

MEMORANDUM

To: Planning Commission
 From: Kinsey O’Shea, AICP; Senior Planner
 Date: March 15, 2024
 Subject: PLAT-23-20 Glade Spring Crossing Major Subdivision Preliminary Plat for 176 lots on ±45 acres at 1006 Glade Road (Tax Map Nos. 225-(A)-3, 4 & 224-(A)-57) by Michael Formica (agent) for Cary Hopper of Glade Spring Crossing, LLC (property owner)

SUMMARY OF REQUEST

Property Details	
Property Location	1006 Glade Road
Tax Parcel Number	225-(A)-3, 4 & 224-(A)-57
Parcel Size	45 acres
Present Zoning District	PRD Planned Residential (Ordinance 2007)
Current Use	Agriculture, Undeveloped
Adjacent Zoning Districts	North: PRD Village at Toms Creek East: PRD The Union (across US 460-Bypass) South: PRD The Farm; RR-1 West: RR-1
Adjacent Uses	North: Single-family residential East: US 460-Bypass South: Single-family residential; multifamily residential (The Farm) West: Single-family residential
Adopted Future Land Use	Low density residential

Glade Spring Crossing Planned Residential District Site Development Standards

Proposed Use	Single-family residential, two-family residential; townhouse	
Maximum Number of Lots	176	
Minimum Open Space	39.3% provided; 35% required per PRD	
Minimum Lot Size	No minimum	
Minimum Lot Frontage	North: 40’	South: 15’
Minimum Setback Front	North: 20’	South: 20’
Minimum Setback Side	North: 10’	South: 8.5’
Minimum Setback Side Corner	North: 15’	South: 15’
Minimum Setback Rear	North: 20’	South: 10’
Maximum Building Height	42’	
Maximum Lot Coverage	Varies by unit type; up to 90% for interior attached units	
Maximum FAR	Varies by unit type; up to 1.3 for interior attached units	

PLAT-23-20 GLADE SPRING CROSSING PRELIMINARY PLAT REVIEW

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

Glade Spring Crossing PRD Site Development Standards

Proposed Use	Single-family; two-family; townhouse
Development Size	45 acres
Number of Lots	176
Minimum Open Space	39.3% provided; 35% required
Minimum Lot Size	No minimum



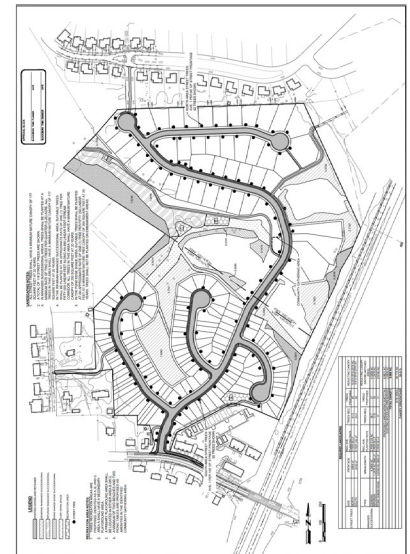
Aerial of the site

GLADE SPRING CROSSING PRD REZONING

Glade Spring Crossing PRD was approved in May 2023 and proposed the development of 176 single-family; two-family; and townhouse residential dwellings. The development is a mix of deed-restricted affordable dwellings that will be part of the Community Land Trust, and market-rate dwellings.

PRELIMINARY PLAT PROCESS

Following the approval of the rezoning request, the applicant must file a preliminary plat for review to ensure that the development will meet subdivision standards since the development is more than 50 lots. The preliminary plat contains more detailed engineering information to show compliance with regulations. If the plat meets the applicable standards, Planning Commission must approve the submission; however variance requests are discretionary decisions.



Approved PRD layout

VARIANCE REQUESTS

There are two requests for variances to subdivision ordinance standards:

- Section 5-503 (e) **Bikeways** to permit landings of no greater than 5% grade, rather than 2% on the emergency access connection from Glade Spring Drive and Village Way South
- Section 5-901 **Public Utility Easements** to permit construction of a retaining wall on lots 169-175 within public utility easements (PUEs)

PRELIMINARY PLAT REVIEW PROCESS

The State views subdivision of land as a “by-right” use, provided that *all* the locality’s standards can be met, or if variances to standards are requested and approved. The State requires that “major” subdivisions are reviewed by the locality’s planning commission for final action, but do not require approval by the elected body such as the Town Council. The threshold for a “major” subdivision is any subdivision of 50 lots or more. Additionally, the Town requires Planning Commission public hearing review for subdivision *variance requests* for subdivisions of 6 or more lots.

The Town’s subdivision ordinance sets the process for submittal, review, and approval of subdivision plats in Article IV of the Subdivision Ordinance, beginning with §4-100. The code sections detail the information required on the submittal, the timelines for review, and the process by which a plat is acted upon, and resubmitted if deficiencies are noted. This process is different in both its timelines and review requirements than a typical public hearing request such as a rezoning request or conditional use permit request. The ordinance is very clear in its language regarding rezoning or conditional use permit “requests” vs. a preliminary plat “review”.

The purpose of the preliminary plat submission and review is to ensure that the applicant has done enough engineering due diligence to ensure that all of the Town’s zoning and subdivision standards can be met for when the subdivision is constructed, or to determine what variances may be required in order to develop the property. The developer’s engineer does not have to provide construction-level detail for the development, but must be able to assure Planning Commission and staff that there are no deviations from standards in the Town’s ordinances. Upon approval of a preliminary plat, the applicant would then submit the final plat for recordation and legal creation of the lots, and the engineering site plans for construction, which contain all of the specific details for construction of the development.

Planning Commission Review

The Planning Commission is required to review preliminary subdivision plats for 50 lots or more. Planning Commission is the agent or the arbiter of the Subdivision Ordinance for major subdivisions. Subdivision Ordinance §4-207 lays out the process for Planning Commission review of preliminary subdivision plats. The goal of the preliminary plat process for the Town and the applicant is an approvable plat. The review culminates in the public hearing, where the Planning Commission will “determine the plat’s compliance or not with the standards and requirements of [the Subdivision Ordinance], the Zoning Ordinance, and other applicable town ordinances.” ***If a plat meets all of the locality’s regulations then it must be approved.*** The Planning Commission is also tasked with making “recommendations to the agent regarding utility service, and transportation access to, and circulation within the proposed subdivision.” In its review of subdivision plats, the Planning Commission is asked to thoroughly review and “make a good faith effort to identify all deficiencies, if any, with the initial submission.” If a plat is denied, the Planning Commission shall include specific reasons for disapproval, referencing specific ordinances, regulations, or policies, and include methods to correct the plat in “the resolution or on the plat itself”.

Application Requirements

The developer is required to submit a plat for review that contains specific elements to demonstrate compliance with the zoning ordinance and the subdivision ordinance. The information required to be submitted with or on the plat is found in Article IV, §4-200, and included as an attachment. Much of this information is routine and does not involve a complex review to ensure compliance with standards, such as ensuring that the plat includes north arrows, an appropriate drawing scale, and lot statistics including lot size and frontage. Additionally, the applicant must provide more detailed information showing open space dedication, right-of-way dedication as well as street grades and profiles, provisions for stormwater management and public utilities. Some of these

requirements entail a more complex review to ensure that applicable Town ordinances, standards, and specifications are, or can be met.

Prior to this submission for preliminary plat review, per the development agreement, the applicant went through administrative review with staff to ensure that the plat is approvable, minus any variance requests that are acted upon by Planning Commission. For Planning Commission review, the applicant submitted a preliminary plat set containing 86 sheets; a memo containing two subdivision ordinance variance requests; a stormwater concept plan and narrative; a floodplain study; and a comment response letter (in response to staff's January 11, 2024 comment letter on the second administrative submission).

Relationship to Planned Residential District

The subject property was recently rezoned to Planned Residential and thus has a binding plan of development. The information provided at the time of the rezone was not sufficient enough to ensure that all applicable standards could be met, as is the case with a preliminary plat review. The submission of the preliminary plat following the rezone ensures that the proposed development will be in keeping with the binding plan.

PLAT REVIEW AND ANALYSIS

The plat is reviewed per §4-200(c) to “**demonstrate compliance with...the [subdivision ordinance]**” and is required to contain certain graphical and text elements on the plat document itself. The standards for subdivision development are found in Article V of the Subdivision Ordinance, “Requirements for Design Standards, Public Improvements, and Reservation of Land for Public Purposes”. The applicant will have to show enough detail on the preliminary plat and supplemental information to be able to “demonstrate compliance” with the standards in the subdivision ordinance, which may be more information than is listed as “required elements” in §4-200(c). The review of the preliminary plat also requires ensuring that the development conforms to the district standards for the development, which in this case is the Glade Spring Crossing Planned Residential District.

Compliance and Variance Requests

For the submittal, all required standards have been met and are not discussed in the staff report except where a variance has been requested. More specifically, the applicant has made two variance requests as below.

ARTICLE IV APPROVAL OF PLATS

DIVISION 2 PRELIMINARY PLATS

§ 4-200 Size and information required on a preliminary plat

(c) The preliminary plat shall demonstrate compliance with the requirements of the Blacksburg Zoning Ordinance and this chapter [the Subdivision Ordinance]. It shall contain the following elements...

The plat submitted includes the required information in the list in §4-200. The required plat elements list §4-200 is included as an attachment to this report.

In evaluating whether the preliminary plat “demonstrate[s] compliance with the [Subdivision Ordinance]” per §4-200(c), staff has reviewed the submitted information against the applicable standards in Article V of the Subdivision Ordinance. Article V provides the standards for design, public improvements, and open space dedication for subdivisions. Some sections of this article are not applicable at this time because they refer to items not proposed or required, or because they refer to steps in the design and construction process beyond the preliminary plat. **After review by staff, the plat is found to be approvable by Planning Commission. Staff has provided analysis below on the variances requested by the applicant.**

ARTICLE V REQUIREMENTS FOR DESIGN STANDARDS, PUBLIC IMPROVEMENTS, AND RESERVATION OF LAND FOR PUBLIC PURPOSES

DIVISION 5 BIKEWAYS

§§ 5-500-503 *Multi-use trails required; location of multi-use trails; access to future multi-use trails rights-of-way; construction design standards*

The preliminary plat shows the multiuse trails as approved in the Planned Residential District rezoning.

VARIANCE REQUESTED

§5-303(e): Landings at road crossings shall be not more than 2% grade for a distance of fifteen (15) feet measured from the edge of the street pavement

The applicant requests a variance to this standard to allow up to 5% landing where the emergency connection is made at Village Way South. This allows the overall grade of the connection to not exceed 15%. *Staff supports the variance request as it reduces the overall maximum grade of the connection rather than having flatter landings and a steeper connection.*

DIVISION 9 OTHER UTILITIES

§5-901 *Public Utility Easements shall be 15' wide, centered on interior lot lines, and interior to all perimeter lot lines.*

Dedication of Public Utility Easements (PUE's), along lot lines help facilitate the expansion of franchised public service corporations furnishing cable television, fiber, telephone, gas and electrical service to proposed development lots as well as the surrounding area. PUEs, as required by Section 5-901, are intended to provide an efficient way for utility providers to provide and maintain critical community services and help provide more diverse opportunities to the consumer. If the requirements of Section 5-901 cannot be met, a variance request, with supporting justification, must be submitted for review by the Planning Commission.

In addition to §5-901, additional regulations regarding public utility easements are found within the Town Water and Sewer Standards and Specifications which are adopted by reference in the Town Code. These regulations specify that public utility easements remain free from structures.

VARIANCE REQUESTED

The Applicant requests a variance to allow a retaining wall to be located within the PUE along the rear of the homes adjacent to The Village at Toms Creek. The applicant submitted a justification with their variance request noting that the inclusion of a wall in this area will allow for less steep back yards adjacent to the existing neighboring homes. *Staff supports the variance request, with the condition that conduits will be provided to allow utilities within the PUE regardless of the wall. However, it should be noted that the maintenance of the wall should be the burden of the HOA, and not the Town, or the individual homeowner.*

SUMMARY OF VARIANCES AND MODIFICATIONS REQUESTED

- **§5-303(e):** To allow greater than 2% landing (not to exceed 5%) on the bike/emergency connection to Village Way South.
- **§5-901:** To allow the construction of a retaining wall in a PUE behind lots 169-175, *with the condition that conduit be provided, and maintenance of the wall be the responsibility of the Homeowner's Association.*

SUMMARY

The Planning Commission is asked to review the preliminary plat for compliance with the standards in the Zoning Ordinance and the Subdivision Ordinance. If deficiencies are noted, then the plat must be denied and then can be resubmitted. Planning Commission is also asked to evaluate the requested variances to subdivision ordinance standards.

ATTACHMENTS

- GIS Maps
- §4-200(c): Preliminary Plat information required




Application components provided in packet

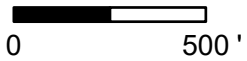
- Plat Submittal – Excerpted Sheets (1-16 and 71)
- Comment Response Letter
- Variance Request Letter

Application components available online

- Complete preliminary plat sheets (1-86)
- Stormwater Concept Narrative
- Stormwater Concept Plans
- Traffic Impact Analysis

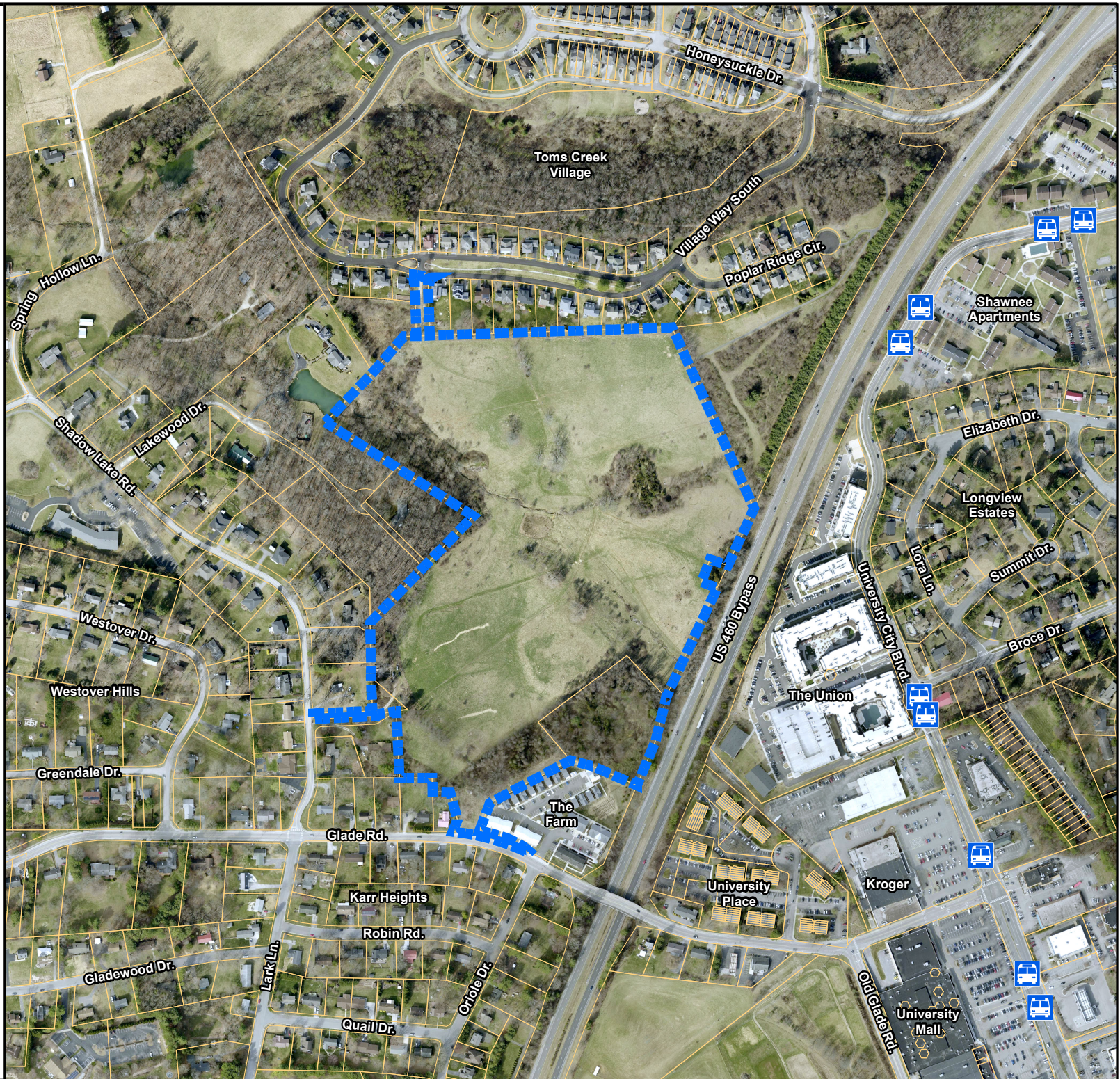
Glade Spring Crossing PLAT-23-20

-  Bus Stops
-  Subject Area
-  Parcels











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2023 Aerials provided by Pictometry
Town of Blacksburg, E&G Dept. 3-5-2024



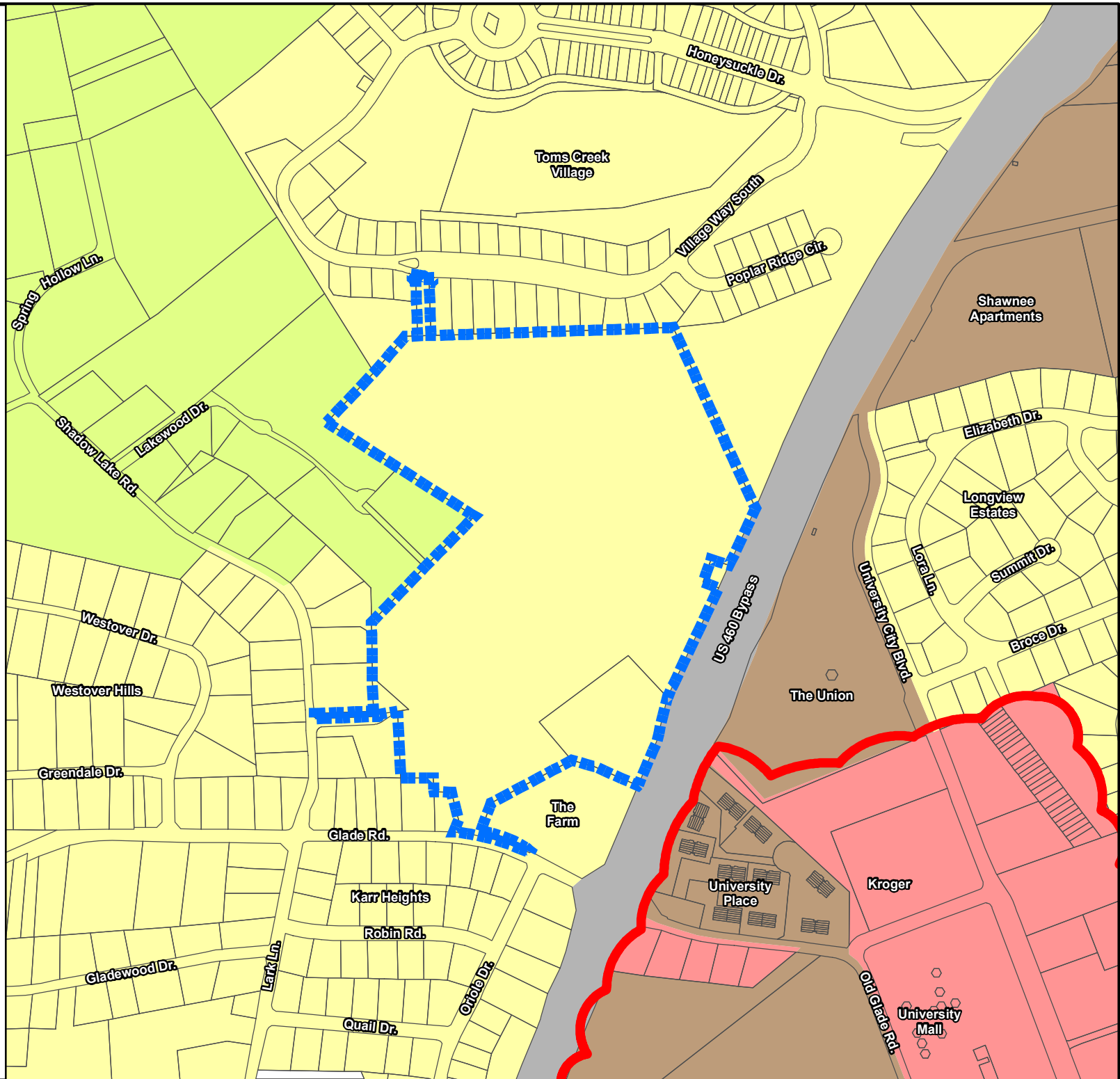
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Future Land Use

-  Subject Area
-  Mixed Use
-  Parcels
-  Very Low Density Residential
-  Low Density Residential
-  High Density Residential
-  Commercial
-  US 460 Corridor



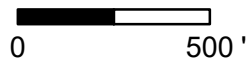
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VIRGINIA



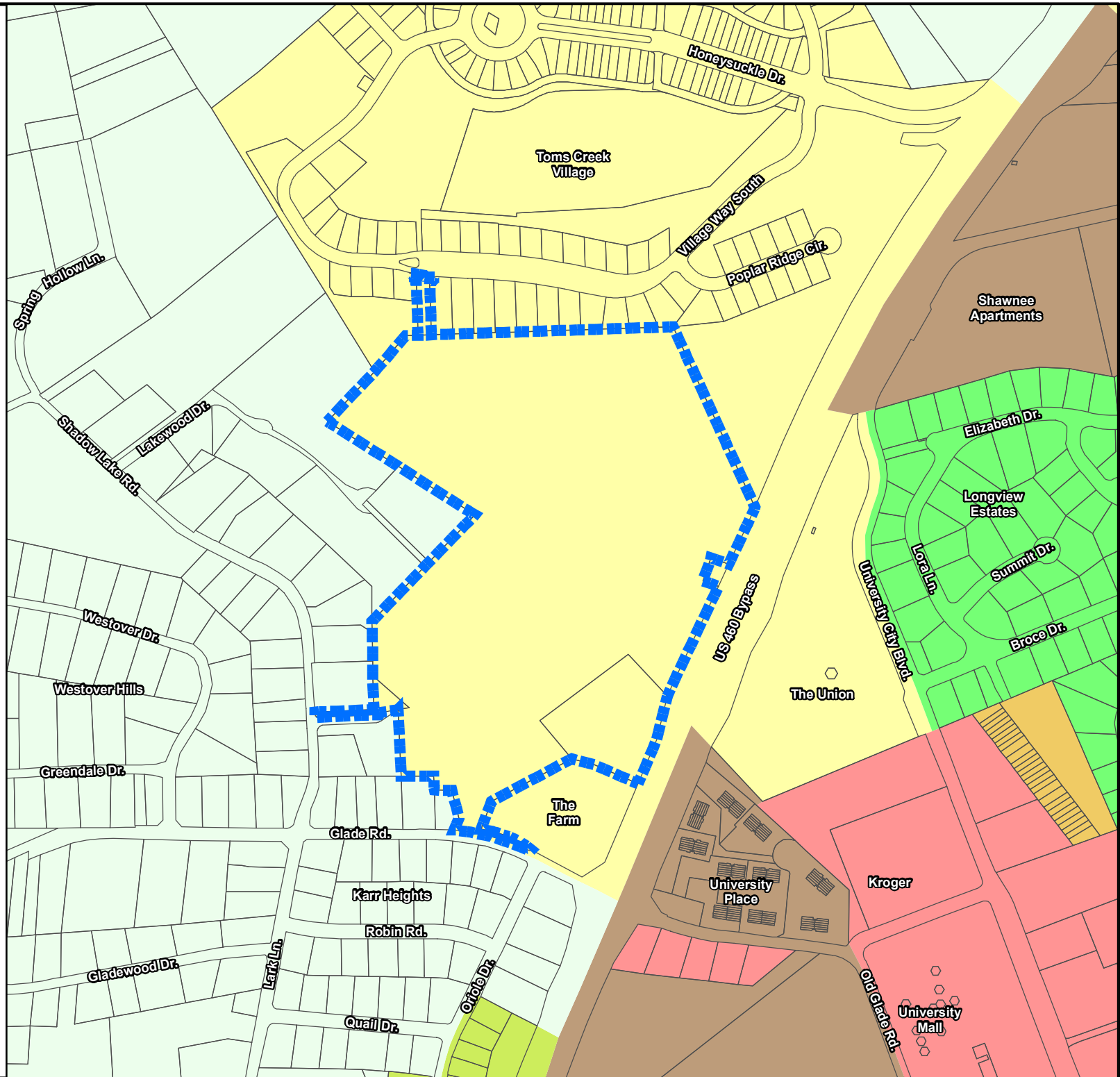
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Current Zoning

- ■ ■ Subject Area
- Parcels
- RR-1 Rural Residential 1
- RR-2 Rural Residential 2
- R-4 Low Density Residential
- RM-27 Medium Density Multiunit Residential
- RM-48 Low Density Multiunit Residential
- GC General Commercial
- PR Planned Residential



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Sec. 4-200. Size and information required on a preliminary plat.

- (a) All preliminary plats shall be either seventeen (17) by twenty-two (22) inches or twenty-four (24) by thirty-six (36) inches in size.
- (b) Prior to final approval by the Planning Commission, the preliminary plat shall be signed by the owner of the land proposed for subdivision. The signature shall certify that the owner is aware of the requirements imposed by the plat and applicable Town codes, and shall further certify that the owner agrees to comply with these requirements, unless modified in accordance with the Town Code.
- (c) The preliminary plat shall demonstrate compliance with the requirements of the Blacksburg Zoning Ordinance and this chapter. It shall contain the following elements:
 - (1) Name of the subdivision, with the notation, "Preliminary Plat."
 - (2) Name(s) of owner(s) of subdivision
 - (3) Name of surveyor or engineer
 - (4) Location of proposed subdivision by vicinity map showing adjoining roads, names of roads, and jurisdiction in which the subdivision lies
 - (5) Adjoining subdivisions
 - (6) Parcel tax numbers
 - (7) Deed references
 - (8) True, record or grid north
 - (9) Identification of graves, objects, or structures marking a place of human burial
 - (10) Scale of drawing
 - (11) Boundary survey
 - (12) Total acreage in overall parcel or parcels involved.
 - (13) Total acreage of subdivided area
 - (14) Number of lots
 - (15) Area of each lot
 - (16) Frontage of each lot
 - (17) Purpose of dedication of land to public use
 - (18) Area in common open space, park or public lands
 - (19) Percentage of land to be subdivided as common open space, park or public lands
 - (20) Names of all existing, platted and proposed streets
 - (21) Width of existing, platted and proposed streets
 - (22) Location of existing buildings within the boundaries of the tract
 - (23) Existing and proposed utility and other easements
 - (24) Sidewalks and bikeways
 - (25) Parking spaces

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- (26) Existing and proposed storm sewer facilities
 - (27) Water courses
 - (28) Names, if any, of water courses
 - (29) Topography at contour intervals satisfactory to the agent for full engineering review
 - (30) Road profiles showing existing and proposed street grades
 - (31) Proposed connections with existing sanitary sewers
 - (32) Existing water supply and proposed connections thereof
 - (33) Any non-public means of disposal of sewage
 - (34) Any non-public means of water service
 - (35) Provisions for stormwater management
 - (36) Contiguous land owned or controlled by the subdivider
- (Ord. No. 1217, § 2, 12-14-99)