

Opinion/Letter: County's beauty being ruined by development

Letter to the Editor

Feb 17, 2021

Since 1968, I have lived in Albemarle County and in Louisa County. My father worked and managed farms, starting with the family farm in Loudon County.

As a farm girl, I am sad that Albemarle County is growing with residential and commercial developments that remind me of what happened in Northern Virginia.

Albemarle has put plans in place to protect rural areas and natural habitats, but the identified growth areas are seeing natural areas being replaced with buildings and asphalt at an alarming rate.

Much of the infrastructure that is needed to support these developments is not in place. The Places29 plan states: "It is important to provide infrastructure at or before the time it is needed to serve new development."

However, the infrastructure of a public bus system does not extend to the Hollymead and Piney Mountain development areas, and some public schools are already overcrowded.

One way to slow growth is to deny the RST development application submitted for the Hollymead growth area. I don't think the development respects the scale and character of existing surrounding neighborhoods as outlined in the county's Comprehensive Plan and the Places29 plan.

According to the county's 2019 Growth Management Report, "an estimated 11,750 additional dwelling units will be needed by 2040." And it says, "An estimated 8,843 dwelling units are currently in the development 'pipeline'," with 44% of them in the Hollymead area.

Especially considering the current economic situation, it is time to pause and reevaluate the rate of growth in Albemarle.

Charlottesville has been ranked as one of the best places to live in Virginia. However, this ranking includes the attractive features of Albemarle, such as Monticello.

It is incumbent upon the Planning Commission and the Board of Supervisors to follow the Comprehensive and Places29 plans to ensure that Albemarle continues to be a place people want to move to and that current residents do not want to leave. The quality of life needs to be considered instead of meeting density numbers and dollar amounts.

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Albemarle County

Information links:

<https://www.albemarle.org/home/showpublisheddocument?id=2973> (page 15)

<https://www.charlottesville.gov/DocumentCenter/View/1121/System-Map-PDF>

https://www.cvillepedia.org/Designated_Growth_Area

<https://resources.finalsite.net/images/v1604532801/k12albemarleorg/grobwncjatnggtifsgyp/CapacityvsEnrc>

<https://lfweb.albemarle.org/WebLink/DocView.aspx?id=1195476&dbid=0>

[https://www.albemarle.org/home/showpublisheddocument?id=322,](https://www.albemarle.org/home/showpublisheddocument?id=322)

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<https://www.thecrazytourist.com/15-best-places-live-virginia/>
