

TOWN OF SCOTTSVILLE



Mayor

Ron Smith

Town Council

Alex Bessette

Zachary Bullock

Daniel Gritsko

Meredith Hynes

Bill Hyson

Eddie Payne

The Scottsville Town Council meets in Regular Session on the third Monday of each month at 7:00 p.m. (on Tuesday if that Monday is a state holiday).

Remote access for the public is available [online at this link](#) or call 301-715-8592, then enter meeting ID 872-9931-0821 and pass code 1744.

Town Administrator: Matthew Lawless

Town Attorney: James Bowling IV

Town Clerk: Javier Raudales

TOWN COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA FOR 7:00 p.m. DECEMBER 12, 2022

1. Call to order, roll call of Town Council, and pledge of allegiance
2. Consent calendar
 - a) Approval of agenda
 - b) Approval of past meeting minutes
 - c) Approval of financial report for November 2022
3. Public hearing for rezoning and special use permit, Echelon Resources 800 Bird St.
4. Items for Town Council discussion and action
 - a) Rezoning and special use permit, Echelon Resources 800 Bird St.
5. Public forum
6. Mayor's report and Vice Mayor's report
7. Reports of chartered committees, planning commission, and architectural review board
8. Staff reports
9. Adjournment

Staff Report on the Rezoning and Special Use Permit at 800 Bird Street

Project Name: Scottsville Lofts	Staff: Matthew Lawless
Planning Commission Public Hearing: 10/3/22. Recommended approval 3-1 with conditions.	Town Council Hearing: 12/14/22
Owner: Lower Bird Street, LLC (under contract)	Applicant: Echelon Resources, Edwin Gaskin
TMP: 130 - 43 Acreage: 41.31	Application for: Zoning Map Amendment and Special Use Permit.
Location: 800 Bird Street	Zoning/by-right use: Light and Heavy Industrial
Proffers/Conditions: Proffers are appropriate. Recommended conditions attached. These mitigate negative impacts of development.	Requested # of Dwelling Units/Lots: Up to 205 homes, being a mix of one-, two-, and three-bedroom floorplans.
Proposal: Rezone the factory grounds from Heavy Industrial and Light Industrial to Commercial. With a special use permit for multi-family residential, renovate the historic factory with apartments and amenities.	Comp. Plan Designation: Transformative Mixed Use
Character of Property: Historic industrial. A factory built in 1944, it closed in 2009. The site has wetlands under conservation easement, a levee, and large factory buildings. Condition varies, with increasing blight.	Use of Surrounding Properties: Farms and forest on three sides, outside of town limits. Levee and ballfields to the northeast. Hillside to the north has 36 homes approved for construction.
Factors Favorable: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. History of intensive use on site. 2. Comprehensive plan supportive. 3. Need for workforce housing in the region. 4. Mix of size and types for different families (conditions can improve affordability). 5. Location is walkable to downtown, but far enough from neighbors to limit noise. 6. Good environmental quality. 	Factors Unfavorable: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Possible traffic congestion at downtown intersections (mitigated by traffic studies and sidewalk improvements). 2. Limited mixed use (mitigated by home business opportunities and condition for 5,000 sf commercial).
Recommendation: Staff recommends approval. The building has a history of intensive use (and traffic) and was the town's economic engine for decades. The renovation plan appears sound and brings massive new investment and vitality to the community. The Comprehensive Plan and multiple planning grants support this pattern of redevelopment, and state agency partners concur. Conditions and proffers should address walkability and mixed-income affordability.	

Action Item: Hold the required public hearing. Then the Council may vote to approve or deny the rezoning and SUP. The recommendation from the planning commission can be amended. The item can also be deferred to a later date.

Review of the voting item: Planning Commission voted 3-1 to recommend approval of the rezoning and SUP. The commission accepted the applicant's proffers and recommended several conditions—all of those in the first staff report, plus one more for 5,000 square feet of commercial space in addition to the homes.



Comprehensive Plan: The Town's 2018 Comprehensive Plan is the policy guide for staff and the Planning Commission. The future land use category for this site is "Transformative Mixed Use," and rezoning away from Industrial is a specific action item. Per the Comprehensive Plan, the Town has used grants to fund detailed plans, market studies, environmental reports, community outreach, and other preparation. The application has less mixed use than the Town's plans envisioned, but the mixed-income component is strong. Overall, staff conclude the application is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.

By-Right Alternative: If the application is denied, the property remains zoned Industrial. Uses such as assembly, manufacturing, equipment storage, and warehousing are all by-right. The new owner has represented their by-right option with a sales website at www.scottsvilleindustrialpark.com. The basic policy question for Town Council is whether the by-right Industrial use, or the application as presented, is more in the community's better long-term interest.

Comparing positive impacts: The factory was idle and increasingly blighted for over ten years. Both the application and the by-right use stand to increase Town revenues. However, the application probably offers greater revenue increases. For the application, staff estimate new revenues roughly \$75,000 in the first year, then \$62,000 in subsequent years, or \$112,000 if the Town adopts a 10-cent real estate tax. Estimating by-right revenue is harder, because the specific tenant mix matters: whether retail sales occur on-site, whether the factory is used as a main base of business versus an outpost, or how intensive the electric and gas usage. Generalizing, the by-right use is very likely less: lower utility tax revenue, lower sales and meals tax, and much lower real estate tax, not offset by a possibly greater business license revenue.

Comparing and mitigating negative impacts: The staff fiscal impact report finds the application a net positive for the Town's finances. Most Town services are not affected significantly. Town maintenance needs see the greatest increase, with new residents visiting parks and the farmers market. The estimated new tax revenue supports a seasonal maintenance worker and some sidewalk repair, costing \$35,000. The application also has proffers and conditions to mitigate other known impacts, consistent with Town goals.

- \$200,000 paid to the Town to match VDOT grants and construct sidewalks along Bird Street.
- A 5,000 square foot space will be reserved for non-residential commercial use.
- Outdoor lighting must be Dark Sky compliant.
- Native plants must be used in the site landscaping.
- Parking areas must include electric vehicle chargers, covered bike storage, and e-bike charging.
- An application for federal Low-Income Housing Tax Credits will be made.
- Notwithstanding the federal tax credits, an affordable housing mix will be maintained for 10 years, with at least 20% of the homes restricted to families earning 60% or less of the Area Median Income.

In the by-right scenario, none of these conditions and proffers apply. The Town would not receive the same consideration for sidewalks, light pollution, native plants, or affordable housing.

Mobility: The relative traffic impacts are most trenchant, considering public comments. According to the engineered study, the apartments application probably generates more total trips, but the industrial use is more heavy trucks. A fair bottom-line question is, “Would the community prefer two new car trips or one new truck trip? The car option has funding and options for bike, pedestrian, and bus improvements, and the truck option does not.”

Table 6: Site Trip Generation

Buildout				Weekday ⁽¹⁾						Average Daily Trips
Land Use	Size	Units	Land Use Code	AM Peak Hour			PM Peak Hour			
				In	Out	Total	In	Out	Total	
Existing Development Factory (Manufacturing)	159,000	S.F.	140	76	23	99	33	74	107	662
Proposed Development Multifamily Apartments	205	D.U.	220	22	72	94	71	41	112	1,509
Difference (Proposed - Existing)						(5)	5			847

Note: (1) Based on the Institute of Transportation Engineers Trip Generation, 10th Edition. Assumes General Urban/Suburban land use category.

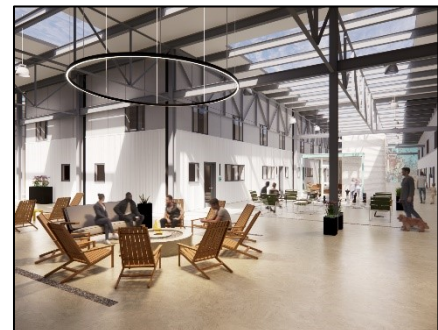
VDOT has awarded the Town a \$320,000 grant to construct sidewalks and crosswalks on Bird St. Town Council already received commitments from Southern Development with the 36 Bird St. houses, to build sidewalk on the frontage of their property. Taken together, the current VDOT funding, another VDOT grant, and the proffered funds in this application can fully fund sidewalks along Bird Street from the factory to Valley St. VDOT is also willing to consider a one-way change on Bird St. near the churches.

Highest and Best Use: In public finance and land use theory, one way to consider development is to maximize the value of improvements and use of a community’s limited land. The “highest and best use” earns the greatest tax revenue for the community and creates the most community wealth. By this measure, the apartments application is superior to the by-right Industrial alternative. The application means millions of dollars in new investment, a more valuable building, and greater economic activity.

Quality of Architecture: Scottsville places a high value on its historic architecture. One of our Comprehensive Plan goals is to, “Protect and preserve the original historic downtown along with other historic sites and places for the benefit of both present and future generations and long-term conservation of the Town’s character.”

The Comprehensive Plan also anticipated for the factory, “The site has architectural merit and a unique place in the community history. Historic status can help with the creative visioning of redevelopment, and historic tax credits have been an exceptionally valuable financing tool for adaptive reuse, very notably in large industrial buildings on the James River in Richmond and Lynchburg.”

The application fits with these goals. The application requires Historic Tax Credits for its financing, so its design has the goal of preservation as a Virginia Historic Landmark. Preserving the town’s architectural history with more landmark properties is a community goal. Richmond architect Forrest Frazier drew designs consistent with National Park Service rehabilitation rules. Exterior change to the historic facade is minimal, and the interior courtyards have a genuine architectural quality.



Cost and Fairness of Homes: Many residents are concerned about the cost of housing and how this application fits in the housing market. Rents and home prices have increased in recent years, in Scottsville as well as statewide. Construction has not kept up with population growth, causing prices to rise and straining family budgets.

The applicant offers the mix of size and pricing at right. These rates meet demand for the area’s workforce and fit within the [Regional Housing Plan](#) published by the Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission.

Unit Mix & Rental Rates as of 12/1/2022

	Studio	1 BR	2 BR	3 BR	Total Units
# of Units	1	56	130	9	196 (zoning allows up to 205)
%	<1%	28%	66%	5%	
Avg Rent	\$1,008	\$1,060	\$1,263	\$1,452	

The graphics below are from the [Executive summary of the HB854 Statewide Housing Study \(virginia.gov\)](#).

About 30,000 new homes are built in Virginia each year.

However, this rate is about half the annual production from the mid-2000s.



Statewide population growth remains several percentage points above the increase in housing supply, even as shrinking average household sizes require more homes per person.



Housing options in Virginia should adapt to shrinking household sizes among both owners and renters in nearly every part of the state.

