Planning and Coordination Council Quarterly Meeting
November 15, 2012; 2:00 p.m.
Room 241, Albemarle County Office Building at McIntire Road

PACC Members in Attendance: Tom Foley, Pat Hogan, Maurice Jones, Ann Mallek, David Neuman, Dennis Rooker, Colette Sheehy, Kristin Szakos

Also in Attendance: Elaine Echols, Missy Creasy, Tim Rose, Deborah Van Eersel, Steve Williams, Joel DeNunzio, David Benish, Fred Missel. Also at the meeting: League of Women Voters representative, Neighborhood Representatives, Members from the Public, Media Representatives

1. Call to Order – Ann Mallek
Ms. Mallek, Chair of the Albemarle County Board of Supervisors, called the meeting to order at 2:05 p.m.

2. Approval of August 16, 2012 Meeting Minutes
Mr. Rooker moved approval of the August 16, 2012 minutes as written; Mr. Jones seconded. The motion carried by a voice call vote of 7-0.

3. **Area B Approvals (w/o southern urban area) w/Overview of City/County Comp Plan Status – Elaine Echols, Missy Creasy**

Ms. Echols, Principal Planner with Albemarle County, reported that Area B recommendations went to PACC-TECH on October 25th and were endorsed/recommended for approval. PACC-TECH also got an update on the plans that both the City and County are working on. Area A encompasses University property and the areas in B are University-related properties, for which there is some joint planning. We wanted to update these plans, but also incorporate them into the Comprehensive Plans for the City and County. Ms. Echols said that she, Julia Monteith, Missy Creasy and Fred Missel all have been working for several months on the recommendations of this plan with one of the goals being to modernize and update the language.

Ms. Echols said the first study was the Blue Ridge Hospital Neighborhood. Recommendations suggest this property retain its institutional designation but be available for office, R &D flex, light industrial; that it retain environmental resources on the site to the greatest extent possible; and that screening along Rt. 20 and 53 act as a buffer to the site which is very important to Monticello and the Thomas Jefferson Foundation. Buildings for Rt. 53 are not expected to exceed 4 stories and should be more compatible with the rural setting. The main entrance to the site is to be in compliance with VDOT requirements. Lastly, she said the entrance corridor overlay district development will be submitted for a non-binding review in keeping with those guidelines when it is developed. The bike and pedestrian system is expected to be on-site and connect to a system off-site.

Ms. Echols said most of the recommendations for the Lewis Mountain/U-Heights area were transportation related and came from a 1994 study. She said recommended improvements to Ivy Road are still valid. There are some issues related to the intersection of Ivy and Old Ivy Road which need to be corrected over time. Efforts are being made to create a better pedestrian area by adding sidewalks and bike lanes, providing safe and convenient access with sidewalks and pedestrian controls and street lights next to the sidewalks adding to the safety at night. Another recommendation is to provide for a multi-purpose path in the railroad right of way if the railroad ever abandons that particular right of way. She added that there are some heavily wooded slopes on Lewis Mountain Road in one particular area and those are recommended to be preserved.

Ms. Echols said the Milton Airport is a University Foundation-owned property, and was once an airfield during World War I. There are university uses in the hangar so the recommendation is to continue those uses and retain a buffer along Milton Road.

Ms. Echols said the recommendations for Birdwood, Fox Haven Farm and UVA related properties on Ivy Road are to retain the institutional use for the Birdwood Golf Course and to also retain the historic mansion and important outfields on that property. Included also is acknowledgement of the North Ridge and Medical Center properties. She stated that there is a conservation easement on a portion of Fox Haven Farm and a correction in language is needed. The recommended use continues to be neighborhood density/residential and there is a recommendation to retain the environmental resources and consider pedestrian connections east and west, especially from the Birdwood Golf Course into Ednam, Boar's Head and Bellair Subdivision. Since the last PACC-TECH meeting, a change in language was recommended to say "near term development is unlikely with the exception of educational uses included, but not limited to, a research station."

Ms. Echols said a portion of the Westover/Colonnades area is in the County's rural areas and will remain so; however, property in the development areas is recommended to remain neighborhood/density/residential. Acknowledgement of the by-pass and the limitations on access points is also in the Plan.

Ms. Echols said the Southern Urban Area B Study has not been updated because staff would like to have some additional discussion on the impact of the roads in this area. The County is developing a Master Plan for its southern and western neighborhoods and some of its land uses will be dependent on what happens with Sunset/Fontaine and the southern parkway. The Bent Drive connecting road is now expected to happen so decisions will be made based on these roads. Once conversations with the City, County and UVA take place, staff will work to finish the recommended land use plan that will then be presented to the southern and western neighborhoods and ultimately to both Planning Commissions.

Ms. Szakos suggested sponsoring co-neighborhood presentations for residents in those areas.

Ms. Echols asked for PACC's approval/endorsement of the language change for inclusion in the City and County Comprehensive Plans.

Mr. Rooker said the recommended changes seem to make sense and are consistent with what the County has wanted to do in those areas.

Mr. Szakos said she was pleased with the language regarding bike and pedestrian connectivity. She made a motion to approve revised language; Ms. Sheehy seconded. Motion carried by a 7-0 vote.

Ms. Creasy, Charlottesville's Planning Manager, reported on the status of the City's Comp Plan. When City staff presented to PACC-TECH last month, staff was in the middle of its comprehensive plan outreach meetings. Three public meetings were held and staff is just beginning to get data back. A mini-retreat with the City's Planning Commission is scheduled for November 27th with a focus on the land use chapter. All of the other chapters of the Comprehensive Plan will only involve more of an update. The One Community project is continuing and another joint City/County Planning Commission meeting is scheduled for December 4th. Currently, the Planning Commissioners are in teams, one City and one County Commissioner, who are working together to present recommendations that will be put into a packet and brought back to the whole group. Early in January, staff will begin working with Planning Commissioners on the different chapters and getting those finalized. The goal is to hold a joint public hearing on April 9th.

Ms. Echols said the County's process is similar to the City's. She said a work session is planned for next week to discuss rural areas and natural resources. Both Planning Commissions usually meet on the same night for the Comprehensive Plan work so, on November 27th, they will be working on the Parks & Green Systems section. Housing and Community Facilities is tentatively set for November. 29th as is the meeting with the southern and western neighborhoods. December 4th is a joint PC meeting. On December 18th, staff will be discussing recommendations from the southern and western neighborhood meetings. In January, there will be a transportation and developments areas meeting with Advisory councils on updated master plans and any minor changes that have taken place. There are a number of different master plans with different land use designations and staff is trying to standardize land use designations. The goal is to take a final version to the Planning

Commission in February at which time a date for a public hearing will be set in order to make a recommendation to the Board of Supervisors in March with potential adoption by the Board in the spring of 2013.

4. **UVA Research Park Strategic Plan – Deborah van Eersel**

Mr. Pat Hogan, University of Virginia Vice-President/Chief Operating Officer, reported that the University has three research parks – Fontaine, the University of Virginia Research Park and Blue Ridge. He said the University is very interested in promoting economic development for the region and strategic planning for the research parks will play an important role. He introduced Deborah van Eersel, who provided the following report:

Ms. van Eersel, UVAF's Chief of Staff and Director of Marketing, stated that the University underwent a strategic review of all of its research parks in an effort to: review the mission of those research parks; identify challenges and opportunities that might exist which are slightly different for each location; to get feedback from stakeholders; and to formulate recommendations about future development.

Ms. van Eersel noted the Blue Ridge Park is a 124-acre property located at the base of Monticello Mountain and was given to the University during the Gilmore administration. The University used it for some time as a hospital. Most of the buildings have been demolished except for those that have some historic significance. The property is a very nice piece of land that is strategically located at the interchange of I64 and Rt. 20. The University has no plans at this time to develop this property.

Ms. van Eersel noted that the Fontaine Research Park is adjacent to the University of Virginia and is located along the Fontaine/29 corridor. This property consists of 560,000 square feet of built-out space in nine buildings. Currently, this site consists of 1/3 office/administration; 1/3 clinical; 1/3 research operations. Because of its proximity to the University, the preferred use is medical, clinical, academic and scientific research.

Ms. van Eersel noted the UVA Research Park is north of town near the Airport and is a 562-acre piece of property consisting of approximately 500,000 square feet of built-out space in eight buildings. There are 24 tenants; four are UVA-related entities: the Center for Addiction, Research and Education, the Center for Research in Contraceptive and Reproductive Health, and the Center for Applied Biomechanics and the Applied Research Institute (ARI). ARI works with federal contractors who are closely associated with the National Ground Intelligence Center and Defense Intelligence Agency. There continues to be a distance issue for those associated with the University because the Research Park is 8 to 10 miles away. Providing some on-demand taxi service for University and/or tenant activities between the Park and the Grounds has been discussed and will be implemented this year and is to be funded by the Foundation. Some recommendations that came out of the planning exercise were: strengthen the University's relationship with Rivanna Station - UVA/UVAF realizes that it will need to invest in specialized infrastructure in order for that to happen. A lot of the work on these contracts takes place in secure, compartmented information facilities (SCIF spaces) and those types of facilities are costly to build. There are several of these facilities in the Park and is the kind of infrastructure that will help the University continue to work with partners in that industry. Discussions have taken place regarding the possibility that the Research Park could become a preferred location for later-stage start-up companies as well.

Ms. van Eersel noted that the Vice-President for Research is renowned throughout the country for working on innovation and bringing venture capital into the area and is an area that Charlottesville probably will grow and could benefit the Research Park as things progress. Another theme was to try and increase University of Virginia's presence in the UVA Research Park which will take some time. In order to build a critical mass in the Park with supported amenities, there will need to be a larger population. To the degree that the University has functions that are in town which are more administrative in nature and could possibly move out to the Park, that would allow the University to keep its core functions, research and academic functions near Grounds.

Ms. van Eersel noted that, in terms of future development opportunities, UVA/UVAF continues to coordinate with community partners, which is critically important. Strengthening outreach efforts with industry and finding synergies with companies that would work with the University in high tech ways is very important.

Ms. van Eersel said there was a time when the UVA Foundation thought there would be a housing component in the UVA Research Park but, because the area is now surrounded by many approved mixed-use developments which include housing, that is no longer being actively considered for the UVA Research Park.

Ms. Szakos asked about the possibility of bus rapid transit up Rt. 29. Ms. van Eersel said if the demand increases in the future, there may be a need for expanded transportation.

Mr. Rooker asked about current leasing. Ms. van Eersel noted that many of their tenants are related to the federal government so leasing has been stable.

5. **InSync Traffic Control Management System – Joe DeNunzio, Charlottesville Residency Engineer, Virginia Department of Transportation**

Mr. DeNunzio introduced Mike Clements, Signal Systems Manager, who is overseeing VDOT's adaptive control system. He also introduced Chris McDonald who is VDOT's Acting Regional Operations Director, Northwest Region – Culpeper/Staunton Districts. Mr. DeNunzio explained that the adaptive control system is new technology which can get the most efficient use of green timing by adapting to real time traffic conditions.

Mr. Clements explained that there is a striking difference between the way timing signals currently work and the way adaptive works. Currently, if a traffic signal needs re-timing, traffic counts must be taken and a timing plan is set up based on historical traffic volumes, which works great until there is an accident or a major event that occurs. When there is a lot of development in an area, it requires VDOT to re-time signals frequently. It can be fairly expensive to time traffic signals; most of the cost is in collecting the data. This practice assumes that traffic is consistent from day to day.

Mr. Clements said the adaptive system is different because it relies on system detectors. Instead of using historical data, the system can calculate how much green time is needed and immediately begins to distribute green time. The system also looks at multiple intersections. Adaptive is a computerized system which can communicate intersection to intersection, able to detect how many cars are coming down the road, how many that were just released, how soon they are going to be at a given location, and trying to set up progression "on the fly."

Mr. Clements said the benefits of the new system are: improvement in congestion, reduction in the number of vehicle stops on a given corridor and, at the same time, not increasing the amount of delays on side streets and, improvement of environmental conditions. The less a vehicle stops, the faster that vehicle travels down the roadway, the travel time is more consistent and there are fewer emissions/less fuel used. Incident management is another improvement of the adaptive system. Because adaptive reaction is real time, when there is an accident that creates a change in the traffic pattern, the system reacts in real time. He said incident management signal response benefits are harder to measure, but there are, nonetheless benefits to be found.

Mr. Clements said locations chosen for the pilot were corridors that: had fluctuations in traffic volume, had heavy main street volumes with somewhat heavy side streets but not over done; corridors that had special events or some other type of non-recurring congestion, corridors that were heavy commercial, and/or corridors that required frequent re-timing. VDOT looked for corridors that had state-wide significance in an effort to reduce the number of traffic signals along those corridors or at least not make the situation any worse. VDOT looked for corridors that had conflicts with other modes such as pedestrians, transit, etc. Lastly, VDOT looked for corridors that had support from the localities. The pilot project includes 13 corridors and 114 intersections, which will provide a good base for evaluations.

Mr. Clements said VDOT wanted a program that would work well with any traffic controller hardware. VDOT is using four different brands and needed a system that would communicate with all four. InSync, which was developed by Rhythm Engineering, met all the requirements. The base system cost is $25,000/intersection and includes a processor with 4 video cameras, one for each approach, and all the cables that connect. It does not include installation or the communication system which will push the cost to approximately $40,000-$45,000 depending on the desired capabilities. A pedestrian crossing with ped-heads adds $5,000 to the total cost.

Mr. Clements said the Virginia Center for Transportation and Innovation Research at UVA is in the process of looking at all of the pilot project locations. They are conducting 'before and after' studies in an effort to assess system effectiveness. Travel times, the number of stops and delays on the side streets will be measured. In the end, VDOT will learn the characteristics of where the system worked well, where there was no great benefit or where there was a negative result.

Mr. Clements said the US 250/Pantops corridor consists of 8 signals in 3 miles. Two additional signals were recently installed at Rt. 20 on each side of Rt. 250 and VDOT saw immediate results. The number of stops was reduced by 64% in the morning peak. In the evening, there was an 80% reduction in stops and no significant delays on the side streets. Those are big results for only 3 miles. Another benefit is the coordination with the City which was much easier because it was all one system. An additional benefit seen was when the Shadwell Bridge was temporarily closed. The system adapted very well to the changes in traffic volumes there. Mr. Clements said VDOT evaluates crash rates using three-year averages. This system has only been in place for one year, but studies are showing crashes are going down and that can be attributed to fewer stops on the roadway.

Mr. Clements stated that the corridor piloted in Fairfax County was on Braddock Road at Ox Road located at the corner of George Mason University. This corridor is about 2 miles long and has 5 signals. All 5 signals have pedestrian actuations. There is very heavy traffic volume on some of the side streets, especially coming in and out of the University, and has a major crossing arterial. There was a significant reduction in travel time in the mid-day and the PM peak, however, there was significant increases in delay on the side streets. In the eastbound lane during the off-peak direction, there was no significant difference in travel time. We turned the system off in the spring of 2012 at the request of the Board of Supervisors.

Mr. Clements pointed out some of the lessons learned thus far: If a corridor or an intersection is maxed out, there is not going to be a great benefit during peak hours; and VDOT should have done a better job of measuring the off-peaks. Also, corridors that are already functioning fairly well will not see a great benefit. Having better evaluation methods for major crossing arterials by looking at queues was something VDOT realized. A better job at communicating to the public when drastic changes are made was also recommended. He said communication is extremely important. Because this system relies on a broadband, Ethernet communication system which is somewhat new for VDOT traffic signals, the right communications need to be in place and must be reliable. If the system goes down, it is more difficult to re-boot a traffic signal.

Mr. Rooker said the Board of Supervisors allocated money in its Capital Improvement Plan to help fund an adaptive system for the Rt. 29 corridor.

Mr. DeNunzio said one of the difficulties with Rt. 29 is determining where the break in system should occur and the effects of that. He said the installation on Rt. 29 would be larger than any other pilot done to date and there may be some questions about the benefits/cost ratio because of its size. He said it will be important to wrap up the pilot program before VDOT begins to think about additional installations.

Mr. Rooker said every situation has unique factors and added that it would be important to begin thinking about how this system might work. The County currently has an ITS system on Rt. 29 which cost about $1.5 million. It took a long time to get that coordinated with the City system, but today, it is an integrated system.

6. **Livability Project Status/Update – Steve Williams, TJPDC**

Mr. Williams said the Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission (TJPDC) is in the process of working with City and County Planning Commissioners on the Livability Project. A member from each Planning Commission is reviewing language developed by TJPDC staff, City and County staff on issues such as land use, housing, transportation, environment, entrance corridors and historic resources. That process will continue through the end of November with a joint Planning Commission meeting scheduled for December 4th. Staff will report at that time on their particular processes and TJPDC staff will be providing information that was received from community conversations held throughout the region during October. TJPDC will produce a final report on that outreach project as well as the Planning Commission process. Those reports will be given to City and County staff for incorporation into their Comprehension Plans that are being prepared for approval and adoption. Once the City and County begin their adoption processes for Comp Plans, TJPDC staff will begin work on its final Livability product that will include an analysis of code and ordinance changes as well as a sustainability initiatives report.

7. **Identify Future Agenda Items**

For a future agenda, Ms. Szakos recommended further discussions between the City, County and University regarding the potential of an adaptive traffic program for Rt. 29.

Mr. Neuman announced the University is moving ahead with its Bike Share program next spring and would like to provide an update on that program at a future meeting.

8. **Adjourn**
Meeting was adjourned by Ms. Mallek at 4:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Diane Mullins
Recording Secretary