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**Charlottesville-Albemarle Metropolitan Planning Organization**

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**Route 29 Bypass Design Advisory Committee**

**Criteria-Based Report on Proposed Design**

**Approved February 20, 1997**

The Charlottesville-Albemarle Metropolitan Planning Organization

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Available upon request are copies of the original statements of each committee member. These statements, other than being reorganized to provide a listing under each criterion and edited by the committee members who wrote them, have not been changed in this document from their original form. This report can be viewed on the Internet at the Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission home page: <http://monticello.avenue.org/gov/tjpd>

**What is The MPO?**

The Charlottesville-Albemarle Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) is the forum for cooperative transportation decision-making among Charlottesville, Albemarle, and Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) officials.

The local governments and VDOT created the MPO in response to a federal mandate in 1982 through a memorandum of understanding and bylaws with the Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission (PDC), JAUNT, and VDOT. MPO funding is provided by the Federal Transit Administration, the Federal Highway Administration, VDOT, local governments, and the PDC.

**MPO Membership**

Voting members of the MPO Policy Board include two City Councilors, two County Supervisors, and one VDOT representative. Current City members are Kay Slaughter and Meredith Richards. County members are Charlotte Humphris (Chairman) and Sally Thomas. VDOT's representative is Don Wells of the Transportation Planning Division in Richmond. The Policy Board meets monthly or as needed on the second Monday of each month at 5:00 p.m. in the MPO offices of the NationsBank building, 300 East Main Street on the downtown mall of Charlottesville.

The MPO Technical Committee develops information for the Policy Board. It includes local citizens and local, regional, and state transportation planning staff. The Technical Committee meets monthly on the fourth Thursday at 10:30 a.m. in the MPO offices. All MPO meetings are open to the public, and each meeting includes opportunities for public comment on any transportation-related topic.

**Regularly Updated Plans**

Staffed by the PDC with assistance from local and state planners, the MPO conducts transportation studies and ongoing planning activities. A Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) describing MPO activities is developed each spring. Regular planning documents include a Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), which lists projects for the upcoming three years, and the 20-year Charlottesville Area Transportation Study (CATS), updated every five years. Transportation projects developed with federal funds must be approved in the TIP before the Federal Highway Administration or the Federal Transit Administration will approve funding.

### Current MPO Studies and Committees

The Citizens Advisory Committee for the Charlottesville Area Transportation Study Year 2015 developed a draft report presented to local governments and the MPO in the late fall of 1996; is it currently being revised for a second presentation in the spring of 1997. Other MPO committees include:

- The Big Wheels Commuter Opportunities Group, a team of area employers who plan and promote commuter alternatives to driving alone.
- The Route 29 Bypass Design Planning Advisory Committee and the Meadow Creek Parkway Design Planning Advisory Committee, groups of citizens and planners working with VDOT's design consultants.
- The Jefferson Area Bicycling and Walking Committee, a group of citizens and planners from the planning district working on updates and implementation strategies for area bicycle and pedestrian plans (scheduled for appointment in the spring of 1997).
- The Jefferson Area Intelligent Transportation Systems Study Committee, developing recommendations for computer technology improvements for the transportation system.

### Past MPO Studies

- Albemarle and Charlottesville Pedestrian Studies (1985, updates pending)
- Public-Private Transit Alternatives for Urban Albemarle County (1988)
- Household Survey of Charlottesville-Albemarle Transit Needs (1989)
- Guidelines for Transit Operators Contracting with the Private Sector (1990)
- Charlottesville-Albemarle Bicycle Plan (coordinated with UVA bicycle plan) (1991)
- Charlottesville-Albemarle Traffic Reduction Strategy (1992)
- Charlottesville Area Transportation Study, 1995-2015 Update: Policies and Goals (1994); Project Plan (draft, 1997)
- Regional Transit Development Plan (1994)
- Southern Charlottesville - Albemarle Transportation Study (1995)
- Entrance Corridor Study and Design Guidelines (1995)

### Route 29 Bypass Design Planning Citizens Advisory Committee

This committee was appointed by the Charlottesville-Albemarle Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) in 1993, following the completion of the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) for the Alternative 10 location of the proposed bypass. The original charge to the committee was as follows:

An advisory committee appointed by the Charlottesville-Albemarle Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) will develop a community consensus on issues related to vehicle, pedestrian, bicycle, and transit transportation on the Route 29 bypass. The committee will work with VDOT and the bypass design consultant during the design planning phase of the project. With a community consensus in place, communication with VDOT will be smoother as planned improvements are implemented.

Bypass design issues to be addressed by the advisory board concern community needs and preferences. Technical facility design issues will be addressed by VDOT as customary, with the advisory board's report as a resource for guidance on community needs and preferences. The board will present a final report to the MPO. The advisory board's report will be considered during the development of the Charlottesville Area Transportation Study (CATS) year 2015. Staffing is provided by the MPO, working with the city, county, and VDOT staff.

Final design issues to be addressed in detail following the Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB)'s approval of the major design features and right-of-way footprint (as proposed at the February, 1997 public hearing) include several important committee criteria such as stormwater management, noise impacts, landscaping and materials. The committee has requested the MPO to allow it to continue working with VDOT on the final design if the basic design is approved by the CTB. VDOT has agreed to continue working with the committee if so directed by the MPO.

### A Note About the Report

The committee developed a list of 15 criteria upon which the bypass design would be evaluated. This report is organized according to these criteria, which are listed in order in the Table of Contents, and described at the beginning of each section. Committee members' remarks address the relationship of their geographic areas of responsibility according to each criterion, as well as general observations, which are included at the end of each section as well as the end of the report. Not all committee members had detailed comments on each criterion; in these cases, their name in the geographic order is skipped.

A list of the committee members and a map showing their geographic areas of concern are included on the following pages.

### Committee Membership

Numbers and geographic descriptions relate to the member's area of responsibility in the report; this list serves as a key to the map on the following page.

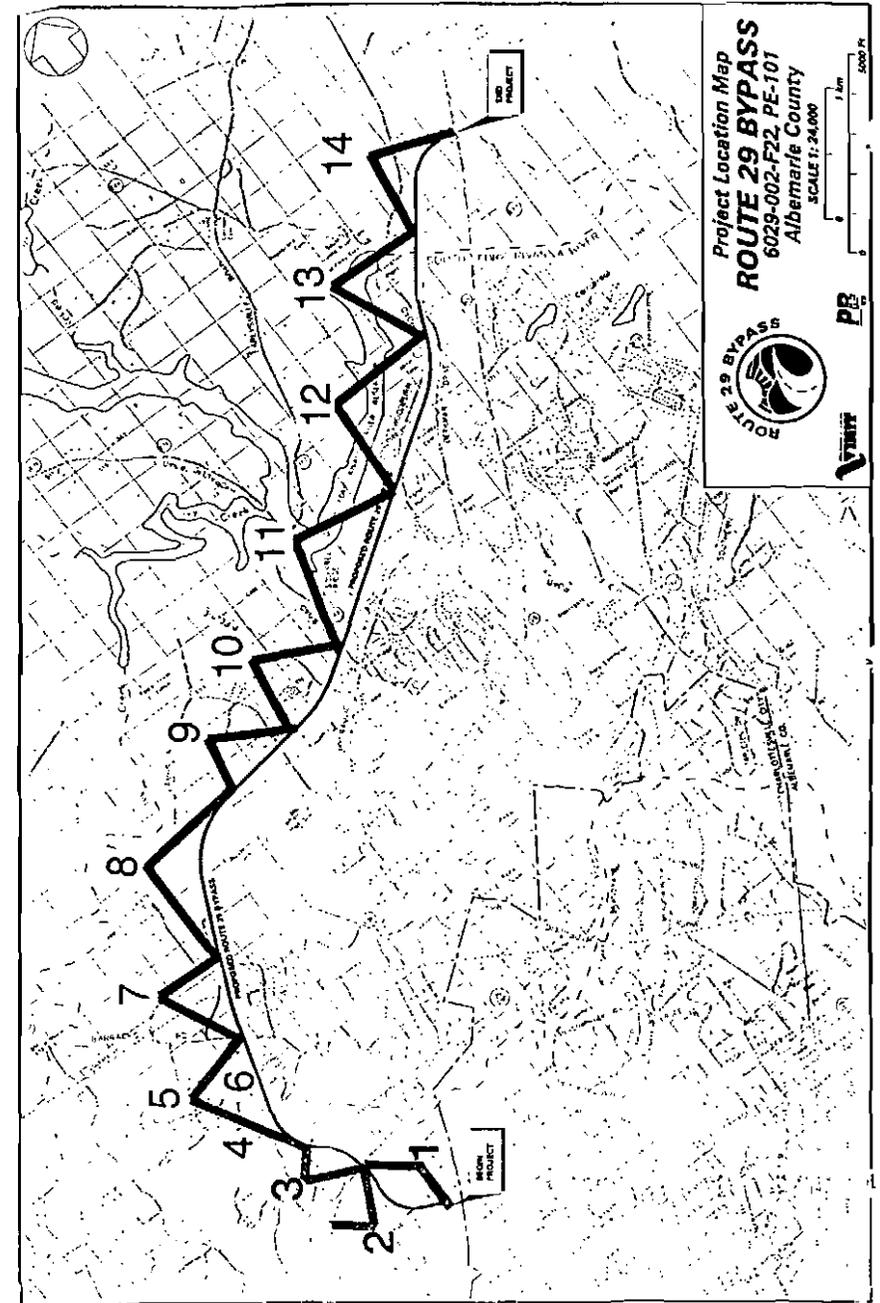
- 1) Pete Anderson, University of VA: North Grounds Connector to Southern Interchange
- 2) Opal David, University Village: North Grounds Connector and Southern Interchange
- 3) David Kalergis, Sugardey Farm: St. Anne's-Belfield School and Southern Interchange
- 4) Robert Garland, Canterbury Hills: Southern Interchange to Colthurst (Committee Chair)\*
- 5) Reed Johnson, Colthurst: Area passing by Colthurst to Barracks Road
- 6) Copley McLean, McLean Farm: Area passing by McLean Farm
- 7) Jan Weary, Montvue: Barracks Road through area passing by Montvue
- 8) David Kalergis, Sugardey Farm: Montvue to area behind Greer School
- 9) Shawn Mooney, Lambs Road: Area behind Greer School to past Lambs Road
- 10) Ann Rooker, Roslyn Ridge: Area passing by Roslyn Ridge to Hydraulic Road
- 11) Ron Keeney, Squirrel Ridge: Hydraulic Road to intersection of Rio/Woodburn Road
- 12) Alex Dotson, Woodburn Road: Woodburn Road to water tower
- 13) Jacquelyn Huckle, Albemarle Planning Commission: Water tower to Rivanna River
- 14) Don Wagner, North Charlottesville Business Council: Rivanna River to North Interchange
- 15) Wayne Cilimberg, Albemarle Planning/Community Development: General Comments
- 16) Satyendra Huja, Charlottesville Planning/Community Development: General Comments
- 17) Blake Caravati, Charlottesville Planning Commission: General Comments
- 18) Patsy Napier, VDOT Design and Location Division: VDOT Comments

Committee Staff: Hannah Twaddell, Senior Planner; Nancy K. O'Brien, Executive Director

\* The MPO acknowledges appreciation to Mr. Munir Eways of Squirrel Ridge, who chaired the committee from 1994-95.

Route 29 Bypass Design Advisory Committee  
Areas For Report

See list of committee members for names associated with numbers on map



## **Protection of Natural and Historic Resources**

*The construction process and completed facility must have the smallest possible impact on natural and historic resources such as water, air, soils, wildlife and their habitats, archeological and historic sites.*

### 1) Pete Anderson: North Grounds Connector to Southern Interchange

The boundaries of construction should be restricted in order to enhance the natural qualities of the existing site. Within roughly the same cross-sectional dimensions, a carefully landscaped "urban street" with four lanes and a planted median, all bounded with curbs, is probably preferable to a two-lane "country road" bounded by improved shoulders and open drainage swales. The eastern end of the proposed route is of more natural beauty than the end nearer to the new bypass.

### 2) Opal David: North Grounds Connector and Southern Interchange

The area to be traversed by the North Grounds Connector is a heavily wooded ravine through uneven terrain. When the idea for this connector was first discussed, it was in terms of an unobtrusive two-lane road, possibly "gated," to limit access and/or to make it one-way in and out on football days. The present drawings and the informational material designed for distribution at the Public Hearing on February 25 indicate "a four-lane urban roadway" which will cut a wide swath through the existing woods.

As a retirement community inhabited by elderly people, we are especially concerned about this aspect of the project. The necessity for traffic lights as part of the three-tier structure at the Southern Terminus means that a substantial number of trucks will be forced to stop and shift gears there, resulting in noise levels (see also comments under "Noise") and carbon monoxide fumes markedly higher than at present. An assisted living facility to be built between University Village and Ivy Gardens within the near future will be even more seriously affected.

### 4) Robert Garland: Southern Interchange to Colthurst

Although this is a large interchange by community standards, it seems to have taken the least amount of land possible and uses much of the existing Rt. 29/250 corridor. Because all Rt. 29 bypass traffic currently uses the existing road, the new road is not expected to have significant additional natural impacts at this location. There are no known historic site impacts.

5) Reed Johnson: Area passing by Colthurst to Barracks Road

Both alternatives seriously impact a heavily wooded area that is the habitat of deer and other small game, such as wild turkeys. The area involved is not large.

7) Jan Weary: Barracks Road through area passing by Montvue

Natural resources, i.e., the land itself, are jeopardized by overly extreme vigilance for the historic resource - a barn exemplifying Depression Era construction. The barn cannot be seen from any road and is on private property which is now for sale.

9) Shawn Mooney: Area behind Greer School to past Lambs Road

As the road intersects Lambs Road, it is hoped that disruption to existing Lambs Road will be as unobtrusive as possible. We would hope that approaches to the new bridge would be as short and subtle as possible and that the trees and natural features of the existing road would be carefully preserved.

10) Ann Rooker: Area passing by Roslyn Ridge to Hydraulic Road

The description for this criterion states that "the construction process and completed facility must have the smallest possible impact on natural and historic resources such as water, air, soils, wildlife and their habitats, archeological and historic sites." As applied to Roslyn Ridge, the proposed bypass, both during construction and after completion, would greatly impact air quality (due to air pollution from truck and automobile emissions) and wildlife (deer, rabbits, foxes) and their habitats. The impact on water quality is unknown at this time because of incomplete information about stormwater management ponds. The possibilities for these ponds to drain toxins into the groundwater as well as the unavoidable toxic run-off from the bypass's paved surface both present threats to individual wells which are the source of water for all Roslyn Ridge residents.

According to the Draft and Final Environmental Impact Statements for this project, "Highway construction can influence groundwater storage levels by interrupting groundwater flow, reducing aquifer recharge area, and lowering the water table in the surrounding area. In addition, runoff from the highway can potentially degrade water quality . . . Groundwater contamination may occur along the highway. Potential pollutants include de-icers, pesticides and herbicides, accidental spills of hazardous materials during transportation, pavement tars, and vehicle emissions. The soils in the

project area typically have low clay contents, therefore, pollutants have a good chance of reaching groundwater and localized contamination may occur."

11) Ron Keeney: Hydraulic Road to intersection of Rio/Woodburn Road

The design does not offer much protection of the natural resources. (There are no historic resources involved in this section.)

12) Alex Dotson: Woodburn Road to water tower

Woodburn Road is one of the oldest communities in Albemarle County, as evidenced by the dates on the many backyard cemeteries. Some of the headstones, the ones that are legible, date back to the 1800's. With the assistance of several long term residents, I was able to locate most of these cemeteries. I do believe other cemeteries are in the path of the proposed bypass. I feel that much more time is necessary to locate these cemeteries and to relocate the proposed bypass to avoid running through them altogether.

13) Jacquelyn Huckle: Water tower to Rivanna River

FAILING GRADE because many sites of MAJOR significance are impacted and VDOT has provided NO assurance of mitigation.

14) Don Wagner: Rivanna River to North Interchange

There was some concern about Indian artifacts in the area north of the Rivanna River bridge, but I understand that has been resolved.

18) Patsy Napier: VDOT Comments

Design actions toward goal include:

- Shifted alignment and construction wall to avoid impact to Westover Property (historic)
- Skewed pipe crossings to minimize stream relocations.
- Varied vertical and horizontal alignment to maximum extent allowable by safe operating conditions to minimize disruption to the natural topography.
- Construction retaining walls to minimize disruption to natural topography (Central Alignment)
- Shifted alignment to preserve knoll north of Roslyn Ridge Road.

### Other General Comments From Committee Members

#### Ann Rooker, Roslyn Ridge

The design of the proposed Rt. 29 Bypass does not meet this criterion because its very location prevents it from having "the smallest possible impact [during the construction process and as a completed facility] on natural . . . resources."

The location of the bypass negatively impacts water, air, soils, wildlife and their habitats, and may have an adverse effect on adjacent historical sites such as the Haffner farm and the Westover property. Water, soil, and air impacts are discussed in subsequent criteria. In reference to impact on wildlife and their habitats, the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) states that, "Wood ducks, mallards, and Canada geese are found along the major streams and on the South Fork Rivanna River Reservoir," and the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) adds that, "In the project area, the South Fork Rivanna River and the Rivanna River are designated by the state as natural trout waters."

Habitats for large numbers of deer, turkeys, foxes, raccoons, and opossums will be severely impacted. Major construction in this area and its accompanying side effects such as erosion, sedimentation, and the inevitable disruption of wildlife habitats can be expected to have long-lasting negative impacts on the area's natural resources.

## **Protection of Rivanna River Watershed**

*Particular care should be taken to protect the Rivanna River watershed and the community reservoir through design strategies such as diverted drainage routes to minimize the effects of toxic freight spills, and through provision of accident prevention features along the roadway and its bridges. Stormwater management facilities should be integrated into the County regional stormwater management system. State of the art sedimentation prevention methods should be used during construction.*

#### 4) Robert Garland: Southern Interchange to Colthurst

This interchange is not expected to have any impacts to the watershed.

#### 7) Jan Weary: Barracks Road through area passing by Montvue

Our neighborhood water is supplied by the reservoir in question.

#### 10) Ann Rooker: Area passing by Roslyn Ridge to Hydraulic Road

The criterion for the protection of the watershed from the proposed bypass is applicable to Roslyn Ridge in that the entire neighborhood lies within the watershed and in close proximity to the reservoir. The construction of this major road project, the earthworks it will require in both cut and fill, the resulting sedimentation and erosion, and the eventual constant run-off of pollutants from the road's surface all will negatively impact the watershed and the reservoir itself. Additionally, groundwater pollution from surface run-off and/or accidents on the bypass may enter tributaries of Ivy Creek which flow through Roslyn Ridge.

#### 11) Ron Keeney: Hydraulic Road to intersection of Rio/Woodburn Road

The entire area reviewed drains directly into the reservoir. No storm water management or retention ponds are in or immediately adjacent to the proposed Bypass roadway. In addition, the proposed four-laning of Hydraulic Road from its intersection at Rio and Hydraulic will substantially increase run-off as the road bed slopes down to the reservoir past the Ivy Creek Natural Area. Approximately seventy-five meters of roadway past the Ivy Creek Natural Area will be regraded and repaved.

#### 12) Alex Dotson: Woodburn Road to water tower

This is an absolute joke! This is an out-and-out violation! VDOT and Parsons Brinckerhoff have displayed a complete and total disregard for the Charlottesville-Albemarle water supply system.

Although the proposed bypass passes through slightly more than four miles of watershed area, my primary concern is a quarter mile on Woodburn Road at Reservoir Ridge Road. Along this zone, the proposed bypass comes perilously close to the reservoir. Approximately 75 feet from the edge of the road surface, the land slopes at approximately 30 degrees; from 75 feet to about 150 feet the grade goes to approximately 45 degrees; from 150 feet to 375 feet is a sheer drop-off, or about an 80-degree slope (see drawings and photos at the end of this section).

It is quite obvious that sediment runoff, during construction, will be impossible to control. Our water supply will be completely contaminated within the first week of construction. In speaking with Mrs. Napier of VDOT, I was informed that they were only concerned with right of way areas and that this area between the right of way and the reservoir "did not matter."

The aspect of this scenario that angers me the most is the appearance that the proposed bypass was aligned to avoid the property of a particular, very influential real estate developer. Initial alignments passed through this property and almost completely out of the watershed area. As soon as this particular developer acquired the property, a mysterious S-Curve appeared in the alignment which very conveniently skirted around his property lines. In my opinion, this is clearly a violation that must not go unchecked. We will, as a group, pursue this injustice to whatever length necessary.

13) Jacquelyn Huckle: Water tower to Rivanna River

FAILING GRADE- VDOT has not answered questions as to whether the storm water detention basins will be "WET" (preferable) or "DRY" ponds. One drainage easement shown on sheet 27 drains directly into the reservoir but has no detention pond shown.

The Bypass will be only about 75 meters from the open clarifying tanks at the water treatment plant. This Bypass has been planned at the urging of the trucking industry, so many tractor-trailers, with their tail pipes at cab level, will spew exhaust into the already treated "finished" water.

The Bypass passes close to five schools which means that 4,314 children will also be affected by this toxic exhaust, especially when they are exercising on the playing fields.

In the opinion of some engineers the vibration from many heavy tractor trailer trucks (up to 80,000 lbs.) could compromise the stability of the water tower.

The actual construction of this road within the watershed of the Rivanna Reservoir will require much cut and fill to create a "shelf" on steep slopes (most of which drain into the reservoir) on which to build the road.

Adding two more lanes to Hydraulic Road will also entail more cut and fill on steep slopes draining into the reservoir. Here no mitigation or storm water detention is shown on the plans. Even the lowest design standards- "All discharge points are protected by storm water management facilities" are not met.

14) Don Wagner: Rivanna River to North Interchange

The Northern Interchange is outside the reservoir watershed.

15) Wayne Cilimberg: General Comments

No proposals for stormwater management for water quality have been provided to the Rivanna Authority or David Hirschmann, Water Resources Manager for the County. This is an essential element of the Committee's design criteria and should be provided for their review and recommendations to the Committee.

18) Patsy Napier: VDOT Comments

Design actions toward goal include:

- Ongoing study by VDOT: analysis of dry ponds vs. wet ponds; stormwater management monitoring during construction and two years after construction
- Shifted alignment as far east in the corridor as practical near the reservoir

Other General Comments From Committee Members

Ann Rooker, Roslyn Ridge

The South Fork Rivanna River reservoir and its watershed are perhaps the most precious, irreplaceable natural resources in Albemarle County, and construction of the proposed bypass poses a very serious threat to them.

The DEIS states and the FEIS reiterates, "The South Fork Rivanna River Reservoir currently supplies the drinking water for much of the population of Charlottesville and

Albemarle County. In the past, the reservoir has experienced problems resulting from early eutrophication. Runoff from agricultural areas has elevated nutrient levels, and construction activities within the watershed have increased sedimentation. This has caused concern within the county due to estimates that the working life of the reservoir may be reduced. A bathymetric study conducted during the course of this study confirmed suspected higher sedimentation rates and a decreased working life for this reservoir." In fact, the reservoir has already lost 22% of its capacity due to siltation and eutrophication.

The DEIS further states that, in reference to construction impacts, "Short-term water quality impact will come from erosion and associated sedimentation. Erosion results when the ground surface is bared from clearing and earthmoving operations. After entering streams, the eroded material may increase turbidity levels and sedimentation downstream. Excessive quantities of suspended solids can harm fish and other aquatic life. Deposition of suspended solids may alter the substrate of stream beds, interfere with plant production and fish spawning, smother benthic fauna, and reduce substrate utilization. Eroded material may also contain organic matter and nutrients, such as nitrogen and phosphorus. High inputs of organic matter may result in an increase in biological oxygen demand decreasing dissolved oxygen concentrations. Additionally, inputs of nutrients can increase both turbidity and eutrophication by increasing algae production."

Construction poses risks throughout the watershed in terms of run-off and groundwater contamination. The DEIS states and the FEIS reiterates that, "Highway construction can influence groundwater storage levels by interrupting groundwater flow, reducing aquifer recharge area, and lowering the water table in the surrounding area. In addition, runoff from the highway can potentially degrade water quality . . . Groundwater contamination may occur along the highway. Potential pollutants include de-icers, pesticides and herbicides, accidental spills of hazardous materials during transportation, pavement tars, and vehicle emissions. The soils in the project area typically have low clay contents, therefore, pollutants have a good chance of reaching groundwater and localized contamination may occur."

Both reports state that, "Concentrations of pollutants in runoff would be . . . greatest under Alternative 10 [the proposed bypass]." In addition to the concern with pollutants entering the reservoir during and after construction, there is a significant potential of

pollutant runoffs from the impervious surface of the roadway contaminating groundwater along the corridor, thereby impacting private wells that are the source of drinking water for many people in the watershed. Private wells are utilized in several neighborhoods along the bypass.

A major concern during and after construction of the proposed bypass is accidental toxic spills into the reservoir or its tributaries. This is of particular importance because the reservoir is the major drinking water supply for more than 60,000 people in Charlottesville and Albemarle County, because there is no adequate replacement for it if it becomes contaminated, and because construction of the roadway is on very steep slopes only a few hundred feet from the intake for the reservoir and its clarifiers. The DEIS and the FEIS acknowledge that, "The presence of hazardous materials in our environment is unavoidable in today's society. Transportation of hazardous materials is regulated by the Department of Transportation under strict packaging, manifesting, handling, and placarding requirements. Despite all precautions, however, the potential for accidents involving these materials is ever-present."

With all of these concerns about water quality impact, erosion, sedimentation, pollutant runoffs and toxic spills, the most up-to-date, state of the art strategies should be implemented during and after construction of this project to maximize protection of the watershed and reservoir.

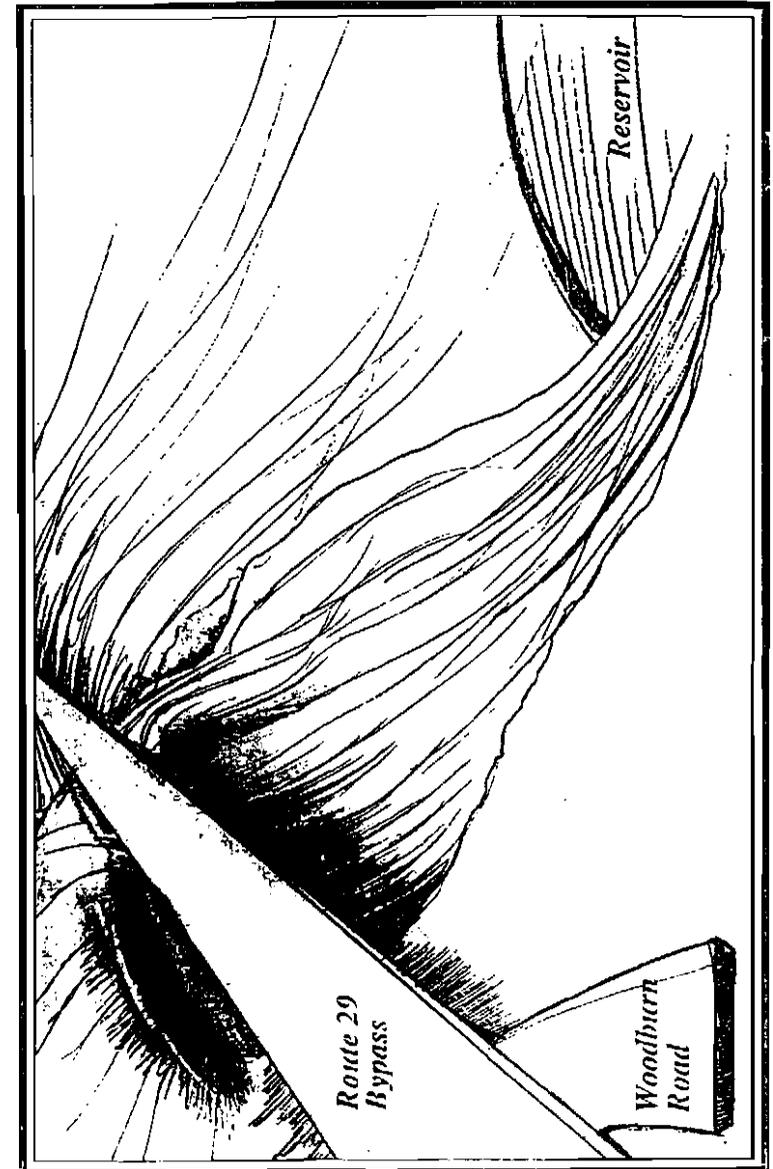
However, the Rivanna Water & Sewer Authority's Executive Director, in a letter dated December 16, 1996 to the VDOT project manager, stated, "At the November 18 [1996] meeting, a VDOT representative stated that VDOT is only prepared to do the minimum that a private developer would be required to do in the reservoir watershed area, or the minimum required by state code. We take exception to this approach because the implication is that a state government agency is not obligated to work with local agencies or exceed minimum design standards in some cases. In this case, we are discussing the major water supply for the City of Charlottesville and Albemarle County. Great pains have been taken locally to protect this supply from the adverse impacts of development [including downzoning the entire watershed, one third of Albemarle County]. This type of statement from a state agency, is to say the least, unfortunate. We would encourage VDOT to exceed minimum standards in this case through special design features and considerations, recognizing that this project imposes on the watershed pollutant loadings and toxic spill risks greater than currently

exist. Increased traffic volumes within the watershed area and intrastate trucks transporting hazardous materials will be direct results of Route 29 Bypass."

In a letter dated December 23, 1996 from the Albemarle County Executive to the VDOT project manager, similar concerns were expressed: "I am concerned about what I understand to be the limited number of reservoir protection devices planned for the Western Bypass within this drinking water supply watershed of the Charlottesville/Albemarle area."

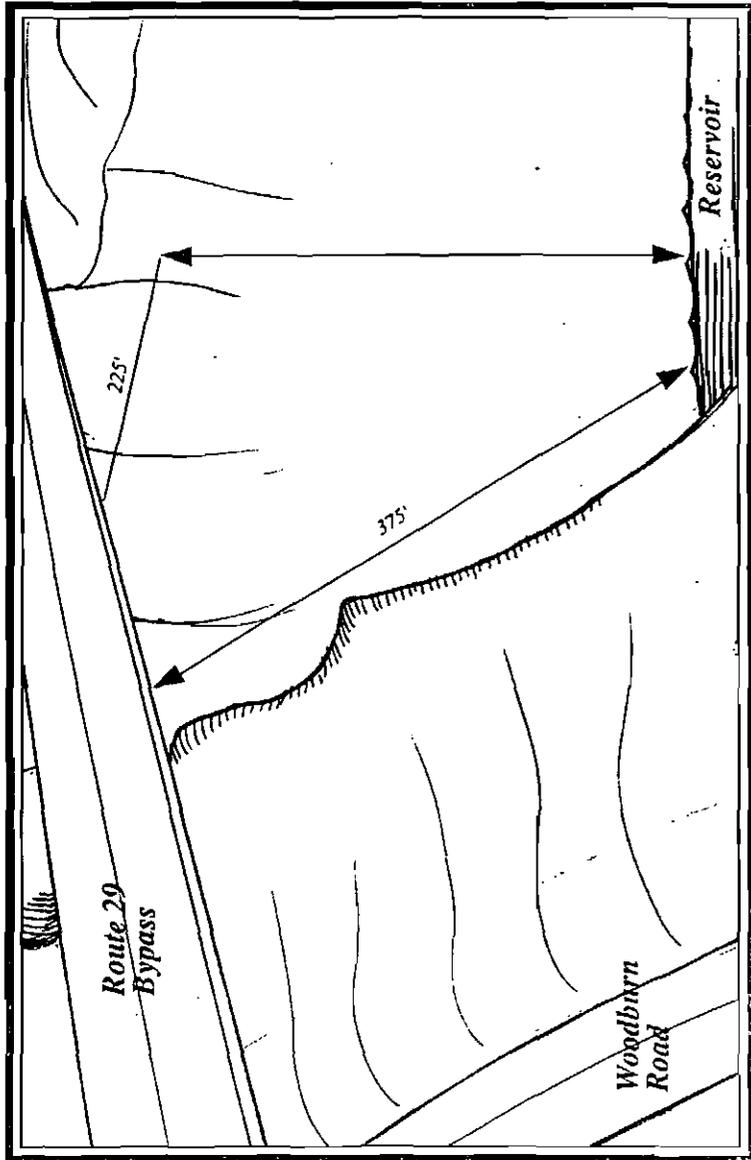
With the potential severity of the impacts to the watershed and reservoir and with the apparent unwillingness of VDOT to take more than the minimum measures necessary to mitigate those impacts, the design criterion for the protection of the Rivanna River watershed is not met. In fact, for these reasons alone, this bypass should not be built.

Drawing 1: Ravine Near Proposed Bypass Location in Woodburn Road Area Submitted by Alex Dotson



*Proposed Rt. 29 Bypass  
Thomas Jefferson Planning District  
Depicts design defect in vicinity  
of Rivanna Reservoir  
Submitted: Feb. 20, 1997*

Drawing 2: Ravine Near Proposed Bypass Location in Woodburn Road Area  
Submitted by Alex Dotson



Proposed Rt. 29 Bypass  
Thomas Jefferson Planning District  
Depicts design defect in vicinity  
of Rivanna Reservoir  
Submitted: Feb. 20, 1997

Photos of Ravine Near Proposed Bypass Location in Woodburn Road Area  
Submitted by Alex Dotson



View as if standing  
alongside bypass; ravine  
slopes sharply down to  
reservoir on left of viewer.



View as if standing on  
bypass looking out over  
ravine, which drops off to  
reservoir in front of  
viewer.

## **Integrity of Neighborhoods/ Business Communities**

*The bypass design should minimize disruption of neighborhoods and business communities as much as possible, avoiding such effects as the physical division or prevention of circulation within communities as well as negative effects resulting from lost properties or placement of residences or businesses close to the roadway.*

### 1) Pete Anderson: North Grounds Connector to Southern Interchange

The proposed design runs along a seam between the University and University Village, causing minimal neighborhood disruption. No businesses are affected by the North Grounds Connector.

### 2) Opal David: North Grounds Connector and Southern Interchange

The following statement from University Village addresses this issue:

The Virginia Department of Transportation has proposed construction of a "Connector" between the planned Route 29 Bypass and Massie Road, in Charlottesville. If built in accordance with the VDOT plan, this Connector could result in:

1. major increase in traffic flow on Massie Road, a small and relatively remote side street,
2. higher noise levels in University Village, other nearby residential areas, and the Assisted Living Facility that is to be built soon by Manorhouse Retirement Centers, Inc.
3. demolishing a relatively new two-story brick building at University Village, and
4. expenditure of an estimated \$4,500,000 for an extra on/off Bypass ramp, which would be very near a planned major interchange.

Rationale for the proposal is quite unclear in several respects and it should be evaluated carefully before proceeding with further plans for construction. This discussion reviews some aspects of the preliminary design that raise serious questions and warrant detailed answers from the designers.

### *Should the Connector be constructed at all?*

The Connector would be constructed only a few hundred feet away from an already-existing major street and east-west highway (Route 250). That thoroughfare is located at the extreme southern end of the Bypass and is where the major interchange at its southern terminus will be placed. Actually, the Connector would be the only

interchange connecting the Bypass to City streets or other highways along the entire length of its six mile route, except at its two ends.

The value of having a reasonable number of connections between the Bypass and major City thoroughfares is understandable, of course, because they could facilitate flow of local traffic, in addition to fulfilling the primary purpose of expediting through traffic. Unfortunately, such interchanges were opposed by City and County officials, reducing local utility of the Bypass considerably. In any event, the value of this on/off ramp, to be built at an estimated cost of \$4,500,000 **and connected between one end of the Bypass and a minor City side street**, is considerably less than clear.

### *If constructed, should the Connector be designed for four lanes?*

For several reasons, some of which are outlined here, design of this Connector as a four-lane highway does not appear to be reasonable and should be re-examined.

1. The proposed connector would be a four-lane on/off ramp feeding into a two-lane side street (Massie Road). Within a very short distance Massie Road dead-ends at a chronically-crowded four-lane city street (Emmet Street).
2. Design width of the four-lane Connector is about 70 feet, including a median of about 15 feet. For comparison, two-lane Massie Road is shown on the plans to have a width of about 25 feet.
3. As it enters Massie Road, the Connector is designed to narrow to two lanes. This produces an obvious bottleneck, with a traffic flow capacity that cannot exceed that of a two lane road.
4. Actually, incoming traffic flow would be substantially less than that because Massie Road is a minor city street that already has two traffic lights in the short distance to its dead end at Emmet Street.
5. Traffic moving out to the Bypass on the Connector also would be severely limited by the need to merge, undoubtedly from only one lane, into rapidly moving Bypass traffic.
6. Considering these factors, which produce a four-lane island between two bottlenecks at the ends, there seems to be little or no justification for making the Connector a dual highway.

### *Is the proposed right of way reasonable?*

1. The right of way proposed for the 70 foot wide, four-lane Connector varies considerably along its length.

2. At a point between an Ivy Garden Apartments building and a University of Virginia parking lot, near the East end of the Connector, the right of way width is shown at about 140 feet. Roughly 650 feet away, opposite the University Village building that is slated for demolition, it is shown by the VDOT plan to be about 180 feet wide.
3. Clearly, a 180 foot wide right of way (or even 140 feet, for that matter) is not necessary to construct a road 70 feet wide, including a 15 foot median, even if that were justified
4. Construction of a two lane Connector would reduce the right of way requirements substantially and would allow placement of the roadway much farther from the University Village building, without significant effect on overall capacity of the system.

*Is it necessary to demolish the University Village building?*

1. The excessively wide right of way opposite the building is one reason why it appears to be "necessary" to demolish it. Reducing its width to a more reasonable value could place it well outside of the University Village building, making its demolition unnecessary.
2. Even assuming that the four lane road could be justified, the right of way (whether 180 feet, 140 feet, or less) could be moved slightly to the North to leave adequate space between it and the building.
3. A two lane roadway clearly could be located in the position currently proposed for westbound lanes of the Connector, making it much farther from the building.

*Why is the gravel road located to pass through the building?*

Another possible but dubious "reason" for demolishing the University Village building could be the VDOT plan to move an existing gravel road from its current location just north of the building to pass through the current building site. There are several questions that arise from that plan, which should be addressed:

1. Presumably the purpose of that move would be to provide access from Old Ivy Road to property west of University Village. Currently, it appears that the only access from the gravel road to Old Ivy Road would have to be through Ivy Garden or Crestwood Drive. The latter is a private drive which is the entrance to University Village and is owned by that organization. It also is used under easements granted by University Village to the University of Virginia and to the planned Manorhouse Assisted Living Facility. It does not have capacity for safe

- traffic flow beyond that projected for residents and staff of University Village and the others already under commitment to use it.
2. The County has expressed great concern about increases in traffic on Old Ivy Road. To that end, proffers to the County exist that limit the number of units that can be constructed at University Village and the planned Assisted Living facility to be built by Manorhouse. Those proffers do not include traffic allowances for the property in question here.
  3. It should be noted, incidentally, that the proposed VDOT layout of a future route for the gravel road shows a width of only about ten feet, clearly inadequate for providing access to any developed property anyway.
  4. This situation suggests that access to property west of University Village must be accomplished by some other route. Two possibilities could include an entrance into the Connector, or additional entrances into Old Ivy Road at other locations, if the County so approves at some future date.
  5. Accordingly, providing space for relocation of the gravel road should have little or no weight in considering any possible need for demolishing the University Village building.

4) Robert Garland, Canterbury Hills: Southern Interchange to Colthurst

There are no disruptions of any neighborhoods or businesses. The current Rt. 29/250 Bypass is about 125' from the closest homes in the adjacent Canterbury Hills Neighborhood. The relocated Rt. 250 Bypass will be about 250' or greater from these same homes and the new Rt. 29 Bypass northbound ramp will be about 400' from the closest home. It is believed that total negative effects for this neighborhood will actually decrease.

5) Reed Johnson, Colthurst: Area passing by Colthurst to Barracks Road

Both alternatives seriously impact the Colthurst community. The "Central Alignment" takes three or four homes and the road hangs out over many others. Nine remaining homes are within 250 meters of the road. In addition the fill at the north end of the segment would be very visible from many of the remaining homes. The "Eastern Alignment" would take no homes and would be less visible from the neighborhood.

In the current version of this alignment the depth of the cut in Stillhouse Mountain through which it runs is about 6 meters less than it was in the July 30, 1996 version of "Alternative 3." Therefore the grade from the north into Colthurst is increased to about

6%, maximizing vehicle noise from that direction. The grade for the "Central Alignment" is still a very steep 4.5%.

In addition to increasing the grade, the change from the July 30 version of "Alternative 3" to the current "Eastern Alignment" raises the level of the crossing over Barracks Road (from 177 M to 186 M). Because of offsetting features it is very difficult to determine which alignment is the least desirable for Colthurst, but both have significant impacts on the community.

7) Jan Weary: Barracks Road through area passing by Montvue

The position of the road will not go through our neighborhood but rather "slice off" a section of homes which is better. However, it will intrude on all views, and is so close as to create noise and air pollution within a few hundred feet.

10) Ann Rooker: Area passing by Roslyn Ridge to Hydraulic Road

This criteria emphasizes minimizing "disruption of neighborhoods" and avoiding "negative effects resulting from lost properties or placement of residences ... close to the roadway." While the criteria of avoiding "physical division or prevention of circulation within [the neighborhood]" is met, the integrity of a small, wooded, quiet neighborhood is greatly comprised by the construction of a major high-speed four lane highway through it.

All residences in Roslyn Ridge are within approximately 1,500' of the proposed bypass; it literally runs through or adjacent to the backyards of two of the residences, and lies within a few hundred feet of three more. In a neighborhood of eleven homes, this represents quite a substantial percentage of "placement of residences ... close to the roadway."

The one Roslyn Ridge home purchased several years ago by VDOT under hardship acquisition now lies outside of the right-of-way, and can apparently be rented or offered for sale by VDOT. Only one home in Roslyn Ridge, other than the one owned by VDOT, has been sold since the announcement of the corridor for the proposed bypass, although several have been on the market for years.

11) Ron Keeney: Hydraulic Road to intersection of Rio/Woodburn Road

The proposed Bypass skirts across the back of the Centel property and the trailer park

that are adjacent to Rio Road without direct conflict with either. It passes through the southern end of the 22-lot subdivision, apparently taking seven homes (although I was told by VDOT that two or three more are affected so significantly that they may be taken), taking between one-third to one half of the neighborhood.

In addition, the proposed changes include the four-laning of the current two-lane Hydraulic Road (Route 743) as it turns away from its intersection with Hydraulic Road and Rio Road at the Rock Store and leads north across the reservoir to Earlysville. This new section of four-lane road will include a new four-lane-wide bridge over the proposed Bypass and new grading and pavement work down the hill across the face of the Squirrel Ridge neighborhood and past the subdivision entrance, affecting two additional houses and further isolating the subdivision from the Ivy Creek Natural Area immediately across the road from the subdivision.

12) Alex Dotson: Woodburn Road to water tower

It is very clear to me that the final alignment was carefully positioned to completely wipe out every house on the south end of Woodburn Road. Woodburn Road is not a very well-to-do neighborhood and therefore does not have any large, expensive, architecturally correct houses. I believe these houses were eliminated to improve aesthetics for all the thousands of motorists whose primary concern is getting somewhere else. I feel this is another major injustice.

Many Woodburn residents live on fixed incomes and have also spent most of their lives on Woodburn Road. The primary problem is that these people will not be adequately compensated and as a result will have to endure the remainder of their lives with a much lower standard of living. These are very good, honest people who deserve much better treatment.

Another concern of great importance is the complete destruction of the SPCA. As with the residents of Woodburn Road, the SPCA will not be adequately compensated for their losses. The Department of Agriculture, the agency that governs SPCA's, has many, many strict rules concerning the design and construction of SPCA facilities. Mike Foreman of the SPCA has obtained several initial bids for a new building and the results have been mind boggling. The expense may prevent Charlottesville and Albemarle from having an SPCA facility.

I am an avid pet lover and the thought of losing our SPCA infuriates me. I will not, under any circumstances, permit this to happen!! My primary goal was to locate in close proximity to the SPCA so I could volunteer my maintenance services and to help collect and care for all those unwanted animals that would normally fall through the cracks. This situation ranks high as one of the greatest disappointments of my entire life. Once again, I will pursue this problem to whatever length necessary.

13) Jacquelyn Huckle: Water tower to Rivanna River

**FAILING GRADE.** Many homes and businesses displaced will be purchased and removed, but there are many properties not actually taken, but severely impacted by the Bypass for which the owner will not be compensated. However, the owners' quality of life and property values will be destroyed.

The RWSA Treatment Plant, while not part of the "business community," certainly is a business with a product, potable water. Pollution from trucks and auto exhaust could severely degrade the product produced at the Treatment Plant.

14) Don Wagner: Rivanna River to North Interchange

There are no neighborhoods or businesses in the Northern Interchange area. One house is impacted.

18) Patsy Napier, VDOT Comments

Design actions toward goal include:

- No roadways cut
- No intermediate interchanges
- Alignment located to avoid splitting (dividing) subdivisions. Only perimeter disruptions (Squirrel Ridge, Montvue, Colthurst, Roslyn Ridge)
- Alignment removes some residences as opposed to leaving them close to the roadway (Colthurst)

**Other General Comments From Committee Members**

Ann Rooker, Roslyn Ridge

For the first time in history VDOT is proposing to build a "bypass" that goes through seven neighborhoods. Residents within each of these neighborhoods will suffer from substantial noise, visual, and air quality impacts.

The DEIS and FEIS characterize this area as one of "hilly terrain, the nearby mountains and the combination of open and wooded areas [which] afford many scenic vistas. A number of attractive residential developments have been located to capitalize on these views. The Rivanna River, the South Fork Rivanna Reservoir and several creeks provide another dimension of scenic beauty to the area." This scenic beauty will obviously be marred by the construction of a major four-lane highway carrying through traffic including tractor trailer trucks at 55 m.p.h.

Air quality will be compromised during construction as stated in the DEIS: "Construction impacts on air quality include exhaust emissions from construction equipment and dust generated by construction activities on disturbed earth. Additional emissions could be generated by burning of debris from clearing operations." Although these impacts would mainly occur during construction, negative air quality impacts from exhaust emissions from vehicles using the bypass would be experienced constantly by people living, working, and attending school in the corridor.

The same is true of noise impacts, and the DEIS and FEIS verify that "most major changes in noise levels would be attributable to the [bypass] due to introduction of major new noise sources..." Unfortunately, no sound barriers are currently planned for neighborhoods to mitigate the negative noise impacts of the bypass.

This criteria also addresses the need to avoid the negative effects "resulting from lost properties or placement of residences or businesses close to the roadway." In each impacted neighborhood, residences are left close to the roadway. In some neighborhoods, VDOT owned property (purchased under hardship acquisition) will not be taken and will apparently be rented or sold at a loss which will negatively impact county tax revenue. Real estate values in all of the impacted neighborhoods can be expected to suffer, as witnessed by the inability of property owners to sell homes in these neighborhoods for the seven years since designation of the bypass corridor.

## Protection of Schools

*The bypass design must minimize visual impacts and avoid negative health impacts, especially related to safety, noise and air pollution, on area schools and school playing fields.*

### 1) Pete Anderson: North Grounds Connector to Southern Interchange

The design of this road will be in a cut and out of view of the nearest University school, building. Transmission of traffic noises should be abated by the fact that the roadway is in cut -- although specific noise data has not yet been provided, A proposed footbridge over the new road should actually improve pedestrian safety.

### 2) Opal David: North Grounds Connector and Southern Interchange

Although some minor adjustments have been made to keep the main route of the Bypass away from St. Anne's Belfield and the playing fields of public schools in its path, this Connector runs dangerously close to the recently completed Darden School.

### 4) Robert Garland: Southern Interchange to Colthurst

St. Anne's-Belfield school is located less than 200 feet from the current Rt. 29/250 Bypass which carries about 40,000 vehicles per day. The closest new ramp (southbound Rt. 29 Bypass) will be about 300 feet from the school and in a cut. The main roads (new Rt. 29 Bypass & relocated Rt. 250 Bypass) will be considerably further away. In addition, the design of the access ramps should decrease the "cut-thru" traffic which presents a hazard at the current entrance/exit to the school without limiting access to the school. Overall, I believe the school actually benefits from this design.

### 7) Jan Weary: Barracks Road through area passing by Montvue

Efforts to keep the road low where it is close to playing fields will help. We have no way of knowing, however, what actual noise and pollution levels will be for those fields.

### 12) Alex Dotson: Woodburn Road to water tower

Agnor-Hurt, the only school in the Woodburn area, was avoided by a very safe margin. The primary problem with this is that the additional margin of safety to the school created an additional threat to the reservoir. The explanation for this occurrence was detailed under "Protection of Rivanna River Watershed." By avoiding Mr.

Developer's property, Agnor-Hurt school was spared any impact.

### 13) Jacquelyn Huckle: Water tower to Rivanna River

**FAILING GRADE** Five schools with a present enrollment of 4,314 students will be subjected to increased air and noise pollution. Anyone who has walked or driven with the car windows open near a busy highway knows that exhaust can be very unpleasant, and breathing it can be hazardous to health. Students exercising on school playing fields next to the Bypass will be inhaling heavy doses of this dangerous air. At the last meeting of the Advisory committee we were told that no decision had been made about noise barriers to mitigate traffic sounds.

### 14) Don Wagner: Rivanna River to North Interchange

There are no schools in the Northern Interchange area.

### 18) Patsy Napier: VDOT Comments

Design actions toward goal include:

- Avoids St. Anne's-Belfield
- Alignment moved west to avoid school fields at Mary Greer; Jack Jouett, and Agnor-Hurt Schools
- Vertical alignment lower than St. Anne's, Mary Greer, and Jack Jouett Schools, and in cut at Agnor Hurt School.

## Other General Comments From Committee Members

### Ann Rooker, Roslyn Ridge

Five schools, Agnor-Hurt and Greer Elementary Schools, Jack Jouett Middle School, Albemarle High School, and St. Anne's - Belfield Lower School, lie within a few hundred feet of the proposed bypass. Noise, visual, and air pollution impacts on them will be significant, particularly in the case of the three elementary schools.

The FEIS states that "exterior noise levels will increase substantially over existing noise levels at a St. Anne's-Belfield outdoor activity area and at the Greer Elementary School playground." Information has not been completed on the possibility of the construction of sound barriers at these sites to help mitigate the noise impacts.

Another, more serious, potential impact to the school communities is the possibility of

a hazardous materials spill as a result of an accident on the bypass in the vicinity of any of the schools. The FEIS states, "The potential for a rare hazardous spill or accident in close proximity to a concentration of people, especially children, is a concern expressed by several citizens... In 1988, representatives of the Charlottesville Fire Department compiled a list of hazardous materials being transported on U.S. Route 29 near Rio Road on week days during daylight hours. The materials included flammable gas, nonflammable gas, flammable solids, oxidizers, poison, corrosives, and radioactive substances. The data collected indicate that an average of 42 trucks per day during daylight hours are carrying some type of hazardous material. Under the selected alternative [the proposed bypass], it could be expected that many of these trucks would be using the new route and thereby passing the schools." In the case of all five of the schools, access and escape routes on existing roads are limited, thereby increasing the potential for serious injury to the school populations if a toxic spill were to occur.

## Size and Scale

*The height, width, depth, and other size and scale indicators of the bypass and its facilities, such as interchanges, should be consistent with and not violate local planning guidelines for land use and design. This may call for a balance of design strategies such as narrow medians and noise walls for urban commercial areas and neighborhoods and a wider separation of directional lanes by grade and median space for rural sections.*

### 4) Robert Garland: Southern Interchange to Colthurst

As stated above, this is a large interchange but accomplishes much in a relatively small area. It is true that, from the relocated and lowered Rt. 250, the design will appear as a three level structure. However, when the existing topography is taken into account, much of the structure is actually at or below ground level. For example, the northbound flyover is the highest point on the structure, but is actually below existing ground level as it passes the adjacent neighborhood. The adjacent six-story University Village will remain significantly higher.

### 5) Reed Johnson: Area passing by Colthurst to Barracks Road

The road as it passes through Colthurst has been reduced in width to the apparent minimum, thus reducing the magnitude of the impact. As noted in 3 above, if the depth of the cut for the "Eastern Alignment" were greater (the road deeper), there would be less impact visually and less noise.

### 7) Jan Weary: Barracks Road through area passing by Montvue

Efforts have been made to conform to the land, but in our area it is impossible because the road must rise from a low area to proceed through or over a mountain.

### 10) Ann Rooker: Area passing by Roslyn Ridge to Hydraulic Road

The 46' cut through the highest hillside in Roslyn Ridge and the 39'-42' embankment that will have to be constructed through pasture land to support the elevated highway are out of scale with the current landscape. Essentially, the construction of the bypass requires cutting away an existing heavily wooded hillside and building a steep hill with a road atop it through a pasture. Both dramatically alter the natural terrain. Information on noise walls or sound barriers, which are also included in this criteria, is incomplete; however, there has never been any plan to provide noise barriers in Roslyn Ridge.

11) Ron Keeney: Hydraulic Road to intersection of Rio/Woodburn Road

As small as a four-lane high-speed road can be.

12) Alex Dotson: Woodburn Road to water tower

I must, at this time, express a certain degree of ignorance in this area. I am not very familiar with "local planning guidelines". I hope that the people in charge of County Planning have reviewed the plans and have given their recommendations.

13) Jacquelyn Huckle: Water tower to Rivanna River

**FAILING GRADE** We can anticipate the visual impact of a four lane road, but having parts of this Bypass elevated makes it much more visually intrusive. One does not expect to see such a highway in a scenic rural landscape, so it will capture the viewers' attention rather than the beautiful Blue Ridge Mountains.

14) Don Wagner: Rivanna River to North Interchange

While the size and scale of the Northern Interchange might be a problem at other locations, they are dictated by the speeds involved and anticipated future traffic, and in my opinion, given the location, are not a problem.

18) Patsy Napier: VDOT Comments

Design actions toward goal include:

- Narrow median and walls (Colthurst, Montvue, Roslyn Ridge, Squirrel Ridge, Woodburn)
- Independent grading in less-developed areas
- Minimized scale of Southern Interchange by lowering elevation one level
- Landscaping options are being considered

**Other General Comments From Committee Members**

Ann Rooker, Roslyn Ridge

The size and scale of the proposed bypass are not consistent with existing topography and will change this part of the countryside of Albemarle County forever. Examples include the extremely high (90'), wide (400'), and unsightly embankments planned in the Barracks Road area and the 42' high embankment that will have to be constructed between Roslyn Ridge and Roslyn Heights.

The design criteria calls for "a balance of design strategies such as narrow medians and noise walls for urban commercial areas and neighborhoods and a wider separation of directional lanes by grade and median space for rural sections." Information about the possibility of noise walls has not been completed. In many cases where the bypass passes through neighborhoods the medians have been narrowed; unfortunately, that necessitates the construction of concrete barriers, 2' wide and 2 1/2 - 3' high, in the center of the median which is not in keeping with the aesthetics of the existing landscape. Conversely, where median space is widened in some of the more rural sections, right-of-way is also widened so more properties are impacted.

Grades on the bypass range from level to 6% on some ramps, with several sections at 3 - 5%. These grade changes will add to the noise impact on schools and residential areas as tractor trailer trucks traveling at 55 m.p.h. shift gears to accelerate or decelerate accordingly.

## Materials

*The texture and appearance of building materials of the bypass and associated facilities such as terminal interchanges and noise walls should be visually complementary to the built and natural environments.*

### Overall Committee Comment:

Design elements such as materials for bridge structures/wall treatments/barriers and landscaping are still under development, and have not been established except in general discussion concerning desired use of "natural" materials. They will, apparently, not be finalized until road plans are approved. Part of the Committee's charge was to review and evaluate these features. It is recommended that the Committee remain in place to complete those responsibilities.

The Committee notes the following comment from Shawn Mooney regarding the Lambs Road area, which is typical of the concerns of other members:

We would hope that the bridge design at Lambs Road would blend in with the very rural and natural setting of Lambs Road. We would think that the design team would be able to come up with something other than a stark and standard concrete structure. I hope that when details and landscape plans are being discussed our neighborhood will have an input into the final product.

## Berms and Landscaping

*To reduce noise and visual impacts, landscaping features such as berms, evergreen trees, grasses, shrubs, and flowering plants should be included. The plans should provide for effective, safe, screening of buildings within sight of the bypass as well as a buffer between northbound/southbound lanes to shield drivers from glare of opposing headlights. Plans should include color schemes for all seasons.*

### Overall Committee Comment:

Landscaping design elements are still under development, and have not been established except in general discussion. They will, apparently, not be finalized until road plans are approved. Part of the Committee's charge was to review and evaluate these features, which are of critical importance to the community; concerns include such issues as the placement of trees to screen the view of the road from the sight line of nearby residences; reducing glare from headlights; and blending with the natural environment according to each season. VDOT has agreed to continue its work on landscaping development with the committee. It is recommended that the Committee remain in place to complete those responsibilities.

## Visual Impacts

*The design should have minimum impact on day and night views from residences and businesses for whom aesthetic views are important such as hotels. Utility lines should not be visible. The roadway should not be illuminated, except where needed for safety at termini. In these cases, cutoff optics or other techniques should be used to avoid light pollution on residences and the University observatory. Highway signs should be included in this assessment. Visual impacts are also affected by the height, depth, and width of the facility (see "Size and Scale"). It is preferable for the bypass to go under local roads in order to minimize noise and visual impacts. It will be important for residents to compare the desirability of looking down or up at the bypass.*

### 2) Opal David: North Grounds Connector and Southern Interchange

Around 100 apartments at University Village which now look out on the wooded area mentioned above will be looking out on a quarter-mile stretch of four-lane highway, enlivened by car lights at night. The Ivy Gardens apartment complex has never had any representation on this Committee but I should think this community of "young marrieds" and graduate students would be concerned about the safety of the small children there. Will this require a chain-link fence????

### 4) Robert Garland: Southern Interchange to Colthurst

Because this structure is largely hidden from the adjacent neighborhood and school, it is believed there will be no significant visual impacts with the following two exceptions: the northbound flyover will likely be visible from the school and some of the structure may be visible from the six story University Village. Because there will be no lighting (except for signs), night views should not be affected. There should be little or no light pollution affecting the University Observatory.

### 5) Reed Johnson: Area passing by Colthurst to Barracks Road

One of the most serious impacts for this segment is the cut the road will make as it passes through or around Stillhouse Mountain. At an elevation of about 200 M, this segment will be a scar visible for miles from the west. Further, as the road passes to the north of the Mountain, there will have to be a significant area of fill, leading to a passage over Barracks Road some 10 to 15 meters above the current roadway. In addition the fill section will loom above some existing homes in Colthurst.

### 7) Jan Weary: Barracks Road through area passing by Montvue

See "General Comments."

### 9) Shawn Mooney: Area behind Greer School to past Lambs Road

See comments under "Natural Resources", "Noise", and "Materials."

### 10) Ann Rooker: Area passing by Roslyn Ridge to Hydraulic Road

This criteria states that "the design should have minimum impact on day and night views from residences" and that "visual impacts are also affected by the height, depth, and width of the facility." The 39'-42' high embankment that will be built through pasture land to support the elevated highway as well as the 46' cut in the highest hillside, requiring a 250' right-of-way, both create enormous visual impacts for Roslyn Ridge.

This criteria also states that "the roadway should not be illuminated," an important criterion to which VDOT and the consultants have agreed.

The criteria also calls for "the bypass to go under local roads" which has been done in Roslyn Ridge.

### 11) Ron Keeney: Hydraulic Road to intersection of Rio/Woodburn Road

Significant to one-third of the Squirrel Ridge Subdivision. Six homes will view the proposed roadbed as it crosses the ravine north of Squirrel Ridge at about 25 feet above existing grade. Insignificant to Hydraulic Road traffic (which passes over the by-pass), and to the corner church.

### 12) Alex Dotson: Woodburn Road to water tower

Visual impacts to residences were completely solved through the simple process of eliminating these residences.

### 13) Jacquelyn Huckle: Water tower to Rivanna River

**FAILING GRADE:** With the bypass elevated in places and located in a gash through Stillhouse mountain, the visual impacts will be horrendous. Although the Bypass may be at grade level in other places, at intersections the elevation of the "other" road will be ugly. Why not have one road at grade and the other beneath it? This would be visually preferable and eliminate the need for expensive and unsightly bridges.

**14) Don Wagner: Rivanna River to North Interchange**

See comments on Materials and Landscaping. Otherwise, the visual impact of the Northern Interchange is not unexpected or unacceptable in this location.

**18) Patsy Napier: VDOT Comments**

Design actions toward goal include:

- No highway lighting
- Highway passes under all existing roads except Barracks
- Highway is as low as practicable throughout its length
- Landscaping will be used where possible to minimize visual impacts

**Other General Comments From Committee Members**

**Ann Rooker, Roslyn Ridge**

Again, the description of this part of Albemarle County found in the DEIS and the FEIS sets the stage for understanding the visual impacts the proposed bypass will have: "The hilly terrain, the nearby mountains and the combination of open and wooded areas afford many scenic vistas. A number of attractive residential developments have been located to capitalize on these views. The Rivanna River, the South Fork Rivanna Reservoir and several creeks provide another dimension of scenic beauty to the area."

The proposed bypass cuts through the heart of this area, leaving gashes in hillsides, scars on mountainsides, and creating hills where there formerly were pastures and meadows. In short, it permanently and irretrievably changes the landscape of this part of Albemarle County.

With regard to the design criterion of the bypass having "minimum impact on day and night views from residences and businesses," the extreme elevation of the bypass above the natural terrain at several locations and the height, depth, and width of the facility make it impossible to fulfill this criterion.

The design criterion of preference for the bypass to "go under local roads to minimize noise and visual impacts" has been accomplished in some, but not all, cases. The most notable exception is on Barracks Road where the bypass crosses the existing road on a bridge 35' - 60' in the air, depending on which route is selected. The embankments

constructed at this point completely destroy the beautiful vista from Barracks Road to the Blue Ridge Mountains.

The most recent statements from the VDOT project manager indicate that the decision has been made not to illuminate the bypass, including the northern and southern termini. This completely fulfills another part of the design criteria in this category. According to this criteria, "highway signs should be included in this assessment." Information about that is not complete.

There has been no information about utility lines; design criteria states that they should not be visible.

## Noise

*The design should have the smallest noise impact on homes, commercial properties and other facilities. The study process should provide information and opportunities for the community to participate in developing and designing for noise walls, if needed. Plans should include strategies such as gentle slope changes, lowering the bypass under existing roads, and using berms and landscaping to minimize all noise impacts including truck gearing and braking noises. New noise surveys and calculations of impacts will be conducted as part of determination for final design.*

### 1) Pete Anderson: North Grounds Connector to Southern Interchange

Noise will be a major factor in the public perception of this road; the Criteria are good, but there is no data at this writing.

### 2) Opal David: North Grounds Connector and Southern Interchange

As a retirement community inhabited by elderly people, we are especially concerned about this aspect of the project. The necessity for traffic lights as part of the three-tier structure at the Southern Terminus means that a substantial number of trucks will be forced to stop and shift gears there, resulting in noise levels and carbon monoxide fumes markedly higher than at present. An assisted living facility to be built between University Village and Ivy Gardens within the near future will be even more seriously affected.

### 4) Robert Garland: Southern Interchange to Colthurst

Final noise data is not available at this time, but this area of the current Rt. 29/250 bypass already carries approximately 40,000 vehicles per day and thus has significant noise levels in the range of 58 - 63 decibels (1994). Because of the design and projected traffic, noise levels may actually decrease at various receptors.

### 5) Reed Johnson: Area passing by Colthurst to Barracks Road

Because many homes in Colthurst will be close to the road (9 within 250 M), and as there is a significant increasing grade (4.5 % or 6%, depending upon the alignment chosen) as the road comes into the Colthurst segment from the north, one would expect significant truck noise as they negotiate the rise in the roadway. The deeper "Eastern Alternative" of July 30, 1996 would reduce this impact, as the grade would be less and the traffic deeper into the mountain. From the standpoint of the quality of life of most of the residents of Colthurst, noise impacts would probably be considered the most

serious.

### 7) Jan Weary: Barracks Road through area passing by Montvue

Noise levels are expected to be unacceptable in this area. No definitive information has yet been given to the committee.

### 9) Shawn Mooney: Area behind Greer School to past Lambs Road

The section of road which passes through Roslyn Farm would be elevated as it crosses the deep swale before intersecting with Lambs Road. This section will be very noisy and unsightly to the residents on Lambs Road. Realizing the restraints of right of way and drainage, is there any way this section could be bermed with excess excavated material? This would relieve the noise in both Roslyn Ridge and on Lambs Road.

After crossing Lambs Road the new alignment goes from a cut to a fill section in about 200 feet. I realize that this is necessary topographically but again, some berms would greatly alleviate the disruption and the traffic noise.

### 10) Ann Rooker: Area passing by Roslyn Ridge to Hydraulic Road

The failure of the design to meet this criterion is perhaps most disappointing of all. The criterion states that "the design should have the smallest possible impact on homes", that the "study process should provide information and opportunities for the community to participate in developing and designing for noise walls, if needed," that "plans should include strategies such as gentle slope changes ... and using berms and landscaping to minimize all noise impacts including truck gearing and braking noises," and that "new noise surveys and calculations of impacts will be conducted as part of determination for final design."

The design of the proposed bypass through Roslyn Ridge creates tremendous noise impacts. The berms that, according to the criteria, should mitigate noise impacts, actually create them in this neighborhood. Locating the bypass to the west of the hill at the front of the neighborhood destroys the opportunity of using that hill to buffer the neighborhood from noise. There has never been any consideration given to developing and designing noise walls in Roslyn Ridge.

General information about noise impacts was presented to the Bypass Design Advisory Committee in June, 1996. The follow-up bypass noise analysis report was not

completed in time for the committee to discuss it prior to the February 25, 1997 Final Design Public Hearing when it is supposed to be available to the public. The apparent lack of attention to this criterion, both in study and design, by VDOT and the consultants is very disappointing since this is an issue that impacts so many people.

11) Ron Keeney: Hydraulic Road to intersection of Rio/Woodburn Road

The proposed Bypass will pass between the Rio Road trailer court and Squirrel Ridge. Both the trailer court and the entire Squirrel Ridge subdivision will be within 250 meters of the roadbed as it climbs up out of the drainage ravine to the north of Squirrel Ridge at a slope of about 4%. Noise from truck traffic on this grade will be unabated by any grading, as the roadbed transitions from the above-grade fill in the ravine to the below-grade cut (to pass under Hydraulic Road) just as it passes closest to Squirrel Ridge.

After going under Hydraulic Road, the proposed Bypass will pass about forty meters behind the church at the corner at about fourteen meters below the existing grade. This deeply recessed roadbed will substantially cut the impact of the noise on the church.

12) Alex Dotson: Woodburn Road to water tower

Noise pollution is going to be a serious problem due to the numerous long, steep grades. This roadway will be carrying mostly heavy trucks, which by their nature, generate high noise levels from their engines and tires. I see this as a serious problem.

13) Jacquelyn Huckle: Water tower to Rivanna River

FAILING GRADE VDOT does not promise noise barriers. All five schools will be bombarded by constant truck noise all day long, as will the residences along the route.

14) Don Wagner: Rivanna River to North Interchange

All of the traffic that will pass through the Northern Interchange is already passing along Route 29 at this location. My guess is that if there is any affect on noise, the elimination of stop and go truck traffic will lessen rather than increase traffic noise. That will certainly be true for the residential area east of Route 29 across from the stop lights on the southbound upgrade just south of the River.

18) Patsy Napier: VDOT Comments

Design actions toward goal include:

- Performed noise analysis
- Minimized steepness of roadway
- Berms and landscaping will be developed in the final design

Other General Comments From Committee Members

Ann Rooker, Roslyn Ridge

It is unquestionable that construction of the proposed bypass would produce noise impacts throughout the corridor it traverses. Again, the DEIS and FEIS state that, "most major changes in noise levels would be attributable to the [bypass] due to introduction of major new noise sources represented by the [bypass]." The obvious noise impacts will be increased wherever the bypass is elevated, rather than depressed, and wherever grade changes will require tractor trailer trucks to shift gears to accelerate or decelerate.

Noise levels around the southern terminus could be expected to significantly increase; although the area is currently impacted by the noise of the 250 bypass, the proposed bypass will add several more lanes of traffic flowing north-south as well as east-west, including an elevated triple-decker interchange, and intersections to serve the new North Grounds connector.

This criterion addresses the need for the study process and plans to include information about noise walls and the use of landscaping to minimize noise impacts. This information is not complete. Noise study information is unavailable at this time.

## Property Takings and Lost Revenues

*The design should take the smallest amount of property while meeting aesthetic goals. The design should have the smallest possible projected loss of tax revenues to local governments. The ability of residences and businesses to relocate successfully should be assured.*

### 2) Opal David: North Grounds Connector and Southern Interchange

Although the VDOT "Presentation" dated February 6, 1997 does not appear to include it, we have been told on various occasions--and the current blueprints indicate--that the small brick building at the northeast corner of our property would be condemned and demolished. While the consulting team was here on the 6th, I drove Jake Keller to the site and explained our view, i.e., that by keeping the gravel road (see next paragraph) in its present location they could save the building and avoid the cost of excavating and building a retaining wall.

The gravel road referred to above is not, as I understand it, a part of the project but the blueprints show it as intended to be reconstituted "in kind" which presumably means as a one-lane gravel road following roughly the old (abandoned?) right-of-way for Tunfell Road used by UVA students for running practice. VDOT's plans for this area need to be clarified and discussed with all of the parties involved.

### 4) Robert Garland: Southern Interchange to Colthurst

The design takes a relatively small area compared to the various traffic movements accomplished. In addition, no occupied dwellings are taken. The tax loss implications are not yet known, but are believed to be minimal.

### 5) Reed Johnson: Area passing by Colthurst to Barracks Road

The "central alignment" takes three or four homes, all of which are valued close to \$500,000, thus pay high taxes. The "Eastern Alignment" takes none, and on this basis might be considered preferable. For residents of the taken homes, the issue is not so clear. Some may prefer to be taken as opposed to having to live immediately adjacent to a noisy roadway!

### 7) Jan Weary: Barracks Road through area passing by Montvue

Stillfield: Because the road will not encroach on drainage field, this very expensive piece of property will be uncompensated except for the actual footage used by the road.

Montvue: Six houses, three at the Montvue Drive cul-de-sac and three at the Magnolia Drive cul-de-sac are slated to be demolished (re: conversation by phone Monday February 10, 1997, with Patsy Napier). The three houses at Magnolia Drive must be bought at fair market value. Three houses at the Montvue Drive cul-de-sac have already been bought at fair value. However, one of these will not be needed; instead, one further west will be needed and must be bought at fair price. There is a fourth house at Montvue Drive cul-de-sac which remains in a compromised position with the road running through its property on nearly the same level as the house. This seventh house should also be bought if the owner wishes (see VDOT maps).

### 10) Ann Rooker: Area passing by Roslyn Ridge to Hydraulic Road

One property in Roslyn Ridge has been purchased by VDOT under hardship acquisition. The house on that property no longer lies within the alignment or the right-of-way for the proposed bypass. It appears that access to the house can be provided if the bypass is built, and that VDOT will be able to rent or sell, albeit at a loss, the house.

Other properties in the neighborhood that have been listed for sale as a result of the corridor designation have not been sold, with the exception of one house which was sold for a substantial loss to the owner after being on the market for several years. Plans for the proposed bypass have had a chilling effect on the real estate market in this neighborhood.

### 11) Ron Keeney: Hydraulic Road to intersection of Rio/Woodburn Road

The bypass will take seven residences and should take at least three more. This will reduce the lots sharing the maintenance of the private neighborhood roads from 22 to 15 or 12. Property values (and county tax assessments) of the neighborhood have already dropped to below the level that existed in 1990 when the alignment was selected.

### 12) Alex Dotson: Woodburn Road to water tower

It is quite obvious to me that Woodburn Road was viewed by VDOT as a "cakewalk". This was clearly evidenced by the total lack of communication concerning the proposed bypass with the residents of Woodburn Road. Woodburn Road has mostly older, less expensive homes so I am certain VDOT considers it a "cost effective" move to destroy all of the homes on the south end of the road.

### Other General Comments From Committee Members

#### Ann Rooker, Roslyn Ridge

The design for the proposed bypass will take approximately 30 homes which will represent substantial lost tax revenue to Albemarle County. Some of these homes have already been purchased by VDOT under hardship acquisition, and some of those now lie outside of the right-of-way. Therefore, VDOT will have to rent or sell these properties at a loss, and that will also negatively affect local tax revenue. This criterion states that "the ability of residences and businesses to relocate successfully should be assured." However, the FEIS states that "in the information ... based on the Stage I Relocation Assistance Report prepared by VDOT in February and March 1990, and updated in February and July 1991 and again in February of 1992 [,] the field review was conducted without contacting any of the potential displaced residents." The measure of successful relocation can only be made by the displaced residents.

## **Regional Traffic Movement**

*The bypass should enhance efficient traffic movement for the region by serving through traffic, reducing high speed through traffic on neighborhood streets, and supporting traffic reduction strategies. Plans for park and ride lots adjacent to or near the bypass should be addressed in the design.*

#### 1) Pete Anderson: North Grounds Connector to Southern Interchange

The Connector will enhance the ability of regional traffic to enter and exit the University Grounds.

#### 2) Opal David: North Grounds Connector and Southern Interchange

It has not been possible to arrange a meeting of the Board of Directors of the University Village Owners Association before these comments were due but more than seventy-five resident/owners have signed the petition circulated by CATCO (see quote below) and I have, as the Association's representative on this committee, voted in favor of the Resolution offered by Reed Johnson at our meeting October 24, 1996.

We support the conclusions of the ROAD TO RUIN report which listed this project as one of 22 highway projects throughout the United States which are "unnecessary, environmentally harmful and opposed by concerned local residents." We believe that there are two separate problems here:

- (1) The need to relieve congestion caused by local traffic on Route 29N. This has already been partially taken care of by widening and could be further improved by construction of the Meadow Creek Parkway and other measures approved by the City, County, and University but vetoed by the Commonwealth Transportation Board. We do not believe that the proposed Bypass, which limits access/exits to two possibilities, six miles apart, is going to attract any significant number of the shoppers and diners and movie patrons who currently travel on 29N between Barracks Road and Rio Road.
- (2) The need for an additional North-South route to accommodate the mainly truck traffic overflowing Routes 81 and 95. This traffic should not be routed through built-up urban areas (the complications of the proposed Southern Terminus underline this point) nor in the watersheds of urban water supplies. A Bypass should be a Bypass.

The CATCO petition reads as follows:

"We, the undersigned, oppose the construction of the Alternative 10 Route 29 Bypass for the following reasons: 1) 4.2 miles of the road is in the South Fork Rivanna River Reservoir Watershed and dangerously close to the intake for the main water supply for over 60,000 people; 2) it takes over 30 homes and runs through 7 established neighborhoods; 3) it impacts 5 schools and 450 homes; 4) it fails to carry a significant amount of through north-south traffic; 5) Taxpayers for Common Sense and Friends of the Earth identified this project, which will cost \$140-\$170 million, as wasteful of taxpayers' money and destructive to our environment; 6) the State has failed to fulfill its promise to build other projects first, including the Meadow Creek Parkway; and 7) we don't need years of ongoing construction in the Route 29 corridor after the widening of Route 29 is completed; the Route 29 widening project and construction of the Meadow Creek Parkway should adequately solve our traffic problems into the foreseeable future."

4) Robert Garland: Southern Interchange to Colthurst

The Southern Terminus enhances regional & local traffic movement. While not specifically listed in the Committee's criteria, the interchange meets all standards for sufficient merging distances on all exiting and entering ramps.

7) Jan Weary: Barracks Road through area passing by Montvue

No ride-sharing facilities planned at this time.

10) Ann Rooker: Area passing by Roslyn Ridge to Hydraulic Road

The only part of this criteria that is applicable to Roslyn Ridge is that "the bypass ... [should have the effect of reducing high speed through traffic on neighborhood streets..." Roslyn Ridge neighborhood streets have never experienced high speed through traffic; however, the passage of the bypass through the neighborhood will create a high speed through traffic route.

11) Ron Keeney: Hydraulic Road to intersection of Rio/Woodburn Road

Without an interchange at Hydraulic Road, there will be no significant effect on regional traffic.

12) Alex Dotson: Woodburn Road to water tower

I drive quite a bit and have found that a periodic diversion during a long trip is very beneficial. By eliminating the Charlottesville stop-over, fatigued drivers will continue

on their way, possibly resulting in an accident and loss of lives. Another aspect to be considered is the loss of revenue to restaurants and gas stations. Park and ride facilities were discussed briefly and, I believe, the determination was to include them in the plans.

13) Jacquelyn Huckle: Water tower to Rivanna River

**FAILING GRADE:** Rather than reduce local traffic, the Bypass may cause increased through truck traffic into the region.

14) Don Wagner: Rivanna River to North Interchange

The main purpose of the bypass is to facilitate regional traffic movement, and without an intersection at Hydraulic Road, which would make the Bypass very useful for local traffic, it will benefit local traffic mainly by allowing regional traffic to bypass the business area between the North Fork of the Rivanna and the existing 29/250 Bypass. Many say that the Bypass should be further out, but this committee is not charged with that decision, and given our charge the Northern Interchange design is acceptable.

15) Wayne Cilimberg: General Comments

Road plans include widening of Route 743 (Hydraulic Road) to four lanes divided from the Route 631 (Rio Road) intersection through the bridge overpass of the Bypass to a transition back to two lanes northwest of the Bypass. This was apparently requested by the local VDOT Residency as a part of the ultimate widening of Route 743.

There are currently no such County plans for widening of Route 743 northwest of the Route 631 intersection. The County has only identified study of Route 743 in that area for possible spot and alignment improvements. It is requested that widening of Route 743 to four lanes divided not be included in the Bypass plans.

16) Satyendra Huja: General Comments

Design should incorporate plans for a park and ride lot at or near the Northern Terminus.

18) Patsy Napier: VDOT Comments

Design actions toward goal include:

- Movement of through traffic enhanced by limited-access roadway
- No intermediate interchanges
- Will pull 24,400 cars/day off Route 29 North Business (for design year 2022)
- UVA is considering a multimodal facility in the North Grounds area

Other General Comments From Committee Members

Ann Rooker, Roslyn Ridge

The present Rt. 29 corridor between Warrenton and Charlottesville is not suited for conversion to a limited access facility. There are approximately 20 traffic lights and hundreds of entrances on this stretch of the highway. Accordingly, it is highly unlikely that the planned western bypass will become a link in a realistic center state limited access highway. The bypass is a very short route proposed to be built in the center of Albemarle County's most densely populated area and the Northern Terminus is located south of the county's largest designated growth area. Therefore, it would not even act as an effective bypass for residents of adjacent counties.

Regional traffic movement goals for the proposed bypass can only be accomplished if it becomes part of a limited-access, interstate-type freeway in the Rt. 29 corridor. Since the 29 Corridor Study is incomplete, and since preliminary indications are that the Study will not recommend Rt. 29 to become a limited access interstate from Charlottesville to Warrenton, it is premature at best to assume that this proposed Rt. 29 bypass would be an effective and important link in regional traffic movement.

This criterion calls for the design to support traffic reduction strategies and to address "plans for park and ride lots adjacent to or near the bypass." Neither of those criteria has been fulfilled.

## **Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities**

*The design should be consistent with national, state, and regional bicycle plans, and regional pedestrian plans. This could include parallel bicycle paths and pedestrian/bicycle under/overpasses.*

Overall Committee Comment

An element of the bicycle and pedestrian facilities criteria was possible incorporation of a separate bicycle/pedestrian system within the bypass corridor. Such facilities have not been included in the design and, due to the additional right of way necessary and the associated impact of these features, are not recommended by the Committee for the bypass alignment. Bicycle facilities associate with roads affected by the bypass, however, should be developed in accordance with local bicycle plans.

## Needs for Future Facilities

*The study should assess potential future needs identified from plans such as the Warrenton-Charlottesville corridor study and include preliminary information and sketches for community review.*

### 4) Robert Garland: Southern Interchange to Colthurst

The design is believed to be sufficient to carry many more vehicles than currently projected.

### 7) Jan Weary: Barracks Road through area passing by Montvue

Allowance for Meadow Creek Parkway connection planned.

### 10) Ann Rooker: Area passing by Roslyn Ridge to Hydraulic Road

This criteria is not applicable to Roslyn Ridge unless the proposed four-laning of Hydraulic Road from the Rock Store to the entrance to Squirrel Ridge included in the construction plans for the bypass project is a forerunner to the construction of an interchange off the bypass at Hydraulic Road which is opposed by the neighborhood.

### 11) Ron Keeney: Hydraulic Road to intersection of Rio/Woodburn Road

Without the space for an interchange at Hydraulic Road, there are no future facilities available in this section.

### 12) Alex Dotson: Woodburn Road to water tower

I don't believe we had any discussion on future projects. In reality, this project is not planning for the future. As research has shown, the proposed bypass will still leave Route 29 Business with an "F" Level of Service rating at the time of completion. This is a horrible waste of taxpayer dollars.

### 13) Jacquelyn Huckle: Water tower to Rivanna River

FAILING GRADE: Planning for this bypass should have waited until the Warrenton--Charlottesville study was complete. Given the number of curb cuts in this corridor, Route 29 may have to be moved to another location altogether.

### 14) Don Wagner: Rivanna River to North Interchange

As outlined in my comments on the various criteria by which the committee very early on agreed to evaluate the Bypass design, I have no significant problems with the design

of the North Interchange. It does take a fair amount of land due to large loop ramps. but the design appears appropriate for the need without undue adverse impacts.

### 18) Patsy Napier: VDOT Comments

Design actions toward goal include:

- The Northern Interchange provides for a future interchange with the Meadow Creek Parkway, and will accommodate future extension of Route 29 Bypass to north.
- Because the roadway is as low as possible, these opportunities were limited.
- Pullouts (scenic view overlooks) are secondary to other goals to minimize impacts

### Other General Comments From Committee Members

#### Ann Rooker, Roslyn Ridge

The criterion states the "The study should assess potential future needs identified from plans such as the Warrenton-Charlottesville corridor study and include preliminary information and sketches for community review." This has not been done, as the Rt. 29 Corridor Study is not complete. However, the design for the proposed bypass does provide room at the Northern Terminus for the inclusion of the Meadow Creek Parkway terminus onto Rt. 29 North.

The design also shows the four-laning of Hydraulic Road between the Rock Store and Squirrel Ridge, a widening that was requested by VDOT and opposed by Albemarle County.

## North Terminus Interchange

*Although an at-grade, signalized intersection is currently planned for the northern terminus, design scenarios for a grade-separated interchange should be included.*

### 1) Pete Anderson: North Grounds Connector to Southern Interchange

No specific comment but, over the long term, attention must be given to improving access to the Airport.

### 12) Alex Dotson: Woodburn Road to water tower

This is another area of great concern. This interchange location has numerous flaws. First, this intersection should be located in the area of Airport/Profitt Road. Relocating the interchange to this area will help to move all of the additional traffic from the fast-growing Forest Lakes area. In addition, the road surface from the proposed interchange, heading north from town, is very narrow and has many rolling hills with very steep grades. Because of the fast growing nature of this area, additional traffic lights are frequently being added.

### 13) Jacquelyn Huckle: Water tower to Rivanna River

**FAILING GRADE** If this bypass is built, a grade separated interchange should be built at the same time. A light at the bypass and Rt. 29 intersection would negate any value the bypass might have.

### 14) Don Wagner: Rivanna River to North Interchange

Other than taking a fair amount of land due to large loop ramps, the design appears appropriate for the need without undue adverse impacts on this section.

### 16) Satyendra Huja: General Comments

Design should incorporate plans for a park and ride lot at or near the Northern Terminus.

### 18) Patsy Napier: VDOT Comments

Design actions toward goal include:

- Provided for future Meadow Creek Parkway Interchange
- Provided ability to extend to north to the extent feasible

## Other General Comments From Committee Members

### Ann Rooker, Roslyn Ridge

In accordance with this criterion, the design for the proposed bypass does show a grade-separated interchange at the Northern Terminus, although part of it is signalized. This interchange could accommodate the northern terminus of the Meadow Creek Parkway in the future. There is a potential safety hazard with this interchange as its two northbound Route 29 bypass exit ramps merge with two lanes of northbound traffic on existing Route 29 a few hundred feet from the signalized entrance to Forest Lakes South.

## South Terminus Interchange

*The design study should include an analysis of the design sent to VDOT by the Canterbury Hills Neighborhood Association.*

### 4) Robert Garland: Southern Interchange to Colthurst

This design represents an improvement on the design submitted to VDOT by the Canterbury Hills Neighborhood Association.

### 7) Jan Weary: Barracks Road through area passing by Montvue

There are many ongoing concerns about this area of multi-directional turnoffs, little weaving room, and short term decision-making. Much traffic will be dumped into this area, especially during rush hours and school opening/closing. This is a dangerous section affecting everyone.

### 12) Alex Dotson: Woodburn Road to water tower

A nightmare!! It's like trying to pack four pounds of "crap" into a three pound bag, or we could just as well call this area "Spaghetti Junction". This is a hideous location for such a complex interchange. This interchange was designed to minimum standards. By the admission of Mr. Cayton of Parsons-Brinckerhoff, this was the "best they could do." Motorists will possibly have to slow to as little as 35-45 mph to negotiate entry and exit ramps. The result will be numerous rear-end collisions and people being run off the road. I am certain lives will, once again, be lost.

### 13) Jacquelyn Huckle: Water tower to Rivanna River

**FAILING GRADE:** Nothing can be done to "cure" this hodgepodge of roads but whatever is attempted, the newest entrance to and exit from the 250 bypass must remain in use. The half clover-leaf on the south side of Route 250 was inadequate years ago and cannot handle the increased traffic of today. No "at grade" railroad crossings are acceptable.

### 18) Patsy Napier: VDOT Comments

Design actions toward goal include:

- Analysis of south terminus interchange design submitted by Canterbury Hills Neighborhood Association has been completed.

## Other General Comments From Committee Members

### Reed Johnson, Colthurst

The Southern Terminus interchange planned for the proposed Route 29 Bypass will exacerbate an already very difficult and dangerous traffic intersection at the junction of Route 250 and the existing Route 250 Bypass, will require major changes in historic traffic patterns and will significantly inconvenience residents, school traffic and businesses in the vicinity of the Southern Terminus. In particular:

As traffic arrives at the Southern Terminus from the south on existing Route 250-29 Bypass, it will encounter oncoming (i.e., traffic coming onto the road) traffic from Business Route 250 (Ivy Road) into the far right lane. Then there are two overpasses, Business Route 250 and Old Ivy Road, which tend to obstruct the view. Within about 1/4 mile, drivers must select which of three directions they must follow; straight ahead to continue on Route 250 Bypass (far left lane), a right veer to go onto Route 29 Bypass or to the North Grounds connector approach (Ramps A and AE), followed very quickly by a right veer onto the North Grounds Connector approach (Ramp AE). All of this is made more difficult by the fact that, in general oncoming traffic from Business Route 250-arriving in the far right lane, will want to continue on Route 250 Bypass-the far left lane. In addition Route 29 Bypass traffic is likely to be in the left lane as it comes to the Southern Terminus, and must move over to the right to continue on Route 29 Bypass (Ramp A).

The on-coming and off-going ramps from the rerouted 250 Bypass to Barracks Road are within about 1/8 mile of the exit and entrance ramps of new St. Anne's-Belfield School approach (Ramp C) and the road from the North Grounds connector (Ramp F), respectively.

At rush hours southbound traffic from the merging of Route 29 Bypass and the existing Route 250 bypass may encounter traffic backed up onto the roadway from cars trying to exit onto Business 250 through a stoplighted interchange at the top of the off-ramp.

Trucks from the south that move onto the Route 29 Bypass (Ramp A) will

probably have had to slow down to negotiate the interchange, then they will accelerate as they move up Ramp A. This will amplify the noise impact for both the Canterbury Hills community and Belfield School.

Local traffic onto Route 250 Bypass from Old Ivy Road and off of the 250 Bypass going toward St. Anne's-Belfield School will have to pass through stoplighted intersections.

With the exception of the last inconvenience, all of the problems listed above will be magnified in their intensity if, as is often suggested, Route 29 becomes a major, central north-south corridor. In my opinion, as a result of these mainly safety-related weaknesses, the Southern Terminus interchange is not appropriately located for a road of this character and is inadequate and dangerous for its proposed traffic load.

Ann Rooker, Roslyn Ridge

The only design criteria for the southern interchange is that "the design study should include an analysis of the design sent to VDOT by the Canterbury Hills Neighborhood Association." This criteria for the southern interchange has been accomplished.

However, it is important to note that the southern interchange impacts not only the Canterbury Hills neighborhood, but also University Village, St. Anne's - Belfield Lower School, and the new Darden School, the J.A.G. School, and the School of Law at the University of Virginia's North Grounds. The inhabitants of all of these facilities and residences will have to contend with noise, visual, and air pollution impacts both during and after construction.

Additionally, there will be issues of erosion and sedimentation during construction of the new bypass and North Grounds connector, and during construction to tear up and move the existing 250 Bypass to the east. Property values in the area can be expected to decrease.

## General Comments

David Kalergis, Sugardey Farm

The location for this Bypass, which was presented to us by decision of the Commonwealth Transportation Board some years ago, presents many design obstacles. We are all aware of the numerous negative environmental and neighborhood impacts the road will have as witnessed by continuing opposition to the original location decision. That having been said, I believe that the VDOT team and their consultants have done a creditable job in trying to minimize the impact of the road, given the location decision with which they had to work.

The design criteria developed by the Committee contain, by their very nature, numerous trade-offs. Efforts to achieve one particular design goal invariably have a negative effect on some other goal. I believe that, all-in-all, the road design, as it stands to date, reflects a good effort to achieve the design goals, and I would vote accordingly. I discussed this position with representatives of St. Anne's - Belfield School this afternoon (Feb. 17), and they are in agreement.

I don't believe that the design job is finished, however. As I mentioned at the last meeting, landscaping now takes on an important role. I also feel that the combination of topography and land use constraints are having a particularly harsh impact on both the Colthurst and Montvue sub-divisions, and I urge the design team to continue to work with these neighborhoods in an effort to do whatever might be feasible to lessen the impact.

Robert Garland, Canterbury Hills

Realizing this was one of the most difficult areas of the Bypass, I feel the consultants did an admirable job in satisfying most, if not all, of the Committee's criteria.

Jan Weary, Montvue

The location of the Route 29 Alternative 10 is an unacceptable choice to the Barracks Rd., Stillfield and Montvue area. Its location will necessitate a 15 to 40 foot high earthworks through the property known as Stillfield in order to support a bridge over Barracks Rd.. Any increase in the height of the bridge could raise the earthworks to as much as 60 feet. The road on top of the earthworks will have a 4.5% grade and will be within a hundred to a few hundred feet of the nearest houses, causing unacceptable

noise levels for Stillfield and next door Magnolia Dr. residents. To the north, at the end of Montvue Dr., though at a lesser grade of 1.97%, the road is still too close to a remaining house and runs through an area even less protected by trees.

Ever since Montvue Subdivision was deemed "a viable and reasonable alternative" to encroaching upon an edge of the 188 acre "historic" Haffner property to its west, its residents have not only fought a frustrating and fruitless battle for a sensible solution, but have also lived through years of indecision as to where the bypass center line would be, whose home would be taken, and whose would be left and devalued by the road's eventual presence. The whole neighborhood suffers as these home owners hesitate to instigate necessary repairs and improvements to their properties. After the bypass is constructed, should that eventually happen, which properties left behind will be unsaleable?

The dilemma of Montvue Subdivision and its neighbor, the estate Stillfield, is the result of an effort to squeeze a 4-lane divided highway for through truck traffic into an area of established homes. Our situation is not unique as this highway route passes through or immediately adjacent to six other established residential areas. Its proximity to the watershed is a threat to our water supply, and its presence through the proposed area a blight on the landscape prized by local residents and visitors alike. If it removes any local traffic from Route 29 it will be to reroute it into Ivy Rd., and Emmet St. (through the north grounds connector) to create two new bottle necks.

#### Shawn Mooney, Lambs Road

As an overview, we would like to emphasize that the consulting team has been most cooperative and sensitive to our requests thus far, and we certainly hope that this will continue. We need to emphasize that whether this project proceeds or not, everyone should strive to see that it is planned to be as unobtrusive and sensitive to citizen concerns as possible, despite the enormity of this task.

#### Ann Rooker, Roslyn Ridge

The proposed Rt. 29 Bypass passes through the Roslyn Ridge neighborhood between the Squirrel Ridge and Lambs Road neighborhoods. Roslyn Ridge is bound on the north and east by Hydraulic Road, on the west by the Ivy Creek Natural Area, and on the south by farmland adjacent to Lambs Road. It is a small neighborhood of eleven homes set in a heavily wooded area crossed with streams that are tributaries of Ivy

Creek. Neighborhood covenants establish guidelines for preservation of woods, streams, and the natural environment, and residents of Roslyn Ridge are very committed to the environmental preservation and protection of the neighborhood. The entire development lies in the watershed for Albemarle County, in close proximity to the reservoir, and all of the homes are serviced by individual wells.

From the north, the proposed bypass traverses through a 21 acre lot that is heavily wooded and is the highest point in the neighborhood, culminating in a knoll. Construction of the bypass will require a 46' cut in this lot, with steep slopes on either side; this necessitates a 250' right of way and essentially will devastate a large portion of the hillside and knoll. (This part of the proposed bypass will run in close proximity to the Mormon Church on the corner of Hydraulic Road. Plans also show the widening of Hydraulic Road from its current two lanes to four lanes from the Rock Store to the entrance to Squirrel Ridge.)

The neighborhood has repeatedly and unsuccessfully requested VDOT and the Parsons Brinckerhoff consultants to move the bypass farther to the east to avoid taking as much of that hillside and knoll as possible, since they provide some natural sound and visual barrier from the bypass for the neighborhood. It should be noted that neighborhood representatives were given a preliminary map in May, 1996 that showed the bypass alignment through Roslyn Ridge shifted substantially to the east and were told by VDOT and the consultants that "this is what can be done for your neighborhood."

The map also showed an interchange off the bypass at Hydraulic Road in the Squirrel Ridge neighborhood. This interchange has consistently been opposed by the Albemarle County Board of Supervisors, and when the Board again voiced its opposition to the interchange and VDOT was instructed to stop designing it, the alignment through Roslyn Ridge shifted back to the west. At no time was the interchange mentioned to any Roslyn Ridge neighborhood representatives as the reason for the eastward shift of the bypass and there is no evidence to suggest otherwise. Therefore, the neighborhood continues to request an easterly shift of the bypass, and, as of February 6, 1997, that request continues to be denied by VDOT and the consultants.

Traveling south through the Roslyn Ridge neighborhood, the bypass passes under Roslyn Ridge Road. This will necessitate the construction of a bridged entrance to the

neighborhood. During construction of the bridge, a detour road will be built to provide entrance to Roslyn Ridge. Unfortunately, this detour road will be constructed on the same 21 acre lot aforementioned and will result in more devastation to the hillside and the trees because, in order to provide access during construction, it will have to go farther west on the lot than the cut in the knoll for the bypass would require. The bridged entrance also will require the elevation of Roslyn Ridge Road at that point by 6'; therefore, approximately 2/3 - 3/4 of Roslyn Ridge Road will have to be rebuilt to accommodate the increased 6' height at the bridge.

Despite years of assurances from VDOT and the consultants to residents of the Roslyn Ridge neighborhood that the bypass would be depressed as it traversed our neighborhood, construction plans show that, after crossing under Roslyn Ridge Road, the bypass will actually be elevated 39' - 42' in the field between Roslyn Ridge and Roslyn Farm. (Neighborhood representatives actually learned about this change in plans accidentally at a meeting with VDOT and the consultants on November 18, 1996.) This elevation will be accomplished by constructing a man-made embankment, and this embankment will be at its highest elevation (42') as it passes adjacent to the backyard of Roslyn Ridge residents. The grade of the bypass at this point is 3%, which will probably cause tractor trailers to have to shift gears. Noise and visual impacts from the bypass for our neighborhood are greatly magnified by this elevation and grade.

Two stormwater retention ponds are planned along the route of the bypass in Roslyn Ridge. Both of the ponds are located adjacent to a cul-de-sac where six very young children live and play. Parents are rightly concerned about safety hazards presented by the location of these ponds. Residents are very concerned about leakage from these ponds of toxic materials into the groundwater, particularly since much of the neighborhood lies downhill from these ponds, since we are serviced by wells, and since our streams empty into Ivy Creek. No determination has been made as to whether these ponds will be wet or dry, lined or unlined, fenced or unfenced.

At the request of the Roslyn Ridge neighborhood, the alignment of the bypass is tightened as it traverses the neighborhood. However, this tightening has necessitated median barriers, known in the industry as "Jersey barriers," which are concrete walls, 2' wide and 2 1/2 - 3' high. There is an unfortunate trade-off between having the alignment as tight as possible, thereby minimizing the amount of right-of-way and land

taken, and having these unsightly barriers.

Several years ago, VDOT purchased one home in Roslyn Ridge under hardship acquisition. The right-of-way and alignment for the proposed bypass currently do not touch that house, although the right-of-way does take a detached garage. It appears that access can be provided to that house and VDOT can continue to rent or sell it, albeit at a greatly reduced price than VDOT's purchase price. The movement of the bypass to the west into the neighborhood will protect the VDOT owned residence from destruction.

The impact of the proposed bypass on Roslyn Ridge is devastating. The neighborhood that is now characterized by gently rolling, densely wooded hillsides with adjacent pastures and mountain views will become a thoroughfare for tractor trailers and other through traffic traveling at 55-65 m.p.h. Our current ambient noises of birds singing and wind blowing through the trees will be replaced with the noise of traffic, especially trucks changing gears as they climb or descend the 3% grade through the meadows. The visual impact will range from the large gash in the knoll to the man-made embankment in the meadow. In short, our peaceful, pastoral neighborhood will be destroyed.

#### 11) Ron Keeney, Squirrel Ridge

The proposed Bypass design attempts to respond to pressures from each side as it traverses through the northwest side of town. It carefully "threads the needle" between established neighborhoods, historic properties, and the physical topography while trying to provide a reasonably level, straight roadway on which non-local traffic can bypass parts of Charlottesville at 55 mph.

But based on my two years of exposure to the proposed Bypass design as a member of the Design Advisory Committee, the individual parts, no matter how locally sensitively they are designed, do not add up to a viable whole. The Alternative 10 Alignment is across rolling hills, in close to town past a variety of established neighborhoods and schools, and across an ecologically very sensitive water-shed area that provides drinking water for the entire city and county area. Creating a major roadway past each of the obstacles requires a variety of compromises. Creating a major limited access roadway past all of the obstacles requires major compromises.

- 1) The rolling terrain can be overcome by infilling across depressions or ravines and cutting through hills. However, these fills and cuts require substantial width to accommodate the change in grades or the roadway is required to rise and fall with the terrain.

As the roadway width is generally constricted by adjacent obstacles, the road must therefore rise and fall with the topography, causing traffic to vary in speed, losing economic uniform speed, and producing more noise. However, these conditions produce exactly the problems that the adjacent neighborhoods cannot tolerate. A compromise is required.

This roadway is close enough into town that the creation of substantial changes in grades (embankments and cuts) are objectionable visually to the large number of area residents that will be forever looking at the roadbed in their daily travels, so again, a compromise is required.

- 2) The objections to the close proximity to the established neighborhoods and developments could normally be overcome by integrating this roadway into the local system of traffic. But the defined purpose of the road is to bypass the local area. A distinct conflict remains.
- 3) Taking a major north-south transportation link highway safely across a watershed area that drains into the primary reservoir for over 100,000 people is questionable at best, but nevertheless requires extreme care, with the maximum precautions involved. These precautions would include a straight and level roadbed, minimum entering and exiting traffic, and substantial space around the roadbed to accommodate and contain a potential hazardous spill at any point along the roadbed. Each of these elements is in direct conflict with the restrictions placed on this roadway by the rolling terrain and the adjacent developments around which the design must accommodate.

Therefore, despite our best efforts (those of VDOT, their consultants, and of the Advisory Committee), I do not believe that we have succeeded in achieving an acceptable series of compromises for each of these conflicts. The end result is still the wrong road in the wrong place. Either a more remote bypass should be built, which can accommodate the rolling hills without offending neighboring developments

visually with grading or acoustically with noise generation. Or the proposed alignment should become a locally integrated roadway without affecting the water supply. As this lack of effect is very questionable, I do not believe this alignment is reasonable.

### 12) Alex Dotson, Woodburn Road

In conclusion, this is truly "big money - politics" in action. This compromise project will benefit only a small group of individuals who stand to gain financially as a result of its construction. This is a direct slap in the face to all of the hard-working, law-abiding taxpayers who will be footing the bill. Continuing this project, as proposed, would strike a devastating blow to Charlottesville and Albemarle County's environment, air and water quality, and the way of life that makes this area so desirable.

VDOT is a very unresponsive organization that is behaving like a very large, out-of-control machine that is "blasting" through our area without regard for the well being of its residents. This behavior is irresponsible and unacceptable.

Bottom line: I believe a well planned, properly located bypass would be beneficial for area and regional traffic. The present proposed plan is not that plan. To VDOT: Give us a plan and we will give you a bypass!!!