



Albemarle County Planning Commission Staff Report

Project Name: ZMA-2025-00001 600 Rio Road W.	Staff: Cameron Langille, Principal Planner
Planning Commission Hearing: February 24, 2026	Board of Supervisors Public Hearing: To be Scheduled
Owners: Piedmont Realty Holdings LLC, Station Lane Holdings LLC	Applicant: Piedmont Realty Holdings LLC
Acreage: 3.20	Rezone from: CO Commercial Office to NMD Neighborhood Model District
Tax Map Parcels (TMP): 04500-00-00-15700, 04500-00-00-15800, 04500-00-00-16600, and 04500-00-00-16700	Location: 555 Station Lane, Charlottesville, VA 22901
School Districts: Agnor (Elementary); Burley (Middle School); Albemarle (High School)	By-right use: CO Commercial Office - offices, supporting commercial and service; residential by special use permit (15 units/ acre)
Magisterial District: Rio	Proffers: Yes
Proposal NMD Neighborhood Model District to allow 153 multifamily and townhouse units and up to 20,000 sq.ft. of non-residential uses.	Requested Dwelling Units: 153 units maximum
DA (Development Area): Rio29 Small Area Plan	Comp. Plan Designation: Flex Area within Rio29 Small Area Plan – area intended to allow a flexibility of uses including residential, commercial, retail, office, institutional, and employment uses. Buildings with heights of 2-5 stories, built close to the street, with pedestrian access and relegated parking.
Affordable Housing Provided: Yes	Affordable Housing AMI (%): 60% of AMI as determined for a period of 30 years for rental units
Character of Property: Five (5) multifamily residential units, two single family detached homes, two undeveloped properties	Use of Surrounding Properties: Offices and retail uses to the east and south, residential uses to the south and southwest including the Oakleigh development, detached residential uses to the west, undeveloped property to the north

Positive Aspects: 1. The request is consistent with the County's Growth Management Policy because it provides new housing within a designated development area. 2. The request is consistent with the form and site design standards of the Rio29 Small Area Plan. 3. The request provides a new 8' wide sidewalk along Rio Road W. which is a transportation improvement recommended by the Rio29 Small Area Plan. 4. The request provides land that could be dedicated to the County to allow construction of a vehicular and pedestrian connection to a public amenity space identified by the Rio29 Small Area Plan.	Concerns: 1. Agnor Elementary school is projected to be over capacity in future academic years, and this project would constitute up to 20 additional elementary students.
RECOMMENDATION: Based on the identified positive aspects, staff recommends approval of ZMA-2025-00001, SE2025-00007, and SE-2025-00008.	

STAFF PERSON:
PLANNING COMMISSION:
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS:

Cameron Langille, Principal Planner
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CHARACTER OF THE AREA

The proposal seeks to rezone Tax Map Parcels (TMP) 04500-00-00-15700, 04500-00-00-15800, 04500-00-00-16600, and 04500-00-00-16700. All four properties are currently zoned CO Commercial Office and are located within the Rio29 Form Based Code Overlay District (optional), Airport Impact Area (AIA) Overlay Zoning District, Entrance Corridor (EC) Overlay Zoning District, and the Managed Steep Slopes Overlay District. In total, they measure 3.20 acres and are located on the north side of Rio Road W. between Berkmar Drive and Woodburn Road. Currently, TMP 04500-00-00-16700 is developed with five (5) multifamily dwelling units in the form of 2-story attached townhomes. Another standalone single-family home exists on the parcel. A single-family detached structure that has been approved for office use is located on TMP 04500-00-00-16600. TMPs 04500-00-00-15700 and 04500-00-00-15800 are currently undeveloped.

The properties can be accessed directly off Rio Road W. via Station Lane, which is a 30' wide private street. An additional access point is provided by a 50' wide public road known as Greenfield Terrace, which intersects Berkmar Drive to the east. The properties are located in the Neighborhood 1 Comprehensive Plan Area and are subject to the recommendations of the [Rio29 Small Area Plan](#). More detailed discussion of how the proposal relates to the Rio29 Small Area Plan is included later in the report.

A mix of uses surround the subject parcels. Numerous professional offices, medical/dental offices, and commercial retail businesses are located to the east and south. The properties directly south across Rio Road W. are known as Berkmar Crossing and feature retail, offices, and commercial services uses. To the southwest is the Oakleigh development which features multifamily residential uses and will eventually include additional attached dwelling units. Some standalone single-family detached homes are located to the west between the subject properties and Woodburn Road. To the north of the subject properties is an undeveloped parcel of land owned by Albemarle County. This parcel abuts the property occupied by Agnor Elementary school.

Abutting properties are described below:

	<i>Land Use</i>	<i>Zoning District</i>	<i>Comp Plan Designation</i>
<i><u>North</u></i>	Undeveloped property	R6 Residential	Flex Area – Rio29 Small Area Plan
<i><u>South</u></i>	Berkmar Crossing development, Oakleigh development to the southwest	PDMC Planned Development Mixed Commercial, NMD Neighborhood Model District	Flex Area – Rio29 Small Area Plan
<i><u>East</u></i>	Professional offices, commercial services and retail uses	CO Commercial Office	Flex Area – Rio29 Small Area Plan
<i><u>West</u></i>	Single-family detached dwellings	R4 Residential	Flex Area – Rio29 Small Area Plan

BACKGROUND

Previous planning applications approved for TMPs 04500-00-00-15700, 04500-00-00-15800, 04500-00-00-16600, and 04500-00-00-16700 include:

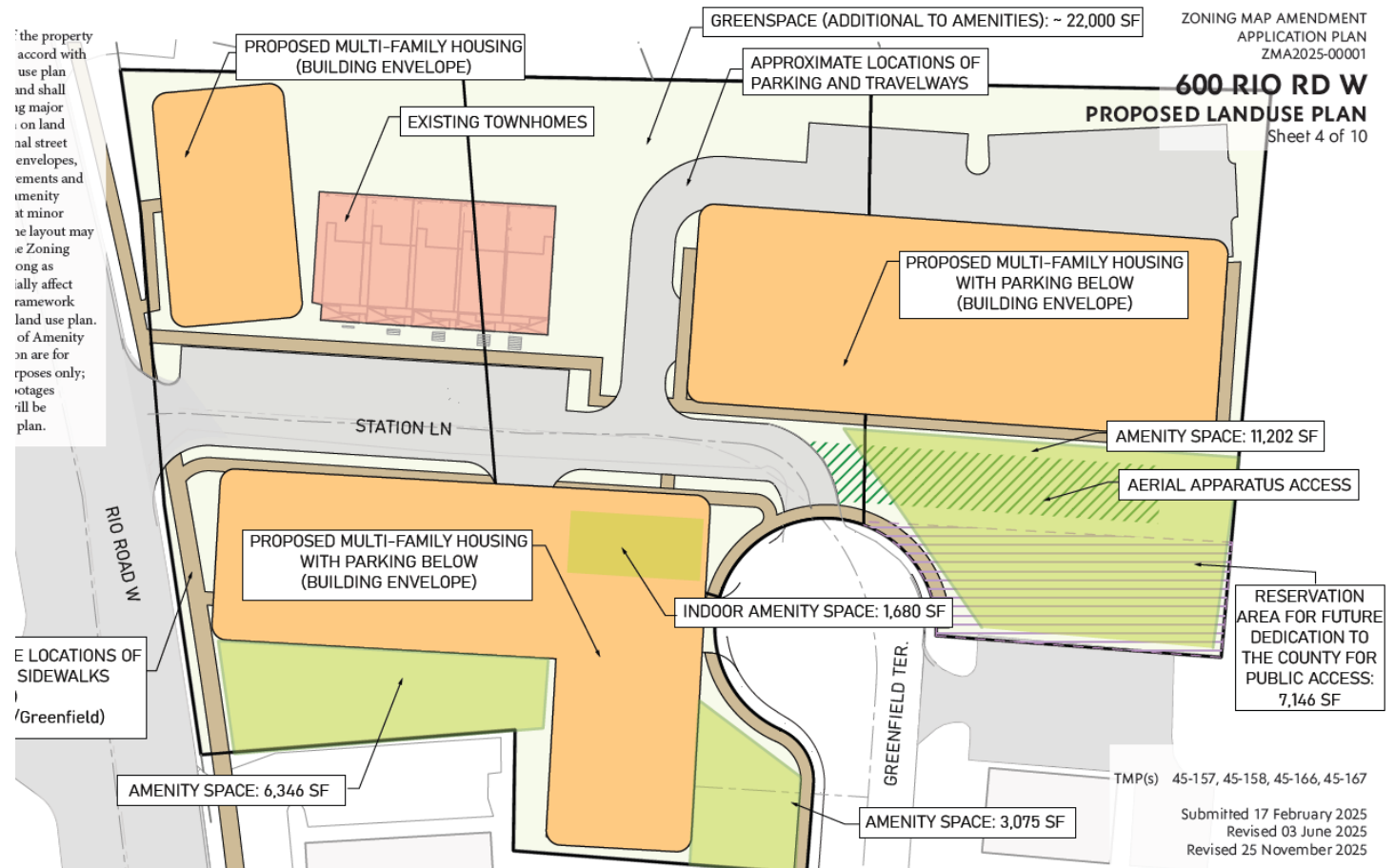
- SP200000074 – Special Use Permit to approve six residential units on TMP 04500-00-00-16700. Although office uses are by-right in the CO District, the Special Use Permit also showed the existing

detached home on TMP 04500-00-00-16600 being converted to an office and a new 10,000 sq.ft. office building on TMPs 04500-00-00-15700 and 04500-00-00-15800.

- SDP200800160 – Site plan to allow development of the parcels as shown on SP200000074. All proposed buildings/uses mentioned in the SP summary above were constructed except for the 10,000 sq.ft. office building on TMPs 04500-00-00-15700 and 04500-00-00-15800.
- Form-based Code Overlay District- The County adopted the Rio29 Form-Based Code Overlay District (Rio29 FBC District) on September 1, 2021. The Rio29 FBC District was created to encourage a development pattern consistent with the vision described in the Rio29 Small Area Plan. The subject properties are within the Rio29 FBC District. The Rio29 FBC is an optional zoning tool. Property owners who do not opt into the Rio29 FBC retain their existing zoning, or may still seek a rezoning application to change their existing underlying zoning.

SPECIFICS OF THE PROPOSAL

The ZMA-2025-00001 application proposes to rezone the property to the NMD Neighborhood Model District. A detailed narrative of the request is provided in Attachment 1. If the ZMA is approved, development of the property would follow the Application Plan (Attachment 2) and Code of Development (COD).



Details of the proposal include:

A maximum of 153 dwelling units total, including multifamily dwellings and townhomes. This includes retaining the five existing townhome/multifamily units with the possibility for future redevelopment. maximum of 20,000 sq.ft. of non-residential uses, but with no minimum non-residential requirement. The list of permitted non-residential uses is included in Table A on pages 2-3 of the COD (Attachment 3).

Access to the development would be provided by Station Lane which is an existing private street that with direct access onto Rio Road W. The development would upgrade the existing driveway entrance onto Greenfield Terrace to allow a second access point that leads to Berkmar Drive. Other pertinent transportation improvements proposed by the application include installation of a new 8' wide sidewalk along the property frontage of Rio Road W. Internally, Station Lane would feature 6' wide sidewalks along both sides of the street. Parking within the development would include a mix of on-street parking along Station Lane, outdoor parking lots, and ground-level parking within some of the multi-family buildings.

The applicant has also requested a Special Exception (SE-2025-00007) to waive requirements related to uses in the NMD district (Attachment 5). County Code §18-20A.8(b) of the Zoning Ordinance requires NMD districts to have a minimum of two general land use classifications (residential, commercial, institutional, industrial, parks or recreational facilities open to the public). The Special Exception is needed because the COD does not commit to providing a minimum amount of non-residential uses, which means the project could be developed entirely as residential uses. A detailed analysis of this request is provided later in the report

The Code of Development requires a minimum of 22,303 sq.ft. (16%) of amenities and 27,878 sq.ft. (20%) of greenspace to be provided throughout the project. Exact details of the amenities proposed would be determined during the site plan stage, but could include active recreation areas, dog parks, outdoor kitchen, outdoor plaza spaces, and fitness rooms within the multifamily buildings. A key positive component of the proposal is that the Application Plan and Proffer Statement (Attachment 4) require a 7,146 sq.ft. portion of the northern amenity space to be reserved for future dedication to Albemarle County for park access for a period of ten years. The property north of the site (TMP 45-94) has been identified as a potential future public park. Albemarle County Parks & Recreation staff have indicated that this reservation area within the site would significantly minimize the County's costs of constructing a vehicular entrance to access TMP 45-94. Without the proffered reservation area, the only other option to access TMP 45-94 would be from Berkmar Drive. Any entrance onto Berkmar Drive would need to adhere to VDOT commercial entrance standards, which includes construction of turn lanes within the existing right-of-way.

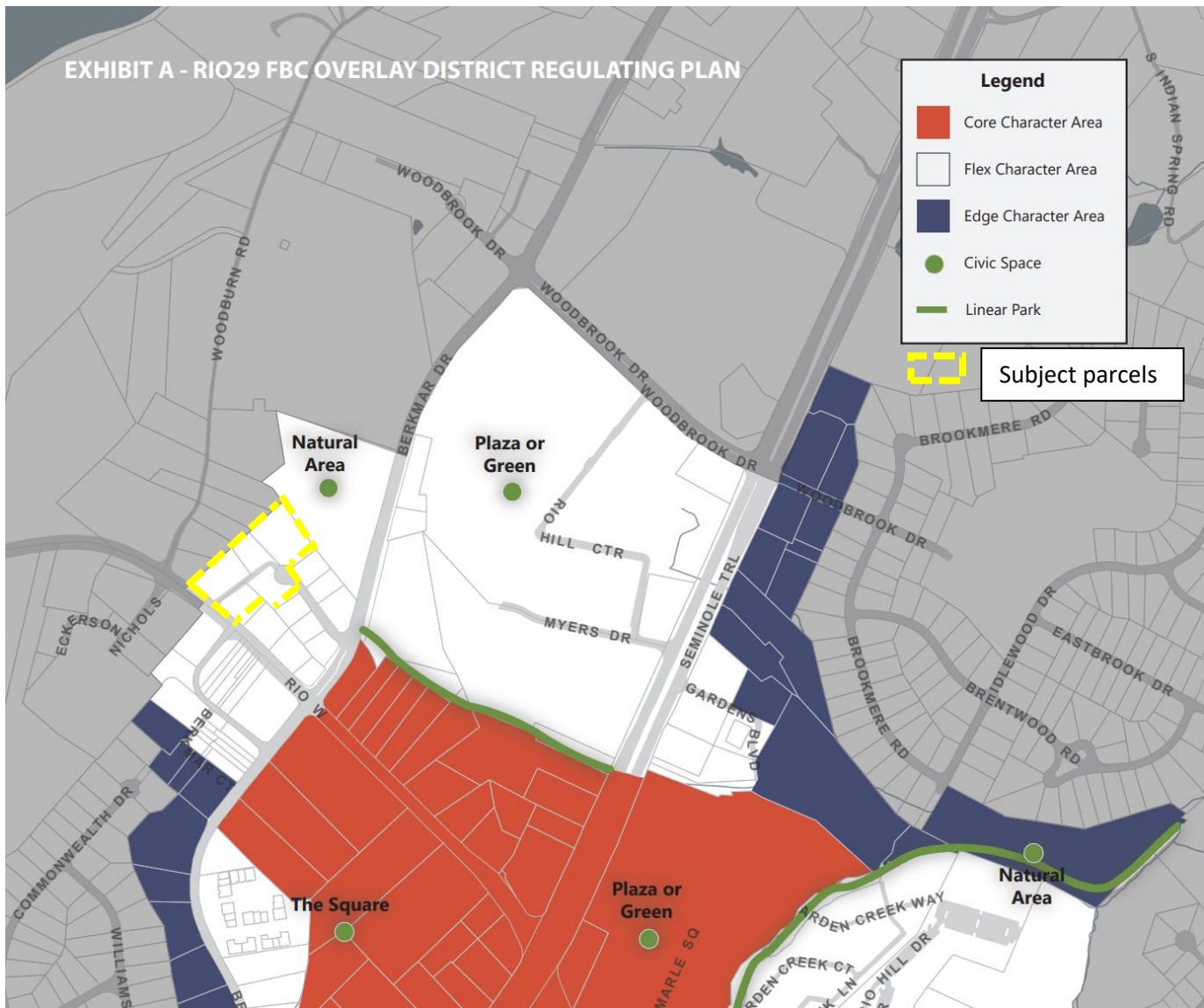
To address concerns about whether the application meets the Rio29 SAP amenity percentage recommendations, the applicant has submitted a second Special Exception application (SE-2025-00008) to allow the minimum amount of amenities provided to be 16% (Attachment 6). A detailed analysis of this request is provided later in the report.

COMMUNITY MEETING

A community meeting was held for this proposal on April 24, 2025 with the Places29-Rio Community Advisory Committee (CAC). There were no significant concerns expressed. A copy of the meeting minutes are available [HERE](#).

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The property is located in the Neighborhood 1 Comprehensive Plan Area and are subject to the recommendations of the [Rio29 Small Area Plan](#). In regard to future land use recommendations specifically, the Rio29 Small Area Plan (SAP) identifies the land use category that applies to each property as the Flex Area future land use typology.



The Flex Area allows for a mixture of uses, including residential and non-residential. There is no maximum density recommendation for residential uses. Guidance for private developments is focused on building form and site design standards. Permitted non-residential use types include “employment, recreational, cultural, and civic uses.” The ZMA application is consistent with the SAP recommendations for land uses, building height, stepbacks, parking, building and block sizes in the Flex Area.

Transportation recommendations from the Rio29 SAP relevant to this proposal can be seen on the Connectivity Plan (page 15 of the SAP).



The primary transportation recommendations applicable to this site are new sidewalks along Rio Road W. and internal streets. The application is generally consistent with the recommended future street cross-section improvements called for along Rio Road W. (including a new 8' wide sidewalk and 8' wide planting strip) and internally along Station Lane/Greenfield Terrace (new 6' wide sidewalks and 5' planting strips).

Affordable Housing

The proposed rezoning meets the general housing strategies and objectives of Housing Albemarle by increasing housing opportunities in the Development Area:

Objective 1: Increase the supply of housing to meet the diverse housing needs of current and future Albemarle County residents.

Strategy 1a: Allow, encourage, and incentivize a variety of housing types (such as bungalow courts, triplexes and fourplexes, accessory dwelling units, live/work units, tiny homes, modular homes, and apartment buildings); close to job centers, public transit and community amenities; and affordable for all income levels; and promote increased density in the Development Areas.

This application was submitted post-March 2024 and is therefore subject to current Housing Albemarle standards and practices, which recommends that new residential rezonings provide 20% of the total proposed units as affordable housing at 60% of the Area Median Income (AMI). The Code of Development requires that 20% of the rental units would be provided as affordable units at 60% AMI with an affordability period requirement of 30 years. If developed to the maximum 153 units, this would create 31 new affordable housing dwellings.

The Albemarle County Housing Office has indicated that the ZMA is consistent with the Housing Albemarle policy.

ZONING ORDINANCE REQUIREMENTS

The purpose and intent of the NMD Zoning District (County Code §18-20A) is to establish a planned development district in which traditional neighborhood development, as established in the County's Neighborhood Model, will occur. The NMD is intended to provide for compact, mixed-use developments with an urban scale, massing, density, and an infrastructure configuration that integrates diversified uses within close proximity to each other within the development areas identified in the comprehensive plan.

The particular uses permitted within a particular district, as well as the character, form and density of the development, shall be derived from the comprehensive plan, including the land use plan for the applicable development area, the master plan for the applicable development area, and the Neighborhood Model. Density shall be achieved with careful attention to design, as articulated in the Neighborhood Model.

These regulations are intended to provide an applicant with maximum flexibility in creating and implementing the general development plan and the code of development.

Anticipated impact on public facilities and services:

Transportation:

The properties are accessed primarily from Rio Road W. via Station Lane which is a 30' wide private street. Station Lane ends where its pavement touches the right-of-way of Greenfield Terrace, which is a 50' public road maintained by the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT). Rio Road W. currently has no sidewalks along the frontage shared with the subject parcels. The ZMA proposes to construct a new 8' wide sidewalk along Rio Road W. which is consistent with the transportation recommendations of the Rio29 SAP. The ZMA proposes to maintain and improve Station Lane with additional pedestrian infrastructure along both sides of the street. No traffic impact analysis (TIA) was required based on the number of units proposed, however the applicant has provided trip generation estimates of 695 trips per day. County Transportation Planning staff and the VDOT are supportive of the two site entrances and have no objections to the proposal.

Schools:

Students living in the Project would be within the current school districts for Agnor Elementary School, Burley Middle School, and Albemarle High School.

The Albemarle County Public Schools (ACPS) [2025 capacity report](#) identifies the existing capacity and projected future enrollment at each school level. Existing capacity and projected future enrollment at each school are as follows:

School	Enrollment Capacity 25/26	Current Enrollment	ZMA-2025-00001 Student Projection	Projected Effect
Agnor E.S.	450	449	20	Remain over capacity
Burley M.S.	693	506	8	Remain under capacity
Albemarle H.S.	1,757	1,875	15	Remain over capacity

Burley Middle School is currently under capacity, and the project would not create a capacity conflict at the middle school level. Albemarle High School is currently over capacity and Agnor Elementary is projected to become over capacity in future academic years. The ZMA would contribute additional students at both school levels.

However, it should be noted that two capital improvement projects are currently underway that would affect capacity conflicts projections at the high school level. One project is adding a second-floor connector wing at Albemarle High School. This project is underway with an expected completion date during the 2026/2027 school year. It is expected to add additional capacity that would accommodate up to 115 students. The second project is construction of the ACE Academy Lambs Lane (aka High School Center II) project, which is also underway at the Lambs Lane school campus. This school is projected to serve up to 400 students per day once complete. Combined, these projects will increase capacity by 515 students at the high school level. This means that future expected capacity at the high school level would be more than enough to accommodate anticipated enrollment plus the additional 15 students generated by the ZMA.

Parks

No public parks are called for on the subject properties by the Comprehensive Plan. However, the proposal is proffering an area that could be dedicated to the County in the future to establish vehicular and pedestrian access to a potential future public park that abuts the site to the north. As noted earlier in the report, this would greatly alleviate the cost of establishing access to the park site, and it is supported by County Parks & Recreation Department staff.

Fire and Rescue:

Fire and Rescue has reviewed this rezoning application and has no objection to the proposal. All requirements of the Fire Code would be met at site development plan review.

Utilities:

The subject property is within the Albemarle County Service Authority (ACSA) jurisdictional area for both water and sewer utilities. Both utilities are available to serve the property. ACSA staff have indicated that the development would not result in any adverse impacts to water or sewer service delivery to the subject parcel or neighboring properties.

Anticipated impact on environmental, cultural and historic resources:

No impacts to environmental, cultural, or historic resources are anticipated as the property does not contain any of these features.

Anticipated impact on nearby and surrounding properties:

No adverse impacts are anticipated on nearby or surrounding properties based on the land uses and form proposed. There are many existing commercial, office, and residential uses within the surrounding area. The Oakleigh development is southwest of the site and features a residential development of similar scale to what is proposed by the ZMA.

Public need and justification for the change:

The County's growth management policy states that new residential development should occur in the designated Development Areas where infrastructure and services are provided, rather than in the Rural Area. This development is within Neighborhood 1 of the Comprehensive Plan. It would provide additional housing and potentially non-residential uses on a parcel that is located in the Flex Area of the Rio29 Small Area Plan.

Proffers

The proffer statement is attached to the staff report as Attachment 5. It reinforces notes on the Application Plan that require reservation of an area for future dedication to Albemarle County for park access to the north.

SE-2025-00007 – REQUEST TO WAIVE MIXTURE OF USES REQUIREMENT

County Code §18-20A.8(b) (below) requires NMD projects to have at least two general land use categories. However, this requirement can be waived by the Board of Supervisors:

Each district shall have at least two different general use classifications (i.e., residential, commercial, industrial, institutional, parks or recreational facilities open to the public); provided that this requirement may be waived by the board of supervisors if a different use is already present within one-quarter mile of the proposed district and accomplishes the mixture of uses within the neighborhood sought to be achieved by this section to an equivalent degree.

The applicant has submitted a special exception request to not require two land use types. Although the COD allows for up to 20,000 sq.ft. on non-residential uses, there is no minimum amount of non-residential required. This means that the project could feature entirely residential uses once developed. The requirement can be waived if the following findings are met:

if a different use is already present within one-quarter mile of the proposed district,

A wide mix of uses are present within a ¼ mile of the site. Numerous commercial retail and commercial service business such as the Rio Hill Shopping Center are within a ¼ mile radius. Professional and medical offices, institutional uses (Northside Library and Agnor Elementary), and potentially a future County-owned park open to the public also fall within ¼ mile of the proposed district. This finding is met.

and accomplishes the mixture of uses within the neighborhood sought to be achieved by this section to an equivalent degree.

The proposed district could feature non-residential uses such as offices, retail, restaurants, health spas, and child day centers. The application also meets the requirement to feature two housing types (multifamily and attached single-family dwellings). Staff believe this finding is met.

Recommendation for SE-2025-00007:

Staff recommends approval of SE-2025-00007 because it is consistent with the findings necessary to approve such a request as specified in County Code §18-20A.8(b).

SE-2025-00008 – REQUEST TO REDUCE MINIMUM AREA OF AMENITY SPACE REQUIREMENT

County Code §18-20A.5(b) requires that NMD districts provide acreage devoted to greenspace, amenities, and recreational facilities as required by County Code §18-4.16. County Code §18-20A.9 (b) requires NMD district to have a minimum amount (percentage of gross acreage of the area to be rezoned) to be devoted to greenspace and amenities on application plans.

For areas having a land use designation not addressed in subsections [20A.9\(b\)\(1\)](#) and [20A.9\(b\)\(2\)](#), the recommendations of the applicable provisions of the comprehensive plan shall be guidance on the minimum area devoted to amenities. For properties within the Rio29 Small Area Plan, private developments are recommended to devote 15-20% of their acreage to amenities.

Although this project would be required to contain a minimum of 16% amenity space by the Code of Development, the applicant has chosen to submit this exception request to ameliorate any potential concerns that the project needs 17-20% of its acreage devoted to amenities.

The minimum area devoted to amenities may be reduced by the board of supervisors at the request of the applicant. In acting on a request, the board shall consider these factors:

the relationship of the site to adjoining or nearby properties containing amenities;

Amenity spaces will be provided as the project develops. Amenity facilities allowed by the Code of Development include dog parks, active outdoor recreation spaces, outdoor plazas and kitchens, and fitness rooms within new buildings. These recreational facilities are provided in lieu of those required by County Code §18-4.16, which would be tot lots, half-court basketball courts, etc.

Most importantly, the Rio29 SAP recommends a range between 15-20% of the gross site acreage for the amount of amenity space required in private developments. The exception calls for a minimum of 16% of the site acreage to be amenities, which is consistent with the range guidance from the SAP.

the proportion of residential uses to nonresidential uses proposed;

The application proposes a minimum of 28 and maximum of 153 residential units. There is no minimum non-residential use requirement, but the development could feature up to 20,000 sq.ft. of non-residential uses. Staff believe that providing 16% of the site acreage as amenity spaces is adequate based on the number of units proposed.

the known future uses of the adjoining properties;

The Rio29 SAP states the following:

“Development of property adjacent to a public amenity space identified on the Conservation Plan should have the opportunity to contribute to the development of those facilities or expand upon existing facilities, as a substitution for required on-site facilities.”

Although it is not a certainty, there is the potential for a County-owned public park to be established on the property which abuts the site to the north. The Rio29 Future Conservation Plan identifies that parcel as a public amenity space that is important to the larger recreation network.

The Application Plan and Proffer Statement commit to reserving an area for future dedication to Albemarle County to establish a pedestrian and vehicular connection to the park. The park and the connection would afford residents with direct access to many different types of recreational amenities that may eventually exist within the park. The applicant has coordinated diligently with County staff to ensure that the location and size of the reservation area identified in the application materials is suitable for the County to construct the park connection. This finding is met.

and whether a reduction would better achieve the neighborhood model goals of the comprehensive plan.

The request would enhance the application's consistency with the Interconnected Streets and Transportation Networks principle by providing the opportunity to establish new and valuable inter-parcel connection. Not only would vehicles be able to use the interconnection, but other modes of travel (pedestrian, bicycle) would be able to use it, so the request is also consistent with the Multi-Modal Transportation Opportunities principle.

Recommendation for SE-2025-00008:

Staff recommend approval of SE-2025-00008 because it is consistent with the findings necessary to approve such a request as specified in County Code §18-20A.9(b)(4).

SUMMARY

Staff has identified the following positive aspects to this rezoning request:

1. The request is consistent with the County's Growth Management Policy because it provides new housing within a designated development area.
2. The request is consistent with the form and site design standards of the Rio29 Small Area Plan.
3. The request provides a new 8' wide sidewalk along Rio Road W. which is a transportation improvement recommended by the Rio29 Small Area Plan.
4. The request provides land that could be dedicated to the County to allow construction of a vehicular and pedestrian connection to a public amenity space identified by the Rio29 Small Area Plan.

Staff has identified the following concerns related to this rezoning request:

1. Agnor Elementary school is projected to be over capacity in future academic years, and this project would constitute up to 20 additional elementary students.

RECOMMENDATION

For the reasons outlined in the staff report, staff recommends approval of ZMA-2025-00001 600 Rio Road W.

PLANNING COMMISSION POTENTIAL MOTIONS

- A. Should a Planning Commissioner **choose to recommend denial** of zoning map amendment **ZMA-2025-00001**:

Move to recommend denial for the reasons stated in the staff report.

- B. Should a Planning Commissioner **choose to recommend approval** of this zoning map amendment:

Move to recommend approval of, (outline. reasons for approval).

Attachments

1. Application Narrative
2. Application Plan
3. Code of Development
4. Proffer Statement
5. SE-2025-00007 – Request to Waive Mixture of Uses
6. SE-2025-00008 Request to Reduce Minimum Required Amenity Space