



**TOWN OF BLACKSBURG
AGENDA MEMO**

DATE: March 10, 2023

TO: Town Council

FROM: Anne McClung, Planning and Building Director _____

PREPARED BY: Kinsey O'Shea, Senior Town Planner

TITLE: RZN 22-0004/ORD 2007-Request to rezone 44.85 acres of vacant land from RR-1 Rural Residential 1 to PR Planned Residential at 1006 Glade Road by Meredith Jones of Eden and Associates, PC (applicant) for Cary Hopper of Glade Spring Crossing, LLC (owner)

-
- **Background:** The attached is a request to rezone approximately 45 acres in the 1000-block of Glade Road from RR-1 Rural Residential to PR Planned Residential. The development request entails the construction of a 176-unit mixed-income, mixed-unit-type residential neighborhood that includes 24 units of affordable housing and a regional stormwater management facility. Planning Commission heard the rezoning request at its March 7, 2023 public hearing. A motion to approve the rezoning request and all associated variances was made; following a second to the motion, the motion failed by a vote of two (2) yes, and five (5) no, with one member absent.

There will be several Town Council work sessions before the public hearing. Staff will advise Council ahead of time about what topics will be discussed at each work session.

- **Considerations:** The staff report was previously distributed to Council ahead of the March 7, 2023 Council work session. Staff will provide any new or updated information to Council throughout the upcoming work sessions prior to the public hearing.
- **Action:** Place on consent agenda and schedule public hearing for May 9, 2023.
- **Attachments:**
Planning Commission to Town Council Memo
Additional correspondence received between March 3, 2023 at noon and March 9, 2023 at 5:00 pm

MEMORANDUM

TO: Town Council

FROM: Planning Commission

DATE: March 7, 2023

SUBJECT: RZN 22-0004/ORD 2007-Request to rezone 44.85 acres of vacant land from RR-1 Rural Residential 1 to PR Planned Residential at 1006 Glade Road by Meredith Jones of Eden and Associates, PC (applicant) for Cary Hopper of Glade Spring Crossing, LLC (owner)

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Planning Commission Recommendation:

Planning Commission made a motion for APPROVAL for the rezoning request RZN 22-0004/ORD 2007, and associated variance and modification requests as below. The motion **failed by a vote of 2/5 with one member absent.**

For: Kassoff; Jones
Against: Ford; Herbein; Rinehart; Walker; Watson
Abstain:
Absent: Colley

As the motion to approve this rezoning request and all the associated variance and modification requests failed, this indicates that a majority of the Planning Commission did not find that the request, or elements thereof, were in conformity with the Comprehensive Plan, or the Zoning Ordinance, and was unable to conclude that the request, or parts thereof, would have minimum adverse impacts on the surrounding neighborhood or community.

Variations and Modifications:

- Zoning Ordinance §4231(b)(6) Request to allow parking in front of the building line for townhomes
- Zoning Ordinance §4231(b)(14) Request to eliminate front façade setback variation for townhomes, and instead require that no two adjacent units be identical, and must contain at least two variations of: color, material, fenestration, architectural details and porch details between adjacent units
- Zoning Ordinance §4241(a)(2) Request to allow parking in front of the building line for two-family dwellings
- Zoning Ordinance §5202(c) Request to allow townhomes and two-family dwellings to have driveways that require backing into or maneuvering in the public street

- Zoning Ordinance §5428(a) Request to reduce required street tree ratio from 1 tree per 30' of frontage to 1 tree per 80' of frontage in the north area, and 1 tree per 100' of frontage in the south area
- Subdivision Ordinance §5-303 Request to eliminate requirement to dedicate streets to adjacent property Parcel ID 012579
- Subdivision Ordinance §5-310 Request to eliminate requirement for bulb cul-de-sac and provide a branch-type turnaround on Street D.
- Subdivision Ordinance §5-313(1) Request to increase maximum street grade from 10% to 15% for portions of Street A
- Subdivision Ordinance §5-313(2) Request to reduce minimum intersection landing from 100' to 50' for portions of Street A
- Subdivision Ordinance §5-313(3) Request to eliminate required CG6 curb & gutter, and provide modified rolled curb/roll-top curb along portions of Street A; and all of Street B; Street C; and Street D; and provide roadside ditch along portions of Street A and all of Street E.
- Subdivision Ordinance §5-317(1) Request to reduce minimum block length from 500' to 200'
- Subdivision Ordinance §5-318(c), and Zoning Ordinance §5204(a), and §5790(d) Request to reduce minimum driveway separation from property lines from 3' to 0'
- Subdivision Ordinance §5-318(d) Request to reduce minimum driveway separation from intersections from 50' to 20' for specific lots
- Subdivision Ordinance §5-401(a) Request to eliminate required sidewalk along portions of Street A and all of Street E.
- Subdivision Ordinance §5-401(a) Request to provide trail in lieu of sidewalk along portions of Street A, and all of Street D
- Subdivision Ordinance §5-401(b) Request to reduce minimum planting strip between sidewalk and curb from 4' to 3'
- Subdivision Ordinance §5-402(c) Request to eliminate pavement or gravel requirement for open space access and provide grass trails instead
- Subdivision Ordinance §5-901 Request to reduce required perimeter public utility easements from 15' to 7.5' where 15' PUEs exist on adjacent properties

From: [Anne McClung](#)
To: [Kasey Thomsen](#); [Kinsey O'Shea](#)
Subject: Fw: Development of Glade Springs Crossing
Date: Tuesday, March 7, 2023 7:57:21 AM

From: Jeff Lang <jeff@venveo.com>
Sent: Monday, March 6, 2023 9:41 PM
Cc: Planning Commission; Joel Herbein; Melissa (Mel) Jones; Andy Kassoff; Susanna Rinehart; Latanya Walker; Liam Watson; Kinsey O'Shea; Jerry Ford; tcolley@vt.edu
Subject: Development of Glade Springs Crossing

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

Dear Planning Commission,
I wanted to let you know some of my thoughts on the rezoning of Glade Springs Crossing. I live at 1208 Village way south with my wife and two boys (ages 5 and 8) and have tried to understand the proposed development - and there is a lot to digest.

However, all the changes in the last several days have left me dazed, and provide little confidence that the Glade Spring Crossing team will deliver anything they've promised, especially around affordable housing.

How can we trust a neighborhood designed around affordable housing, when those homes are so easily dismissed if sell dates aren't met - and is that even legal when following HUD protocol? The glade spring crossing team then changes the language back to original form once the mistake was realized, only to claim "it's complex and evolving".

In the letter uploaded today from Meredith Jones, it states "While we have had conversations with staff about them; there is not a clear solution yet but we will continue to discuss them further through the process. Staff feels they may be more appropriately handled in the development agreement." Does this mean that GSC wants zoning approval while they continue to work through specifics?

None of this makes any sense.

I thought the purpose of all the work sessions were to finalize details so both the Town and community at large knew what to expect. This all sounds unprofessional and ill-informed.

As someone who works professionally with large contracts/proposals, the idea of not having a clear statement of work and expecting approval from potential clients is not conceivable. I'm asking please do not grant the rezoning request until the specifics of this proposal are firmed up.

Thank you for your consideration.

Best,

Jeff Lang

From: [Anne McClung](#)
To: [Kasey Thomsen](#); [Kinsey O'Shea](#)
Subject: FW: Glade Spring Crossing - stormwater concern
Date: Monday, March 6, 2023 10:47:01 AM

From: Stephen Schoenholtz <schoenhs@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, March 6, 2023 9:10 AM
To: Kinsey O'Shea <KOShea@blacksburg.gov>; Planning Commission <PlanningCommission@blacksburg.gov>; Leslie Hager-Smith <LHager-Smith@blacksburg.gov>; S Anderson Math <anderson@math.vt.edu>; Jerry Ford <jford@blacksburg.gov>; Susan Mattingly <smattingly@blacksburg.gov>; Michael Sutphin <msutphin@blacksburg.gov>; John Bush <jbush@blacksburg.gov>; Lauren Colliver <lcolliver@blacksburg.gov>; Matt Hanratty <mhanratty@blacksburg.gov>; Town Council <TownCouncil@blacksburg.gov>; tcolley@vt.edu; Joel Herbein <jherbein@techlab.com>; Melissa (Mel) Jones <jones.melissa.kay@gmail.com>; Andy Kassoff <akassoff@wetlands.com>; Susanna Rinehart <susannar@vt.edu>; Latanya Walker <latanya@vt.edu>; Liam Watson <liamwatsonva@gmail.com>
Cc: Gloria Schoenholtz <ghschoenholtz@gmail.com>
Subject: Re: Glade Spring Crossing - stormwater concern

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Dear Planning Commission Members and Town Council,

We just realized that the links we provided below showing stormwater on our property were reversed in the previous email sent Saturday, March 4. The links are now corrected in the email below. Please use the corrected email below and discard the one sent Saturday, March 4. Apologies for the error.

Sincerely,
Gloria and Stephen Schoenholtz
1201 Glen Cove Lane

Dear Planning Commission Members and Town Council,

It is now Spring Break at Virginia Tech and we are heading out of town. Unfortunately, that means we will miss the upcoming Planning Commission meeting where there will be both public comment and a vote on the Glade Springs Crossing rezoning request. In lieu of this missed opportunity to provide public comment, we are providing the attached video letter as our last submission before the vote. The video was taken this morning (March 4th) on our property on Glen Cove Lane and it demonstrates the current stormwater problem we still experience.

As most of you know, our house and seven acres is directly downstream from the Glade Springs property. Like Glade Springs, our land is hilly and steeply sloping in places, and the

Glade Spring stream cuts through the center of our property. The stream flows year-round with clean spring water. Unfortunately, after a moderate rainfall like the one we just had on Friday, March 3rd, the stream also carries discarded stormwater from the University City Boulevard neighborhood. When that happens, our clear stream muddies and begins to rage. Usually the water jumps the bank and then fills up our yard with stormwater. It washes away the plants holding the stream bank and kills our grass, because the standing water on the floodplain can remain for a week or more. We have to replant every year in an effort to keep our front yard presentable.

One last point we'd like to make before the video: In the past, we objected to the Sturbridge Square redevelopment project (now The Union) and The Farm rental development because we feared increased stormwater. Both times we were told that the engineers had addressed that problem by installing underground stormwater holding tanks. Now that they are built, we are hopeful they are helping, at least somewhat, to address the on-site stormwater from those developments. However, as our video from today points out, there is still a good deal of stormwater coming our way from those properties and other developed land on University City Boulevard.

What you will see in the video below is what an average rain looks like for us...in this case, only one inch in 24 hours...something that happens numerous times a year in Blacksburg. This is not even close to a "one-year storm" or a "ten-year storm" or a "100-year storm". When those bigger storms happen, the downstream flooding is not only damaging to private property, but also very dangerous for children and animals. (earlier videos of flooding [here](#))

We ask you to consider: is the GSC stormwater plan "just good enough" and therefore passable, or should we be thinking futuristically and planning ahead for much bigger storms? Is it reasonable to expect that the stormwater ponds currently planned at GSC will address 1) the existing stormwater problem, 2) the new problem (176 new homes and streets), 3) future increases in rainfall intensity and amounts due to climate change, and 4) anticipated new developments on our side of Town that aren't even on the books yet?

For the sake of everyone involved, we hope for a true solution to the stormwater issues we face on this side of Blacksburg! Maybe bigger detention ponds and fewer houses at GSC would be prudent.

Thank you,
Gloria and Stephen Schoenholtz
1201 Glen Cove Lane

[March 4th stormwater video from Glen Cove Lane](#)

On Sat, Mar 4, 2023 at 9:51 PM Stephen Schoenholtz <schoenhs@gmail.com> wrote:

Dear Planning Commission Members and Town Council,

It is now Spring Break at Virginia Tech and we are heading out of town. Unfortunately, that means we will miss the upcoming Planning Commission meeting where there will be both public comment and a vote on the Glade Springs Crossing rezoning request. In lieu of this missed opportunity to provide public comment, we are providing the attached video letter as

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We ask you to consider: is the GSC stormwater plan "just good enough" and therefore passable, or should we be thinking futuristically and planning ahead for much bigger storms? Is it reasonable to expect that the stormwater ponds currently planned at GSC will address 1) the existing stormwater problem, 2) the new problem (176 new homes and streets), 3) future increases in rainfall intensity and amounts due to climate change, and 4) anticipated new developments on our side of Town that aren't even on the books yet?

For the sake of everyone involved, we hope for a true solution to the stormwater issues we face on this side of Blacksburg! Maybe bigger detention ponds and fewer houses at GSC would be prudent.

Thank you,
Gloria and Stephen Schoenholtz
1201 Glen Cove Lane

[March 4th stormwater video from Glen Cove Lane](#)

From: [Anne McClung](#)
To: [Kinsey O'Shea](#); [Kasey Thomsen](#)
Subject: FW: Glade Spring Crossing
Date: Tuesday, March 7, 2023 1:44:52 PM

From: bocwebster@aol.com <bocwebster@aol.com>

Sent: Tuesday, March 7, 2023 10:48 AM

To: Planning Commission <PlanningCommission@blacksburg.gov>; tcolley@vt.edu; arctic220games@gmail.com; Joel Herbein <jherbein@techlab.com>; Melissa (Mel) Jones <jones.melissa.kay@gmail.com>; Andy Kassoff <akassoff@wetlands.com>; works@aol.com; Susanna Rinehart <susannar@vt.edu>; Latanya Walker <latanya@vt.edu>; Liam Watson <liamwatsonva@gmail.com>; Kinsey O'Shea <KOShea@blacksburg.gov>; Jerry Ford <jford@blacksburg.gov>

Subject: Glade Spring Crossing

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Good Morning,

I am writing you all today to add my voice to the opposition of the proposed rezoning application by the Cary Hopper Development Group at 1006 Glade Road. I do not support the re-zoning request, taking that parcel of land from a rural residential 1 district to a planned residential district. As a resident of the Village of Tom's Creek Neighborhood, I join my neighbors in expressing serious concerns over the potential impact of the proposed development in the areas of traffic, safety, and environmental risk. While growth and development within our town is a certainty, the proposed re-zoning would inundate that parcel of land with potentially 176 single family homes. That is juxtaposed against the roughly 40 units that could be built on that parcel now, with it's current designated zoning. Please keep this parcel zoned as it currently is and allow for a more reasonable and appropriate development to come in the future. Please vote NO on the 1006 Glade Road Re-zoning request.

Thank you all for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Robert C. Webster III
1234 Redbud Rd.
Blacksburg, VA 24060

From: [Anne McClung](#)
To: [Kinsey O'Shea](#); [Kasey Thomsen](#)
Subject: FW: GSC connector road to Village Way S.
Date: Monday, March 6, 2023 5:10:58 PM
Attachments: [Walnut 8.jpg](#)
[Walnut 1.jpg](#)
[Walnut 2.jpg](#)
[Walnut 3.jpg](#)
[Walnut 4.jpg](#)
[Walnut 5.jpg](#)
[Walnut 6.jpg](#)
[Walnut 7.jpg](#)

From: Mike Stein <mike_stein2@yahoo.com>
Sent: Monday, March 6, 2023 3:04 PM
To: Planning Commission <PlanningCommission@blacksburg.gov>; tcolley@vt.edu; arctic220games@gmail.com; Joel Herbein <jherbein@techlab.com>; Melissa (Mel) Jones <jones.melissa.kay@gmail.com>; Andy Kassoff <akassoff@wetlands.com>; Susanna Rinehart <susannar@vt.edu>; Latanya Walker <latanya@vt.edu>; Liam Watson <liamwatsonva@gmail.com>; Kinsey O'Shea <KOShea@blacksburg.gov>; Jerry Ford <jford@blacksburg.gov>
Subject: GSC connector road to Village Way S.

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Planning Commission,

My name is Mike Stein and I live at 1225 Village Way S. I am writing to share my concern with the connector road from Village Way S. to the Glade Springs Crossing development.

The developer has made some claims about this road that need clarification. Below I will hopefully show some light to the realities of what has been said.

1. Meredith Jones, developer engineer, has said to the Planning Commission that the developer and the homeowners at 1225 and 1301 Village Way S. are in negotiations regarding using our property to help the road be built.

This statement is false.

There have been zero negotiations with Ms. Jones or the developer. I have no intention to allow an easement of any kind or allowing the developer to use my property so that a road can be built. I have spoken with Ms. Jones two times.

- a. The first meeting occurred on October 16, 2022, on the proposed access road site. Ms. Jones outlined what the road would look like and how it could affect our properties. Ms. Jones asked if I would allow the developer to use my property and I declined to answer.
- b. The second was two weeks ago when I called Ms. Jones about an alternate road route that would put the road close to 460. Ms. Jones had no interest in exploring such a route because it would be difficult and as she stated "I don't think it will work." Please note here that this is 100% a viable option and Ms. Jones has not and will not explore this option.

2. Meredith Jones compared the connector road to Walnut Drive in Blacksburg. Jones stated the "roads are similar."

This statement is false.

- a. The proposed connector road is 19 feet in width. This is with requested variances and no sidewalk. Walnut Drive is **32.3 feet wide**, has a 31 inch curb on each side (standard curb with flat concrete surface meeting blacktop), 3 feet of a grass strip, and **5 feet of sidewalk**. Walnut Drive is clearly wider, well planned and safer than the proposed road.
- b. The single similarity lies in grade of the road. This is an exaggeration of stating the roads are "similar."
- c. Please note the attached pictures. Please pay close attention to the road width.
- d. The street at the top of Walnut Dr. is a standard two-way neighborhood street. The street at the top of the connector has four one-way streets, two walking paths in the middle of the intersection, and two driveways within 5 feet of the intersection.

Thank you for your time. Please feel free to contact me with any comments or concerns. I look forward to talking with you on Tuesday, March 7.

Mike Stein
540-449-8805

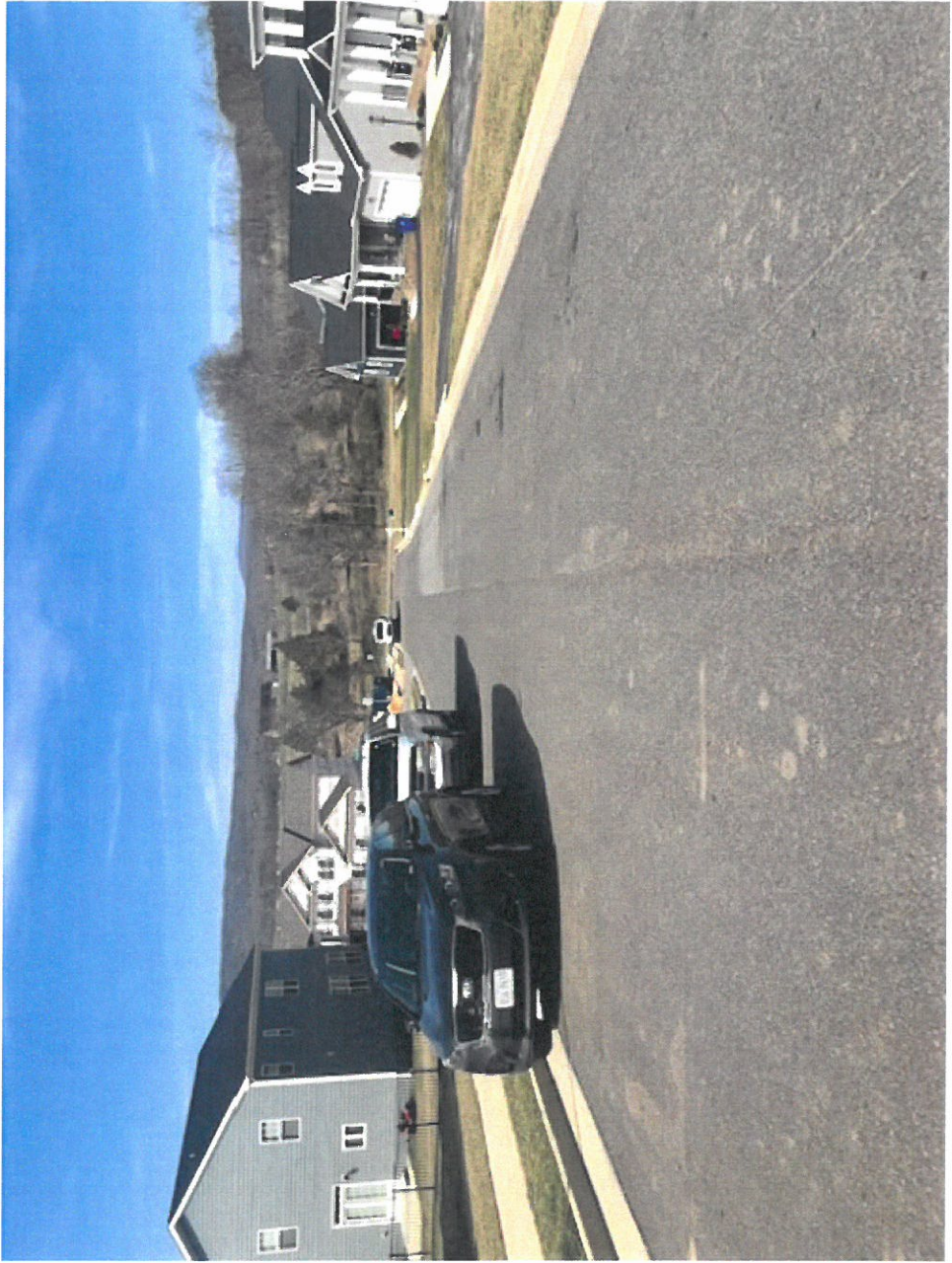
Mike_stein2@yahoo.com

1225 Village Way S.

















From: [Anne McClung](#)
To: [Kasey Thomsen](#); [Kinsey O'Shea](#)
Subject: FW: GSC- square peg/round hole
Date: Monday, March 6, 2023 10:47:10 AM

From: Robin Jones <robindavisjones@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, March 6, 2023 9:36 AM
To: Planning Commission <PlanningCommission@blacksburg.gov>; Kinsey O'Shea <KOShea@blacksburg.gov>
Cc: Leslie Hager-Smith <LHager-Smith@blacksburg.gov>; S Anderson Math <anderson@math.vt.edu>; John Bush <jbush@blacksburg.gov>; Lauren Colliver <lcolliver@blacksburg.gov>; Jerry Ford <jford@blacksburg.gov>; Susan Mattingly <smattingly@blacksburg.gov>; Michael Sutphin <msutphin@blacksburg.gov>
Subject: GSC- square peg/round hole

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Members of the Planning Commission,

On March 7 you set precedence with your vote. Your vote will reveal how consistent you think the town should be regarding our own laws, policies, standards, and guidelines. The exorbitant number of variance requests means that if you recommend this development, you will be contradicting town and VDOT standards and setting major precedent for future applications. And if this many variances are required for this project, it doesn't fit the reasonable person test and logically should not be approved.

Why are so many mitigations necessary to try to reduce negative environmental impacts? Why is safety being ignored? Why are there so many unknowns regarding proffers still outstanding? Why are so many exceptions needed? Why can't engineers and environmentalists agree? Simple- this is the wrong project for this property. It seems so obvious you are trying to fit a square peg into a round hole.

A few other items to note:

-variances expose the town to future liabilities- including- ongoing maintenance and cost, injury or death

-our own Blacksburg Fire and Blacksburg Rescue Chiefs are against the connection for safety reasons

-the TOB is the only entity putting any real effort into affordable housing- the applicant has already indicated the other 14 homes are at risk if they don't sell on their timeline (bait and switch?)

-resident voices matter- please consider all that you have heard regarding resident and taxpayer opposition- there is a lack of actual support- we could be partners in development- TC is elected and should only be given viable projects to consider

I'm shocked this application has gotten this far as it disregards so many TOB standards and requirements. It is just not worth the long term implications. Why have standards at all if we are willing to make so many exceptions?

Robin Jones
1224 Village Way S.

From: [Anne McClung](#)
To: [Kinsey O'Shea](#); [Kasey Thomsen](#)
Subject: FW: Rezoning 1006 Glade Rd
Date: Tuesday, March 7, 2023 1:45:07 PM

From: Mode Johnson <modeaj01@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 7, 2023 12:06 PM
To: Planning Commission <PlanningCommission@blacksburg.gov>; Kinsey O'Shea <KOShea@blacksburg.gov>
Subject: Rezoning 1006 Glade Rd

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I cannot support the following variance requests for 1006 Glade Road:

- 1) The storm water management and the installation roll top curbs will cause the diverting water from the streets onto private property resulting in standing water, wet basements/crawl spaces and/or erosion. The developer states in the variance request concerning "Curbs and Gutters": "While it is a luxury many homeowners expect because they don't want to see water traversing their lot, it is not always required from an engineering standpoint." Diverting water through a homeowners parcel to save the developer cost should not be a reason to approve the variance and homeowners should expect water to be diverted away from homes and not toward or between homes. My crawl space is damp and my neighbor recently installed a water diversion system so their crawl space could be dry;
- 2) The connecting road from Street A to Village Way South (VWS) will be too steep, have inadequate landing length, and have sight line issues. The increased traffic pattern at this intersection where VWS changes from a two lane street to a divided street will be a safety issue at this intersection;
- 3) No sidewalks along main Glade Spring Crossing streets is a safety concern. The developer's rep mentioned Poplar Ridge Circle as an example of no sidewalks but Poplar Ridge Circle is a cul de sac street with no through traffic.

Just because something was done at Brookfield Village or the Village at Tom's Creek (VATC) doesn't mean it is good or should be repeated. Instead, learn from the mistakes made in the VATC. Subdivision standards are there for the health and safety of the Town's residents and property values.

Thank you for considering the above mentioned reasons in denying these variance requests.

Mode Johnson
921 Village Way North

From: [Anne McClung](#)
To: [Kasey Thomsen](#); [Kinsey O'Shea](#)
Subject: Fw: Rezoning Application
Date: Monday, March 6, 2023 12:58:46 PM

From: Jean Haskell <jeanhaskell415@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, March 6, 2023 12:31 PM
To: Planning Commission; tcolley@vt.edu; arctic220games@gmail.com; Joel Herbein; Melissa (Mel) Jones; Andy Kassoff; Susanna Rinehart; Latanya Walker; Liam Watson; Kinsey O'Shea; Jerry Ford
Subject: Rezoning Application

<p style="border:2px; border-style:solid; border-color:#000000; padding: .7em; background-color:#FFFF00 ">
CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.</p>

Dear Planning Commission Members and Staff:

As a resident of the Village at Tom's Creek, I write to urge you to deny the rezoning application for Glade Spring Crossing that will be voted on this evening. I cannot attend the public hearing but wanted to join my neighbors in voicing our concerns with this rezoning.

In the UK and across Europe, villages that are beautiful and socially healthy are regarded as special treasures to be protected and promoted. We have such a village here in Blacksburg--the Village at Tom's Creek--and it is a special treasure in a community that is exploding with development. Our village is beautiful with a lush natural setting, village neighbors know one and watch out for one another, children, pets, and wildlife can roam in a protected environment, and we have village-wide social gatherings. Too much development and increased traffic surrounding us will destroy our village atmosphere, something fragile in contemporary life.

I urge you to consider the uniqueness of the Village at Tom's Creek and how to protect and showcase the village as one of Blacksburg's most special places. As someone once said, "Village is a place where you can find peace, unity, strength, inspiration, and most importantly, a natural and beautiful life."

Jean Haskell, Ph.D.

--

Dr. Jean Haskell, Professor, Appalachian Studies

Virginia Tech and East Tennessee State University (retired)
Visiting Professor, University of Edinburgh, Scotland
Co-editor, Encyclopedia of Appalachia
Whisman Appalachian Scholar, Appalachian Regional Commission (2000-2002,2008-2010)
President, Board of Directors, Montgomery Museum of Art and History

Mobile: 757-544-9096
jeanhaskell415@gmail.com

"One place comprehended helps us understand other places better. Sense of place gives us equilibrium; extended, it is sense of direction." Eudora Welty

"Elegant solutions will be predicated on uniqueness of place." John Todd

From: [Anne McClung](#)
To: [Kinsey O'Shea](#); [Kasey Thomsen](#)
Subject: FW: Rezoning Request - Planning Commission Vote on 3/7
Date: Monday, March 6, 2023 5:11:08 PM
Attachments: [image001.jpg](#)

From: Bruce Friedman <bhfriedm@vt.edu>

Sent: Monday, March 6, 2023 3:24 PM

To: Planning Commission <PlanningCommission@blacksburg.gov>; tcolley@vt.edu; arctic220games@gmail.com; Joel Herbein <jherbein@techlab.com>; Melissa (Mel) Jones <jones.melissa.kay@gmail.com>; Andy Kassoff <akassoff@wetlands.com>; Susanna Rinehart <susannar@vt.edu>; Latanya Walker <latanya@vt.edu>; Liam Watson <liamwatsonva@gmail.com>; Kinsey O'Shea <KOShea@blacksburg.gov>; Jerry Ford <jford@blacksburg.gov>

Cc: Leslie Hager-Smith <LHager-Smith@blacksburg.gov>; Matt Hanratty <mhanratty@blacksburg.gov>; S Anderson Math <anderson@math.vt.edu>; John Bush <jbush@blacksburg.gov>; Lauren Colliver <llcolliver@blacksburg.gov>; Jerry Ford <jford@blacksburg.gov>; Susan Mattingly <smattingly@blacksburg.gov>; Michael Sutphin <msutphin@blacksburg.gov>

Subject: Rezoning Request - Planning Commission Vote on 3/7

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To the planning commission:

I am a 20-year resident of the Village at Tom's Creek, and I urge you all to vote not to approve this rezoning request:

RZN 22-0004-Glade Spring Crossing PR Rezoning-1006 Glade Road

The proposed road that would connect this new housing development with the Village at Tom's Creek is a serious threat to our neighborhood. It would significantly increase traffic, pose a safety hazard, and ultimately change the character of our development. This would likely have a negative impact on property values, as well as the quality of life for current residents.

I ask with urgency that you consider the voices of the residents of our development and vote wisely not to approve the this rezoning request.

Thank you,

-Bruce Scarpa-Friedman

Bruce H. Friedman [Scarpa-Friedman], Ph.D.
Associate Professor
Department of Psychology (0436)
Williams Hall /Room 221
Virginia Tech

Blacksburg VA 24061-0436

Ph.: (540) 231-9611

FAX: (540) 231-3652

<https://support.psyc.vt.edu/users/bhfriedm>

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<https://virginiatech.zoom.us/j/4696065832> or **by appointment**



From: [Anne McClung](#)
To: [Kinsey O'Shea](#); [Kasey Thomsen](#)
Subject: Fw: RZN22-0004, a blockbuster change in proffers
Date: Sunday, March 5, 2023 6:14:56 PM
Attachments: [1006 Glade Road STAFF cov.pdf](#)

From: James Whitener <whitenej@vt.edu>
Sent: Sunday, March 5, 2023 11:04 AM
To: Planning Commission; Matt Hanratty; Leslie Hager-Smith; S Anderson Math; John Bush; Lauren Colliver; Jerry Ford; Michael Sutphin; Kinsey O'Shea
Subject: Re: RZN22-0004, a blockbuster change in proffers

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Good morning,

I just found out (yesterday) re: the latest change in proffers from the Applicant for the GSC proposal. This change in proffers comes just days before the Planning Commission is scheduled to vote on the rezoning and the GSC project. I am attaching the March 3, 2023 memo from Planning Staff which outlines the changes in proffers from the Applicant. Once again, I have taken the liberty of highlighting the section that most concerns me. You may be hearing from my neighbors on this item, or other items, which this memo describes. Also, the timing of this change in proffers, coming just days before the PC vote, throws the whole proposal into disarray.

My particular item of interest in the updated proffers is re: the affordable housing component of the application. Ms. O'Shea, in her memo, succinctly says, "There is no commitment in the proffer statement that requires the developer to transfer the homes to the land trust. This means that the applicant has removed the commitment to permanent affordability for the 24 homes."

Later in the memo, Ms. O'Shea writes "*If the units are not sold to a qualified buyer within 90 days of C.O. and settled within 150 days of the C.O. the builder may sell the home on the open market to a non-qualified buyer. If this occurs the value of the lot of a minimum of \$75,000 will be added to the sales price and when the home settles the \$75,000 will go to the land trust. This would qualify as meeting the requirement of one of the affordable units.*" The memo goes on to say, "The new language in #8(g) does not ensure homes will be sold to income-eligible buyers and does not meet the intent or requirements of the Affordable Housing Development Fund or American Rescue Plan Act funds."

In short, the Applicant is removing himself from the Affordable Housing component of the proposal. And, by doing so, the Applicant no longer qualifies for the \$2-million subsidy of

ARPA funds. My former emails discussed the obstacles to the through road connecting Glade Road to Village Way South, and now the Applicant no longer qualifies for the \$2-million ARPA fund subsidy. Those two items (the through road and affordable housing) were the basis (from the Town's viewpoint) for considering and approving the rezoning and the GSC project.

In some respects, the Applicant has done us all a service. By changing the proffers, the Town can now consider other projects for the award of the ARPA funds, since said funds must be obligated by December 2024, and spent by 2026. The Applicant can now consider and propose a new project, under the current zoning. The PC and the TC could then consider that new proposal on its own merits, without a rezoning.

My suggestion is, that at a minimum, the PC table the scheduled action re: the rezoning, to afford an opportunity for Planning Staff and the Applicant to come to a resolution that would include the affordable housing component, and the through road. If an acceptable resolution cannot be reached, then the PC should recommend denial of the proposal.

I look forward to following your actions on this matter.

Jim Whitener

From: [Anne McClung](#)
To: [Kinsey O'Shea](#); [Kasey Thomsen](#)
Subject: Fw: RZN22-0004, the latest escapade
Date: Tuesday, March 7, 2023 7:57:10 AM

From: James Whitener <whitenej@vt.edu>
Sent: Monday, March 6, 2023 8:24 PM
To: Planning Commission; Matt Hanratty; Leslie Hager-Smith; S Anderson Math; John Bush; Lauren Colliver; Jerry Ford; Michael Sutphin; Kinsey O'Shea; Susan Mattingly
Subject: Re: RZN22-0004, the latest escapade

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Hello All,

I did not intend to write all of you again, at least not this soon. But today, there was again a change in proffers by the Applicant,--just a day before the PC is scheduled to have a public hearing on captioned rezoning. This latest change in proffers now wants to retract the proffers offered just last Friday. What changed so quickly? Did someone get caught being sneaky? All these last minute, seemingly sneaky changes and revisions, leads me to come to the conclusion that my elected official cannot be trusted. But, once again, I digress.

When I wrote you all this weekend, I would have thought the GSC proposal was DOA. The through road is unbuildable for numerous reasons (improper transfer of the parcel, insurmountable environmental issues, grade issues, lack of necessary easements, to name a few). And, as per the proffers of March 3 by the Applicant, the ARPA funding could no longer be used to subsidize the project. And, since the through road and the affordable housing were the two items driving the rezoning and proposal, the rezoning was no longer necessary. In short, the Applicant could build as currently zoned; and, inasmuch as I've been told by Town Staff that the Applicant could make **more** money building as currently zoned, things could proceed with 40 homes rather than 176. But then today, the new proffers are reminiscent of SNL's Emily Litella, "Never Mind!"

There are a few sentences in the Applicant's memo that cause me some concern. The first one was

"Our intent was never to remove the ability for the Land Trust to receive the lots."

Then what was the intent of the Applicant in changing the proffers on March 3? If Planning Staff had not posted on the Town's webpage about the changes in proffers, myself and my neighbors would never have known. Again, what was the intent of the proffer changes noted in the March 3 memo, if not to put in doubt "...the ability for the Land Trust to receive the lots."? This leads me to having less trust in the processes of the Town.

The next sentence in the Applicant's memo that causes me concern is as follows:

"Staff feels they may be more appropriately handled in the development agreement."

This sentence causes me both trepidation and confusion. First, I would rather hear such a suggestion from Staff vice the Applicant. Next, the Applicant presumes the rezoning and proposal should just be recommended to TC, and that they'll negotiate a solution after the fact. But, as I've said previously, if the through road can't won't be built, and the ARPA funds cannot be appropriately and legally obligated, there is no reason for a rezoning and approval of such a dense project. And, as I said previously, this whole debacle has caused myself, and most probably my neighbors, to have trust in the process and trust in our elected officials.

For once, I was almost precognizant. In my last email, I suggested, at a minimum, tabling tomorrow's vote by the PC, so any differences could be worked out. I'll stand by that suggestion; because, otherwise, myself, my neighbors and fellow citizens of Blacksburg will have every reason to doubt any unilateral actions to push this proposal through.

I'll be watching tomorrow night to see if my trust is further eroded.

Jim Whitener

Kasey Thomsen

From: Anne McClung
Sent: Tuesday, March 7, 2023 9:59 PM
To: Kasey Thomsen; Kinsey O'Shea
Subject: Fw: Comments on proposed Glade Road Crossing

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

From: Alan Raflo <araflo@vt.edu>
Sent: Tuesday, March 7, 2023 5:50 PM
To: Planning Commission
Subject: Comments on proposed Glade Road Crossing

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Dear Planning Commission Members,

In my view, the proposed Glade Road Crossing project offers some good things for the Town: adding development near shopping and a bus line; and provision of some housing for lower-income people.

Less positive, however, are the potential impacts on the water resources of the Toms Creek Basin, the impacts of putting a road through to the Village at Toms Creek, and variances that would allow them not to have sidewalks in certain areas (as I understand the proposal).

I think the project would be much more appealing without the through road. That should reduce the stormwater runoff issues and allow some financial flexibility to the developer to add more amenities like the sidewalks in places where they're not already intended. Creating, instead, a walking-biking connection between the neighborhoods would result in a different kind of connectivity. Such a connector might also be designed to allow public access/viewing of the wetlands/springs areas, creating an outdoor recreation spot that would contribute to Blacksburg's already strong reputation for that kind of quality-of-life feature.

Thank you for your work on the Planning Commission and I wish you patience and wisdom in your decision-making.

Sincerely yours,

Alan Raflo

1751 Ginger Lane

Glade Springs Comparisons



1. Density: Glade Springs comparison of density to surrounding areas. To the left is Westover Hills, an RR-4 community. To top is the Village at Tom's Creek (VATC) with single family detached homes on the south side and townhomes in the middle and significant wooded open space. The VATC is effectively an RR-2 community.

Glade Springs is concentrating density and only leaving the floodplain as a significant open space. It is not congruous with the development in the Tom's Creek basin. The South section of approximately 15 acres is essentially building at 8-10 homes per acre. Far too dense for this environmentally challenged site to support.

2. Wooded Area Comparison: At the last work session, Mr. Kassoff

asked the developer to show the wooded areas being removed. Instead of this, the developer said it would be easier to show the remaining wooded areas and proceeded to evade answering the question. This is drawing of the south side of the proposed development overlaid on the aerial photography for the site.

The area in the right lower corner is now The Farm development. When the developers for The Farm proposed this development, there was significant concern about the increased density.

Several Planning Commission members and Town Council members approved the development with some reservations of what precedent would be set for the lower lot we are discussing today. Several approved the development with caveats. Susan Mattingly, for example, voted for the project because "it

supported town growth, was in close proximity to a commercial area AND because of protections that were in place for residents of the area". This included the large treed buffer area between The Farm and neighborhoods to the North and West. The comparison below shows the overlay of the Glade Springs

project on the aerial photography for the town. The bold green line shows the wooded area to be removed for the construction of the proposed development. It is approximately 4.5 acres of existing hardwood that stabilizes the slopes, provides buffering, minimizes stormwater runoff and provides shade and cooling.

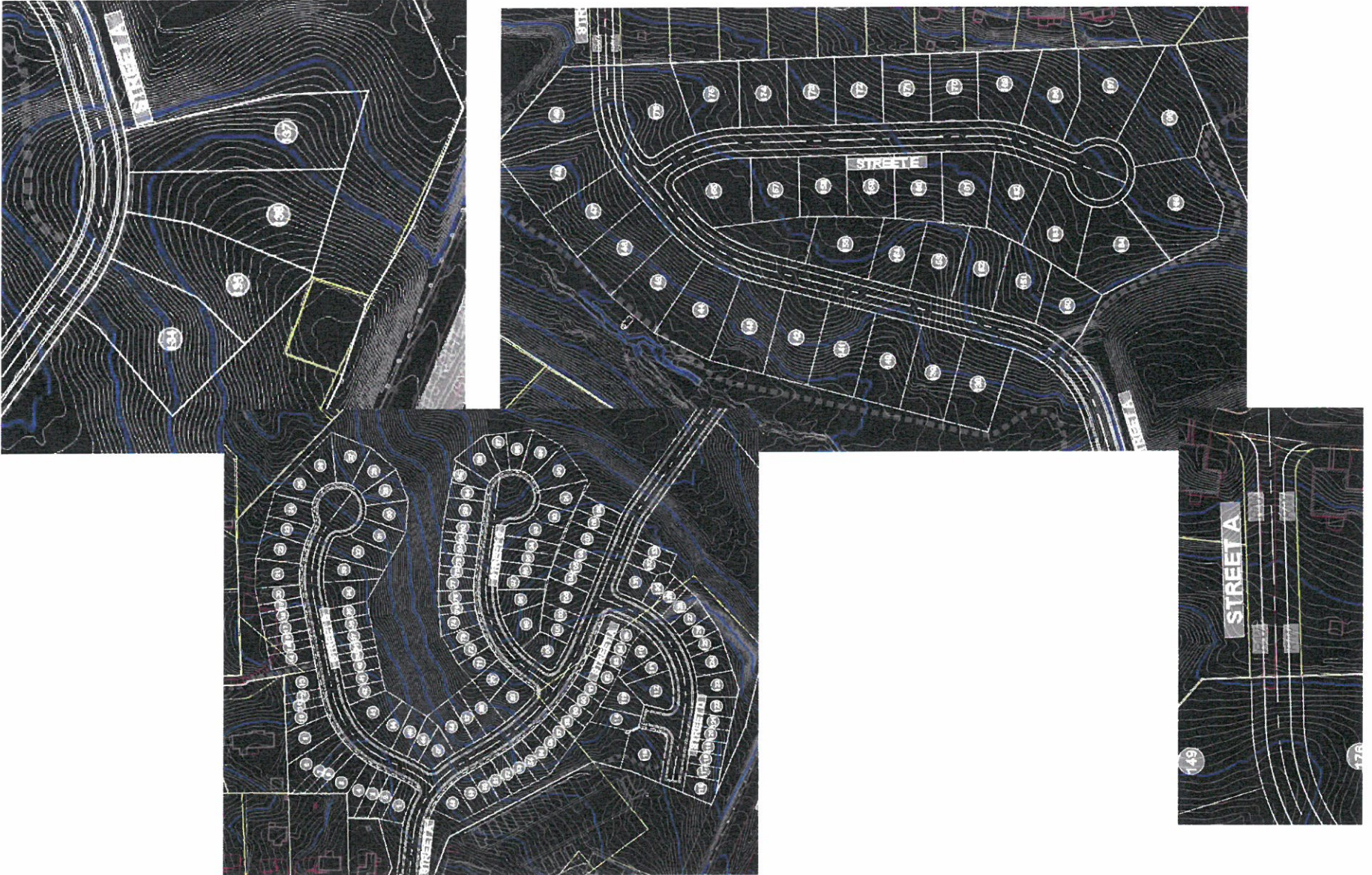
The Glade Springs proposal is to remove all of this mature tree stand in favor of a landscaping plan that is inadequate at best. It proposes reducing street trees from 1 per 30' to 1 per 100' and planting only a small fraction of the required tree canopy and leaving the rest to the HOA in hopes that it will spring forth and grow itself over the next 20 years on land that has been grazed for decades. This is folly and will not happen. It is not a

sustainable practice to remove the wooded area on over 10% of the site and replace it with 35 lots and minimal landscaping.



Glade Springs Comparisons

3. Topographical Considerations. The topography of the site is challenging. The proposed increased density of the land makes the grading and grade changes more difficult. Each gray line represents a foot of elevation change. This parcel is NOT flat, despite the renderings provided that make it appear flat. Changes in elevations between lots and homes need to be addressed. Clustering the houses together along the slopes will create significant issues. Consider backing out of a parking space at Kroger. Now increase the speed on the drive aisle to 25 mph. Now imagine tipping that at a 12% slope and you cannot see around the car beside you because it is now uphill of you. This is not safe.



Photos of ditches, culverts and roads at the Village at Tom's Creek – March 2023 – Page 1



Clogged driveway outlet pipe – no ditch



Driveway inlet culvert – Ditch filled in



Driveway inlet culvert with road and sidewalk damage



Driveway outlet. – ditch filled in



Driveway outlet crushed and buried



Damage to median due to lack of curbing

Photos of ditches, culverts and roads at the Village at Tom's Creek – March 2023 – Page 2



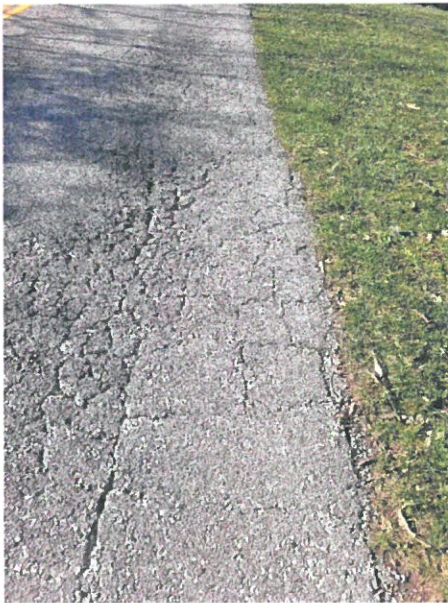
Sediment deposit along roadside



Stormwater damage along roadside



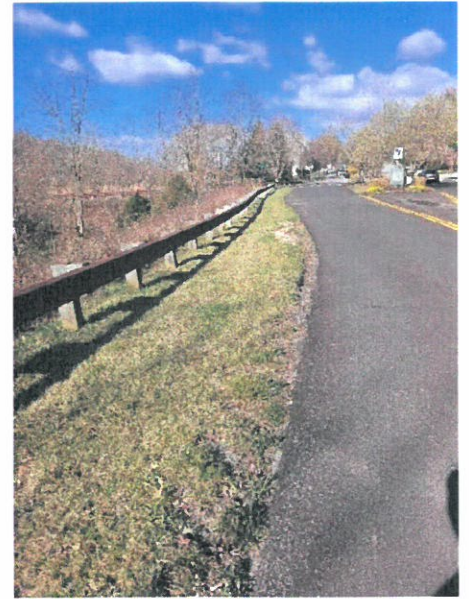
Erosion and damage along roadside



Pavement alligator cracking due to inadequate side support



Edge cracking on brand new road surface installed fall 2022



Edge of median damage and sediment deposits