work is now underway, for ADA sidewalk on Bird Street between Harrison and Page, and crosswalks at the intersections. Albemarle County recognized the project's value and contributed \$60,000, as well.

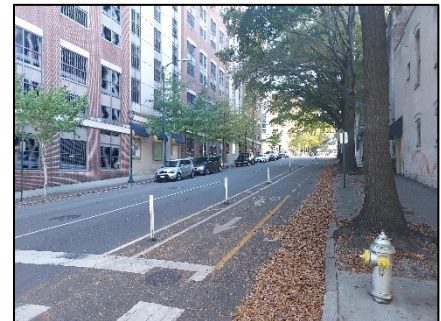


- **Bird Street sidewalks** phase II and III. The rest of the sidewalk connection from downtown to the factory can be completed upon approval of this application. As a condition of the SUP approval for



36 homes this past March, Southern Development committed to build a sidewalk along the 800 feet of their property's frontage on Bird Street. They also agreed to design a set of plans for the final segment, from their property to the library, another 750 feet. The Town can use those plans to apply for VDOT construction grants, under which VDOT pays 80% of cost and the Town pays 20% match. Private match funds are allowed, and Echelon Resources has proffered \$200,000 for this purpose.

- **One-way street conversions.** Separate from the sidewalk phases above, the Town can also study and petition VDOT to convert some streets to one-way traffic. The benefits are to free up more space for on-street parking and bike lanes, and remove some unsafe intersection maneuvers. The drawbacks are confusion for new drivers, and possibly higher speeds. In Scottsville, segments of Bird or Harrison Street could perhaps benefit from one-way conversion. The Town can request VDOT study and action on this. Deployment might involve a revenue sharing program with 50-50 cost, but as shown in this example in downtown Richmond, paint and flex posts are low-cost materials. The other example shown, in Appomattox, has one travel lane, parking and sidewalks on both sides, and a solid curb extension to protect the crosswalk.



- **Multimodal planning support.** The Town Comprehensive Plan has several sections related to trails, sidewalks, and roadway improvements, but no overall plan for the future of getting around Scottsville. There should be a map of existing infrastructure, gaps, and priorities for improved connections, whether by foot, wheelchair, bike, car, or bus. VDOT has an Office of Intermodal Planning and Investment (OIPI) with an assistance program for exactly this purpose. For small towns, the county must apply on their behalf, and yesterday Albemarle County did apply for Scottsville. The state's consultant help would be available in 2023, aligned with the Comprehensive Plan update.



Staff recommend approval of the factory rezoning and SUP because of its alignment with the Town's Comprehensive Plan, endorsement by state funding agencies and environmental partners, and the several options to mitigate the primary concern of residents: traffic. To advance the Town's environmental goals, staff recommend SUP conditions related to Dark Sky light fixtures and native plants in landscaping. To further support affordable housing, staff recommend a condition that the applicant pursue federal Low-Income Housing Tax Credits.

5c. Planned Unit Development

Commissioners have worked to refine the draft PUD ordinance. The current draft reflects staff work by regional planners at the Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission, as well as Town staff and interns. The Town has received advice, encouragement, and endorsement of this draft from technical experts at Virginia Housing Development Authority, Piedmont Environmental Council, Albemarle County, and the Berkley Group consultant.

The draft also reflects community engagement efforts over the course of four years, through the comprehensive plan update of 2018, a market study, the small area plan of 2021, and specific outreach on permit applications in 2021 and 2022. Methods included professional surveys, facilitated community meetings, focus groups, community petitions, social media discussions, formal public hearings, and door-to-door canvassing.

The PUD provides a high level of Town Council control over development, but it also opens broad flexibility for creative design. This appears to be the best answer for complex sites. **Staff recommend approval of the zoning text amendment.**

6a. Special Use Permit, Arts & Education Center, Hardware Street

Scottsville Center for the Arts and the Natural Environment owns a 13-acre parcel across Hardware Street from the cemetery. The site has a connection to the public easement on the Mink Creek Trail. The applicant requests an SUP for Arts and Education Center, consistent with their long-term plans as a community nonprofit. The Town created this use category in 2007 with the “SCAN Land” in mind, but never issued the permit. SCAN’s director Erin Root is available to make a presentation on the matter. **Staff recommend calling a public hearing** on the matter for December 5th.

6b. Zoning text amendment, Homestays

Town Council and Planning Commission expressed dissatisfaction with the SUP process for tourist lodgings. Town staff and the Berkley Group consultants examined options and recommend a category for *Homestays*. This is a fairly common solution in Virginia. It distinguishes the occasional rental of a room in an owner-occupied house from the rental of a vacant house owned by an investor. The draft makes homestays by-right in residential zones, while tourist lodgings, traditional B&Bs, and hotels would remain SUP uses in most areas. The intent is to flexibility for homeowners, without reducing the supply of rental homes. Town Council discussed this concept at work session and agreed with the general direction of this policy. **Staff recommend calling a public hearing** on the matter for December 5th.