

TOWN OF STANARDSVILLE, VIRGINIA

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

1996-2000

Adopted

February 9, 1998

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EXISTING CONDITIONS

Introduction:

The purpose of this comprehensive plan is to identify the current state of affairs and present a future land use program as well as an element about the future growth of the community. Basically, it is a document to which residents and newcomers can refer to learn about their community and its future. The comprehensive plan is a statement of community problems, desires, needs, potentials, and specific recommendations of how to address them. The main purpose is to suggest ways to protect and enhance the quality of life for the community. By creating a comprehensive plan- the community is asking itself what kind of town we have and what kind of town do we want. It is a look at the future and the creation of an agenda for action.

This update of the comprehensive plan is the second since the original plan of 1978. Some unique new challenges are facing the community at this time. These issues will be explored. Additionally, future goals and recommendations will be made to make Stanardsville a better place to live. While these objectives are not self executing, they provide an agenda which will be the basis for the future.

Setting:

Stanardsville is a peaceful and serene place nestled in the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains. The town was incorporated in 1921. The community has existed much longer, however, to a time prior to the creation of Greene County in 1838. The town is named for Robert Stanard who donated the land upon which stands the Greene County Court House. As the county seat, Stanardsville has been and remains the center of the county's government and commerce. Located 25 miles north of Charlottesville, Stanardsville is located close to the geographic center of Greene County. The town's topography within the 200 acres of incorporated area is flat and rolling with a maximum elevation of 700 feet above sea level. Open vistas of rugged mountains and verdant farms can be found throughout the town. Additionally, a number of historic structures add to the charm that is Stanardsville.

Existing Land Use:

The land use pattern of Stanardsville is quite linear. Housing generally fronts on primary and secondary roads particularly on Routes 33, 230 and 1001. Commercial uses in the town are concentrated near the Court House Square and on Route 33 at the western end of the town.

Build-out Analysis:

A 1990 Greene County Land-use and Build-out Analysis was conducted by the Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission. The study was undertaken to determine the

current land use in the county and to attempt to predict what the county may be like if all the possible developable land was built upon. In this study the Stanardsville Cluster/Growth Area, as designated by Greene County, was identified as a distinct area and analyzed as well. The growth area includes the Township of Stanardsville, land east and west of Stanardsville along Route 33 and a large wedge of land south of the town. The study first determined what the overall area of development is currently and how much vacant acreage remains. In the Stanardsville growth area the total R-1 area is 1841 acres. Existing residential development occupies 810 acres. Other existing development occupies 210 acres. Currently platted acreage for development is 189 acres. This leaves 632 acres which are vacant. This means that 34.3% of the area is vacant while 62.2% is developed. Given this a calculation is made of the potential population of the area if the vacant land were developed.

The vacant acreage of 632 acres is multiplied into total number of square feet and then divided by the minimum lot size of 10,000 square feet for Stanardsville. This given the total number of 2,753 lots. Because not all of the lots can be developed given set back and other requirements, the lots are multiplied by a development factor of 65% and then by a 92% factor to account for easements and utilities. This gives the final number 1,645.9 lots. From the census data, the average number of persons per dwelling is 2.8. By combining the number of lots with the average number of residents per lot, a final total of 4,605 persons is the potential population increase. Additionally, the population potential from platted undeveloped lots was determined. From the 189 acres of platted undeveloped land and additional 1,498 persons could be added. Combining this total with that from the vacant land, the total population increase is 6,094 persons.

The calculation to determine raw water demand for this population requires multiplying the population by the water use rate of 62.5 gallons per person per day. This total is 380,875 gallons per day. The Rapidan Service Authority has a current capacity of 800,000 gallons per day and can expand to 1 million gallons per day. With the potential for growth in Stanardsville and the rest of the County, this capacity would not be exceeded in the short term, but might be threatened in the long term. Careful study also needs to be made of the distribution potential of the system so that adequate water supplies reach the Town of Stanardsville.

Residential:

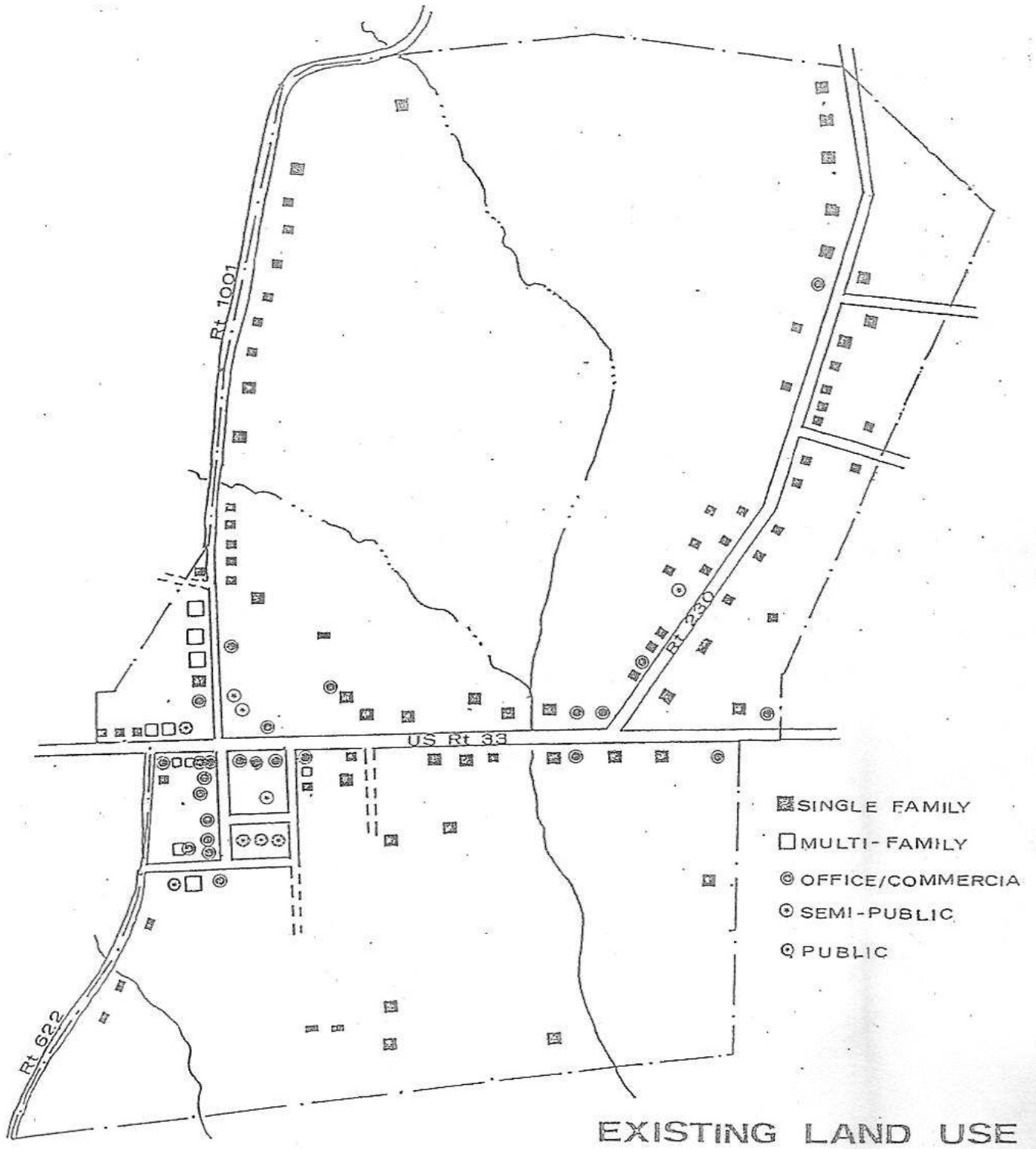
Subdivision activity in the town has been slow. Some recent developments include the Evergreen Nursing Home, Stanard Hall Apartment Complex, and the Greene Village. Most new construction has occurred on lots with frontage onto existing roads. Approximately one-third of the town remains undeveloped. The most sizeable undeveloped acreage is located in the north of town in the area bounded by Routes 33, 230 and 1001 and the north corporate limit. The southeastern portion of the town is also largely undeveloped.

Commercial:

Commercial activity is centered around the Court House Square. A number of commercial goods and services are available.

Stanardsville does lack some needed commercial activities which are currently unavailable. These include: Larger Supermarket, Dry-Cleaning Laundromat, ABC Store, Hardware Store, Movie Theater, Video Rental, Clothing and Shoes, Furniture Store, Car Dealership, additional Bank, Family Restaurant, Hotel/Inn, additional Doctor, and Taxi-Service.

Existing Land Use Map



Map 1 Town of Stanardsville

Government, Government Facilities and Services:

The Town of Stanardsville was incorporated by judicial order on April 18, 1921. The Town Council is composed of four council members and a mayor who are elected every four years. Additionally, the five member Town Planning Commission is appointed by the town council for staggered 1, 2, 3, 4 year terms. The town maintains no administrative offices or officers except that of Secretary-Treasurer. Income is derived from a share of the county's sales tax, ABC tax, a tax on certain assets of the local bank, at tax on light poles erected by Allegheny Power Company, cable TV offered by Frontier Vision, and a franchise tax by the telephone company, Centel. As is the case with all incorporated towns in Virginia, the residents of Stanardsville are subject to county taxation. The town levies no tax at this time.

The services provided by the town are street lighting and public receptical trash collection. All other services including education, health, welfare, police and road maintenance are provided by Greene County. Fire protection and rescue squad services are provided through countywide volunteer units.

Public Facilities:

The Town of Stanardsville plans to provide public meeting facilities in the Town Hall to its residents. Townspeople do pay county taxes however, and consequently have access to all facilities constructed and maintained with county funds. As the county seat, Stanardsville is the site of most of the county's public facilities.

Recreation:

Greene County provides limited public recreational facilities. The facilities of the public schools are available to residents. As a predominantly rural county, many recreation opportunities exist which include access to streams and rivers as well as the Shenandoah National Park which provides opportunities for hiking, camping and picnicing. The Greene Hills Club, Inc. north of Stanardsville has recreational privileges for its members.

Education:

The public school system of Greene County is consolidated on one large site off Rt. 33 just west of Stanardsville. The school facility consists of a high school, a middle school, elementary school, and a primary school. The total number of Stanardsville students is estimated to be approximately 65. This education facility is surrounded by ball fields and open space.

It is within easy walking distance for most students residing in Stanardsville. A new elementary school, K-5, is planned for the Ruckersville area to be opened for the Fall Session 1998. Educational opportunities exist as well at private institutions throughout the area including Blue Ridge School and the Christian Academy. The county also offers educational opportunities at the Vocational-Technical Center on Route 33 east of

Stanardsville. Higher education is available at James Madison University in Harrisonburg, the University of Virginia and Piedmont Virginia Community College, both in nearby Charlottesville.

Libraries:

The Greene County branch of the Jefferson-Madison library is located in Stanardsville. This branch library maintains regular hours and contains several thousand volumes. The Jefferson-Madison Library is located in Charlottesville. The space in the current building is inadequate. Another site in Stanardsville is being investigated by the Library Board.

Public Utilities:

Stanardsville is the only locale in Greene County which is currently served by a comprehensive system of public utilities.

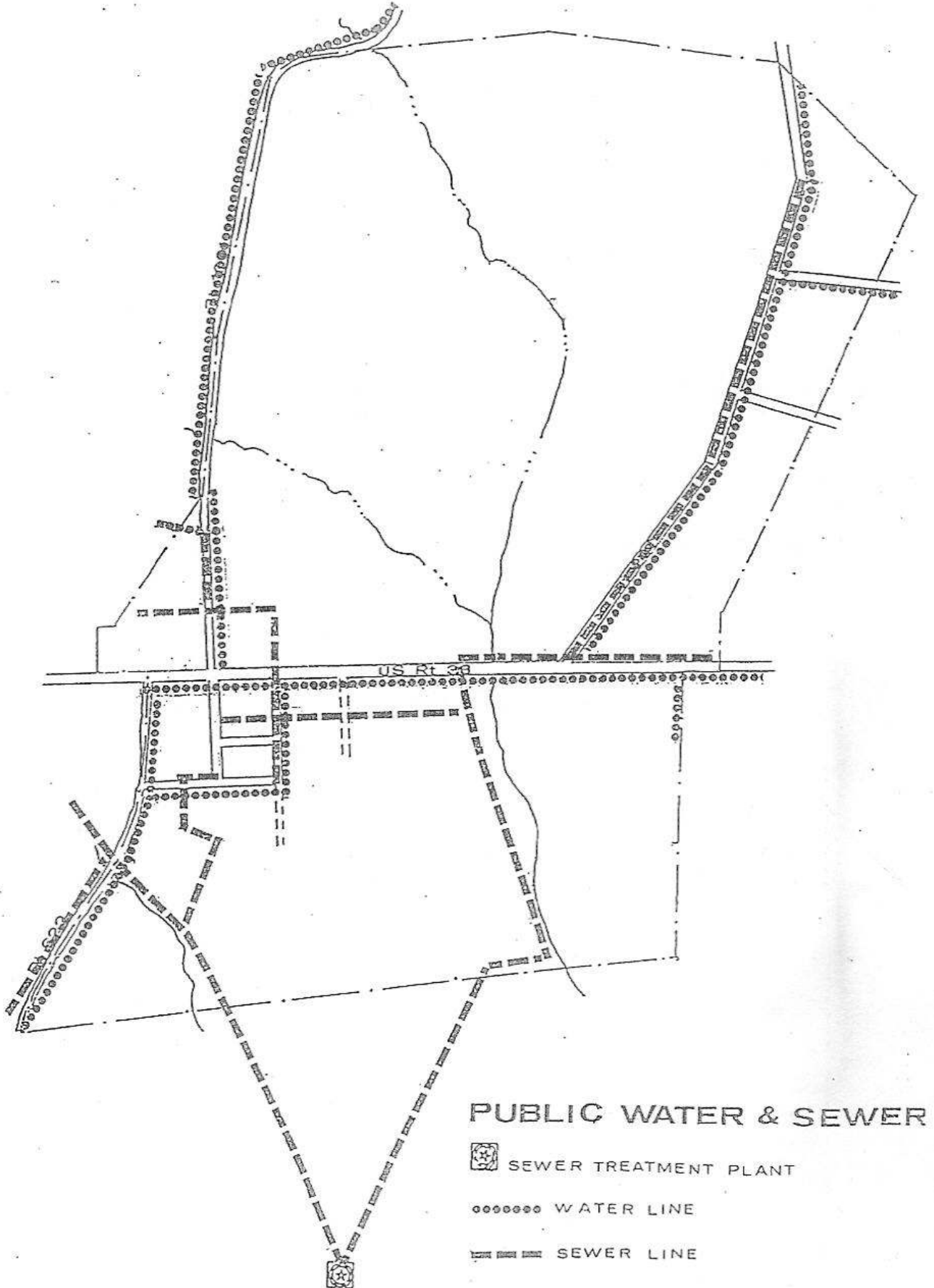
(Water) The public water system is administered by the Rapidan Service Authority. The current system is quite old and will require future improvements. The water treatment capacity of the Rapidan Service Authority is currently 800,000 gallons per day. This can be increased to about 1 million gallons. As the county grows and additional water systems are installed this capacity will become diminished. Stanardsville will need to continue to monitor the availability of water to ensure adequate amounts for the town.

(Sewer) The Stanardsville sewage system is the only public facility of its kind in Greene County. The new sewage treatment plant for Stanardsville was completed in 1988. This system is currently functioning at one-third capacity and therefore has the additional capacity to serve more residences and businesses. The sewer lines will be extended to areas of new commercial development in the Ruckersville area.

(Electricity and Gas) Electric power is provided to Stanardsville by the Allegheny Power Company. Natural gas is supplied by Commonwealth Gas of Virginia.

(Telephone and Cable Television) Telephone service is provided by Centel. Long distance service is available from a number of companies. Cable service is provided by Frontier Vision, Inc.

Public Water & Sewer Map



Public Services:

As the county seat, Stanardsville is the center for county offices and departments. The County Court House and offices of the County Clerk, Commissioner of Revenue, County Treasurer, County Registrar, Sheriff, and Commonwealth Attorney are located on or adjacent to the Court Square. Offices of the county administrator, county planning and development, county health and welfare, county school board and Greene County Transit are located in the county administration building immediately outside the town limits. The volunteer fire department and rescue squad are within a few minutes response time from the town. A new modernized fire house was completed in 1990.

Transportation:

Stanardsville is well served by a network of modern state and federal highways. US Route 33 passes through the town providing direct access east to Richmond and west to the Shenandoah Valley. State Route 230 is classified as a rural arterial and connects Stanardsville with Madison County and US Route 29 to the north. Route 622 is a minor connector which connects Stanardsville with Charlottesville and other points to the south. Construction for the Stanardsville By-pass is to begin in 1998 and is to be completed by the year 2000. Stanardsville has no rail or commercial bus service, but the Charlottesville-Albemarle Airport is approximately twenty minutes away via Routes 33 and 29.

The Greene County Transit System provides town residents and intra-county service along with commuter and shopper service to Charlottesville for a fee.

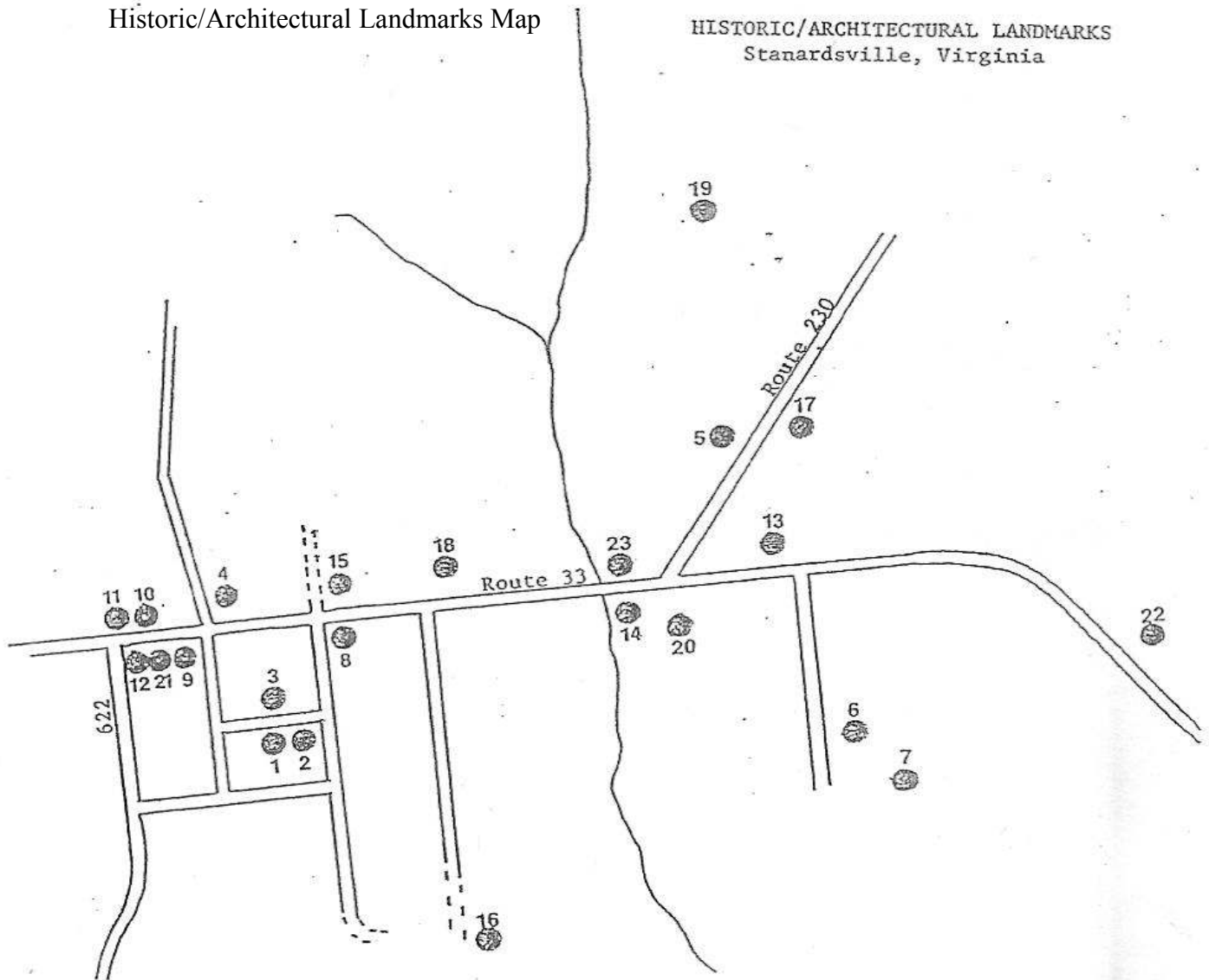
Historical and Architectural Landmarks:

Few towns of comparable size in Virginia possess as many structures of architectural and historical significance as Stanardsville, according to a survey made in 1980 for the Stanardsville Area Revitalization Team, Inc.

There are no less than 23 such structures within the town limits. Some of these structures date back to the early nineteenth century and one, the Greene County Court House, is on the National Register of Historic Places. According to the survey the town possesses an outstanding number of Greek ante-bellum buildings representing all major building types: commercial, residential, ecclesiastical and public. Most of the historic buildings are concentrated near the Court Square along Route 33 at the town center.

Historic/Architectural Landmarks Map

HISTORIC/ARCHITECTURAL LANDMARKS
Stanardsville, Virginia



- | | |
|---------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. Greene County Courthouse | 13. Shelton-Watson House |
| 2. County Jail | 14. Mitchell House |
| 3. Stanardsville Methodist Church | 15. Eddins-Deane House |
| 4. Grace Episcopal Church | 16. Episcopal Rectory |
| 5. Stanardsville Baptist Church | 17. Bickers-Comer House |
| 6. Shiloh Baptist Church | 18. Miller-Jordan House |
| 7. Schoolhouse | 19. Paige-Jarrell House |
| 8. Spotswood Hotel and Slave Quarters | 20. Bickers-Whitlock House |
| 9. Gibbons Market | 21. Library Building |
| 10. Davis-Deane House | 22. Doctor Davis House |
| 11. Gibbons House | 23. Taylor House |
| 12. Ham-Thomas-Southard House | |

Source: A Survey of the Historical and Architectural Landmarks.
Stanardsville, Virginia. Dianne Pierce. 1980.

Housing:

According to the 1990 US Census data, Stanardsville has 124 total housing units. Of these, 4 are vacant and 120 are households which are split almost equally between family and single family households. Of the 120 occupied units, 52 (43.3%) are owner occupied, while 68 (56.6%) are renter occupied. The town has three apartment complexes which have approximately 39 units. The homeowner vacancy rate is 1.9% while the rental vacancy is 2.9%. Owner occupied units have a median value of \$83,900. This is an increase of 84% from the \$45,600 median value of 1980. The median rental rate is \$302. This is an increase of 67% from the 1980 median rent of \$181.

Population and the Economy:

The population of Stanardsville was relatively stable since the incorporation of the town in 1921. According to the 1990 US Census, in recent years the population has been on the decline (see Table 1). In the past ten years the population has declined by 9.5% and since 1970 the decline is 13.2%. Additionally, the population is beginning to age with an increasing aged population and a decrease of younger persons. Although the county's population has grown tremendously in the past twenty years, the town's population has been declining. This has occurred in spite of the increase in available housing units which have increased in the past twenty years by 19.2 %. These population figures seem to be rather low however. The Town judges the population to be in excess of 300. This judgment is born out by the 2.8 persons per dwelling reported by the Jefferson Area Community Census. Using the 2.8 persons per dwelling and the 124 total housing units, the projected population is 347 persons. More accurate is probably a population of about 300 persons.

The town has remained as the center of business, commerce and government. In order to assist current and new businesses, the newly founded Chamber of Commerce is located in Stanardsville. Also, the Pride With Action formed by the town to assist with the Town's Bicentennial Celebration, is very much active in the activities of the town. Members are concerned citizens of the county as well as residents of the town.

Table 1

Demographic and Housing Characteristics: Stanardsville, VA

	1970	1980	% change from 1970 to 1980	1990	% change from 1980 to 1990	% change from 1970 to 1990
Total Population	296	284	-4%	257	-9.5%	-13.2%
Male	141	129	-8.5%	114	-11.6%	-19.1%
Female	155	155	0	143	-7.7%	-7.7%
Age						
0-18	99	88	-11%	59	-33%	-40.4%
19-59	153	133	-13%	143	+7.5%	-6.5%
60+	44	63	+43%	55	-12.7%	+25%
Total Housing Units	104	112	+7.7%	124	+10.7%	+19.2%
Total Occupied Units	100	107	+7%	120	+12.1%	+20%
Owner Occupied	67	72	+7.5%	52	-27.8%	-22.4%
Renter Occupied	33	35	+6%	68	+94.3%	+106%
1 Unit in Structure	85	86	+1%	68	-20.9%	-20%
2-9 Units in Structure	17	25	+47%	35	+40%	+106%
10+ Units in Structure	0	0	0	18	0	0
Mobile Homes	2	1	-50%	3 (0)	+200%	+50%

Projections:

Considering the overall growth of the county and the central position of Stanardsville as a center of business and government the potential for growth in the town is good. Because of the existence of central water and sewer, it is an ideal development option. With the decline in owner occupied housing, and the increases in housing values and rents, the town is becoming much more of a bed-room community for Charlottesville/Albemarle County. The vast majority of the county's population is employed outside the county. This seems to be true of Stanardsville as well. Population projections are difficult to make. In the early 1980's, the growth of Stanardsville seemed likely and the population was projected to reach 400 or more by the Year 2000. Today, that rate of growth still seems likely. With the good potential for growth and its central role in the economy of Greene County, Stanardsville has an excellent opportunity to become a stronger, more thriving community. However, if the town's efforts to extend its boundaries are successful, the population could double.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES FOR FUTURE LAND USE

A comprehensive plan serves two primary functions. First is the description of the physical, social and economic conditions of the community. Second, the plan puts forth the future long term goals and short term objectives that will create a community that the citizens desire. The following are the broad goals and objectives of the Town of Stanardsville. Additionally, specifics are listed by subsection to enhance these general goals:

Goal 1:

Ensure a planning process which encourages the greatest possible citizen understanding of and involvement in public decisions affecting the quality of life in Stanardsville.

Objective:

Provision should be made for citizen participation and professional assistance in land use decisions affecting more than an individual property owner. Annexation will increase the number of citizens who can participate in Stanardsville's government and planning.

Goal 2:

Maintain and enhance Stanardsville as Greene County's leading community by providing for an orderly and compact land use development pattern serviced by adequate transportation, public utilities, commercial services and community facilities.

Objectives:

The Town of Stanardsville is the center of Greene County and this "central place" role needs to be reinforced by allowing moderate to high density development to occur in designated areas of the town now undeveloped.

New commercial establishments should be within the town's corporate boundaries or immediately adjacent thereto. Location should be in compact fashion near the Court Square, with lighter commercial businesses including small professional offices allowed along either side of US Route 33 to the corporate limits. Light industrial should be encouraged along the by-pass corridor.

Public utilities (gas, water, sewage, electricity, cable and telephone services) should be placed underground, and coordinated so as to guide new development.

The possibility of curb-side refuse and recyclables collections should be considered. Periodic road and sidewalk cleaning on Main Street should be done.

Community facilities and services for Stanardsville are provided by Greene County; therefore, the Town should work with the county to insure that a wide range of county facilities/services be maintained near the town center (Court Square) so as to reinforce the multi-functional role of the Town. The Town should support an expanded Stanardsville location for the County branch of the regional library.

Parks/open spaces and playgrounds adequate to service the needs of the town residents should be located in strategic areas including stream valleys. A network of sidewalks and bicycle paths should provide access to the town center from all parts of the town. Donations of land and easements should be encouraged when possible.

Arterial highways serving Stanardsville should be improved and maintained so that easy access can be provided from all parts of the county and state. Of particular importance is access to the proposed US Route 33 bypass from the town center via an intersection or interchange with Rt. 622.

Developers building in currently vacant areas of the town should be required to construct high quality residential streets in accordance with a planned street network and Virginia Department of Highways and Transportation road standards. Residential development should be encouraged near the proposed by-pass. Additionally, all local ordinances should be followed carefully during the development process.

Signs informing the motoring public of retail goods and services available in town should be placed at strategic sites and should follow the guidelines of the Zoning Ordinance. Additionally, a "Welcome to Stanardsville" sign posted at the town limits should be erected to welcome visitors to the town. This will be even more important, once the by-pass is opened.

Goal 3:

Enhance those economic capabilities of the citizens of Stanardsville which can help them achieve a satisfactory and fulfilling life.

Objectives:

Every effort should be made to encourage non-polluting industries to locate close to the town limits of Stanardsville. These industries should employ local residents who are unemployed or underemployed. Continued commercial development is encouraged. Expanded service is encouraged.

County schools should provide meaningful vocational training in order to prepare townspeople for new job openings and in order to provide a ready labor pool for potential industries.

The town should support and promote activities which capitalize on its historical and rural quality and are designed to make the town attractive to tourists visiting the region as

a means to support existing commercial services and attract additional commercial development. Designating Stanardsville as an historical district should be investigated.

Goal 4:

Provide an adequate supply of safe, livable housing which matches the varied needs and income levels of the town's present and future population.

Objectives:

An assortment of housing types in the medium to high density range (4-16 units per acre) should be provided to meet the diverse needs of anticipated new residents.

Higher density housing should be located in proximity to shopping, employment, and community facilities.

Citizens residing in inadequate housing should be assisted in taking advantage of available opportunities to bring their homes up to the minimum health standards, or if necessary to relocate to sound housing.

The supply of decent housing for low income, elderly, and handicapped persons should be increased.

Goal 5:

Respect, preserve, and enhance the historic and architecturally significant buildings and all other elements which establish the tone and character of Stanardsville.

Objectives:

The town should encourage conservation and preservation of the historic and architecturally significant structures through appropriate use regulations, adaptive reuse, and other protective measures in order to enhance and reinforce its heritage.

A Historic District Ordinance should be considered by Stanardsville which would identify significant structures and provide specific protections for them under law.

The town should actively encourage the preservation of park and recreational space in the town in order to retain the charm and beauty that is Stanardsville.

Future Land Use:

The stated goals of this plan are aimed at improving the quality of life of residents of Stanardsville. The goals provide for:

- 1) Citizen participation in planning decisions affecting their lives and property;
- 2) Reinforcement of the town's role as the center of government, services and commerce;
- 3) Creation of economic opportunities for the residents;
- 4) Improvements in housing in the town; and
- 5) Respect for and protection of the character of the town and its significant buildings.

Government, Services and Retailing:

It is the hope of the citizens drafting this Comprehensive Plan for Stanardsville that the town will continue to be the major location in the county for services, shopping, and private and government business.

In order for this to occur, the Town of Stanardsville must work closely with the County of Greene. The governing bodies should interact regularly and come to joint decisions on issues which are of central importance to the town. Shared services and facilities must be managed in such a manner that the residents of Stanardsville will receive the same level of service as other residents of the county.

One of the first opportunities to work cooperatively will be during the process to redefine the town boundaries. The boundaries need to be specifically delineated especially as Stanardsville begins to grow. This process should begin immediately after the adoption of the comprehensive plan.

A way to strengthen the commercial focus of the town will be to encourage additional offices and retail uses in existing vacant buildings and lots around the court square area and improve the appearance and access to that area.

Incentives to improve the facades of existing buildings should be initiated by the town in order to provide an attractive setting for commercial activity. Appropriate landscaping, trees, walkways and seating for the convenience of pedestrians will add charm to the historic court square area. Contributions from civic groups and garden clubs should be sought for this purpose. Additionally, serious consideration should be given to the creation of a town park. This would contribute greatly to the beauty of the town as well as providing a public meeting place for citizens.

Residential:

Residential densities should be highest near the town center and where water and sewer lines are available, except where such development would conflict with the open views from the Court Square.

Residential development along US Route 33 and between Routes 1001 and 230 should be planned with care to include a street network which will provide access to both secondary roads and make undeveloped land accessible.

The flood plain along Stanardsville Run should be protected from development and at least 20 additional acres should be retained as open space for future park or recreation uses.

Utilities and Transportation:

A continual study should be made of the functioning of the sewage and water systems. These two systems will be the driving force behind the future development of the town. Therefore, the capacity and performance of these systems must be continually studied so as to prevent costly improvement projects.

A transportation study should be made of Stanardsville to assess the current capacity of the roads and to plan for the future development of the community. Included should also be the needs of pedestrians and bicyclists. This will be especially important once the town boundaries are redefined.

Community Facilities:

Public facilities serving Stanardsville are built and maintained by Greene County. The Greene County Comprehensive Plan 1990-1995 calls for a number of improvements in this area which will benefit the residents of Stanardsville. It is important for Stanardsville to plan an active role in the creation of these facilities.

Town Character and Historic Preservation:

As vacant land in Stanardsville develops into recommended uses and to the recommended densities, it will be important to protect and enhance the sweeping views of pastureland and nearby mountains which provide beauty and charm to the character of the town. The adoption of a historic district ordinance would go a long way toward these ends. The historic resources would be protected while at the same time encouraging new business and commercial activity in a scenic and enjoyable community. Additionally, the town council should support efforts to make citizens aware of the economic value of these architectural qualities. Actions which enhance and preserve the historic quality of the town should be encouraged, so long as the efforts do not inappropriately infringe upon individual property rights.

Implementation:

The implementation of this plan can follow a number of routes. Additional plans may be drafted on specific issues such as housing, capital improvements, and transportation. Then the town council can consider the adoption of additional local ordinances or amending existing statutes to implement provisions of this plan. Current statutes include

a zoning ordinance, subdivision ordinance, flood plain ordinance, and soil and sediment erosion ordinance.

One of the first priorities should be the redefinition of the town boundaries. Following that the zoning ordinance should be reviewed in order to make necessary changes. The council should also consider the development of a transportation plan as well as a capital improvements plan to identify future expenditures for needed projects. In addition, postal delivery service for Stanardsville residents should be sought. This would relieve some traffic congestion on Rt. 33 as residents collect their mail.