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PARKS AND RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD
In re: Ragged Mountain Trails - Allowable Uses
Public Comments
Taken at Jefferson School City Center
233 Fourth Street Northwest
Charlottesville, Virginia
July 20, 2016
5:44 p.m. to 8:55 p.m.

Job No. 31153

Reported by: Wendy R. Sugrue

1 (5:44 p.m., July 20, 2016:)

2 MR. HIRSCHMAN: Good evening, ladies and
3 gentlemen. I'd like to welcome everybody to the public
4 hearing on the use of Ragged Mountain Natural Area. My
5 name is Brian Daly. I'm the director of Parks and
6 Recreation here in the city.

7 On the stage is our Parks and Recreation
8 advisory board. This step in our planning process is a
9 public hearing where we listen to what you have to say
10 regarding the options that are on the table for
11 Ragged Mountain. There are no decisions that will be
12 made tonight.

13 Our planning process follows a very prescribed
14 series of steps. Following this public hearing, there
15 will be a thirty-day, public-comment period where any
16 additional comments received via e-mail, phone, or in
17 writing. Following that, we'll take all the comments
18 and the universe of information we've received to-day,
19 and bring some recommendations to the advisory board
20 for their deliberation and action.

21 That may happen in August. It may happen in
22 September. I doubt that it will go much farther than
23 that. Beyond the advisory board, the plan would then
24 go to city council for their adoption.

25 I'm going to turn microphone over to the

1 chairman for your remarks at this time. We'll call you
2 up. We ask that you limit your comments to three
3 minutes or less. We will be having the little -- I
4 think when that thing turns to yellow, I think you have
5 another thirty seconds.

6 If you'll cue up in the middle row here, we'll
7 be calling everybody by name in the order you signed
8 in. If you signed in and don't want to speak, that's
9 fine. Just please indicate to us that you don't want
10 to.

11 Thank you for being here tonight.

12 David?

13 MR. HIRSCHMAN: Thanks, Brian.

14 Greetings and welcome to everybody tonight.
15 We're so glad you came. This is the parks and rec
16 advisory board. We're a volunteer board that applied
17 and we were appointed by city council to help the city
18 and advise the parks and rec department through all
19 manner of issues related to the parks and the
20 recreation program.

21 I'll go down the line here and have us
22 introduce ourselves to you.

23 MS. LAHENDRO: I'm Jody Lahendro. I'm the
24 representative from the planning commission.

25 MR. MICHIE: Ned Michie, I'm the

1 representative from the school board.

2 MS. BARNETT: I'm Ruth Barnett. I'm just a
3 representative of a city resident.

4 MS. HEMENWAY: I'm Anne Hemenway. I'm a
5 resident of the City of Charlottesville.

6 MR. HIRSCHMAN: My name is David Hirschman.
7 I'm current chair of the board and a resident of the
8 city.

9 MS. CRUZ: My name is Elise Cruz, also a
10 resident of the city.

11 MR. HIRSCHMAN: We have a few members, one is
12 stuck in the Charlotte airport. He may drop in. We'll
13 see, but we hope that we can have a couple more here
14 tonight.

15 One thing that's evident from reading all of
16 the comments heretofore, is that there's a great deal
17 of passion and interest in this issue. You all are a
18 group that is passionate about the outdoors, passionate
19 about your outdoor activities, and you're passionate
20 about this property.

21 The other thing that we really appreciate,
22 everybody involved really appreciates is your time and
23 commitment to come to numerous public meetings, to sit
24 down and write comments and letters, to call in
25 comments. That shows an investment on everyone's part

1 that is much appreciated, and it shows the extent to
2 which this group is investigated in the integrity of
3 our park system and our community. So thank you very
4 much for your level of involvement through this
5 sometimes lengthy process.

6 A few rules about the way we'll proceed
7 tonight. Obviously, you'll hear some comments that you
8 agree with and some you don't agree with. You may feel
9 compelled to cheer or clap for the ones you do agree
10 with. Let's try to hold that to a minimum so we can
11 get through the proceedings and also not create any
12 sense of intimidation for whoever might want to speak
13 tonight, regardless of their point of view.

14 As Brian said, I will call names, three at
15 once so you'll be able to cue up. You'll have three
16 minutes to speak. This is not an opportunity for the
17 board to have back-and-forth with you. We will listen,
18 take notes, meditate on everything you tell us tonight
19 during the public-comment period. And we'll also be
20 digesting everything that comes in during that
21 thirty-day comment period.

22 Please try to listen and show the utmost
23 respect for the other speakers, for those you agree
24 with and those that you don't, so that we can proceed
25 with a great deal of dignity and show the people what

1 kind of people we really are, that we can confront
2 issues like this in a cooperative and collaborative
3 fashion. We all thank you for your willingness and
4 commitment to doing that tonight.

5 I'm going to call the first three speakers and
6 hand the microphone back to Brian. Can you all hear
7 me? John Post, Kay Slaughter, Marilyn Philippi.

8 John Post?

9 MR. POST: Can you hear me? My name is John
10 Post. I seem to straddle both sides of this group. I
11 was in the national parks for twenty-five years and
12 have a been a biker for even longer than that. I'm a
13 serious athlete. I've done the Hawaiian Ironman six
14 times and I still ride my bike every week. I own two
15 mountain bikes and two road bikes.

16 I think this is an opportunity to examine this
17 issue and decide if the potential harm to the Ivy Creek
18 natural area is worth adding a fairly small amount of
19 mileage to the available trails. You'll hear from
20 other speakers who will talk to you about other mileage
21 that might open up, and that I go to the Ivy Creek and
22 Ragged Mountain Natural Area regularly -- I was up
23 there yesterday -- and that, reluctantly, I think that
24 I'm going to vote against opening the trails up and
25 changing the habitat by making the trails wider. And

1 I'll find some other place to ride my bike.

2 Thank you.

3 MS. SLAUGHTER: I'm Kay Slaughter, 1503 Short
4 18th Street in the city.

5 Mr. Chair, members of the advisory board, as
6 mayor, twenty years ago, I, along with the late
7 Charlotte Humphris and Ivy Creek Foundation helped
8 establish the Ragged Mountain Natural Area. Although
9 fishermen and others have frequently visited, Ivy Creek
10 initiated the completion of the primitive trail system
11 with minimal impact to the water supply and ecology.

12 I support retaining Ragged Mountain Natural
13 Area open to foot traffic only. Currently,
14 Ragged Mountain is inclusive, open to all visitors.
15 Out of respect for the ecology, you must enter without
16 bikes and without dogs.

17 Within the city and county system, almost
18 seventy miles of trails are open to bikes, six
19 Albemarle parks, including Walnut Park, feature trails
20 especially designed for biking, many activities for all
21 desires and all wants. Not all such wants can be
22 accommodated at Ragged Mountain.

23 In addition to the city's ecosystem report,
24 several others have recognized Ragged Mountain's
25 biodiversity. The Smithsonian showed the area's

1 importance for nesting wood thrush, that small,
2 unremarkable, brown bird whose song emits the clear
3 tones of a flute. Is there anything more glorious to
4 hear in the woods, as you walk quietly, than the
5 natural sounds of bird songs, even if you don't know
6 the species?

7 The ecosystem report points out the other
8 impacts more-intensive usage and pets can have on the
9 colorful warblers and other species that stop off at
10 Ragged Mountain in their fall and spring migration.
11 After enrolling in Piedmont's ornithology and natural
12 resources course, I was able to study these ecosystems
13 at Ragged Mountain in a quiet classroom.

14 Our current natural areas are akin to the
15 wilderness areas on national-park lands, providing an
16 opportunity for exploration of nature and a chance to
17 reflect on the continuity of life. Wilderness
18 recognizes that activities more intensive than foot
19 traffic destroy root systems, plants, habitats.

20 Because each biker travels further than the
21 average hiker, his or her impact is greater on the
22 environment, not including the footprint of wider
23 trails.

24 As a retired environmentalist, I'm also aware
25 of dog feces as a major source of impaired water in

1 urban areas, including our own Rivanna. Even with the
2 sound of interstate in the background, Ragged Mountain
3 provides 980 acres of wilderness in Charlottesville.

4 Please retain Ragged Mountain as a sanctuary
5 for critters, like the scarlet tanager and wood thrush
6 I heard a couple weeks ago. But see it for yourself;
7 visit Ragged Mountain, not as a group, but as
8 individuals. As in the words of Rachel Carson, What if
9 I had never seen it? What if I knew I would never see
10 it like this again?

11 Thank you.

12 MS. PHILIPPI: My name is Marilyn Philippi,
13 Barboursville, and I'm reading this statement on behalf
14 of Joseph Gould, Charlottesville, who is unable to
15 attend the meeting. He is a former paramedic and
16 firefighter, retired from the Albemarle County Fire
17 Department.

18 Joe says: Although I could not be there, I
19 want to comment on the issue of allowing bikes and dogs
20 at Ragged Mountain. Despite being an avid biker and
21 hiker for all of my life, I urge you to keep
22 Ragged Mountain as a natural area for walking and
23 hiking only.

24 As a cyclist, I share the frustration of other
25 cyclists who would like additional, safe on- and

1 off-road cycling options in the Charlottesville area.
2 We're always looking for new and different places to
3 ride. Most people who walk understand that walking can
4 be as much a means of meditation as it is exercise.

5 Off-road cycling at Ragged Mountain would
6 require a high level of concentration, and is not as
7 much relaxation as it is a challenge because of the
8 steep descents, inclines, physical obstacles, narrow
9 trails, higher rates of speed, and numerous blind
10 curves.

11 If cycling is allowed, provisions should be
12 put in place for when, not if, cyclists injure
13 themselves or walkers or hikers, and emergency
14 hospital care is required. Most importantly, if
15 off-road biking is allowed, it would completely change
16 the character of the walking experience at
17 Ragged Mountain. It's very likely that in the future,
18 more biking trails will be created in the area, but
19 it's impossible to create another Ragged Mountain in
20 its present form.

21 Regarding the dogs, even though they are not
22 currently allowed, dog owners have been bringing dogs
23 and many do not keep the dogs on a leash. My wife
24 prefers not to hike at Ragged Mountain because of dogs
25 running free. If we find it unnerving and, in a few

1 cases, scary to be approached by unleashed dogs, I
2 imagine it is much worse for children.

3 In addition, dogs chase the wildlife and romp
4 through what should be protected habitat. It seems to
5 me that if dogs were officially permitted, the
6 situation would be even worse.

7 A friend in Montreal described the popular
8 attraction called The biodome in which visitors worked
9 through replicas of four different ecosystems,
10 including a north American forest. I would hate for
11 Charlottesville to eventually have to build a biodome
12 to try to recreate the beauty and peace of a place like
13 Ragged Mountain Natural Area.

14 Thank you.

15 MR. HIRSCHMAN: Before I call the next three,
16 I'm going to have Maurice, our vice chair, introduce
17 himself.

18 MR. WALKER: Hi, everybody. My name's Maurice
19 Walker. I'm a native of Charlottesville. And like you
20 all, I really care about our parks.

21 Thank you all for coming out this evening.
22 It's not easy cutting through traffic, whether it's
23 during the summer or during the academic year. It's
24 very hot as well. So thank you all for coming.

25 MR. HIRSCHMAN: Chris, the question about the

1 lights --

2 MR. DALY: It goes straight to red. I'll wave
3 at about thirty seconds.

4 MR. HIRSCHMAN: I wasn't giving a warning.
5 He's going to give you a signal when there's thirty
6 seconds left.

7 Our next three speakers are Richard Collins,
8 Chris Gist, and Garnet Mellon.

9 MR. COLLENS: Thank you for your service and
10 thank you for holding this meeting.

11 My name is Richard Collens. I'm a resident of
12 Charlottesville. My wife and I support keeping the
13 natural area the natural area. I'm willing to forego
14 my opportunity to bicycle there or to walk a golden
15 retriever. And I frequently walk along the
16 Rivanna River. There's a sacrifice involved in that.
17 Many others here today feel like it's a sacrifice for
18 them, to leave and support the natural-area concept
19 because it seems to violate their idea of multiple uses
20 to be compatible.

21 I've talked with all my family members who
22 live right here in this area. Many of us are
23 bicyclists, as I am, hikers, as I am, enjoying nature.
24 So for my four children that live here, their mates,
25 and the seven grandchildren, all of us have had a

1 question: How do we balance this? We're all outdoors
2 lovers. We support the keeping of the natural area as
3 a natural area.

4 I want to say, from my experience as a
5 mediator and trying to help the National Park Service
6 and the US Forest Service get multiple use to satisfy
7 many people who feel that it is their park and their
8 forest, that sometimes the incompatibilities produce
9 conflict. In our case, I don't think it need be.

10 I believe many people will agree with me that
11 the things that they like to do, including biking and
12 walking dogs, can be done in other places, and that
13 this area deserves special protection.

14 My submission; it's a little different.

15 Thank you.

16 MR. GIST: My name is Chris Gist. I am here
17 wearing three hats tonight. First, I'm a
18 representative of the Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory
19 Committee for the City of Charlottesville. I am a
20 long-time board member of Charlottesville Community
21 Bikes, and I am the parent of a Girls Cutaway Mountain
22 Bike team member.

23 First, the Bicycle and Pedestrian committee,
24 last week voted in favor of Option E, the shared-use
25 plan with two caveats. The first is that there appears

1 to be no ADA facilities included in that plan, and we
2 would really like to see some sort of ADA facilities
3 included.

4 Our second concern was the connector going
5 around counterclockwise from the parking lot, around.
6 We would like to see that widened to reduce conflicts
7 between hikers and cyclists.

8 There was further discussion, but not voted
9 on, was a concern over a connector, a multi-use
10 connector between the park and the Boar's Head
11 property. Since that is a heavy-use connector now, we
12 assume that will get more use and will be people riding
13 bikes on it if Option E is selected.

14 Charlottesville Community Bikes, we did not
15 talk about this formally at our last board meeting.
16 However, it's our general philosophy that anything that
17 gets more people on bicycles, the better off we are.

18 As a parent of a mountain biker, I can tell
19 you that, yes, there's lots of miles of trails around
20 Albemarle County. But every Friday when we have
21 practice, we have to load up the car and drive a
22 half-hour to forty-five minutes to get to facilities
23 around the county because there's nothing we can ride
24 on in the city for our group.

25 The trails that we do have are either paltry

1 in the McIntire Park area or they rely on private
2 property owners within the Rivanna Trail. The closest
3 thing we have to ride on is the Monticello Trails, and
4 you can't take children on that road between the city
5 and there.

6 Thank you.

7 MR. HIRSCHMAN: Garnett Mellon?

8 MR. MELLON: I'll pass.

9 MR. HIRSCHMAN: Our next three speakers are
10 Thomas Olivier, Gene Philippi, and Shawn Tevendale.

11 MR. OLIVIER: Thank you.

12 I'm Tom Olivier and I'm speaking for the
13 Piedmont group of the Sierra Club.

14 The Ragged Mountain Natural Area has long been
15 treasured in our community for the complex physical
16 setting it presents and the precious biological
17 resources it contains. In 2004, the Albemarle County
18 Advisory work group identified the Ragged Mountain area
19 as one of Albemarle's most precious biological areas.
20 Since that report, the dam has been built on the site.

21 The area is designated as a natural-resource
22 management area in the Charlottesville Park System.
23 Now the city is considering proposals to extend trails
24 and allow dogs and bicycles in the park. To reach a
25 sound decision, please consider, one, whether any

1 important biological resources remain after dam
2 construction, and two, whether expanded recreational
3 uses are compatible with the intended protection of
4 important natural resources.

5 The Center for Urban Habitats Ecosystems'
6 survey makes clear that thanks largely to the complex
7 geography and topography, the Ragged Mountain remains
8 home to a great variety of species and ecosystems.
9 Some say that the proposed expansion of recreational
10 uses will be harmless. However, biologists have raised
11 concerns.

12 For example, Page 108 of the survey lists
13 seven species of declining, ground-nesting birds that
14 would be particularly vulnerable to disturbance.
15 Increased foot and bicycle traffic and extended trails
16 will promote the spread of invasive species. A 2011
17 review of literature on the impact of non-motorized
18 recreation on birds, in the peer-reviewed Journal of
19 Environmental management, in the link below I will
20 provide you, found that hiking, dog-walking, mountain
21 biking, and other recreations usually had negative
22 effects on nearby bird populations. As its numbers to
23 explore and enjoy and protect the natural world, we're
24 pleased at extensive opportunities for hiking,
25 dog-walking, and mountain biking already exist in our

1 area.

2 After months of reviews, including the
3 ecosystem survey, and discussion, we see no overriding
4 reason to expand recreational opportunities at
5 Ragged Mountain. To protect natural resources at
6 Ragged Mountain, the Piedmont group of the Sierra Club
7 urges that you maintain the trail system essentially
8 as-is, and not allow dogs or bicycles on the trails.

9 Thank you.

10 MR. PHILIPPI: Hi. Chris knows that the last
11 time I did this, I bumped into the time limit. So to
12 avoid that, I'm going to read tonight.

13 You will hear a lot about the impact of bikes
14 and dogs on nature at Ragged Mountain. I want to talk
15 about something different; the impact on people --

16 MR. HIRSCHMAN: Mr. Philippi, would you please
17 step up and speak into the mic?

18 MR. PHILIPPI: You'll hear a lot about the
19 impact of biking and dogs on nature at Ragged Mountain.
20 I want to talk about something different; the impact on
21 people.

22 Ragged Mountain is a sanctuary, a place where
23 people can leave their everyday life behind, get away
24 from it all. Within a stressful world that's changing
25 incredibly fast, we are always stimulated. There's

1 something coming at us every minute. This leads to a
2 great deal of personal stress and tension. People need
3 a place to slow down, take a break, rest their mind,
4 and completely relax both mentally and emotionally.
5 Ragged Mountain does exactly that for us, a place that
6 gives us what we need.

7 To quote the ecosystem report, from our own
8 parks and recreation commission, Ragged Mountain
9 provides a critical escape that maximizes peace and
10 tranquility. When we're at a place like
11 Ragged Mountain, most of us feel good, but we now know
12 there is more to it than that.

13 There are tangible, measurable benefits from
14 exposure to nature. These benefits have been
15 demonstrated and supported by science. Using
16 techniques which map and analyze the activities in our
17 brains, we have learned that nature and peaceful
18 settings actually reduce stress. That's a key point
19 for me.

20 Ragged Mountain actually does reduce stress.
21 These studies show that nature and peaceful settings
22 improve memory, problem-solving, decision-making,
23 creativity, and the ability to be learn. Frankly, I
24 was surprised by all of that. These studies show that
25 we need a break from stimulation. We cannot go

1 nonstop. It will affect -- our ability to deal with
2 problems deteriorates and our decision-making becomes
3 cloudy. We need exactly the kind of break that Ragged
4 Mountain provides.

5 It is important to appreciate that the
6 proposed changes alter the character of Ragged Mountain
7 significantly. They will lead to a very different
8 environment. In fact, they will lead to a totally
9 different environment.

10 It's hard to understand that it might
11 completely change the atmosphere at Ragged Mountain,
12 especially now that we're fully aware of the value of
13 nature and quiet settings. Dogs have their attributes,
14 but nature and peaceful settings deserve attributes,
15 too.

16 I hope the board becomes an advocate for
17 nature and peaceful settings. Thank you.

18 MR. TEVENDALE: Hello, and thank you for
19 taking our comments tonight.

20 My name is Shawn Tevendale. I'm the owner of
21 the Blue Ridge Cyclery. I wear a lot of other hats,
22 too, in the community. I'm on the Charlottesville
23 Mountain Bike Club board of directors, as well as being
24 an outdoor enthusiast, nature lover, and bicyclist,
25 myself, clearly.

1 The opportunity before us at this point with
2 Ragged Mountain is huge, to expand access for city
3 residents for area biking, especially mountain biking.
4 As a local business owner, I see daily the impact that
5 bicycling activity has on everybody's lives, including
6 kids.

7 I'm a huge advocate for the junior cycling
8 programs. Chris already spoke a little bit towards
9 that fact. And part of what we're lacking right now in
10 the city is proximate training, riding areas for these
11 kids to really get out and get participatory in this.

12 Ragged Mountain is an opportunity not to take
13 away from hikers, not to take away from bird watchers,
14 but to add bicycles into the system on limited trails,
15 to use Option E to make it so that there's still areas
16 that are hiker-only. There are areas that can be biked
17 on. There's areas that can be trained on, and really
18 become an inclusive environment for the entire
19 community, including bicyclists.

20 As a business here in this community, we're
21 dependent upon having people give and to ride their
22 bikes. Riding on the mountain is less intimidating.
23 It gets people into the sport. It doesn't put them out
24 on the roadways. It makes them more comfortable
25 getting started into the sport. It's the gateways in.

1 The opportunities at Ragged for something like
2 this are very, very significant here. As a business
3 here in the community, we employ twelve people total,
4 between our two businesses. Between rents, taxes,
5 payroll, everything, we put almost a million dollars a
6 year back into the community. It's a huge amount. For
7 our business to succeed, for bicycling to succeed, for
8 people's health, the opportunity to have proximate
9 riding in Charlottesville at Ragged Mountain is huge.

10 I think that the fact we're looking at being
11 able to share the trail system, rather than exclude
12 from the trail system, is a primary thing that we all
13 need to focus at with this.

14 Thank you.

15 MR. HIRSCHMAN: The next three speakers are
16 Susan Quinn, David White, and Mark Humbertson.

17 MS. QUINN: Hello. I'm Susan Quinn. I live
18 in the Frye Springs area of the city. I cycle, but
19 only to businesses downtown and other convenient
20 locations.

21 I'm here to request that you please keep the
22 Ragged Mountain Natural Area as it is, natural and
23 limited to hikers or joggers. There are a few places
24 where hikers can find quiet enjoyment. Birding and
25 delicate wild flowers, all are adversely impacted by

1 bikes and dogs.

2 Last weekend, I hiked a popular short trail in
3 the St. Mary's Wilderness. I wouldn't call that
4 actually wilderness at all. Dogs are allowed there on
5 the leash. And I saw ten or twelve dogs, but only one
6 was continuously on the leash.

7 One of the members of my group, and faced with
8 a dog a couple times, said, Dogs don't seem to like me
9 and I'm not comfortable with dogs. But owners were
10 oblivious to this, despite the fact that one of them
11 was a pit bull, standing four feet from my friend, and
12 between the owner and my friend. His only response was
13 a casual, He's very friendly. That's not reassuring to
14 someone who is not comfortable with dogs.

15 I don't know the requirements for picking up
16 after dogs, but I didn't see a single pet bag. And I
17 saw plenty of trail-side evidence of them not being
18 used. We know these are adverse impacts and shouldn't
19 be allowed in our Ragged Mountain area.

20 Thank you very much.

21 MR. WHITE: My name's David White. I'm a lay
22 person. I live in Charlottesville. And my wife and I
23 have a piece of property out in the county. I'm a
24 long-time bird watcher. I don't have much pure science
25 in my background. I let the ecologists and

1 ornithologists and naturalists speak to that, but I do
2 have a love for nature.

3 I am definitely, strongly in support of
4 Option B. Woody Allen said to me not too long ago --
5 vicariously -- that eternity is a long time, especially
6 when you get close to the end. Hopefully, we're not
7 close to the end at this point, but the decisions
8 coming out of this series of meetings and conversations
9 will have a long-time impact.

10 The impacts that come out of the extra trail
11 usage are many. You'll hear them again tonight. It
12 has to do with dogs being sensed by the natural fauna
13 as predators. Now, my dog is not a predator -- I guess
14 all dogs are predators, really, but even on leash, they
15 give off that aura that definitely conflicts with any
16 creatures living in any protected area.

17 Water quality is an issue that has been
18 brought up and will be brought up again. Currently,
19 the Ragged Mountain Keswick area is not large enough to
20 fill by itself, as you all know. Water is being
21 transported from Sugar Hollow from the Moormans River.
22 There are costs involved with that, but the larger cost
23 is having water that is contaminated, that takes more
24 chemicals to keep it clean, and that has the pathogens
25 that come from dog waste involved in the clean-up

1 period.

2 There's two natural areas between thirty-six
3 and forty-two parks in the Charlottesville/Albemarle
4 area. The two natural areas, this natural area has
5 been a natural area virtually for over 125 years,
6 certainly for twenty to thirty years as a
7 legislative -- as a result of legislative action. I
8 can't see why that needs to be changed.

9 We have Hedgerow Park coming online in the
10 foreseeable future. Let me close with a close from
11 Aldo Leopold. Some of you may be familiar with this
12 gentleman. That land is a community is the basic
13 concept of ecology, but that land is to be loved and
14 respected as a basic extension of ethics.

15 So thank you for your service to our community
16 and for the opportunity to speak tonight.

17 MR. HUMBERTSON: I work at UVa and I live in
18 the city. I'm supporting Option B. But one
19 perspective, as I listen to the transcript from the
20 last meeting, was that maybe there's a way to consider
21 the preservation of this area by -- that preservation
22 would be increased by the expanded user groups that
23 were allowed to be there because more people would be
24 interested in the preservation and how that area
25 developed for the next fifty or a hundred years.

1 By expanding the groups that worked there,
2 they would be more engaged in the environment and how
3 that area grew. And then, that may become a gateway to
4 natural experiences for them outside of
5 Charlottesville, into the national forests and national
6 parks.

7 You'll probably hear the term "inclusion"
8 versus "exclusion" this evening. I'm just offering
9 that by more inclusion, that the preservation of that
10 area may be increased.

11 Thanks.

12 MR. HIRSCHMAN: The next three are Amy
13 Coffman, Alexandra McGee, and George Politis.

14 MS. COFFMAN: My name is Amy Coffman and I
15 support Option B. My primary concern is that biking
16 remain prohibited from Ragged Mountain.

17 As a child living in Albemarle County fifty
18 years ago, I experienced and learned about nature by
19 roaming the woods around my home off Rio Road. These
20 woods and thousands of acres of natural area of my
21 childhood no longer exist today. Now I enjoy nature by
22 walking Ragged Mountain four to seven days each week.

23 Charlottesville has improved over the years,
24 but at the expense of natural areas. Ragged Mountain
25 is one of only two nearby public areas where one can

1 experience nature in a peaceful, quiet setting, similar
2 to what existed fifty years ago.

3 The Charlottesville Area Mountain Bike Club
4 website lists eight areas where bikers can ride. I ask
5 that you not skew these numbers even further by
6 allowing bikes in Ragged Mountain. No one in this room
7 would be denied access if bikes are prohibited. We
8 would only be denying the use of a bike there, but
9 everyone here would be able to enjoy it. They may even
10 be rewarded with a sight of bears, mallard ducks with
11 their young, spiders scurrying over snow-covered
12 ground, and best of all, a bald eagle soaring
13 majestically over the water, and only 4.6 miles from
14 this very building.

15 I'm concerned that if bikes are allowed at
16 Ragged Mountain, people will ride off the designated
17 trails, creating new, potentially-dangerous trails that
18 destroy our natural area.

19 The Charlottesville Area Mountain Bike Club
20 website discusses and has pictures of just such a trail
21 on Conservatory Hill that the club has started
22 repairing. The trail is described as a big problem, a
23 dangerous section of trail within inches of cliff, a
24 serious cliff. Had everyone gone over the edge, a
25 hundred-foot tumble would have landed them on the

1 highway ramp. Erosion was out of control. Almost two
2 feet of soil had washed away from a section of trail
3 already. Corrective action was necessary.

4 I have the greatest respect for the people who
5 donated their time and efforts to work on the trail,
6 but the fact that they had to do so shows us that not
7 all bike riders stay on designated trails.

8 If the city allows the bikes at Ragged
9 Mountain, are there funds available to repair dangerous
10 trails created by off-trail riders, or do we rely only
11 on volunteers to do the work needed to protect both
12 nature and our water supply?

13 Are we prepared to rescue injured riders from
14 the steep hills in Ragged Mountain? What damage will
15 resulting erosion do to our water supply? I hope you
16 recommend that biking not be allowed at Ragged
17 Mountain. I truly believe it is best if we want to
18 preserve this local, natural treasure.

19 Thank you.

20 MS. McGEE: Thank you all for coming out to
21 listen to us this evening. My name is Alex McGee.
22 I've been walking Ragged Mountain for seventeen years.
23 I worked on a trail crew in 2003, and I'm a city
24 resident.

25 I ask that dogs not be allowed at the Ragged

1 Mountain Natural Area, and that bikers and runners use
2 trails entirely separate from hikers.

3 Option B is my first choice. Option C is a
4 very far second. If I read the math correctly,
5 Option E does not have trails exclusively to keep bikes
6 apart from hikers. Perhaps there's an Option F that
7 could be created.

8 My first point is from the perspective of
9 someone who did own a dog here in Charlottesville for
10 six years. I loved taking my dog out into nature. I
11 do know that my dog was a dog and didn't respect the
12 ecosystem. When I think about what I would like a
13 hundred years from now, I would rather see the
14 Ragged Mountain stay free from dogs.

15 My second point has to do with quietness and
16 stillness. Speakers before me have made this point
17 very well. So I'll just say again that even the
18 best-intended policy doesn't account for the fact that
19 there are cyclists, dog owners, and runners who do not
20 stick to the rules.

21 If the policy is changed, I hope that the
22 people here tonight who are part of the biking and
23 running community, who would like to see this policy
24 change, will take responsibility for educating fellow
25 cyclists and runners about responsible use.

1 Thirdly, I wonder what the costs will be of
2 maintaining an area where bicycles and dogs are causing
3 damage. There will be costs for signage to educate the
4 public. And if you are going to change the use, I hope
5 you will only do so if budget funds are available for
6 this.

7 I'm going to add a point based on what I've
8 heard tonight. Two speakers talked about kids needing
9 a place to learn mountain biking. This is the only
10 point I've heard tonight that changes my thinking. I
11 do feel that's a valid need. If you are going to make
12 a space for kids to learn mountain biking, I hope that
13 would be a very limited section.

14 In closing, I ask that no dogs be allowed at
15 all, and that bikers and runners use entirely separate
16 trails.

17 Thank you for your work.

18 MR. POLITIS: My name's George Politis. I'm a
19 resident of Ednam. It's a big alphabet soup of the
20 different options out there, so I can't tell you
21 exactly which letter represents my choice, but
22 hopefully, I'll get my opinion across and I'll be
23 brief.

24 I am a biker and I also mountain bike. It
25 would be very convenient for me to just go over into

1 the Ragged Mountain wilderness area without having to
2 load up a bike. But I've read the impact survey on the
3 area, and as eloquently stated by the fellow from the
4 Sierra Club, it's a unique area, much more concerns
5 about the wild life and plant life in that area.

6 In my opinion, it's much more important to
7 preserve this rare, unique area with very few nature
8 areas around here than to add more biking and more
9 areas for us to walk our dogs.

10 Thanks.

11 MR. HIRSCHMAN: The next three are
12 Sam Lindblom, Bill Shewkir, and Colleen Little.

13 MR. LINDBLOM: Good evening. My name is Sam
14 Lindblom. I'm the president of the Charlottesville
15 Area Mountain Bike Club. I'm the coach of the
16 Monticello High School Cycling Team. We're the only
17 public-school cycling team in Virginia. I'm an
18 assistant scout master of a local boy scout troop. I'm
19 a former board member of the Ivy Creek Foundation. I
20 am a parent of two children. I'm a forest ecologist
21 with twenty-two years of experience.

22 My professional work involves the restoration
23 of threatened ecosystems, including no less than ten
24 threatened or federally-endangered species across the
25 State of Virginia. I have a deep connection with the

1 outdoors. I know that spending time outside in nature
2 is the only way to build that lasting connection. You
3 just can't get people to care about nature by keeping
4 them out. Sharing our special places doesn't destroy
5 them when we do it responsibly.

6 So I support a shared-use option, specifically
7 Option B, that includes cycling, running, and hiking
8 for a lot of reasons. There are a number of
9 peer-reviewed studies that show that cycling and
10 running have the same impact on wildlife and vegetation
11 as walking. Distance traveled, speed, duration, all
12 that stuff, none of these things have been proven to
13 have a higher impact over another.

14 We also know that the biggest driver of trail
15 destruction is poor design of the Rivanna Trail. That
16 was something we inherited. We fixed it along with the
17 Rivanna Trails Foundation. So that was a bit of a
18 misstatement.

19 Here's a few pictures common to many trails at
20 Ivy Creek. It's the place right around here that you
21 can't ride or take a -- you can't run there. These are
22 two pictures that represent very common sections at
23 Ivy Creek. There are no less than ten or fifteen
24 erosion-control water bars there because those trails
25 were poorly designed. And they're contributing

1 sediment right into the south fork of the Rivanna
2 reservoir.

3 These are really wide trails, eight, ten-foot
4 wide trails at a place that you can only hike. So the
5 whole idea that cyclists make things wider is a
6 misnomer. It's about trail design. These measures to
7 keep erosion at a minimum generally fail. We can do
8 better.

9 From an ecological perspective,
10 Ragged Mountain is embedded into a big system of
11 protected land. It has protected land to the east,
12 west, and south. The southern section is forked by the
13 interstate, so that has some serious issues there.

14 Our state set aside ninety-eight percent of
15 Ragged Mountain as protected. That's a higher
16 percentage than any park in our area, including Ivy
17 Creek. That's more land set aside.

18 Concerns about water quality with bikes and
19 runners are not valid. Rivanna Water Sewer Authority
20 said, It's all good, we can manage that.

21 Lastly, I want to consider a threat-based
22 approach. We have to identify what's important to us
23 as value, and manage the threats to that value. We
24 know from literature and experience that shared use has
25 the same impact. We can remove all the uses or we can

1 allow the same uses that have similar impact.

2 Thank you very much for your time. I really
3 appreciate your volunteer service.

4 MR. SHEWKIR: Thank you for having this public
5 hearing. I'm Bill Shewkir. I currently serve as the
6 president of the board of Ednam Forest Owners
7 Association. The board is elected by the 133
8 homeowners at Ednam Forest.

9 I want to thank the City of Charlottesville
10 council for their decision in October 2015 to open this
11 to a public process, and develop the master plan.

12 The Ednam Forest board and homeowners have
13 followed the deliberations on Ragged Mountain for the
14 last several months. We've attended at Trinity Church
15 and also the previous meeting of the parks advisory
16 board.

17 The usage of Ragged Mountain Natural Area is
18 now at a tipping point. Over the past 130 years,
19 numerous decision-makers like yourselves have, in my
20 judgment, made decisions that were future-oriented and
21 in the greater good of the community. As a result of
22 the wisdom of their long-term view, we have been
23 entrusted with this magnificent biodiversity of
24 Ragged Mountain Natural Area.

25 The Ednam Forest Owners Association board

1 unanimously supports Option B, maintain the current
2 usage of hiking and fishing only. I should say that
3 the board includes several members who are bicyclists,
4 including my wife and me who often pack our bikes in
5 the car to find a trail, and several members with dogs.

6 Thus, the Ednam Forest board's decision does
7 infringe on some of our board members' personal
8 interests. Nevertheless, our unanimous decision takes
9 the long view because we believe, as a board,
10 maintaining current usage will enable us to preserve
11 this pristine nature of Ragged Mountain Natural Area
12 for current and future generations, and very
13 importantly, not compromise water supply.

14 The decision for Option B means that the
15 City of Charlottesville and the county will have two
16 very special biodiversity areas, Ivy Creek and Ragged
17 Mountain Natural Area. With a combined population of
18 over 100,000 citizens, that is not too much to ask of
19 today's decision-makers.

20 Maintaining current usage under Option B
21 welcomes all citizens to use Ragged Mountain as foot
22 travel. Most importantly, if the Parks Advisory Board
23 and the Charlottesville City Council make a change in
24 usage, you cannot go back. Biodiversity loss is loss
25 forever.

1 Thanks for listening.

2 MS. LITTLE: Hi. My name's Colleen Little,
3 and I support Option E, shared use.

4 I'm a hiker and a mountain biker. I don't
5 ride fast. I don't ride off cliffs. I don't run over
6 animals. We have nearly one thousand acres of land,
7 one thousand acres to share.

8 In reviewing past meeting comments and
9 tallies, they were 84 people against shared use and 220
10 in favor of shared use. I know we can find a way for
11 300 people to share one thousand acres. This is twice
12 the size of Walnut Creek, where, on a busy day, I may
13 come across two other cyclists.

14 Obviously, everyone that has been involved in
15 this is very passionate about the area and
16 appreciates what it has to offer. I've attended many
17 of these meetings, and it's undeniable that the
18 overwhelming majority is in favor of mixed use,
19 Option E.

20 This is not a private country club, but a city
21 park. If the mission statement of our city parks is to
22 provide quality recreational experiences, how can we
23 deny this opportunity to promote healthy lifestyles,
24 exercise, and mental wellness for our citizens?

25 I realize there is a group of individuals who

1 want only quiet walking allowed, and I respect that. I
2 get it. I want you to have that, and sometimes I may
3 even want that, as well.

4 That's why I ask you to accept Option E.
5 There are some areas that would virtually allow a hiker
6 to never cross paths with a biker. And if you do, I
7 promise we're really nice.

8 I know that Charlottesville is capable of
9 finding a way for everyone to share nearly one thousand
10 acres of land. We may never convince the other side,
11 but I know we are capable of compromising with each
12 other.

13 Thank you for listening.

14 MR. HIRSCHMAN: Chris Little, John Bennett,
15 and Lee Politis.

16 MR. LITTLE: Hello. My name is Christopher
17 Little. I am the husband of Colleen Little. I didn't
18 know what she was going to say, and I wrote down some
19 stuff, too, and kind of embarrassing, but it's a lot of
20 the same; the idea of sharing.

21 My background, I'm the ninth of twelve kids.
22 My brothers and sisters and I learned how to share. We
23 had to, especially at dinnertime. Right? Like my wife
24 said, there's a lot of land out there. I know we can
25 figure out a way to share this land. It would be a

1 whole lot easier than it was for me and my family. I
2 know we can get it done.

3 Thank you.

4 MR. BENNETT: Hello. My name's John Bennett.
5 I'm for Option B, to keep the rules the same as they
6 are right now.

7 I mean, I know that there are respectful
8 bikers and dog walkers in this room right now. But
9 personally, it's been my experience in regard to
10 encountering bikers on the trails, I've had a number of
11 instances where they've come around blind corners and
12 I've had to jump off the trail.

13 There's certain section of the trails where
14 it's actually really dangerous. A number of these
15 trails are only two or three feet wide, making it
16 dangerous for it to be abused, and especially at this
17 time of year, it's only, like, six inches wide.

18 In order to make it safe, you would have to
19 widen the trails by about three to five times,
20 depending on the section of trail. In my opinion, in
21 the last few years, the trails have already been ripped
22 up enough.

23 Regarding dogs, I think that far too many
24 people allow their dogs to roam free. Out of all the
25 animals I've encountered on the trails, including

1 bears, the only animals that ever run up on me are the
2 dogs, and that can be rather scary at times.

3 Thank you.

4 MS. POLITIS: I'm Lee Politis, resident of
5 Albemarle County. Thank you for allowing me to speak
6 this evening.

7 Given that there are almost seventy miles of
8 existing biking trails in the City of Charlottesville
9 and Albemarle County, and the City of Charlottesville
10 recently acquired over 700 acres near Ragged Mountain
11 available for recreation, I'm strongly in favor of
12 protecting the habitat of Ragged Mountain and the
13 wildlife that depend on Ragged Mountain for their very
14 existence.

15 I support Option B. More expensive trails
16 allowing mountain bikes and dogs will disrupt and
17 disperse wildlife, and will compromise the ecosystem.
18 Many of us here tonight greatly value the tranquility
19 that a place like Ragged Mountain now offers, and
20 wildlife absolutely rely upon it. Additionally, other
21 city and county residents feel the same way.

22 In 2005, community parks and recreation needs
23 assessment found that fifty-nine percent of residents
24 indicated a need for natural areas and wildlife
25 habitats, and fifty-seven percent preferred nature

1 trails, nature centers.

2 We know that no public property in the area
3 matches Ragged Mountain Natural Area in biological
4 significance, soil fertility, forest maturity, and
5 diversity of plant and wildlife species. This has been
6 confirmed by the Albemarle County Biodiversity Work
7 Group in 2004, and again in a recent survey for the
8 city Department of Parks and Recreation for the Center
9 of habitats.

10 This report identifies 76 tree species, 250
11 species of flowering plants, over 150 bird species, as
12 well as numerous species of insects, reptiles,
13 amphibians, many of which are highly sensitive to
14 disturbance.

15 With respect to birds, all birds in the area
16 would be affected by the changes. Even a lay person
17 like myself understands that mountain biking and
18 running dogs would discourage nesting and scare off
19 migratory birds who depend on Ragged Mountain.

20 Some may say that mountain biking will not
21 affect wildlife; that's difficult to imagine. Speed,
22 miles traveled as opposed to foot, increased trail
23 building, habit destruction, soil erosion, startling
24 movements, sudden movements, the noise that comes from
25 mountain biking, skidding, braking, acceleration and

1 deceleration, and chain rattling. In addition, the
2 inclination for some mountain bikers to travel off
3 trail is well known.

4 I implore you to leave Ragged Mountain as it
5 is and support Option B.

6 Thank you.

7 MR. HIRSCHMAN: Just watch for Chris' signal
8 and you'll have thirty seconds left. If you see the
9 sign going up, it's kind of silent clapping, just keep
10 that in check. I appreciate that.

11 The next three are Repp Glaettle, Karen
12 Bennett, and Ken Brayman.

13 MR. GLAETTLE: Hello. My name is Repp
14 Glaettle. I'm an environment scientist for local
15 counties. I think it's really interesting, if you look
16 at the demographics of who is speaking, the people that
17 want to preserve it tend to be older, there's one that
18 seems to be even younger.

19 All I can do is defend both sides with my talk
20 tonight. I think that it's important to recognize that
21 -- the city council has largely been ignored, but 99
22 percent of caterpillar food are native foods. 96
23 percent of baby bird food are caterpillars. There's
24 been a 68 percent decrease in the numbers for the
25 twenty most-common species of birds between 1967 and

1 2007. So over the last forty years, we've lost 20
2 percent of the world's most common birds. The way to
3 extrapolate that is, the less-common bird, we've lost
4 even more.

5 We're losing habitat; that's the main
6 take-away from that. I've tried to find some good data
7 on whether bikes and dogs affect that or not. I had a
8 limited amount of time, and I didn't find anything. I
9 spoke to staff and the author of the ecological report,
10 and he said there's no good scientific data either way
11 on that. And that's very frustrating to me, from my
12 point of view. I feel like we should be making
13 decisions based on the best science available. They're
14 just contradictory. You know, here's one for; one
15 against.

16 So one thing that I did find, this debate has
17 already happened out west. One thing I found from the
18 Washington State Parks website, outdoor recreation is
19 the second-leading cause of decline of US endangered
20 species from public land, Losis, et al., 1995, and the
21 fourth-leading cause across all ownerships, Check, et
22 al., 2000.

23 To go on, in a study in northern Virginia,
24 Reed and Lender, 2008, found that protected areas with
25 dispersed, non-motorized recreation had full decline in

1 the density of native carnivores, and [inaudible] from
2 native and non-native species, over-protected areas
3 without recreation.

4 The next thing I want to say is that the
5 center put together a pretty great report. And in that
6 report, they did a disservice, I feel like. They
7 presented information that wasn't scientifically based
8 and didn't put good citations in for destruction. That
9 was -- I'd like to read quickly -- well, maybe I won't.

10 If you go to Page 106 and 107, it talks about
11 that in the report. I encourage everyone -- to me,
12 that's the smoking gun in the report. The biggest
13 impact on Page 106 and 107 talks about that there are
14 sixty-four nesting sites at the Ragged Mountain Natural
15 Reservoir, and the Blue Ridge Parkway has eighty-six
16 nesting sites. So it has more, but they did a survey
17 of about ten parks and natural areas, and they found
18 that, per area, Ragged Mountain Natural Area has the
19 greatest number of nesting sites.

20 So in conclusion, I feel like we want to use
21 empirical, reputable science when we're trying to make
22 this decision. That's basically what I would like to
23 leave you with.

24 Thank you very much.

25 MR. HIRSCHMAN: Karen Bennett?

1 MS. BENNETT: I'll pass.

2 MR. HIRSCHMAN: Ken Brayman?

3 MR. BRAYMAN: Good evening. My name is Ken
4 Brayman. I'm here with my wife, Kerry. We're
5 residents of Albemarle County.

6 I want to suggest very strongly that you
7 consider Option B.

8 When I look at the debate that is currently
9 taking place, and I've reviewed the ecosystem survey,
10 it seems to me it's almost a no-brainer to have to step
11 up and make the right decision here. I don't envy your
12 responsibility, but this is a very important point.

13 We grew up in Massachusetts, and lived in
14 Minnesota and in the Philadelphia area. We moved down
15 here because Charlottesville is such a unique place. I
16 work at the University of Virginia hospital, and I can
17 tell you that there are very few places in the country
18 that are like Charlottesville.

19 The Ragged Mountain Natural Area is a jewel in
20 the crown of Charlottesville. To me, I just can't
21 understand why we would want to risk the destruction of
22 an area that is just so pristine and important. If you
23 want to teach your children about the outdoors, well,
24 that's possible to do that in the Ragged Mountain
25 Natural Area, independent of riding bikes on the

1 trails.

2 If you go from the hospital down West Main
3 Street and look at the development, things are moving
4 so rapidly in Charlottesville now. And we are building
5 and not following a sensible approach to preservation
6 of natural areas, and the unique beauty and history of
7 the Charlottesville area. I think it's very important
8 to reflect on this as you make your decision.

9 It's very easy to succumb to the idea of
10 wanting to keep people employed in the bike industry
11 and so forth, but it doesn't make sense. When I look
12 at this debate, there is no debate in my mind. It's
13 obvious that these areas should remain pristine.

14 We should make an effort to develop biking
15 trails, but we shouldn't do it at the expense of
16 naturally-occurring areas that, once they're gone, we
17 won't be able to go back and resurrect them.

18 Other people can speak to the some of the
19 passion associated with biking, but I really think if
20 we were to ask Thomas Jefferson what to do with this,
21 it would be very clear. He would say, Absolutely not,
22 we're going to preserve this as a pristine area for
23 future generations.

24 Let's not think about this in terms of the
25 next five or ten years, but about what will happen in

1 fifty years or a hundred years, when people will
2 reflect back on your decisions and will say, Wow, that
3 board was terrific, they really decided to preserve
4 that area.

5 Thank you.

6 MR. HIRSCHMAN: The next three are Joan
7 Walowiec, Irv Cox, and Dave Stalkhouse.

8 MS. WALOWIEC: I'm Joan Walowiec, and I'd like
9 to say I'd like to maintain the current situation at
10 Ragged Mountain and vote for Option B.

11 Thank you.

12 MR. COX: Good evening. Members of the
13 Charlottesville Parks and Recreation Advisory Board, my
14 name is Irving Cox. I live at Ednam Forest on
15 Brookwood, about 300 yards north of the Ragged Mountain
16 Natural Area. I'm a hiker, a biker, and a dog owner.
17 For more than thirty-five years, I have hiked in that
18 pristine area with my children first, and now with my
19 grandchildren.

20 When I began to learn that there was a
21 potential to have dogs and bike riding in that area, I
22 got really concerned. When I visit my kids and grand
23 kids out in Colorado, biking is a frequent activity.
24 The trails are wide, fifteen feet, rough, some have
25 lots of erosion, and there are frequent conflicts with

1 joggers and hikers. And yes, there have been accidents
2 and injuries.

3 It's my observation that bikers and hikers do
4 not exist comfortably on the same trails. These trails
5 in Colorado are not in nature preserves, and not next
6 to a major water supply like the Ragged Mountain River.

7 I do not need to tell you about the unique
8 ecosystem in the Ragged Mountain area. It is special
9 and unique, not only in Albemarle County but in
10 Virginia. We should do nothing to stress or harm this
11 unique biological area.

12 So you see, my concern is about
13 Ragged Mountain is for real. I do not see a need to
14 have biking and dogs in this pristine area. There are
15 no places in that area where I think the two can
16 co-exist.

17 We currently have almost seventy miles of bike
18 trails in Albemarle County. There are two more parks
19 planned in the county, Hedgerow Park and Biscuit Run
20 sometime in the future where there will be additional
21 bike trails. Hedgerow Park will be next to the
22 Ragged Mountain area and south of 64. These are parks,
23 not natural areas.

24 So it is not as if we do not have sufficient
25 bike trails now. We do and more are coming. It's not

1 as if we're taking away something that we don't have.
2 You're not going to give us something that we don't
3 need.

4 I respectfully request that you support
5 Option B.

6 Do not be persuaded by the number of people,
7 young and old, who would not purposely want to harm
8 this special area, but would do so by riding bikes and
9 having dogs in this unique area. Please consider the
10 common good of all people, both current and future
11 generations. Please, for all of Charlottesville and
12 Albemarle County, support Option B.

13 Thank you.

14 MR. STALKHOUSE: My name is Dave Stalkhouse.
15 I live in the city.

16 First, I want to point that every option that
17 you are considering is exactly the same trail system,
18 the same footprint. None of them expand the trail
19 system; they just change the use. Again, having bikes
20 does not mean more trails. It means some of the trails
21 will be shared use.

22 As you consider this, I recommend you think
23 about the Rivanna Trail right here in the city. It's a
24 ribbon of rustic trail that runs about twenty miles
25 around the city, that is shared use. It hasn't damaged

1 nature. It hasn't gotten wider. In fact, it's been
2 improved every year because the mountain bike club
3 cooperates with the RBF to maintain and fix the erosion
4 that happens.

5 When erosion does happen, it's usually from
6 poorly-designed trails. Poorly-designed trails funnel
7 water, expose roots and rocks. It creates trenches.
8 The water washes silt into our streams. It's not the
9 users that cause the damage; it's the trail being
10 designed poorly and water run-off. Fortunately,
11 mountain bikers are the local experts on designing
12 trails and fixing trails to mitigate erosion.

13 Shared-use trails bring folks together. They
14 build community. Exclusive-use trails divide us and
15 weaken our community. No one can rightfully claim that
16 their method of enjoying nature is more valid than
17 anyone else's. There's no scientific evidence -- and
18 there have been studies -- to show that runners or
19 cyclists cause more damage to trails. There's just no
20 evidence. There have been studies.

21 When it comes to shared use and trails,
22 cyclists were just as courteous and cordial as hikers.
23 In fact, we post signs and teach our members to yield
24 the trail to everyone else on the trail, everyone.
25 This is what we preach. Shared-use trails encourage

1 interaction between folks on the trail. They
2 strengthen social bonds and create a larger pool of
3 volunteers.

4 The number one request in the 2005 parks
5 assessment was for more trails for hiking and biking.
6 Seventy-two percent, over sixty percent, were willing
7 to pay taxpayer dollars. Of the options on the table,
8 only Option E provides shared use.

9 Option E designates most of the trails as
10 single-use hiker. Most of the trails in Option E will
11 remain peaceful trails without bikes. Only one trail
12 goes through that, Option E, and allows biking.

13 Thank you for your time.

14 MR. HIRSCHMAN: The next three are Peter
15 Lewis, Bill Emory, and Robbi Savage.

16 MR. LEWIS: Good evening. I'm Pete Lewis.
17 I'm a local Albemarle County resident, single father of
18 two adult, autistic children who also enjoy biking and
19 like getting out. It's good. My speech is short.

20 I support the community, support the land and
21 the environment. I support the kids and adults wanting
22 to gets outdoors. I believe we can responsibly do all
23 of these things. Please do not support the exclusivity
24 of hikers alone, and please support shared use.

25 I support Option E.

1 Thank you very much.

2 MR. HIRSCHMAN: Bill Emory?

3 MR. EMORY: Hi there. My name is Robbi
4 Savage. I'm the executive director of Rivanna
5 Conservation Alliance.

6 The alliance was created in January of this
7 year through a merger of Rivanna Conservation Society
8 and Stream Watch. We're a 501(c)(3), and our mission
9 is protection of the Rivanna River and its tributaries
10 and watershed through involvement of people,
11 conservation, education, recreation, restoration, water
12 quality, and reporting to our community.

13 We are the ones that go out and monitor the
14 quality of our rivers and streams. And we are the ones
15 that organize the clean-ups of the trash and the dog
16 poop all over our community, including up at
17 Ragged Mountain, as well as the Rivanna Trail.

18 It is an education for our young people to
19 pick up dog poop along the trails, but not one I would
20 like to perpetuate. We try very hard to find that
21 delicate balance between environmental protection,
22 public use, and recreation.

23 With that said, we believe that the natural
24 area should remain a natural area.

25 We are blessed with an abundance of

1 family-friendly activities in our community. Much of
2 that is in our [inaudible]. We recognize that that's
3 highly important and a value to amenities of our
4 community, especially as we are growing. But at the
5 same time, it is important that we protect the
6 highly-vulnerable areas and those that bring silence,
7 peace, serenity, and solace to our citizens, not just
8 we old folks, but the young ones, too.

9 We're encouraged by the recent decisions by
10 the city and appreciate both the parks and the
11 recreations sides of the decisions you have to make.
12 So let me tell you that we've heard that this is, in
13 fact, a park. From my understanding, this is not a
14 park and it's not a recreational area. It was set
15 aside to be a reservoir, to protect water quality, and
16 provide a water supply.

17 Many of us fought the battle, many of us here
18 in this room, on Ragged Mountain and whether or not --
19 where it should go, and how it should be, and so on.
20 It is highly, highly unacceptable for to us degrade
21 that water quality after all we've dealt with.

22 Many of our members, if not most of them are
23 bikers. Most of us have dogs and pets. At the same
24 time, we know what people can do to water quality. So
25 let's imagine the topography at the existing trail

1 network that could be adapted to bikes without causing
2 rapid trail erosion or requiring substantial
3 earth-moving to create new trails, erosion, and
4 sedimentation.

5 We believe that Option B is the preference.

6 But the first important criteria in your
7 priority, from our perspective, should be the security
8 of our water supply and the health of our rivers. We
9 maintain existing trails, and we exclude pets and
10 bikers from Ragged Mountain.

11 Thank you.

12 MR. HIRSCHMAN: The next three are Matt
13 Pazorela, Eric Stravisky, and John Holden.

14 MR. PAUZORELA: Good evening. My name is
15 Matthew Pazorela. I'm a resident of Rugby Avenue. I
16 wanted to thank you for taking my comments.

17 I wanted to let you know I'm an orthopedic
18 surgeon in town. The relevance to that is, I see a lot
19 of people who are obese, who are not active. I think
20 the ability to have Ragged Mountain be a multi-use area
21 really speaks to a lot of our city residents to get
22 more active.

23 Nature reduces stress, as one of the speakers
24 said earlier. What they didn't say was that water also
25 reduces stress. There's been a study that shows that

1 even if you're in a green area, if you're in a green
2 area with water reduces stress, makes people healthier,
3 decreases blood pressure. There's actually been many
4 cardiovascular benefits, as well as mental benefits.

5 So by limiting this area to hiking only, it
6 would reduce the number of people who would be able to
7 use this area and thus get the health benefits that
8 Ragged Mountain would be able to provide to them. This
9 area is part of the city. By having Ragged Mountain
10 close by, it would allow kids and adults to get out to
11 this area.

12 Not all residents of the city have the means
13 to drive out to the Albemarle County parks, nor the
14 opportunity to. So I think you should take that into
15 account when you're making your decision.

16 Finally, I wanted to point out that the city
17 council did vote in October of 2015. They directed the
18 parks and recreation to find options for shared use.
19 By a vote of 3 to 2 for shared use.

20 And I support Option E. Thank you.

21 MR. STAVISKY: My name is Eric Stavisky. I've
22 lived on Carlton Road for the past twenty-eight years.
23 Thank you for the opportunity to speak this evening. I
24 appreciate the fact that everyone can have a voice in
25 our town's decision-making process.

1 Speaking of people having a voice, this goes
2 hand in hand with what we're debating tonight, whether
3 to restrict the right to a few of our citizens or make
4 it shared use for all.

5 I believe that by choosing Option E, we would
6 best serve our current citizens and, more importantly,
7 future generations of outdoor lovers. Hikers, dog
8 walkers, and cyclists can easy share this beautiful
9 area together and no one group needs to be left out.
10 Sharing trails is easy. Common sense and common
11 courtesy are all that are needed.

12 I've been using rider and trail system here in
13 Charlottesville, and the two trail parks in Albemarle
14 County for years, and never had any problems with other
15 trail users. As a matter of fact, it made me encounter
16 old friends and old coworkers I've crossed paths
17 with -- pun intended -- while using local trails.

18 I'd like to share a little story about trail
19 courtesy last year at the Preddy Creek, hiking with
20 another mountain biker. He was taking the lead on a
21 rise and when met up with some hikers coming the other
22 direction, he flagged me to stop, and we waited for the
23 hikers to pass. Next thing you know, the hikers
24 stopped and offered to let us by. My friend said,
25 Hikers have the right-of-way. They said, No, we're

1 just enjoying our time in the evening. It took minutes
2 for us to move on and decided who goes first, but I
3 truly believe we parted ways with a pretty good feeling
4 in our hearts that night. That, fellow citizens, is
5 what shared use is all about.

6 Please decide Option E, the only fair and
7 equitable solution.

8 Thank you very much.

9 MR. HOLDEN: Thank you for the opportunity to
10 speak.

11 I moved here thirty-five years ago with a dog,
12 a mountain bike, and as an avid running. Today, I view
13 things a little bit differently. I'd love to be able
14 to run at Ragged Mountain and take the dog, but we're
15 just running out of wild spaces, out of unfragmented
16 habitat.

17 I've been involved in outdoor recreation for
18 almost fifty years. I've traveled all over north
19 America, hiking, meeting a lot of people. I've
20 probably guided hundreds of hikers in this community.

21 I'm very opposed to any changes to the current
22 status at Ragged Mountain. It's a wild place you can
23 go. I can take people out there. You can kind of
24 crouch down, see critters in the distance on the lake.
25 You can see wild flowers out there without having to

1 drive all the way to the mountains or over to
2 West Virginia.

3 It's an amazingly beautiful place that has a
4 unique topography. We need to preserve it for further
5 generations. I can't believe we're at this crossroads,
6 thinking of changing a natural area into a park. I
7 certainly hope you do not do that.

8 Thank you.

9 MR. HIRSCHMAN: Stanton is the last name, and
10 it's either Linder -- Cinder Stanton, Bahram Mehrad,
11 and Dan Bieker.

12 MS. STANTON: My name's Cinder Stanton. I
13 live on the southern fringes of the Ragged Mountain
14 Natural Area, and I've paid my dues both in speaking
15 and writing. I'll just really wanted to raise my voice
16 one more time for an undisturbed Ragged Mountain
17 Natural Area, which would be Plan B.

18 It makes no sense to me that we would
19 eliminate a precious and irreplaceable resource for
20 something that we already have a lot of. People have
21 used the -- I think there are seventy miles of trails
22 that -- and I look at parks and rec for both the city
23 and county, and it seems to come out to a hundred miles
24 that are open to bikes and dogs. We just can't give up
25 something so precious for something that we already

1 have a lot of.

2 As for kids -- people have mentioned kids a
3 lot. I think this is a tremendous opportunity. It's a
4 laboratory that's very close to our major population, a
5 laboratory of learning about nature and natural
6 history, both for the city programs or county. Parents
7 can bring their children to be exposed to a precious
8 natural area that has been basically undisturbed since
9 1885 when the city began to acquire the property.

10 I do hope that Plan B will be your selection.

11 Thank you.

12 MR. MEHRAD: I apologize for my accent and
13 limited knowledge of English. If what I'm about to say
14 is incomprehensible, you will cue me in advance.

15 As a person who has been involved in several
16 environmental-impact reports, first of all, I'd like to
17 commend the excellent job that Center for Urban
18 Habitats has provided. I find the reports very
19 thorough, quite complete, and excellently presented.

20 I'm certain that the distinguished members of
21 the board, of the advisory board would consider all the
22 factors that this excellent report has presented before
23 making their decision. Basically, maintaining the
24 quality of water and preserving the natural ecological
25 environment are valuable beyond measure.

1 Additionally, those who have applied for
2 opening the Ragged Mountain to bikers must go through
3 this report and prove that the change they have
4 requested does not adversely affect the pristine nature
5 of this unique area.

6 Therefore, I urge advisory board to maintain
7 the current Option B for the benefit of present and
8 future generations.

9 Thank you.

10 MR. BIEKER: I'm Dan Bieker. I am a wildlife
11 biologist. I've worked in this area for over thirty
12 years for various non-profits, landowners on many
13 conservation issues. I've spent a lot of time studying
14 Ragged Mountain.

15 I agree with the other biologists who have
16 come to the conclusion that no public space in this
17 area can match Ragged Mountain in terms of biological
18 richness and diversity.

19 I also can say that I own two mountain bikes,
20 three dogs, and two horses, and I relish all of those
21 activities. But I also relish the natural areas, the
22 closest thing we have to wilderness, which is vital for
23 our spiritual and mental health.

24 I could go on and on about the negative impact
25 of dogs in wild habitats, but I won't. I agree that

1 the effect of biking and hiking are relatively equal.
2 No one can argue that all those things have negative
3 effects on natural environments, but we're talking
4 about a matter of degree. On a lot of weekends, the
5 parking lots are full with hikers only. If we add
6 bikes and dogs, the impact is going to be that much
7 greater.

8 I brought this map in to make a point. This
9 is the current Ragged Mountain Natural Area. This is
10 the interstate. South, that's going to be the new
11 county park, Ragged Mountain County Park. This new
12 county park has a greater land mass than current
13 Ragged Mountain. It's going to allow bicycles and
14 dogs. For all those folks that want to ride bikes and
15 brings dogs to this habitat, here it is. It's coming
16 right next-door.

17 We've heard a lot tonight about compromise and
18 equity. Wouldn't it be more equitable to preserve this
19 area as a natural area, given its water supply, and
20 have areas south of the interstate as a park for bikes
21 and dogs?

22 We are a community that prides itself on
23 inclusion and diversity. I would argue that it's more
24 to inclusive to provide a variety of recreational
25 activity on lands appropriate for those activities. Do

1 we have to turn every acre of public property into
2 intensive recreation?

3 We're adding parks, but we're not adding any
4 natural areas. Let's not take one away.

5 Thank you.

6 MR. HIRSCHMAN: Mary Ames, Jim Childress, John
7 Ciambotti.

8 MS. AMES: Hi. I'm Mary Ames, and I'm new to
9 the area, but I'm a lifelong Virginian. Everything I
10 was going to say, I'm not going to say. I would like
11 to offer a different perspective.

12 I grew up in Virginia Beach. It was
13 beautiful. And I left when it was a concrete jungle.
14 Then I moved to an area southwest of Richmond and I've
15 watched that whole area, the past thirty-some years,
16 grow and develop without regard to the natural areas.

17 I've just come to the Charlottesville area
18 and, you guys, it's beautiful everywhere you look. As
19 a nature lover, I've enjoyed your recreational areas,
20 and I've enjoyed Ivy Creek and Ragged Mountain.

21 I urge you to consider the beauty of it. Is a
22 treasure, and consider Option B. Thank you.

23 MR. HIRSCHMAN: Jim Childress? He's gone.
24 John Ciambotti.

25 MR. CIAMBOTTI: Hey there. How you all doing?

1 John Ciambotti, I live at 1852 Edgewood Lane. I've
2 been an active member of our community for over
3 twenty-two years. Thank you for an opportunity to
4 address the board tonight.

5 I'm going to talk specifically about the
6 different options that parks have produced. I'd like
7 to start particularly with Option C and D. I'm going
8 to lump those together, because basically the same
9 option. One's with dogs, one's without dogs.

10 I'm going to give you three reasons why this
11 board should not support Option C and D. Option C and
12 D puts trail users in the backyards of Ednam Forest.
13 And I believe most of the people who spoke from Ednam
14 Forest don't want people in their backyard where these
15 hikers are not. That's easily solvable by not having a
16 trail in their backyard.

17 Second, Option C and D put users on a
18 hundred-year-old road bed. That road bed is a not
19 environmentally sustainable. It's fall line in the
20 road. It produces sediment. As a trail user, I don't
21 want to be on environmentally-damaging trail.

22 Finally and most importantly, Option C and D
23 puts trail users on a piece of property that does not
24 belong to the city. On the far west side of that, the
25 majority of that old road bed is on private property.

1 If you visit there now, you'll see over one hundred
2 no-trespassing signs posted there. We should not
3 encourage trail users to go off of property.

4 So I think we should discard Option C and D,
5 which leaves us with Option A, Option B, and Option E.
6 Option A was no users, and it provides protection of
7 this the natural area, which a lot of people spoke for
8 protecting this natural area. Unfortunately, none of
9 these people who spoke about protecting the natural
10 area voted for Option A.

11 Everyone in this room has voted to agree to
12 allow humans and people to use Ragged Mountain. That's
13 big, big step because by -- you've already made the
14 judgment that people can use this natural area. By
15 people using this natural area, it's a benefit to all
16 of us.

17 So the question is: How are we going to use
18 it? Are we going to use it with Option B, which is
19 exclusive use for one, small user group represented by
20 a small fraction of people, or Option E which is more
21 inclusive and allows shared use?

22 I will point out that Option E is a
23 win/win/win trail plan. If I could have win/win/win
24 situations when you negotiate with diverse groups.
25 Option E is a win/win/win. Why is it a win/win/win?

1 It has many, many options for hiking only. So people
2 that want to hike undisturbed, Option E provides many
3 options for that. Option B provides one, single loop
4 for active users, just one. The rest of trails are for
5 hiking only.

6 Finally and most importantly -- and this was
7 spoken to at our last public meeting -- is, Option E
8 provides a win for the Ragged Mountain ecosystem.
9 Chris Gist at the last meeting, has emphatically shown
10 that he produced a trail plan which preserves the
11 Ragged Mountain ecosystem, that otherwise lets users
12 experience that. And we can experience that without
13 damaging the ecosystem.

14 I urge you to support Option E, shared use and
15 have an inclusive trail system in our city.

16 Thank you very much.

17 MR. HIRSCHMAN: We did ask people to refrain
18 from clapping for their favorite speakers.

19 Al Inigo, Chris Murray, and Joseph Hoskins.

20 MR. INIGO: Good evening. My name's Al Inigo.
21 I'm a lifelong resident of the city. One of the things
22 I love about the city is the parks and the recreational
23 activities that are available and the trail system.

24 There's been a lot of talk about not changing
25 Ragged Mountain. That's understandable because change

1 is difficult. Change is difficult for everyone, but
2 the fact is that it has changed. It is now a community
3 asset that is within the city parks system. It's
4 really technically not a nature park anymore. I know
5 that's angering people to hear that, but this is a
6 community asset that is within, now, the city parks
7 system.

8 As such, I think you all need to really think
9 about the purpose of the city park and recreational
10 department. You can find that in the mission
11 statement. I'm going to read it. It's pretty short
12 and some of the folks here may not know it.

13 The mission statement that is throughout the
14 park's website says: The mission statement is to
15 enhance the quality of life for all through stewardship
16 of public lands and parks, and to provide quality
17 recreational experiences.

18 Out of all the options that are available to
19 you all, Option E is really the only one that captures
20 that mission statement. Remember, please, that the
21 mission statement is the lens through which you all are
22 supposed to make the decisions and guide you. That's
23 the purpose of the mission statement.

24 It says that it's to enhance the quality of
25 life for all. So shared use does that. It says that

1 you have do that through stewardship of public lands.
2 Option E does that.

3 As Dr. Ciambotti just told us, we're not there
4 to try to degrade the environment or damage what's
5 there. Option E takes into account the ecosystem, the
6 special needs of this area. And the trails are
7 designed to take that into account.

8 Finally, you all have to think about providing
9 quality recreational experiences. That really means
10 both passive use and active use, shared use. Again,
11 this is a community asset that belongs to all of the
12 citizens of Charlottesville. It wouldn't be
13 appropriate to exclude a large part, and really, a
14 majority of the users that want to be out there and use
15 the trails, take advantage of the community asset which
16 this is.

17 So I urge to you consider the mission
18 statement when you make your decision. And Option E is
19 only one that fully captures that.

20 Thank you.

21 MR. MURRAY: My name is Chris Murray, and I
22 live in the City of Charlottesville.

23 Ragged Mountain should remain the way it has
24 been for the past 150 years, for several reasons. The
25 first is that wildlife needs replenishment areas.

1 There's a tipping point, and it's un-knowable until
2 it's too late, where shyer animals and the rarer birds
3 are simply forced out.

4 Imminent evolutionary biologist, Edwardo
5 Wilson, is advocating that half the country be
6 sequestered away for migratory animals and birds
7 migrating away from the changing climate. The presence
8 of mountain bikes at Ragged Mountain heads in the
9 opposite direction and it would upset the current
10 ecological balance irrevocably.

11 Secondly, humans need replenishment areas.
12 Why do we sequester so much land for places to worship
13 and forego the enormous property tax available from
14 that? For two entries the notion of a retreat for us
15 to us feed our spirits has been embedded in public
16 policy by foregoing public tax revenue.

17 Ragged Mountain and Ivy Creek are the only public
18 sanctuaries left, where both nature and humans can
19 co-exist at a spiritual level.

20 Another question is: What is wildlife?
21 Without replenishment areas like Ragged Mountain, our
22 children's experience with wildlife will be inexorably
23 be limited to only those creatures who can adapt to
24 humans. Instead of the ruffed grouse, the birds would
25 be house sparrows and Canada geese. Do we really want

1 future generations to grow up thinking that is wildlife
2 is white-tailed deer? The intensity of mountain biking
3 would bring that risk to Ragged Mountain.

4 The naturalists and hiker, Colin Fletcher,
5 said in the Complete Walker: The love and
6 understanding and appreciation of our environment
7 increases in inverse proportion to the speed through
8 which we traverse it. A corollary would be choosing
9 those with whom we travel.

10 Mountain bikers and contemplative hikers could
11 share the same trail, of course, but the party that
12 makes the most ruckus controls the experience for
13 everyone.

14 I urge you to keep it as a natural area.

15 Thank you.

16 MR. HOSKINS: Thank you for the opportunity to
17 speak. My name is Joe Hoskins. I've been a resident
18 of the City of Charlottesville for sixteen years. My
19 wife, myself, and our three daughters are outdoor
20 sports enthusiasts. We spend a lot of our free time
21 hiking, biking, fishing, tubing, kayaking, and just
22 enjoying our natural surroundings.

23 We frequent many of the city and county parks,
24 including the Monticello Trail, UVa Observatory Hill,
25 the Rivanna Trail, Walnut Creek Park, and Preddy Creek

1 Park. We have been utilizing the Ragged Mountain area
2 since we moved to Charlottesville in the early BC
3 years, before children. My wife and I would frequently
4 hike the loop trail around the reservoir at Ragged
5 Mountain.

6 In more recent years, I've helped to start and
7 become a head coach for the cutaway boys and girls
8 mountain bike teams that are run in conjunction with
9 the Miller School Albemarle Cycling Program. Including
10 both the girls and boys team, we have forty-four riders
11 between the ages of seven and fourteen, two head
12 coaches, five assistant coaches, and many community and
13 parent volunteers. We have developed deep and
14 meaningful ties in the Charlottesville community that
15 are particularly focused on the youngest groups that
16 would be the trail users and guardians of the future.
17 We believe in teaching our kids not only to be able
18 bike riders, but also to be involved with our community
19 and environment.

20 I'm going to read the cutaway team's mission
21 statement: The cutaway mountain bike teams are
22 dedicated to promoting a lifelong interest in mountain
23 biking. Our mission is to build a love of the sport to
24 kids and, through it, teach them to enjoy and protect
25 the environment, serve our communities, make healthy

1 choices, and develop an appreciation for effort and
2 hard work.

3 In accordance with our mission, the cutaway
4 teams have made a commitment to responsible stewardship
5 of the trail and the natural areas where we practice
6 and ride. Each week, we set aside scheduled trail days
7 to work with other trail-advocate groups, such as the
8 Charlottesville Area Mountain Bike Club, to teach
9 riders the proper way to build and maintain the trail
10 systems we enjoy.

11 In addition to our connection with the Miller
12 School of Albemarle, our teammates have been exposed to
13 proper design, construction, and maintenance of trails
14 that are being built in accordance with the most modern
15 trail-building and restoration techniques, endorsed by
16 the International Mountain Biking Association and other
17 national trail-building groups. To put it simply, the
18 kids are learning to take responsibility for the care
19 of their environment.

20 Last season, pursuant to our commitment to
21 environmental stewardship, we devoted a team practice
22 to the completion of our own, short ecological survey
23 of elements of the Ragged Mountain area. During our
24 survey, several team members and parent volunteers
25 accompanying us noted the poor condition and design of

1 historic trail systems on Round Top Mountain. These
2 trails have been formed directly on the fall line of
3 the hillside, which has caused heavy soil erosion. And
4 techniques that could have been used to avoid this have
5 not been employed. This mismanagement of our public
6 resource is what our kids saw firsthand. In a way, it
7 was a very good lesson in what not to do in
8 trail-building.

9 According to our ongoing commitment to build,
10 maintain, and enjoy trails with respect to our natural
11 environment, our teams are advocated for shared,
12 multi-use trails at the Ragged Mountain area.

13 Thank you.

14 MR. HIRSCHMAN: Bevin Cetta, Ned Ormsby,
15 Maurine Minor.

16 Is Bevin Cetta here? He left. Okay.

17 Ned Ormsby?

18 MR. ORMSBY: Hello. My name is Ned Ormsby.
19 I'm a resident of the City of Charlottesville. I want
20 to thank the recreational advisory board for providing
21 the community an opportunity to speak at tonight's
22 meeting.

23 I'm speaking tonight as a citizen of
24 Charlottesville and a mountain biker to support shared
25 use of Ragged Mountain. The reason I want to speak

1 tonight is to bring attention to the level of public
2 support shared use has received. In the seven public
3 meetings held to-date, public comments are three-to-one
4 in favor of allowing bikes, 220 pro-bike comments
5 versus 84 anti-bike comments. If you include those
6 comments into those wanting running and dog-walking,
7 the share-use comments outnumber hiker-only comments,
8 265 to 84. Other opinions as evidenced by e-mail and
9 phone calls to parks and recreation are in favor of
10 shared use.

11 While there's a majority of responses
12 requesting shared use, there are a number of e-mails
13 from people with very strongly-held convictions against
14 shared use at Ragged Mountain trails. As a member of
15 the local mountain biking community, I've always tried
16 to be courteous as possible, slowing down and greeting
17 pedestrians when passing.

18 As courteous as I try to be, I understand that
19 there are people that are intimidated by mountain
20 bikes, or have had negative experiences with a mountain
21 biker in the past, or simply want trails that they can
22 hike on without any interaction with mountain bikers.

23 I, as well as most of the people in the local
24 mountain-biker community, understand this and are happy
25 that Plan E, that's been proposed, includes trails that

1 exclude mountain biking so people that are looking for
2 a solitary experience, without mountain bikes, can have
3 an experience that they enjoy, as well.

4 In making the decision regarding the trails at
5 Ragged Mountain, I ask that you take into account the
6 amount of support that shared use has received.

7 Thank you for your time.

8 MR. HIRSCHMAN: Maureen Minor? Is Maureen
9 Minor here?

10 Joe Mooney, Gretchen Gehrett, Manuel Lerdaun.
11 Joe Mooney?

12 MR. MOONEY: Thank you for patiently listening
13 to us. There's more. I started my experience with
14 Ragged Mountain probably thirty or forty years ago, and
15 I have a mountain bike which I've ridden out to Ragged
16 Mountain, which I have given up because of aging out.
17 My helmet is hung up.

18 But I think one of the things that is a
19 reality that -- I don't mean to be insulting, but as a
20 mountain biker, I was a thrill-seeker. And as an older
21 gentleman, I'm solitude and quiet-seeker. I don't
22 think those two mix. They don't mix in immediate
23 times. I think I'd rather be a thrill-seeker, but my
24 age makes me quiet.

25 So I am very much in favor of Option B. I

1 think that Mr. Bieker flashing his map was meaningful
2 to me because I didn't have any idea of the expanse of
3 the area that is going to be developed for mixed use.
4 To me, it just makes sense to keep that area down below
5 64, mixed use, and the area above 64, Option B, as it
6 is.

7 I do think that I'll take the risk of saying,
8 if I was a native American, I probably would see Ragged
9 Mountain as a sacred area. And I hope that you can
10 look it that way, too.

11 Thank you.

12 MR. GEHRETT: I'm Gretchen Gehrett. I'm so
13 impressed that you all are looking at each of us with
14 rapt attention. It must be hard at this point. So
15 thank you very much for being interested in what we're
16 saying.

17 I'm here representing those who have no voice
18 us in our community. The turtle has no voice. The
19 cottontail has no voice. The wood thrush has no voice.
20 The spotted salamander has no voice. Please do not let
21 biking and dogs into the homes of the wildlife who live
22 in Ragged Mountain area.

23 The term "shared use" is a misnomer because it
24 is exclusionary. It excludes those of us who want this
25 to be a peaceful area. It excludes wildlife inasmuch

1 as it disrupts their home. So shared use is the most
2 exclusionary.

3 Everyone, everyone could use the area if it's
4 just open for walking and hiking. So that is the most
5 inclusive of all the options. I know that everyone who
6 is here speaking on behalf of dog-walking and biking
7 are certainly those people who are the most, shall I
8 say responsible bikers and dog walkers. They certainly
9 wouldn't be the ones who have their dogs off leash or
10 who come zooming up the trail and force those of who
11 are walking, off the trail. I can assure that those
12 people exist in our community. Go to any of the parks
13 that allow dog-walking and bikers and you will see that
14 dogs are off the leash and bikers coming zooming down
15 the trail.

16 So to keep it the most inclusive for all of us
17 in our community, please just leave this one area as a
18 natural area.

19 Thank you.

20 MR. LERDAU: My name is Manuel Lerda. I'm a
21 city resident, father of three, and a very avid
22 mountain biker, professor environmental sciences in
23 biology. I'm a forest ecologist who works on
24 disturbances and invasive species, and been at UVa now
25 for about nine-and-a-half years, and was a professor

1 before that, and worked to US Fish and Wildlife
2 Service.

3 I think we have two main questions before us
4 today. One is, are there physical or biological
5 resources at Ragged Mountain that are sufficiently rare
6 or vulnerable, and that bikes or dogs would place them
7 at risk?

8 And secondly, do there exist sufficient other
9 place in the city or county where mountain bikers can
10 ride and dogs can run?

11 I think that the first question is one that
12 should be answered by experts in the field using the
13 best available data we have for Ragged Mountain and for
14 the science broadly. I think that the second question
15 needs to be considered not just at the scale of Ragged
16 Mountain and how Ragged Mountain would be used, but
17 what are the sum total of resources available for
18 residents of the city. What is around here in total
19 that is available?

20 Above all -- and this is the most important --
21 I ask you not to make your recommendation based on the
22 number of speakers for either side or the vehemence of
23 our words. These are complicated, difficult questions
24 you have before you and you shouldn't base them on the
25 intensity of emotions or the number of people bring out

1 today or at other times.

2 I think you have an amazing set of environment
3 data available in the report that was put together by
4 the Center for Urban Habitats, and you have accessible
5 to you experts in forest ecology who could help with
6 interpreting that report and commenting on it in these
7 contexts. You have accessible to you the input of the
8 Albemarle County Natural History Committee to look at
9 the data, as well.

10 So finally, please take advantage of all of
11 the resources that you have available to yourselves in
12 making this decision.

13 Thank you.

14 MR. HIRSCHMAN: Nancy O'Brien, Matt Kayhoe,
15 Mary McKinley.

16 MS. O'BRIEN: Good evening. I'm Nancy O'Brien
17 and I live at 501 Ninth Street Southwest, over by
18 Buford School.

19 When I think about the natural area around
20 Ragged Mountain, I'm reminded of my dear friend, Jane
21 Henley, who walked that area every morning when she was
22 alive. She walked that area because it brought to her
23 the kind of energy and solace that she needed as she
24 went through her day. I think Mr. Philippi spoke most
25 clearly to those spiritual and soul kinds of things

1 that natural areas bring to us. We should be thankful
2 for that.

3 I came opposed to bikes and dogs on that area
4 because of my use of the Rivanna Trail along the river.
5 I walk there almost every day. And almost every day, I
6 have a bicycle sneak up behind me, which, I'm of an age
7 that it startles me and I lose all track of thought
8 there.

9 The other thing about the Rivanna Trail along
10 the river is that, while there are well-meaning people
11 walking their dogs who watch what they're doing, there
12 are people who don't. So you find dogs leaving things
13 along the path.

14 Not only that, you curiously find people
15 leaving things along the path. They pick up their dog
16 poop, but leave the bag on the trail. I have counted
17 as many as ten bags on the trail when I've gone
18 walking. I think it's sort of a combination where you
19 don't need that kind of thing there.

20 In addition, I also feel we've lost a piece of
21 this argument tonight. You all have a mission
22 statement for the parks and recreation. This isn't
23 just parks-and-recreation land; this is the watershed
24 for our only reservoir.

25 Thirty-five years ago or so, Albemarle had to

1 down-zone an entire part of the county because they had
2 not enforced the law before, and didn't have good
3 erosion control. It was a very expensive and long,
4 drawn-out thing to down-zone that quarter of the county
5 so they could protect the Rivanna reservoir.

6 So you have not the biggest -- I don't see
7 your biggest argument with yourselves being bikers and
8 hikers and whatever. I see the biggest thing as this
9 underlying fact that you're talk my reservoir, your
10 reservoir, and the drinking water which will be the
11 only drinking water source for the City of
12 Charlottesville. So it's a tight squeeze for you all.

13 I'm glad I'm not making that decision, but I
14 hope you'll support the nature part of it instead of
15 the road part.

16 Thank you very much.

17 MR. HIRSCHMAN: Matt Kayhoe?

18 MR. KAYHOE: I'll pass.

19 MR. HIRSCHMAN: Mary McKinley?

20 A VOICE: She left, sir.

21 MR. HIRSCHMAN: Diana Foster, Shannon
22 Tevendale, Andy Kinley.

23 MS. FOSTER: I'm Diana Foster.

24 I encourage the city not to allow dogs at
25 Ragged Mountain even on leashes. As a biologist, I

1 expressed earlier my opinion that dogs, even on leash,
2 will have a negative impact on birds and other
3 wildlife.

4 I'd like to speak now about exclusion, a word
5 people have used often in this discussion. In 2000, I
6 hiked the Appalachian Trail and encountered, during my
7 five-and-a-half-month journey, only one African
8 American hiker. Upon returning home, I researched
9 possible reasons and discovered a deep and complex
10 history that has lead to perceptions and fears some
11 people of color have for not wanting to recreate in
12 forest environments.

13 For the next fifteen years, I helped lead the
14 RTF in the building of hiking trails accessible to all
15 citizens of the region. For four years, I participated
16 in QCC walks, a program that encouraged walking as
17 physical fitness and community. During these walks, I
18 witnessed a fear of dogs on the part of some people of
19 color and inter-generational proliferation of those
20 fears.

21 For the past fifteen years, I have worked with
22 children from various backgrounds, primarily through
23 the Boys and Girls Club, to provide fun,
24 confidence-building, educational experience in forests.
25 To this day, some children still tell me that they

1 cannot participate in my program because of their
2 mama's fear for their safety regarding dogs.

3 In 2005, the parks and rec department
4 participated in a study conducted by the [Inaudible]
5 Quality of Research. To quote: Explore public
6 perception and usage of Charlottesville public spaces,
7 physical activity among residents who reside primarily
8 in the West Haven, Tenth and Page, Orangedale-Prospect,
9 and Ridge Street neighborhoods.

10 One objective of the study was to identify
11 barriers to use of public spaces for physical activity.
12 The results revealed that the most frequently-mentioned
13 desired activity was walking, but that a primary
14 barrier among participants not recreating in public
15 spaces was their fear of loose dogs.

16 Many people, including me, have been bitten or
17 charged by unleashed dogs, either as a child or here in
18 public parks. I fear unleashed dogs. Unfortunately,
19 not every dog owner will keep his dog leashed at Ragged
20 Mountain.

21 Please select a trail-usage option that makes
22 Ragged Mountain a welcoming place for all people.

23 MS. TEVENDALE: I'm Shannon Tevendale. I'm
24 first and foremost a mom. I'm an avid outdoor
25 enthusiast. I've been a cycling coach for the Boys and

1 Girls Club for Central Virginia for over five years.
2 Every year, I work with between forty and fifty kids.
3 We ride and enjoy the outdoors, but most of all, be an
4 active participant in their own lifestyle.

5 I fully support Option E.

6 We've talked at length tonight about the
7 different and very, very positive aspects of being
8 outdoor enthusiasts can have on people, healthy body
9 and lifestyle.

10 I would like to talk about you about the fun
11 of being outside because most of the kids I work with
12 bear the weight of the world on their shoulders. They
13 have a lot of responsibilities at home. And in my
14 opinion, getting them outside, active outside, running,
15 biking, and not limiting that sort of behavior and
16 opportunity for them is a game-changer. When you have
17 a kid that goes outside and spends thirty to sixty
18 minutes a day, they're going to feel better how who
19 they are. They have confidence to approach life in
20 ways they wouldn't if they were obese or feeling poorly
21 about themselves.

22 I teach the kids that I coach that running and
23 biking can be a form of meditation, a way of finding
24 peace in the world. In the world that we live in, I
25 don't think we should limit the opportunity that a

1 child has, or a person has, to go outside and enjoy an
2 active lifestyle.

3 When people see us riding around town, they
4 smile. We're a great group of volunteers and kids and
5 staff. And I think we bring happiness to them, as
6 well. Riding bikes is really fun and happy.

7 So instead of thinking about limiting their
8 accessibility to an active lifestyle, let's think about
9 teaching them responsibility and having that boundary
10 set for them. That's great. Teach them how to do that
11 in a respectful way, and building trails in a
12 respectful way for the longevity of our society. I
13 think that is the only way to approach this.

14 I don't think we have to go all one way or the
15 other. I think we can find a compromise as adults, and
16 to teach the next generation that an active, healthy
17 lifestyle is a requirement.

18 Thank you.

19 MR. KINLEY: Good evening. My name's Andy
20 Kinley. I live in the city. I've been a
21 Charlottesville resident for twenty years, moved here
22 in '96, and I've been heading out to Ragged Mountain
23 since I moved here probably a couple years later, in
24 the late '90s. It's a place I really love, a place
25 where I respect its biodiversity, its serenity.

1 It's unique in the fact that you like you're
2 in the mountains and you're very close to the city.
3 You don't have to drive thirty, forty miles away. It's
4 an extremely unique place in that respect. I think
5 everybody here cares deeply about it, as well.

6 I would love to see more people using it and
7 more people enjoying it. It gives me peace of mind. I
8 can go out, walk around, and show my family all of the
9 places where I've been going for the last twenty years,
10 before my kids were around. I get to teach my children
11 about the outdoors. My daughter saw her first black
12 snake there and she's loved snakes ever since.

13 It gives me a lot of great opportunities. I'd
14 love to see it offer our broader community a lot of
15 opportunities, as well. For that reason, I think the
16 respectful use, respecting trail users, respecting
17 other trail users, and responsible use of area is
18 needed.

19 I would vote for Option E because I think it
20 encompasses all of those.

21 You've heard a lot of opinions tonight. And
22 we all carry our own biases based on sometimes a few,
23 small sample sizes of experiences. But again, we all
24 carry our own bias and those are all truthful and true
25 to our own experiences. That's a hard way for you to

1 make a decision, based on people's biases.

2 So I ask you to try to dig into the facts, as
3 well. Some of the facts are Rivanna Water and Sewer
4 Authority doesn't have any issues with the proposed
5 shared-use activities out there. They don't see that
6 as an issue for the quality of the water. Ninety-eight
7 percent of the land out there will be untouched by
8 trails. That allows for the biodiversity to remain.

9 The trail system for Option E will be multi
10 use. However, it will have dedicated trails for
11 hiking. It will have other trails for mountain biking
12 and jogging. So there will be distinctions.

13 So please, as you make your decision, look at
14 all the facts and do your best. I appreciate it.

15 Thank you.

16 MR. HIRSCHMAN: Chris Bruce, Clive Bradbeer,
17 Victoria Teenagliu.

18 MR. BRUCE: I'm Chris Bruce. I live in
19 Charlottesville in Woolen Mills. I love to hike. I
20 love that there are ample opportunities all around this
21 area for fabulous hikes.

22 I also ride a bike a lot. I've been riding
23 all almost my life. I've raced. I've commuted to work
24 at every job I've had. I'm comfortable riding in
25 traffic that would paralyze most people with fear. So

1 I'm okay with just riding around on city streets and
2 country roads, dangerous as though some may be. But
3 now I have kids. My oldest is eight and he loves
4 riding his bike just as much as his dad. As he's
5 gained more confidence and rides further and further, I
6 have come to realize that are precious few places close
7 to town that are safe for him to ride.

8 I appreciate the effort that the city is
9 making to improve biking infrastructure, but they have
10 a long way to go. Allowing shared use that includes
11 bikes at Ragged Mountain Natural Area would be a big
12 step in the right direction.

13 I also work with conservation and geological
14 data for a living. So I appreciate, more than most,
15 the special natural areas that we have. I'm the
16 biggest tree-hugger among most people that I know.

17 In terms of negative impact to natural areas,
18 what matters is human presence, period. I understand
19 the emotional response in wanting to protect special
20 places, but there's no scientific evidence that
21 runners, cyclists, dog-walkers have any more impact
22 than hikers. It's the human use that has the impact.

23 You've heard a couple people cite scientific
24 studies already, and they include hiking among the
25 negative impacts. If we want to make a decision that

1 this area is going to be open to people, then those
2 negative impacts are going to persist. There's no
3 scientific evidence, none, that shared-use trails have
4 any more negative impact than hiking-only trails. So
5 this special place is not going to be ruined.

6 The uses allowed under Option E that I'm
7 supporting are all low-impact uses, and the integrity
8 of this natural area will remain. I think allowing
9 additional uses will get more people out, enjoying
10 nature, and that's something that I think we can all
11 support.

12 Thank you for the opportunity.

13 MR. BRADBEER: I'm Clive Bradbeer and I've
14 lived in Charlottesville for the past fifty-two years.
15 I've been an enthusiastic bicyclist and hiker since
16 1940, not only in this country, but also in Britain and
17 New Zealand. On the advice of my doctor, I stopped
18 riding a bicycle outdoors about three years ago. I
19 believe that my previous experiences are still valid
20 for our discussion today.

21 Charlottesville needs to decide whether the
22 Ragged Mountain Natural Area will remain a natural area
23 or become an outdoors recreational area. It cannot be
24 both. A natural area would be a place where the human
25 impact would be minimized, but enable the environment

1 and observation of native animals and plants in the
2 relatively-undisturbed environment.

3 Clearly, mountain bikes, runners, and dogs
4 would be prohibited. As a recreation area, the concern
5 for the natural environment would have a much lower
6 priority. Further, even as a recreation area, mountain
7 bikes and walkers are incompatible on the same trails.
8 One problem that I know only too well is that mountain
9 bikes destroy the surfaces of unpaved trails,
10 especially during and after wet weather.

11 The second problem is that mountain bikers
12 like to move as quickly as possible, generating
13 hazardous conditions for other users. So the question
14 remains.

15 Are we to lose one of our two remaining
16 natural areas to the demand of one group of users,
17 whose use would destroy the facility not only for other
18 users, but also for the native plants and animals?

19 Thank you.

20 MR. TEENAGLIO: Victoria ,it's "Teenaglio."
21 I'm for Option E.

22 I'm a Charlottesville resident, resident of
23 the city, and moved here in 1988, and a property owner
24 since 1989. I feel as if anything we can do to get the
25 city residents and all residents moving and active --

1 for children, especially, I'm all about anything
2 physical. I think biking will get them out there. My
3 experience with the cutaway team has been that they're
4 great stewards of the land.

5 I'm for Option E.

6 Thank you.

7 MR. HIRSCHMAN: The parks board has to stand
8 up and stretch, and maybe you all can do the same in
9 the interest of fitness.

10 (A brief recess was taken between 7:55 and
11 7:59 p.m.)

12 MR. HIRSCHMAN: We're supposed to be out of
13 here in a half-hour. We have about twenty-five or
14 thirty more people signed up. I'm going to ask people
15 a bit of an equity issue.

16 If you could, limit your comments to just
17 hitting something new. If someone's already made your
18 point, just reiterate it quickly, and try to wrap up in
19 about a minute. Then we can try to get everybody in.
20 I apologize for that. Or a written statement will be
21 in the thirty-day comment period.

22 Katrina -- oh, okay; she's coming -- Ruth
23 Douglas, Sam Freilich.

24 MS. TEENAGLIO: My name's Katrina Teenaglio.
25 Next year, I'll a freshman at C-ville High school. I

1 love to mountain bike. And recently, my family has
2 moved from Albemarle County where I used to live, and
3 mountain bike and explore, to in the city, which I
4 love, but there's a limit on the spaces where you can
5 explore the outdoors untouched. I think that I've been
6 out in Ragged Mountain a lot, and I like to walk there.

7 But I like Option E because I think that just
8 having the one trail where mountain bikes and dogs can
9 go is a good option. And people who want to just walk
10 in peace, I get that. They can have their own trails.
11 Yeah.

12 MR. HIRSCHMAN: Thank you.

13 Ruth Douglas?

14 MS. DOUGLAS: Good evening. Thank you for the
15 opportunity to speak, limited as it is. It's okay.

16 I'm a naturalist. I've lived here nearly
17 thirty years. I recently had the opportunity to
18 participate in a plant survey of the Ragged Mountain
19 Natural Area. So I'm very aware of all the wonderful
20 areas there are there.

21 I support Option B. I think we need more
22 sanctuaries for both plants and animals in this world
23 that is so dominated by human activity. There are
24 fewer and fewer places, and I just think it's terribly
25 important. I hope you do, too.

1 Thank you.

2 MR. FREILICH: My name is Sam Freilich. I
3 live immediately adjoining the Ragged Mountain Natural
4 Area on Rockwood Drive in Ednam Forest.

5 Many of you have seen the biological and
6 ecological studies of this area. One of the persons
7 that prepared it stated that Ragged Mountain Natural
8 Area is the most unique land in all of the Piedmont.
9 The area is a habitat of plants and animals in
10 incredible variety. Staying on the existing trail in
11 order not to disturb any sensitive species. Any new
12 trails would impact the natural balance of the area.

13 The natural area is a wonder of nature. While
14 walking through the quiet forest, you enjoy peace and
15 calm as you traverse the existing trails. In our world
16 of noise and stress, the natural area acts as a rare
17 refuge from the fast-paced, outside world. The
18 Ragged Mountain Natural Area is in the shape of a bowl,
19 rain runoff into the reservoir, any loud noises,
20 certainly mountain bikers, anywhere near the water are
21 amplified and broadcast through the whole area.

22 A sign posted at the paved parking lot sums it
23 all up. It simply says: Help protect this natural
24 environment. No alcohol, pets, jogging, bicycles, and
25 collecting. Take only pictures. Leave only

1 footprints.

2 Option B accomplishes this. Please support
3 and vote for Option B.

4 Thank you for your consideration.

5 MR. HIRSCHMAN: I'm going to ask the next
6 three people just come up and line up. Annette
7 Dusenbury, Laurie Brenner, John Gulley.

8 Is Annette Dusenbury here?

9 A VOICE: Laurie's not here.

10 MS. DUSENBURY: Good evening. My name is
11 Annette Dusenbury. I've been a city resident for the
12 last twelve years. I will get directly to my point.

13 Personal note, I grew up hiking most of my
14 life. Unfortunately, due to multiple sports and
15 multiple ankle injuries, running and hiking for me is
16 very, very limited. And so I have found a way to
17 return to the beauty of nature by being on the back of
18 a mountain bike. It has become the way that I get back
19 to enjoying nature and letting the rest of the world
20 go.

21 Since I began mountain biking four years ago,
22 I've personally never had a conflict with others on the
23 trail, and I practice the etiquette not only to slow
24 down, but to greet the hikers and users on the trail.
25 Very often, I know them, or someone I'm riding with

1 knows them.

2 I feel that in addition to the continued
3 education for all the users of the trail, careful
4 attention to the design can help deter any potential
5 issues by creating adequate sight lines, no blind
6 corners, and clear trail markers. The last thing any
7 of us want is to be surprised on the trail. The
8 expertise from organizations can and have provided that
9 for an insight on how it can be done.

10 I firmly believe that all people in attendance
11 tonight have more in common and common ground is what
12 should bring us together. We all desire to enjoy and
13 help preserve the Ragged Mountain Area.

14 With an adoption of Option E, I would love to
15 see all the different groups working together in
16 projects like trail-building and maintenance. I feel
17 activities like this would break down stereotypes of
18 each group and would foster positive interactions on
19 the trail now and in the future. In a time of growing
20 population, the more groups we have involved with care
21 of the trails, the better we can preserve this amazing
22 piece of land.

23 Thank you for your time.

24 MR. GULLEY: I'm John Gulley. I'm here
25 representing Charlottesville Trail Runners. I spend a

1 lot of time on the trails on foot, and I can tell you
2 on the spot that CAMBC trails are the best stewards of
3 trails. If we compare the watershed trails here with
4 other areas like Greensboro, North Carolina, whether
5 that's the best urban park in America, I don't know.

6 There's over thirty-five miles of watershed
7 trails there, maintained in a purposeful, well-informed
8 way, compared to some others. I think CAMBC provides
9 the best partner in ensuring the high quality of
10 well-maintained trails that will ensure the integrity
11 of the system there and the wildlife.

12 But also, I want to mention, I work as a
13 philosopher. I'm a big fan of the kind of
14 contemplation that I hear people endorse here and
15 public space that allows that. I want to say there's
16 lots of different ways of having those experiences.
17 And being on a bike and running and walking your dog,
18 even, those are all ways of enjoying nature.

19 I want to endorse the view of shared use, and
20 mountain bikers are the best partners in fostering
21 that.

22 Thank you.

23 MR. HIRSCHMAN: Please come forward. Bobby
24 Casteen, Rose Ryan Byrne, and Silas Byre -- okay. Two
25 Byrnes, Rose Ryan Byrne and Silas Byrne.

1 MR. DALY: Bobby Casteen is gone.

2 MR. HIRSCHMAN: Oh, that's Rose. Hi, Rose.

3 MS. BYRNE: Hi. I'm Rose. And I think I
4 support the -- yeah. Because if you're just walking
5 and hiking in the beautiful area, you could run into a
6 mountain biker and get really injured. And nobody
7 would want that. Or you could get attacked by a dog
8 off his or her leash. And it could ruin the area,
9 riding your bike. And you want to hike there and have
10 fun with your family or anyone, and it's a beautiful,
11 beautiful landscape. And my family and I go there a
12 lot and we want to keep going there for a while.

13 So thank you for your time.

14 MR. HIRSCHMAN: Thank you, Rose.

15 MR. BYRNE: Hi there. I'm Silas Byrne. I'm
16 Rose's father, and in favor of Option B.

17 It's a beautiful area, but it's also a
18 protected environment and a major water source. And
19 allowing dogs and bikes in that area, it's something we
20 can't take back if we allow it to happen.

21 That's why I'm in favor of Option B.

22 Thank you for your time.

23 MR. HIRSCHMAN: Lynn Wolowiec, Dede Smith, and
24 Matt Jones. If you could, cue up here.

25 MR. WOLOWIEC: My name is Len Wolowiec. I am

1 a resident of Albemarle County. Thank you for your
2 service and for your patience in listening to all of us
3 tonight.

4 The city has been a steward over
5 Ragged Mountain Natural Area and Watershed for over 130
6 years, and we need to thank them. But this is a
7 crossroads. This is the only clean water supply that
8 we have, and it is in a natural area. It is not in a
9 park. It's a natural area; not a park.

10 For a community of 145,000 residents, we have
11 only two peaceful natural areas, Ivy Creek and Ragged
12 Mountain, that afford a tranquil setting for students,
13 and we're all students of nature, hikers, birders, and
14 fishermen.

15 I won't get into the study. You have copies
16 of it, and I sent you a five-day synopsis of that. But
17 the current rules only allow hikers and fishermen use
18 of the natural area, in order to protect the
19 environment. Now we have increased efforts for more
20 usage at Ragged Mountain, even in the name of bike
21 training at the expense of interrupting all of the
22 environment.

23 Increased usage translates into an increased
24 threat of a negative impact to the environment. As
25 somebody said earlier, human use has the impact. And

1 what are we talking about if we change the rules?

2 We're talking about more human impact. Once there is a
3 negative impact to the environment, we cannot reverse
4 that damage.

5 This decision is not a popularity contest, as
6 somebody said earlier. It is a very serious decision
7 about our environment. In addition to the sixty-eight
8 miles of shared-usage trails in Albemarle, the county
9 Hedgerow Park project is scheduled for completion
10 within two to three years. It will adjoin ragged
11 Mountain south of I-64 and is already approved to
12 accommodate hikers, biker, joggers, and dogs. No one
13 is stopping anyone from visiting Ragged Mountain, but
14 we don't want anybody to disturb the environment.

15 I urge you to maintain the present rules of
16 Option B for the preservation of our water, our
17 environment, and for the safety of all in the area, now
18 and for more than another 150 years in the future.

19 Thank you.

20 MS. SMITH: Good evening. I'm Dede Smith.

21 I'm here to support Option B, or even
22 Option A. And echo Nancy O'Brien's sentiments on your
23 shared responsibility to protect our water supply.

24 This is our largest, and plan to be our only
25 raw water reservoir for the next fifty years.

1 Interestingly, when the city bought this land in its
2 entirety by the early 1900's, they kicked off all the
3 human use, the farming, the livestock, and then
4 implemented policy to protect it for the next century.
5 Thank God they did because it is now the cleanest, by
6 any measure, reservoir we have.

7 We've just invested \$40 million to enlarge
8 that, to make it now back again our only reservoir for
9 the future. In expanding the reservoir, we have
10 connected Sugar Hollow and Ragged Mountain so that we
11 can cannot get Sugar Hollow water except through
12 Ragged Mountain. If we lose Ragged Mountain, we lose
13 Sugar Hollow. Those are the only two reservoirs we
14 still have that are not polluted.

15 I will send you a report of the Rivanna Water
16 and Sewer Authority they just got last month on the
17 really serious pollution in all of our other
18 reservoirs. In it, they speculate that it might be a
19 matter of time before the only two clean ones we have
20 are infected with this blue-green algae. This is what
21 closed the beaches in Florida over the 4th of July. It
22 exposes us to neurotoxins, et cetera, et cetera.

23 It's a serious, serious matter. And what
24 fuels blue-green algae is nutrient solution. It's not
25 even phosphorus like you get from animal feces,

1 particularly. It's imperious that we remember that
2 we've had protection on this land for a century. To
3 remove those protections is -- that our forefathers
4 understood or needed to provide for us what we have
5 today, which is the cleanest water in the whole system.
6 To remove those is to really reject our responsibility
7 for future generations, for the same children that are
8 mountain biking tonight.

9 Thank you. I appreciate your attention to all
10 us. I meant to be a little shorter.

11 MR. HIRSCHMAN: The following please come up?
12 Matt Jones, Kate Lucas, Maggie Adamson.

13 MR. JONES: Hi. I'm Matt Jones, here on the
14 Charlottesville Area Mountain Bike Club.

15 We have a local membership of about 550-plus
16 members, not including the very youngest of our members
17 that joined us on the some of the mountain biking days
18 one their very small bikes.

19 I want to talk about what CAMBC isn't, first.
20 We are not Red Bull, not the cup, not the X-Games.
21 Instead, we're focused on trail stewardship,
22 [inaudible] etiquette, against hazardous --

23 MR. HIRSCHMAN: You'll have to step up to the
24 mic. We can't hear you.

25 MR. JONES: We aim to educate trail riders

1 against hazardous incidents on the trail, ride with
2 respect for others on the trail, and we focus on trail
3 design that minimizes conflict.

4 So we are, like I said, a local advocacy
5 trail-building club. We are not a race club. We
6 promote preservation of natural spaces, trail design,
7 and our focus is all on the use of multi-use trails.
8 So we're on board for Option B.

9 Rivanna Trail Foundation and Charlottesville
10 Area Trail Owners and those partnerships help us
11 schedule in our goals to create trails that everyone
12 can use. We are a chapter of the International
13 Mountain Bike Association, a non-profit. And we have a
14 healthy, well-organized organization with a huge cache
15 of tools. Over the last five years, we've supplied
16 4,000-plus man hours to rebuilding trails, focused on
17 trail design to minimize conflict and erosion, those
18 type of things.

19 Thanks for your time.

20 MS. LUCAS: My name is a Kate Lucas and I'm
21 frequent user of local trails for mountain biking and
22 trail running. I also participate in the
23 Charlottesville weekly organized open-water swim at the
24 lake. In short, I know the park well. I'm also a
25 seventeen-year [inaudible] of mostly off-road

1 triathlete in my spare time, along with being a founder
2 of the Charlottesville multisport endurance and
3 [inaudible] production, and being a commercial Realtor
4 by day.

5 I'm going to abbreviate my regular speech and
6 go on to say, from my perspective, traveling and racing
7 through the US, shared-use trail system makes a city
8 more livable and increased usage of a park. They are a
9 public asset and should be used for multiple, different
10 uses. Share-use trails also meet the mission of our
11 local parks and rec.

12 We need shared-use trails at Ragged Mountain
13 to make the City of Charlottesville more desirable for
14 active, young, and older professionals to live, work,
15 and play in. Improving our quality of life with
16 incredible, shared-trails access is one of the key ways
17 to help retaining and attract quality people, as well
18 as businesses.

19 It is my understanding, in 2005, community
20 parks and rec did an independent survey that found
21 City of Charlottesville that lacked a connected-trail
22 system that allows for biking and running. The survey
23 needs assessment absolutely stated in need of support
24 for natural areas, and also stated that seventy percent
25 indicated walking and biking trails is the highest

1 need.

2 I am for Option E and urge you to pass
3 Option E for everyone to share.

4 Thank you.

5 MS. ADAMSON: Hello. Thank you for the
6 opportunity to speak.

7 I've lived next to Ragged Mountain Natural
8 Area for twelve years and my family and I have spent a
9 lot of time on the trails and enjoyed them greatly.
10 It's very beautiful. It's very, very quiet.

11 The trails are rather rough. And some of the
12 trails are old road beds and some are single file. You
13 can barely just pass yourself in some areas. It varies
14 a great deal. I would say half are about single-file
15 trails.

16 There are many volunteer trails now. After it
17 rains, it's slippery. So the bikers will really have
18 their hands full. It would be a very intrusive
19 process. It would utterly change the environment. So
20 I really think it's nice to have a variety of
21 facilities in our area and not have every park be
22 multipurpose.

23 I'm very sympathetic to the bikers. I've got
24 a niece and nephew who love to mountain bike and belong
25 to a club. So I have a lot sympathy for that, but we

1 have a beautiful place back there. And it's a place
2 where you can go and spot wild turkey. You won't see
3 those on the Monticello Trail. It's too crowded. You
4 won't even see it to a secluded farm at Monticello.
5 You need a really secluded place to come across wild
6 turkey.

7 So I'm wandering and taking your time. And I
8 apologize. So I think we need to decide on the
9 purpose. Are we going to call the property the
10 Ragged Mountain trails and recreation area, or the
11 Ragged Mountain Reservoir and Natural Area?

12 MR. HIRSCHMAN: Brine can you give us
13 guidance? We have only ten minutes to 8:30 and there's
14 no way to get through the list.

15 (Discussion off record.)

16 MR. HIRSCHMAN: Adele Wood, Betty Mooney, Dan
17 Testa.

18 MS. WOOD: Adele Wood, moved here when I was
19 twelve. I've been a children's nature guide at
20 Ivy Creek Natural Area for about twenty years, love
21 everything that everyone said.

22 I think there's a lot of good points for
23 keeping Ragged Mountain Natural Area as a natural area
24 as its highest investment. Certainly, development is
25 happening all over the planet. And we're having

1 habitat loss, the sixth greatest species extinction.
2 This really needs to be kept a natural area. You can
3 change it later.

4 I think biking is great. I've done
5 competitive sports. I think it's great -- as a
6 children's nature guide, just the experience, even at
7 Ivy Creek with no bikes, no dogs, nobody running, to
8 get the kids from the schools, which is a racially
9 diverse group of kids, and give them a good time and
10 give them a chance to just be kids and to interact with
11 nature, just to do that in that quiet atmosphere, to
12 get to develop eyes to see and ears to hear -- if you
13 want to call poetry, flowery, if you want to call that
14 the ability to focus your mind for sports, for
15 anything, but to have that, you need quiet. You just
16 do.

17 You can't be overtaxing a habitat and think
18 that the pileated woodpecker is going to show up. I
19 said, Hey, okay, now we've had fun, I'll let you run
20 around, you're talking about everything, but where are
21 we? We're here at what used to be a farm, going into
22 forest, started by a guy who saved money year after
23 year to make a farm. He wanted his kids to have a
24 college education. They all did. One of them became
25 an educator and they named Greer Elementary School

1 after her.

2 So where are we? What is that tree? Are we
3 going to see deer if we're making a lot of noise?
4 We're not. And they know that. We'll have -- magic
5 will happen. Let's just be quiet for ten seconds and
6 let's share what we hear.

7 These are just great kids. I would like them
8 to have a chance to have a place where they can, as
9 equals and together, have this quiet experience. You
10 just can't have that with a lot of distractions and
11 noise. So that's what I hope you'll do. And of
12 course, there's water.

13 Great respect to everybody and all their
14 opinions.

15 Thank you.

16 MS. MOONEY: Betty Mooney. I've been a
17 resident of Charlottesville for forty-five years. I
18 served on the planning commission for Charlottesville.
19 I make my life's work trying to help people relax. I'm
20 a great nature lover.

21 I respect the very difficult decision to make.
22 You've listened so well, sat through many meetings well
23 past midnight. I know it's difficult, but I do hope
24 you take the information you've gotten from your
25 consultant.

1 I think you've got an excellent report in
2 front of you, and that you think not just about today,
3 but you think about the protection this natural area's
4 had for over a hundred years, and that if you do give
5 that up, you will never get it back.

6 And then, I'm very happy we're planning for
7 other mixed-use parks. And I'm very happy we have so
8 many opportunities for exercising trails and the
9 Rivanna trails in our community.

10 But we only have two natural areas. I think
11 you have to look at your data and decide is
12 Ragged Mountain worth protecting. Is it worth giving
13 up what many, many leaders before you have chosen to
14 keep? That's really the decision you have to make.

15 It's not really how many people are for this
16 or how many are for that, or how many people showed up
17 tonight. You have a real ethical dilemma on your
18 hands. I hope that you see it as such. It's got huge
19 ramifications for not only the people in this room, but
20 for everyone that I hope for many, many years on this
21 planet comes after us.

22 Thank you.

23 MR. TESTA: Thanks a lot for your patience
24 tonight. Thanks also to the park department staff for
25 organizing this process through the first half of the

1 year.

2 My name is Dan Testa. I'm a city resident.

3 Over the course of this process, I've been
4 struck by how much we all agree. Everyone here wants
5 to preserve Ragged Mountain as the quiet, beautiful
6 place it is. I do not believe that allowing cyclists
7 and dogs on trails is going to irrevocably or
8 drastically alter that.

9 The question before you is how much -- it's
10 not one of Ragged Mountain being lost forever, as I've
11 heard it described tonight. We're talking about a
12 land-use change that is very narrow in scope. Nobody
13 is going to motorize vehicles or organized paint-ball
14 matches or hunting.

15 I have an article I wrote for Blueridge
16 Outdoors many years ago. It is just an example of how
17 CAMBC works with other community groups, in this case
18 and the Boy Scouts, and the land managers to develop
19 more sustainable trails.

20 The only other point I would make is, just as
21 others have noted, Ragged Mountain is a special place,
22 but unfortunately, it is not pristine. It has already
23 been significantly altered. The water is from Sugar
24 Hollow. It has had massive, earth-moving equipment
25 reshaping the landscape for years now. I and probably

1 a lot of others in the cycling community support
2 wilderness areas and recognize the need to preserve
3 fragile ecosystems above other priorities where it is
4 appropriate, but in this case, I question whether a
5 municipally-owned park with a manmade reservoir, at the
6 edge of a city, with an interstate fits that criteria.

7 Option E is the inclusive, compromised
8 solution, and I hope that you will recommend it to city
9 council.

10 Thanks a lot.

11 MR. HIRSCHMAN: The following please come
12 forward, Geoff Keenan, Melisa Denham, Sean Denham.

13 MR. KEENAN: Thank you. I'm Jeff. I'm a city
14 resident for, like, last ten years. I'm just going to
15 read off a couple studies that have looked at the
16 impact of cycling versus hikers.

17 A study was done in Switzerland -- these are
18 all peer-reviewed articles and journals, by the way --
19 looking at the effect of hikers, mountain bikers, and
20 vehicles in low- and high-use areas in Canyonlands
21 National Park. The following observations of 1,029
22 bighorn sheep, reports that sheep fled sixty-one
23 percent of the time from hikers, seventeen percent of
24 the time from vehicles, and six percent of the time
25 from mountain bikers. The strong reaction to hikers,

1 particularly in high-use areas, was attributable to
2 direct approaches to sheep. That's a big difference.

3 Another study done in Switzerland looked at
4 hiking, jogging, and mountain biking in high-elevation
5 animals. The authors assessed alert distance, flight
6 distance, and distance fled, and found that
7 approximately twenty percent of the animals fled from
8 trail-side passers and response to [inaudible].

9 The authors found no statistically-significant
10 differences between the behavioral responses of animals
11 to three different types of users. The authors
12 concluded the restrictions on mountain biking above
13 timber line would not be justified from the perspective
14 of animal disturbance.

15 A study done in Idaho, looking at bald eagles
16 when exposed to actual and simulated walkers, joggers,
17 fisherman, bicycles, and vehicles, published in 1990,
18 the highest frequency of eagle-flushing was associated
19 with walkers, forty-six percent; followed by fishermen,
20 thirty-four percent; bicyclists, fifteen percent;
21 joggers, thirteen percent; and vehicles, six percent.
22 Eagles were most likely to flush when recreationists
23 approached slowly or stopped to observe them, and were
24 less alarmed when bicyclists or vehicles passed quickly
25 at constant speeds.

1 A final study done in 2003 looked at the
2 interaction of wildlife and trail users at Antelope
3 Island State Park in Utah. A hidden observer using an
4 optical range-finder recorded bikers and mule deer, and
5 low responses to assistants who had hiked or biked a
6 section of trail.

7 Observations revealed that seventy percent of
8 animals located within 330 feet of trails were likely
9 to flee when a trail-user passed, and that wildlife
10 exhibited statistically-similar responses to mountain
11 biking and hiking. Wildlife reacted more strongly to
12 off-trail recreationists, suggesting that visitors
13 should stay on trails to reduce wildlife disturbance.
14 As a mountain biker, I've never gone that far off the
15 trail.

16 I hope you take these studies into
17 consideration as you make your decision.

18 I'm in support of Option E.

19 Thank you.

20 MS. DENHAM: Hello. I'm Melisa Denham. I'm
21 born and raised in Charlottesville, Virginia, and a
22 resident here.

23 I just want to say I'm in favor of Option E.

24 Thank you.

25 MR. DENHAM: Hello. My name's Sean Denham,

1 also born and raised in Charlottesville, lived here for
2 thirty of my thirty-two years.

3 I support Option E, the inclusive, shared use
4 of the trails at Ragged Mountain reservoir. Open
5 access for all trail users is one of the aspects that
6 makes Charlottesville a truly great and lovable city.

7 Thank you.

8 MR. HIRSCHMAN: Will Sanford, Mahit Nanda,
9 Todd Niemeier.

10 MR. SANFORD: Hi. I'm Will Sanford,
11 Charlottesville Area Mountain Bike Club. I co-founded
12 the club in 2003.

13 I'm an advocate for Option E.

14 I wanted to take a few minutes. I have
15 something much longer come up. Just to summarize what
16 I have here, [inaudible] trail density is one mile for
17 about thirty acres. A trail density of one mile per
18 five acres is so close that you can shake hands across
19 the trail. [Inaudible] had one mile per twenty-seven
20 acres, back when we were operating a trail business,
21 and they still had enough wildlife to have a hunting
22 lease on the property.

23 So the density proposed with the eleven miles
24 of trails that are on each and every map back there
25 represents about one mile per forty-five acres, which

1 is fifty percent less dense than Ivy Creek Natural
2 Area. The Ivy Creek website states that it's 7.1
3 miles, 215 acres, and leaves large areas of natural
4 habitat undisturbed.

5 One item that hasn't been mentioned here
6 tonight is the very large part of our county, over
7 16,000 acres, is Shenandoah National Park. We can't
8 forget about that when we talk about the park acreage
9 in our county. Shenandoah National Park has not
10 allowed mountain biking. It's something that should be
11 considered in your decision tonight.

12 Also, regarding the water quality, the
13 decision has already been made to pump south Rivanna
14 Reservoir water up to Ragged Mountain as opposed to
15 dredging the reservoir. The quality of the water from
16 the south Rivanna is far inferior to Ragged Mountain.
17 The Rivanna Water and Sewer Authority can deal with
18 that if any potential, added runoff or sediment caused
19 by the change of use on the trails is a drop in the
20 bucket compared to the water-quality change that comes
21 from pumping south Rivanna.

22 I'll give you this.

23 MR. HIRSCHMAN: Mahit Nanda? Okay.

24 Todd Niemeier?

25 MR. NIEMEIER: Hello. I'm Todd Niemeier, live

1 here in the city. I'm the current president of the
2 Rivanna Trails Foundation.

3 I stand in an interesting spot. I represent a
4 varied group of users. Tonight, I'm not going to speak
5 on their behalf, but my behalf, personally. I want to
6 speak specifically about what shared use means to the
7 Rivanna Trail System as it encircles the city.

8 Because the Rivanna Trail System allows shared
9 use, which means that we share it with runners,
10 cyclists, hikers, it's a better trail system. We could
11 not maintain that trail system to the state that is
12 currently, which means it's passable year-round,
13 without the support of groups like CAMBC or Cat, as
14 well as those who just hike on the trail.

15 So I encourage you to consider Option E and
16 shared use, especially a system that has what we call a
17 stacked-use system, which has a specific area for
18 hikers as well as cyclists and a shared-use area,
19 because I think we're an enlightened community that can
20 work together to support a trail system at Ragged
21 Mountain and design trails that not only protect the
22 environment, but create a good experience for everyone.

23 I support Option E.

24 I won't speak on what the large populace of
25 members of RTF support, but personally, I support

1 Option E.

2 Thank you.

3 MR. HIRSCHMAN: Elaine Townsend, Thomas
4 Bowles, Brian Muszynski.

5 MS. TOWNSEND: I'm Elaine Townsend.

6 I just want to say that I fully support
7 Option E and sharing trails.

8 I'm a mountain biker. I'm sixty years old. I
9 hope to live another sixty years. And I look forward
10 to sharing trails with everyone.

11 Thank you.

12 MR. HIRSCHMAN: Is Thomas Bowles here?

13 Brian?

14 MR. MUSZYNSKI: My name's Brian Muszynski.
15 I'm a Charlottesville resident. I've been following
16 this debate for some time.

17 In October, city council voted for shared use.
18 I believe Option B doesn't include shared use. Do you
19 all agree? I think it should be thrown out.

20 Option A does not include shared use. I think
21 it should be thrown out.

22 This debate has been hashed out too long. A
23 lot of the environmentalists have talked. I think
24 they're all talk and no action. Being an
25 environmentalist means saving the environment. It

1 doesn't mean driving around in your air-conditioned
2 car. It doesn't mean running over the animals down
3 Interstate 64.

4 So I support Option E with an extended caveat
5 that all hikers need to be on a leash. That's all I
6 have.

7 Thank you.

8 MR. HIRSCHMAN: Eric Magrum, Scott Paisley,
9 ToShun Campbell?

10 Is Eric here? No.

11 Scott?

12 MR. PAISLEY: I'm Scott Paisley.

13 So much has already been said. I would like
14 to echo Al Inigo, referring to the park's mission
15 statement, the park department's mission statement, Sam
16 Lindblom and Manuel for pushing for the real analysis
17 of the impacts.

18 There have been so many statements that are
19 assumptions or perceptions without the information, the
20 data, facts to support it. One of the personal facts
21 that I find so compelling with all of the concerns
22 about the solitude, the quiet, the peace at Ragged
23 Mountain, I've also been a resident of this area for
24 many years, hiked at Ragged Mountain quite often. I go
25 there with my wife now, and I sit, and what I hear is

1 Interstate 64.

2 I have a much more meditative experience
3 riding my road bike out in the county than I have
4 experiencing the trails at Ragged Mountain. It is a
5 beautiful place. It is a wonderful place for our
6 community, but it is a city location.

7 It is an opportunity for us to build a network
8 for all of us to use that has already been changed
9 dramatically by the construction of the interstate, by
10 the expansion of the reservoir. It is what it is.

11 The thing that I've heard tonight that is most
12 compelling for me is this opportunity to bring our
13 disparate groups together. We've heard, as often as
14 has been said, so much passion, so much dedication.
15 We've heard how remarkably educated, practiced, trained
16 the members of CAMBC are for building sustainable
17 facilities. We know how dedicated the nature area
18 stewards of this property have been over the years.

19 We have a marvelous opportunity to bring these
20 groups together in this time where we have so much
21 division and separation. That, I think, is the best
22 opportunity to, you know, help us all work with each
23 other to learn each other's positive aspects.

24 Thank you.

25 MR. HIRSCHMAN: ToShun Campbell?

1 MR. CAMPBELL: Hello. My name is ToShun
2 Campbell. I am native to Mississippi. I've lived in
3 Charlottesville, Virginia for the last five years. I
4 am also a frequent volunteer with the Charlottesville
5 Area Boys and Girls Club. I'm employed at the
6 University of Virginia.

7 So five years ago when I first moved to
8 Charlottesville, one of the first impressions I had was
9 how exclusive some of the areas in Charlottesville
10 were, and also some of the activities in
11 Charlottesville. Being one of the very few minority
12 cyclists in the area, it was shocking to me that there
13 weren't any programs that included more minority
14 cycling, especially mountain biking. I mean, I grew up
15 in areas where mountain biking was one of the more
16 homogenous sports in the area.

17 Other examples of the exclusion was, as a
18 volunteer with the Boys and Girls Club, cycling, I was
19 a witness to two near-drownings while volunteering. To
20 me, it spoke to access. There were kids who didn't
21 have access to swimming and kids who don't have access
22 to areas where they can bike, play, and ride.

23 For that reason, I would like to respectfully
24 ask for your support of Option E.

25 Thank you.

1 MR. HIRSCHMAN: Reid Bailey, Jake Fox, Frank
2 Dubec.

3 MR. BAILEY: Hey. My name's Reid Bailey. I
4 came here to listen tonight mainly, but I've been moved
5 a bit to speak, given how many different opinions I've
6 heard.

7 The things that moved me the most, I think,
8 is, even though I feel like Option B has been presented
9 as the long view, the system's perspective, I see lot
10 of that in Option E, the shared-use plan, in fact. A
11 big part of taking the long view is starting with the
12 frank appraisal of where you are, what's your current
13 situation.

14 Ragged Mountain is beautiful. It's a
15 fantastic place to be, but as we heard many folks say,
16 it has a manmade lake at the center of it, bounded by
17 64, visually and in terms of sound. It has had massive
18 manmade influence in that space. It is not a
19 wilderness area. It is not a national park.

20 We're looking at very limited changes in terms
21 of Option E. Those changes are limited precisely for
22 the reasons we've heard, to protect water quality,
23 protect the opportunity for solitude, and peaceful
24 reflection in that space as much as possible, and to
25 protect the ecosystems and wildlife.

1 So I'm here to express that perspective in
2 support of Option E, for shared use.

3 Thank you.

4 MR. HIRSCHMAN: Jake Fox? He had to leave.
5 Frank?

6 MR. DUBEC: Hi there. I'm Frank Dubec, city
7 resident. Thanks for the opportunity to speak to you
8 this evening and for your hard work on this project.

9 I have a hard time imagining that a reasonable
10 person, prior to this project, would have ever
11 considered that mountain biking or dogs would bring
12 about such a experience in our community.

13 We're all reasonable people. Let's vote
14 reasonably for inclusion, shared use, Option E.

15 Thanks.

16 MR. HIRSCHMAN: John Compton?

17 MR. COMPTON: I didn't come here to speak. I
18 came mostly to listen. I've been in Charlottesville
19 for seven years. My absolute best friends in the
20 community are avid cyclists, mountain bikers in
21 particular. I've actually had a position of wanting to
22 stay pretty unbiased on this. I came here to listen.

23 My daughter actually is an avid cyclist, and
24 she is for not having bikes in the wilderness, as hard
25 as it is for me to believe. I think there were a lot

1 of good comments made on the Option B side, but I
2 wanted to speak that I also feel that there's been a
3 lot of things said that just -- I'm sure you probably
4 realize this, but there's no new trails being built.

5 There's less than ninety percent of trails
6 there now [inaudible] and of the area that would be
7 actually mountain bike [inaudible] this time. So I put
8 myself in your shoes and I said, Well, what would make
9 a difference to me? Not a lot of scientific data, from
10 what I've heard tonight.

11 I'd want to go out there again. I'd want to
12 be out there, walk the trail that's going to become a
13 mountain-bike trail, walk the trail that's going to be
14 a hiking trail, want to hear 64, and I might even want
15 to say, Hey, let's put some bikes on there. How far do
16 I have to be away to actually hear those bikes?

17 As an avid cyclist, I want Option E.

18 I think bikes won't actually have a lot of
19 impact, but I'm curious. I don't meant to delay the
20 process, but if I was making the decision and feel good
21 about, that's what I want to know. That's what I want
22 to say.

23 Thank you.

24 MR. HIRSCHMAN: The last registered speaker is
25 Jill Zimmerman. Is Jill here?

1 Ms. ZIMMERMAN: Hi. Thanks for letting me
2 speak.

3 I also came with the idea that I was not going
4 to speak. I had come to all the meetings except the
5 last one. I was in chiropractic conference and I was a
6 little late getting here because I had to work real
7 late.

8 So I heard a lot of things said that I feel
9 like is misinformation for you guys and more of an
10 opinion than fact. I own mountain bikes. I'm not very
11 good at it. The first place I ever rode was O-Hill and
12 it is scared the crap out of me. I'm sure UVa students
13 you know, [inaudible], but to hear CAMBC maligned for
14 the fabulous work they did, to get rid of the erosion
15 and make those trails safe was just heartbreaking.

16 I mean, whatever they touch turns to gold. So
17 if you allow them to bring people to Ragged Mountain,
18 they will take care of the trails. It's like a
19 gazillion dollars' worth of help taking care of the
20 trails.

21 Currently, you got to see a picture of
22 Ivy Creek where trails are not maintained by the people
23 who say it's very important to not have these areas
24 disturbed. They're not really taking care of the
25 trails.

1 So toss out Option C and D because the road
2 beds are unridable. They shouldn't have been even
3 talked about. And there's one big road that comes
4 right down the middle that's like a feeder for erosion,
5 for the water.

6 I'll probably get in trouble at work, but I
7 studied groundwater in school. Now I'm a piped-water
8 person. I spend all day working with Rivanna Water and
9 Sewer Authority today, and everybody I've talked to in
10 that organization says that they do not have a problem
11 with the shared use. It is not hurting the water, not
12 something that will change the way they treat the
13 water. So I think talking a lot about the water being
14 ruined is misleading for you guys.

15 One more thing. I am, like, a huge chicken.
16 I would never go out there without my dogs. So I would
17 like to see dogs allowed only on leash, everybody on
18 the trails, nobody off the trails. Single-track
19 trails, I think is what you guys want. They're skinny.
20 So the gentleman that says that the trails have to be
21 five feet wide --

22 Oh, one more thing. I did make a suggestion
23 at the last meeting that I went to, to have certain
24 dates, certain things. If people don't want to walk
25 and run into a bicyclist, let's say the bicycles are on

1 these days, and dogs are these days. And then maybe
2 you never see a dog or a bike if you don't want to.

3 Thanks.

4 MR. HIRSCHMAN: Is there anyone else here who
5 didn't sign up that would have some comments? You can
6 raise your hand, if that's the case.

7 And it looks like not.

8 We appreciate everybody.

9 MR. DALY: We appreciate the diplomacy and all
10 the eloquence of all the information you've brought
11 tonight.

12 Thirty-day comment period, and stay tuned for
13 the rest of the process.

14

15 (Proceedings concluded at 8:55 p.m.)

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1 COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA AT LARGE, to wit:

2 I, Gwendolyn O. Sugrue, Notary Public in and
3 for the Commonwealth of Virginia at large, whose
4 commission expires October 31, 2019, do certify that I
5 was the court reporter at the aforementioned
6 proceedings, and that the foregoing is a true, correct,
7 and full transcript of the proceedings herein.

8 I further certify that I am neither related to
9 nor otherwise associated with any counsel or party to
10 the proceeding, nor otherwise interested in the event
11 thereof.

12 Given under my hand and notarial seal at
13 Charlottesville, Virginia this 8th day of August, 2016.

14

15

16

17

18

19 _____
Gwendolyn O. Sugrue, Notary Public

20 Commonwealth of Virginia at Large

21 Notary Public Registration No. 7339814

22

23 Job No. 31153

24

25

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