



CITY OF BUENA VISTA PLANNING COMMISSION

AGENDA

6/9/2026 | 7:00 PM

Council Chambers – 2039 Sycamore Avenue

ADG #1: CALL TO ORDER

ADG #2: PUBLIC HEARING

1. Zoning Text Amendment – Section 702 Accessory Dwelling Units

ADG #2: PUBLIC COMMENT ON ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA

ADG #3: REVIEW AND ADOPTION OF MINUTES

ADG #4: OLD BUSINESS

1. Zoning Text Amendment – Section 702 Accessory Dwelling Units

ADG #5: NEW BUSINESS

1. Certificate of Appropriateness – Sign at 2522 Beech Ave
2. ROW Abandonment – Alley in 300 block of Longhollow Rd

ADG #8: REPORT OF SECRETARY

1. Board of Zoning Appeals recent items
 - a. Reduction of minimum frontage at 1434 Maple
 - b. Variance at 322 E 17th St
2. 801 Meridian Pkwy campground CUP vote
3. 100 block of E 31st St townhouses abandonment re-approval

ADJOURNMENT

Members and Term Expirations

Dennis Hawes, Chairman, 7/31/2028

Lynette Johnson, 6/30/2026

Kathryn Janiczek, 8/31/2029

Marolyn Cash, 6/30/2028

Sarah Henson, 9/30/2027

Melvin Henson, 9/30/2027

Bryson Adams, 12/31/2028

Timothy Petrie, 12/31/2028

Jason Tyree, Ex Officio member

Staff

Tom Roberts, Director of Community Development

City Hall, 2039 Sycamore Avenue, Buena Vista VA 24416

(540) 261-8607 | tom.roberts@buenavistava.gov | buenvistava.gov

Meetings

Members of the Buena Vista Planning Commission meet in Council Chambers, 2039 Sycamore Avenue, at 7:00 p.m. on the 2nd Tuesday of each month, unless otherwise announced. Meetings may be held and business conducted without a quorum, but no votes may be taken unless a quorum is present. A majority of members constitutes a quorum. A motion passes with a majority vote; a tie constitutes defeat of the motion.



STAFF REPORT

TYPE: Zoning Text Amendment

PROJECT: Section 702 Accessory Dwelling Units

DATE: 3/26/2026

SYNOPSIS

Adopt regulations allowing accessory dwelling units (ADUs).

SUMMARY

This draft text and the analysis was presented and discussed earlier this spring to Planning Commission and City Council, and has now been scheduled for public hearing. The draft text has not changed. For in-depth analysis, please see earlier staff reports.

Currently, accessory dwelling units (ADUs) are generally not permitted in the City. ADUs represent an important piece of the housing stock, and many localities in recent years have updated their regulations to permit them. The recent regional housing study recommended that Buena Vista explore this. Additionally, Governor Spanberger has signed a bill, that would pre-empt local prohibitions of ADUs and permit them anywhere single-family dwellings are permitted beginning in 2027. The text of this included.

ANALYSIS

Proposed Policies

The draft text reflects staff recommendations, Planning Commission discussion and recommendations, and alignment with the bill in General Assembly.

Key policy points of draft text:

- Minimum lot size for house with ADU of 6,250 sf (one lot).
- Max square footage of ADU is 50% of the main house, minimum size is 320 sf (this will align with existing minimum sq ft for “efficiency” apartments in Mixed Use zone)
- Max of 2 people living in ADU
- Max of one bedroom in ADU
- Owner occupancy of either main house or ADU required
- Same setbacks for ADUs as other accessory buildings
- One off-street parking space required for ADU

EXHIBIT A - DRAFT TEXT

Definitions

302.XX *Accessory dwelling unit, or ADU*, a complete independent dwelling unit, with kitchen and bath, designed, arranged, used, or intended for occupancy by not more than two persons for living purposes and having a separate entrance and address, that is either (a) contained within the principal structure of a single-family dwelling (an “attached ADU”) or (b) in a separate, fully detached structure from the principal structure (a “detached ADU”).

Regulations

702.00 Accessory Dwelling Units

702.01 Purpose. The intent of this section is to regulate the construction and occupancy of accessory dwelling units (ADUs). ADUs shall be clearly secondary and accessory to the primary dwelling unit as to location, height, square footage, floor area ratio, and building coverage, and in keeping with the character of a single family neighborhood. The ADU must be integrated into or be compatible with the primary structure using features such as roof lines, exterior materials, window patterning or exterior color.

702.02 Accessory dwelling units generally

702.02-1 A single accessory dwelling unit, both attached and detached, shall be considered a customary accessory use in all zones where single-family dwellings are permitted. A zoning permit must be obtained prior to construction or use of an accessory dwelling unit.

702.02-2 Use and occupancy of each dwelling unit must comply with all applicable building, property maintenance, and rental inspection code regulations including inspection requirements, as applicable.

702.02-3 A primary dwelling unit may have no more than one accessory dwelling unit.

702.02-4 Accessory dwelling units are subject to the dimensional regulations applicable to other accessory buildings within the same zoning district.

702.02-5 No accessory dwelling unit may be established or built on a non-conforming lot. To establish or build an accessory dwelling unit, its lot must meet the minimum lot size, if any, within the applicable zone.

702.02-6 At least one off-street parking space must be dedicated to the accessory dwelling unit.

702.02-7 Attached ADUs may be no larger than 50% of the square footage of the primary dwelling unit. Detached ADUs may be no larger than 50% of the square footage of the primary building.

702.02-8 The minimum square footage of the ADU is 320.

702.02-8 An accessory dwelling unit may have no more than one bedroom.

702.03 Occupancy of accessory dwelling units

702.03-1 No more than two persons may occupy the ADU.

702.03-2 On a property with an accessory dwelling unit, the property owner must at all times be the permanent resident of either the primary or accessory dwelling. Determination of residency shall be made by the Zoning Administrator. Occupancy of an accessory dwelling unit when neither the primary dwelling nor the accessory dwelling unit is the permanent residence of the property owner shall constitute a zoning violation.

CODE OF VIRGINIA AMENDMENT

Approved April 13, 2026

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That the Code of Virginia is amended by adding a section numbered 15.2-2292.3 as follows:

§ 15.2-2292.3. Development and use of accessory dwelling units.

A. As used in this section, "accessory dwelling unit" or "ADU" means an attached or detached dwelling unit on a residential dwelling lot that:

1. Provides complete independent living facilities for one or more individuals;
2. Is located on the same lot as a proposed or existing primary residence; and
3. Includes facilities for living, sleeping, eating, cooking, and sanitation.

B. Zoning ordinances for single-family residential zoning districts shall be deemed to include accessory dwelling units as a permitted accessory use, and no locality shall require compliance with any other requirements except as provided in this section.

C. Any person proposing an ADU shall first obtain an ADU permit from the locality, for which the locality may charge a fee of no more than \$500. Such fee shall be in addition to any other applicable fees, including inspection, site, or building permit fees, that may be required in connection with the ADU. A locality shall issue the permit if the applicant demonstrates that the ADU complies with the requirements of this section and the local codes and ordinances referenced herein.

D. Localities may require the following:

1. A lease term for the rental of an ADU of 30 consecutive days or longer;
2. Replacement of a primary dwelling's required parking if the construction of the ADU eliminates such parking;
3. Dedicated parking for the ADU;
4. Limits on floor area, lot coverage, and impervious area of an ADU of no less than (i) 350 square feet on lots less than 2,500 square feet and (ii) 500 square feet on lots 2,500 square feet or greater;
5. Compliance with (i) building codes, including the requirements of the Uniform Statewide Building Code (§ 36-97 et seq.), for an accessory dwelling unit if the ADU is attached or for a dwelling unit if the ADU is detached; (ii) water, sewer, septic, emergency access, flood zone, and stormwater requirements; (iii) historic and architectural districts and corridor protection restrictions; and (iv) Air Installations Compatible Use Zone restrictions;
6. Owner occupancy of the ADU or the primary dwelling, but not both, only at the time an application is submitted to construct or convert an accessory dwelling unit;
7. That the ADU shall be no more than 500 feet from the primary dwelling;
8. No ADUs on a residential lot that has more than one dwelling unit; and
9. No ADUs sold separately or subdivided from the primary dwelling.

E. Localities shall not require the following:

1. Rear or side setbacks for the ADU that are greater than the setback required for the primary dwelling or the setback required for accessory structures on the residential lot, whichever is less;
2. Restrictions for ADUs that are more restrictive than those for single-family dwellings within the same zoning area with regard to height, rear or side setbacks, lot size or coverage, or building frontage;
3. A restrictive covenant concerning an ADU on a lot or parcel zoned for residential use by a single-family dwelling;
4. Improvements to public streets as a condition of allowing an ADU, except as necessary to reconstruct or repair a public street that is disturbed as a result of the construction of the ADU; or
5. Consanguinity or affinity between the occupants of an ADU and the primary dwelling.

F. Nothing in this section shall be construed to supersede or limit contracts or agreements between or among individuals or private entities related to the use of real property, including recorded declarations and covenants, the provisions of condominium instruments of a condominium created pursuant to the Virginia Condominium Act (§ 55.1-1900 et seq.), the declaration of a common interest community as defined in § 54.1-2345, the cooperative instruments of a cooperative created pursuant to the Virginia Real Estate Cooperative Act (§ 55.1-2100 et seq.), or any declaration of a property owners' association created pursuant to the Property Owners' Association Act (§ 55.1-1800 et seq.).

G. Nothing in this section shall apply to any existing permits for an ADU approved by the locality prior to July 1, 2027.

H. Nothing in this section shall be construed to restrict a locality's passage prior to July 1, 2027, of an ADU ordinance, or a subsequent amendment thereof, that substantially complies with the requirements of this section.

I. Nothing in this section shall apply to a locality that adopted an ADU ordinance prior to January 1, 2026.

2. That the provisions of this act shall become effective on July 1, 2027.



STAFF REPORT

TYPE: Sign Certificate of Appropriateness

PROJECT: 2522 Beech Ave – Triple A Heating & Cooling

DATE: 6/3/2026

SYNOPSIS

Applicant has mounted a wall sign in the Seminary Hill District.

Summary

- Wall-mounted 4' x 8' sign reading "Triple A Heating & Cooling" and their phone number
- Mounted on existing concrete block accessory building set back from road
- Meets all sign regulations

ANALYSIS

Staff do not believe the sign is detrimental to the harmony of the district and recommend approval.





STAFF REPORT

TYPE: ROW Abandonment

PROJECT: 300 Block Longhollow Ave – Alley Abandonment

DATE: 6/2/2026

SYNOPSIS

City requests abandonment of alley in 300 block of Longhollow Ave (Block 1, Forest Addition).

Summary

- Owner of 355 Longhollow Ave submitted plat for boundary adjustment, research uncovered previously unknown alley.
- “Forest Addition” plat (1890’s) was not reflected in later plat maps but informed some development in this area.
- This alley has never been developed, nor has it been mapped properly, and residents were likely unaware of it.
- City requests abandonment of alley in entire block to clear title for property owners, especially the owner of 355 Longhollow Ave.
- Alley is approximately 700’ long and 15’ wide

ANALYSIS

Overview

Initially, the property owner of 355 Longhollow Ave sought a boundary adjustment to relocate the property line between two adjacent parcels he owned. Boundary adjustments are approved by Tom Roberts in his capacity as the Subdivision Administrator. When he submitted the plat to staff for review, it revealed an alley cutting through the middle of the property about which staff were unaware. Further research showed that this block was part of a large subdivision plat from the 1890’s called the “Forest Addition.”

The Buena Vista Land Company laid out the town (later city) of Buena Vista in 1890. The original City boundaries followed this original platted subdivision, but also in the 1890’s adjacent tracts of land were platted out to catch the fervor of the real estate boom. These plats have streets and lots similar to familiar original layout, but most were never built. The adjacent tracts platted include the Enderly Heights, West Enderly (across the river from Enderly Heights), and the Forest Addition.

These plats carry some legal weight even if subsequent development did not conform to them. Presence of documented streets and alleys can cloud title and introduce confusion of ownership and rights. In this particular case, staff cannot approve a plat showing an alley running through the middle of a parcel.

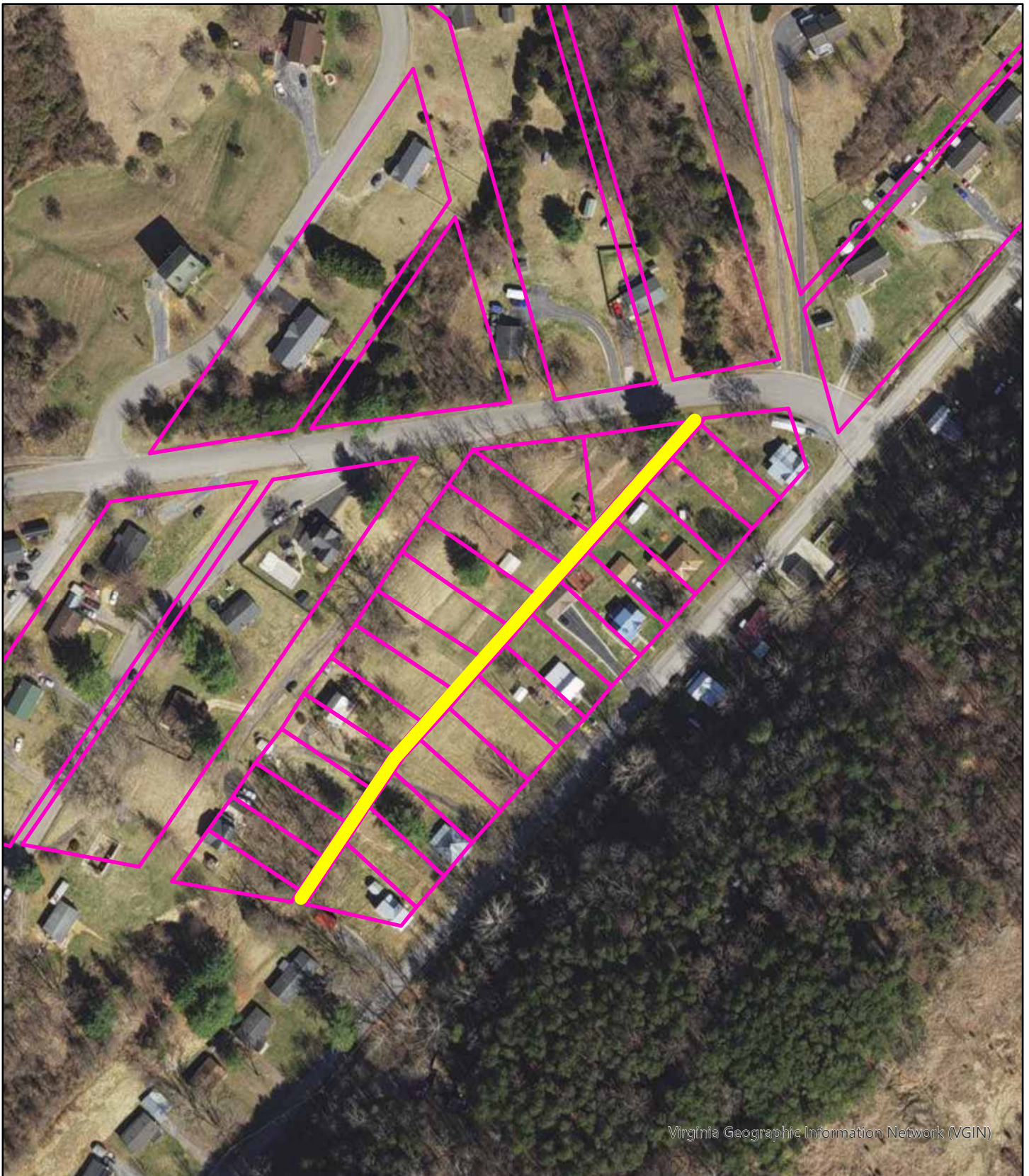
Staff recommend abandoning the alley through Block 1 of the Forest Addition to eliminate any title questions and allow this particular boundary adjustment to move forward. Although there are additional undeveloped streets and alleys in the Forest Addition, staff does not recommend addressing those at this time as that would be a larger research project to trace chains of title and current disposition.

Staff will recommend to City Council to charge no price to the adjacent owners for this abandonment because this alley was not previously known or adequately mapped. The adjacent owners thought they already owned this land, and were not seeking to expand their

property. It is likely that their real estate assessments were not aware of this alley, although staff have not confirmed the impact of this.

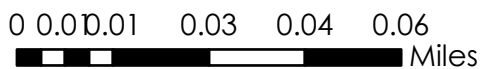
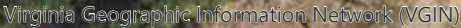
This abandonment will NOT do the following:

- It will NOT affect any known utilities
- It will NOT affect any existing development or access to any properties
- It will NOT affect the developed alley that is used to access 123 Hillside Dr and 133 Hillside Dr (on the Forest Addition plat, this is the “Burns Avenue” ROW)

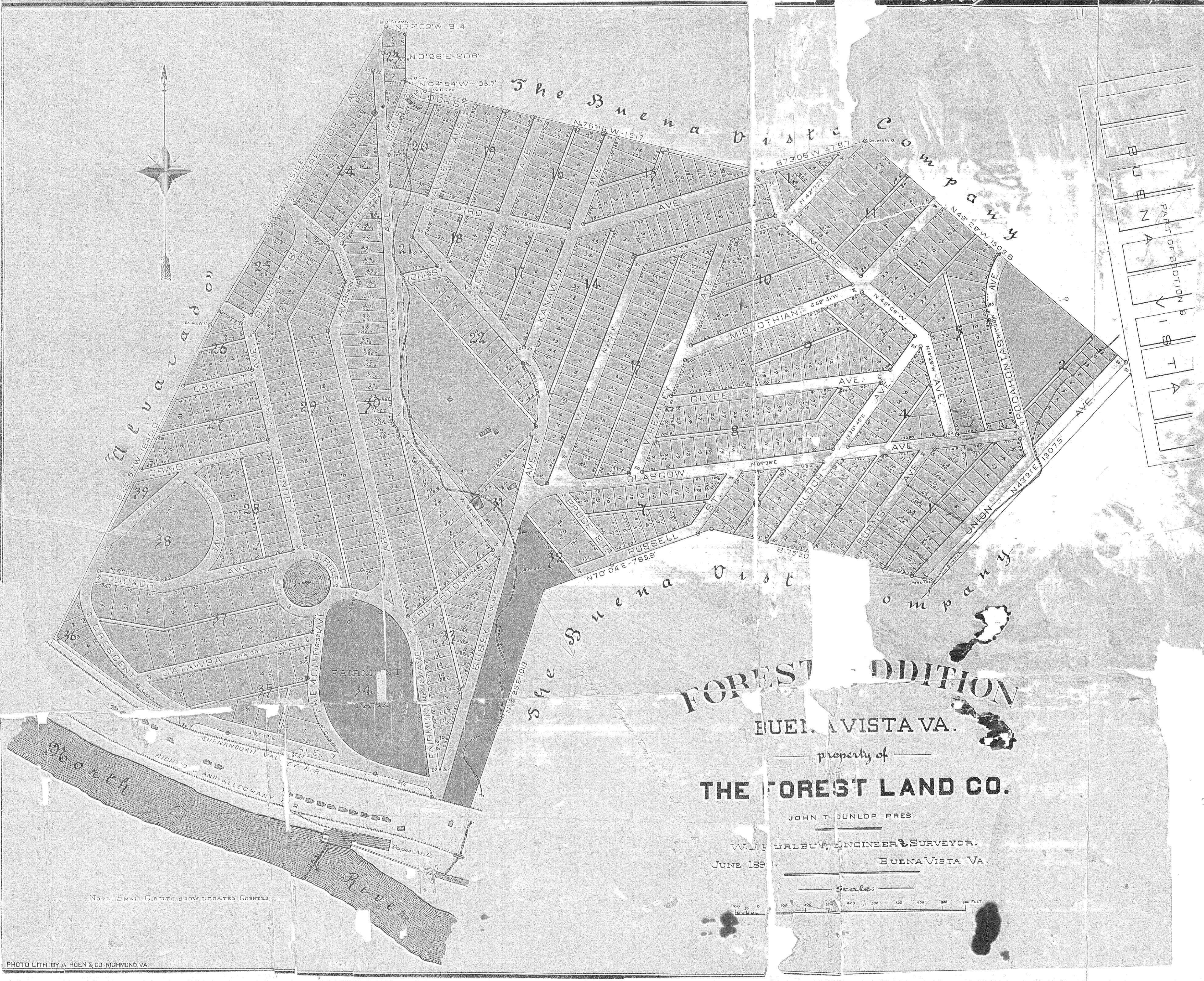


0 0.01 0.02 0.03 0.04 0.06 Miles

"Forest Addition" (1892?) Plat Lines with Alley in Yellow



2026

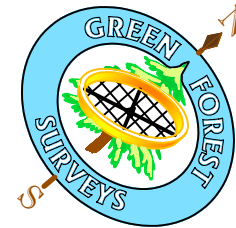


NOTE: SMALL CIRCLES SHOW LOCATED CORNERS

LINE	BEARING	DISTANCE
L1	N 82°33'58" E	19.81'
L2	S 17°00'02" E	62.90'
L3	S 42°18'58" W	71.35'
L4	S 42°18'58" W	58.92'
L5	N 53°10'07" W	2.86'

THIS SURVEY WAS PERFORMED WITHOUT THE BENEFIT OF A TITLE REPORT AND, THEREFORE, MAY NOT, NECESSARILY, INDICATE OR SHOW ALL ENCUMBRANCES OR IMPROVEMENTS ON THE PROPERTY.

THE INTERNAL LOT AND ALLEYWAY LINES SHOWN HEREON FROM THE FOREST SUBDIVISION (AT PLAT CABINET C SLIDE 11) MAY OR MAY NOT BE VACATED.



SOURCE OF MERIDIAN
VA GRID

**BOUNDARY LINE ADJUSTMENT FOR
RANDALL DAVIS**
BUENA VISTA CITY, VIRGINIA
GREEN FOREST JOB # GF02391
REVISION 2, MAY 4, 2026
SHEET 1 OF 1

THIS PROPERTY LIES IN FLOOD ZONE "X" ("AREA DETERMINED TO BE OUTSIDE 500-YEAR FLOODPLAIN") AS SHOWN ON THE FLOOD INSURANCE RATE MAP (FIRM) FOR ROCKBRIDGE COUNTY, VIRGINIA AND INCORPORATED AREAS. MAP NUMBER 51163C0401 C; EFFECTIVE DATE: APRIL 6, 2000.

PORTIONS OF THIS PROPERTY LIE WITHIN OR ADJACENT TO THE TRAVELED WAYS OF LONG HOLLOW ROAD (ROUTE 631), GLASGOW AVENUE, AND HILLSIDE DRIVE, AND ARE SUBJECT TO ANY PUBLIC OR DEEDED RIGHTS NORMALLY ASSOCIATED WITH A ROAD AND, OTHER RIGHTS OR RESTRICTIONS REVEALED BY A TITLE REPORT.

ROAD WIDTHS SHOWN HEREON FROM FOREST HILLS SUBDIVISION (PLAT BOOK 5 PAGE 129 AT ROCKBRIDGE COUNTY COURTHOUSE.)

THE INTENT OF THIS BOUNDARY LINE ADJUSTMENT IS TO 1: ADJUST THE BOUNDARY LINE BETWEEN TM# 10-A---8 AND TM# 10-A---7

AND 2: TO CONVEY THE RESIDUE OF TM# 10-A---7 SHOWN HEREIN AS PARCEL B TO TM# 10-A---8

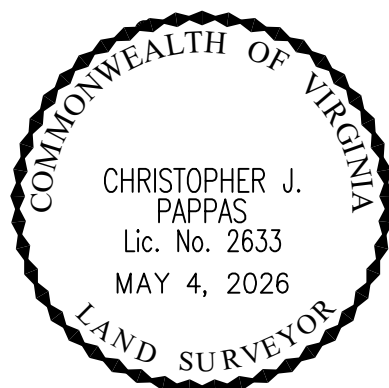
ZONED R2. SEE BUENA VISTA CODE OF ORDINANCES.
FRONT : 30'
BACK : 25'
SIDES: 30' TOTAL

Now or Formerly
RANDALL C. DAVIS
INSTRUMENT# 202500198
TM# 10-A---7 A.K.A. LOT 4 SECTION 90A
0.495 ACRES ORIGINAL (PER SURVEY)
LESS PARCELS A & B
0.215 ACRES TOTAL

LEGEND

(TYPICAL UNLESS NOTED OTHERWISE)

- IRON ROD OR PIPE FOUND
- IRON ROD SET
- POINT



APPROVED BY:

SUBDIVISION AGENT

DATE



HORIZONTAL DATUM: SPCS NAD83 (2011), VA SOUTH ZONE
VERTICAL DATUM: NAVD 88, GEOID 18 CONUS

PARCEL B SHOWN HEREON IS THE RESIDUE OF THE LAND DESCRIBED IN INSTRUMENT# 100000199 AFTER A CONVEYANCE OF LAND OUT OF SAID PARCEL AS DESCRIBED BY PLAT IN INSTRUMENT# 130000676.

ALL DEED AND INSTRUMENTS LISTED ON PLAT ARE REFERENCED TO BUENA VIST COURT HOUSE UNLESS SPECIFICALLY CALLED OUT AS FROM ROCKBRIDGE COURT HOUSE.

GREEN FOREST SURVEYS, LLC

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