

Project Narrative For: 600 West Rio

Parcel Description: TMP 45-157, 45-158, 45-166, 45-167

Preapplication First Submittal: August 30, 2024

Preapplication Resubmittal: October 28, 2024

Pre-App Meeting Date: November 4, 2024

Concept Plan Submittal: February 17, 2025

TMP	ACREAGE	EXISTING ZONING	PROPOSED ZONING	COMP PLAN DESIGNATION
45-157	0.9540	CO, Commercial	NMD,	Urban Density
45-158	1.01	Office	Neighborhood	Residential,
45-166	0.49	Overlays: FBC;	Model District	Neighborhood
45-167	0.75	Entrance Corridor		Service Center
	3.204 Total			

Additional Zoning Considerations:

Airport Impact Area, Entrance Corridor

Location:

Approximately 600' northwest of the intersection of Rio Road and Berkmar Drive; frontage on Station Lane (private) and Greenfield Terrace (public)

Surrounding Uses:

Piano store, car dealer, print shop, building materials store.

Project Proposal:

Piedmont Realty Holdings III LLC (the “applicant”) seeks to rezone TMP(s) 45-157, 45-158, 45-166, 45-167 (together, the “property”) from Commercial Office (CO) to Neighborhood Model District (NMD). The applicant intends to construct several new multi-family and two family buildings, and preserve the existing five townhomes on the property while enabling the possibility for those units to be redeveloped at some point in the future, for a maximum of 153 units on the property. The applicant proposes to establish a Code of Development (COD) that will permit up to 48 dwelling units per acre; commercial uses are also permitted within the NMD but are not required.

The project proposes various recreational areas that may include an outdoor kitchen, courtyard, and/or dog park. On-site parking will be provided as a mixture of surface lots and podium parking; the applicant proposes a parking requirement of one space per residential unit. The project will provide affordable housing consistent with policies set forth in Housing Albemarle; 20% of the residential units will be designated as affordable at 60% AMI rent and income limits.

Per Sec 20A.8.b of the Code of Albemarle, each Neighborhood Model district is required to have at least two different general use classifications. Since non-residential square footage is proposed as allowed but not required, a waiver is requested for this requirement. It is not necessary to include commercial uses on this site as all proposed residential units will be within 1/4 mile of many existing commercial developments.

The site is subject to the Form Based Code Overlay, and so a development of similar size and scale could be realized on this property by electing to develop the property in accordance with those zoning regulations. However, there are several key hinderances within the Form Based Code that make this property difficult to develop under those regulations including the streetscape requirements, dedication of amenity space requirements, and road improvement requirements; and therefore the applicant is seeking approval of this rezoning request to develop the property in a manner that is aligned with the intent of the Form Based Code but that is not subject to some of the major hurdles of the Form Based Code that make the overlay difficult to develop within.

Consistency with the Comprehensive Plan:

The project is located within the Development Areas, which aims to accommodate new residential and mixed-use developments. This supports the county's goal of channeling growth into these areas rather than the Rural Area, aligning with the Comprehensive Plan's emphasis on managing growth effectively.

The property is located within the Rio29 planning area and is designated within the "Flex" character area in the Rio29 Small Area Plan ("SAP"). The project seeks to develop a form that is generally in accordance with recommendations in the SAP. The buildings will be of an urban form and the concept plan shows parking relegated from Rio Road; there will be parking visible from Greenfield Terrace and the visibility of those parking areas can be mitigated with screening.

The project will be consistent with recommendations for affordable housing as provided in the Housing Albemarle Plan.

Connectivity

Chapter 2 of the SAP sets forth the vision for a *"multimodal hub that has a connected network of complete streets, which are designed for all users."* The proposed project is consistent with this vision as it will increase pedestrian facilities and greenscape zones both along Rio Rd W and within Station Lane. The pedestrian path along Rio Rd is proposed as a six-foot sidewalk. If it were to be developed under the "Flex" requirements for the Form Based Code, this would be a six-foot sidewalk. Additionally, a sidewalk is consistent with nearby projects currently under development including Rio Rd Self Storage just across Berkmar Drive.

Character

Chapter 3 of the SAP sets for the vision for *"a vibrant and diverse mixed-use community with interesting character and human-scale built environment."* – This plan expresses goals to move away from the current form of Rio29 which is *"an auto-oriented commercial and retail area. The majority of its buildings are single-story and set back far from the streets.... such conditions are not conducive to walkability and do not provide the conditions necessary for vibrant streetscapes."* Establishing an urban form that is human scale and pedestrian oriented with a range of housing options will create more vibrant street networks. The proposed development includes heights of two to five stories and relegated structured and surface parking. The proposed primary street maximum front setback of 15' will help increase pedestrian orientation along with streetscape improvements. Projects with similar architectural

form, character, and orientation are being developed nearby, such as at 535 Rio Rd. W. The more projects like this that are approved, the closer Rio29 will come to the visions described in the SAP. This project at 600 Rio Rd. W can be a catalyst for desired transformation within the Rio29 Corridor.

Conservation

Chapter 4 of the Rio29 Small Area Plan is the vision to transform Rio29 *“into a place enhanced through conservation with a network of sustainable and usable public spaces that enrich community and preserve and enhance natural resources.”* Included in the plan’s map of future conservation networks is the county-owned land on parcel TMP 45-94, which is adjacent to this project’s proposed development on TMP 45-157. TMP 45-94 is proposed as a potential future public amenity space, including a “natural area” park. The owner of the proposed development for 600 Rio has been in conversation with the county about the potential of an easement reservation on TMP 45-157, which could accommodate the County’s future construction of an entrance to the new county park on TMP 45-94. Providing access through this parcel would significantly minimize the County’s costs of constructing a commercial entrance to access TMP 45-94. The entrance would otherwise be located on Berkmar Dr. and need to adhere to commercial entrance standards, which would require the construction of turn lanes. The owner of TMP 45-157 is very willing to continue the conversation about easement access to a new county park. The currently proposed concept plan preserves the option for this potential entrance easement. In addition to potentially facilitating greater public access to a large new amenity space, the proposed development includes conditions for 15% amenity space and 20% greenspace within the Property.

PUBLIC NEED OR BENEFIT

Albemarle County has established a clear goal in creating a diverse housing stock in form and affordability as the County’s population continues to grow. The Charlottesville-Albemarle area has continuously attracted new residents to the Central Virginia region as a desirable place to live and work. Housing Albemarle (2021) and the present comprehensive plan update, AC44, indicate that one of the County’s primary goals is to provide accessible and affordable housing for its community members. Where Albemarle County’s designated Development Areas total approximately 37 square miles¹, the County seeks to encourage a mixture of uses with additional density and integrated multimodal transportation networks within designated growth areas. Considering the site’s location nearby the Seminole Trail commercial corridor and its direct access to Route 29, the property provides an excellent opportunity for mixed use development. Nearby properties such as 535 Rio Rd. W. are proposed to develop with similar forms as the the proposal for this project. The Property aligns with the developing character of the Rio Rd corridor.

IMPACTS ON PUBLIC FACILITIES

& PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE

Analysis for public facilities and public infrastructures is provided below. Please note that all of the proposed density could be realized by right under the current zoning designation through the Form Based Code. Therefore, there is no impact from the rezoning proposal.

Water and sewer:

The property is to be served by public water and sanitary infrastructure. The property is proposed to connect to existing public water and public sanitary line located in Station Ln. Demand will not exceed what could

¹ Land Use Topic Report for AC44

be developed under current by-right zoning. The waterline internal to the site is anticipated to be upgraded to support this development.

Traffic:

The following trip generation has been provided per ITE Trip Generation, 11th Edition. These provided yields could result from by right development, therefore the project has no net impact.

	ITE Code	Independent Variable	AM			PM			Daily Total
			In	Out	Total	In	Out	Total	
Mid-Rise Multifamily	221	148 dwelling units	14	39	53	38	25	63	659
Single Family Attached	215	5 dwelling units	1	2	3	3	1	4	36
TOTALS			15	41	56	41	26	67	695

IMPACTS ON SCHOOLS

The Property is located within the Northern Feeder Pattern and so children within this development attending public school will attend Agnor-Hurt Elementary school, Burley Middle School, and Albemarle High School. The estimated student yields below are derived from the Albemarle County Long Range Planning Advisory Committee's (LRPAC) 2023 Recommendations Report.

APPENDIX D: Student Yield Ratios

Assumed Student Yield Ratios

Boundary	Apartment	Condo	Mobile	Single Family	Townhome	Dist Average
AGNOR-HURT	0.08	0.10	0.45	0.14	0.06	0.13
BAKER-BUTLER	0.09	0.20	0.33	0.21	0.06	0.22
BROADUS WOOD	0.09	0.20	0.47	0.13	0.06	0.13
BROWNSVILLE	0.05	0.20	0.33	0.28	0.06	0.24
CROZET	0.19	0.20	0.27	0.20	0.06	0.19
GREER	0.14	0.23	0.47	0.12	0.11	0.13
HOLLYMEAD	0.09	0.20	0.47	0.26	0.19	0.21
IVY	0.21	0.20	0.47	0.21	0.06	0.21
MOUNTAIN VIEW	0.05	0.20	0.56	0.14	0.06	0.12
MURRAY	0.09	0.13	0.47	0.14	0.06	0.13
RED HILL	0.09	0.20	0.47	0.09	0.06	0.09
SCOTTSVILLE	0.09	0.20	0.23	0.23	0.06	0.23
STONE-ROBINSON	0.02	0.10	0.47	0.11	0.02	0.10
STONY POINT	0.13	0.20	0.14	0.15	0.06	0.14
WOODBROOK	0.13	0.34	0.47	0.13	0.01	0.14
ELEMENTARY AVERAGE	0.09	0.20	0.47	0.17	0.06	
BURLEY	0.03	0.05	0.22	0.06	0.02	0.05
HENLEY	0.03	0.10	0.24	0.10	0.06	0.10
JOURNEY	0.06	0.09	0.28	0.07	0.06	0.12
LAKESIDE	0.02	0.08	0.08	0.13	0.10	0.05
WALTON	0.01	0.08	0.06	0.05	0.06	0.06
MIDDLE AVERAGE	0.04	0.08	0.22	0.08	0.06	
ALBEMARLE	0.06	0.10	0.27	0.12	0.03	0.10
MONTICELLO	0.03	0.08	0.29	0.09	0.01	0.08
WESTERN ALBEMARLE	0.04	0.14	0.12	0.15	0.14	0.14
HIGH AVERAGE	0.05	0.10	0.26	0.12	0.02	
Housing Type Average	0.18	0.38	0.95	0.37	0.14	

Red yields indicate averages based on incomplete data.

Source: Cooperative Strategies / Albemarle County Public Schools Subdivision Yield Analysis (August 23, 2021)

The projected student yields for this project are distributed between townhome and apartment unit types. For the purposes of this yield analysis, it was assumed that 5 townhome units and 148 apartment units would be constructed within the development:

	Apartment Yield (148 units)	Townhome Yield (5 units)	Total
Agnor Hurt Elementary	0.08	.06	12.14
Burley Middle School	0.03	.02	4.54
Albemarle High	0.06	.03	9.03
			25.71

The 2023 LRPAC Recommendations Report projects no capacity conflicts at Agnor Hurt or Burley through the 33/34 school year. Albemarle County High School currently has and is projected to have capacity conflicts in the coming years however; the construction of Center II will alleviate capacity pressure on Albemarle High School by adding 400 seats in the 26/27 school year. The opening of Center II will alleviate capacity conflicts prior to the completion of this project. As with the traffic analysis, the

projected net impact to schools from this project is negligible given that these units could be developed under by-right zoning.

IMPACTS ON PUBLIC SAFETY SERVICES

According to the Housing Report for AC44, January 2023, the average county household size is 2.4 people per household. It should be noted that this household average does not distinguish between unit types and the proposed townhome and multifamily units would likely hold less than the average people per household, since the County-wide average takes into account single family detached dwellings. Following this average, there could be 367.2 new residents in this development. This same number could be achieved through by-right development under the property's current zoning. The residents would be served by the Jefferson District Sector 1 Beat 7 police force, Albemarle County Fire Rescue, Station 8, Seminole Trail Volunteer Fire Department Station, and Albemarle County Fire Rescue, Rescue Station 18. Albemarle County Fire Rescue Station 18 is currently operating above capacity for EMS services, with approximately 30-40% concurrent dispatch occurrences, where the station experiences simultaneous calls. Albemarle County anticipates to add "between 25,800 and 30,300 new residents over the next 20 years,"² and future development will concentrate in the Development Areas, where public services are readily available and are able to utilize well-connected, regularly maintained infrastructure. The 2015 comprehensive plan clearly emphasizes that community facilities need to be strategically planned for to meet population needs as objective 9 of the Development Areas seeks to "match infrastructure availability and capacity with new development, especially in Priority Areas. The comprehensive plan goes on to specifically identify that "emergency services, such as fire, rescue, and police...are essential services for the community and, along with schools, should have the highest priority for funding" (12.5) and that "firefighting and rescue facilities and equipment [should] meet the characteristics of particular services areas." (12.19). The proposed rezoning has no net impact on these public safety services. All of these impacts would be the same as if the property were to be developed through by-right density allowances.

IMPACTS ON ENVIRONMENTAL FEATURES

There are managed steep slopes on the property. For any proposed grading that takes place within designated managed slope areas, the activity will comply with Sec. 30.7.5 of the Albemarle County Zoning Ordinance. Stormwater management on the site will comply with the applicable DEQ and VSMP regulations.

² Albemarle County Land Use Buildout Analysis, 25 (September 2022)