

REAL ESTATE

EVEN TRADE?



MIKE KROPF, THE DAILY PROGRESS

Oak Lawn, a house built by Jeffersonian contractor James Dinsmore, is seen, Wednesday, March 8, 2023, in Charlottesville's Fifeville neighborhood.

UVa considers handing historic Oak Lawn estate over to Charlottesville school division

DAVID VELAZQUEZ
The Daily Progress

The University of Virginia is considering handing over one of Charlottesville's largest tracts of land, with significant ties to UVa founder Thomas Jefferson, over to the city school division for a "nominal fee."

UVa's governing Board of Visitors will decide whether to hand over the historic Oak Lawn estate, on 5 acres in the city's Fifeville neighborhood, at its meeting this week.

The news comes four months after the Trump administration inexplicably changed course and awarded the shuttered Federal Executive Institute in the city, originally promised to Charlottesville City Schools, to UVa.

The school division had intended to use the 14-acre campus, where federal bureaucrats were trained for 57 years until the Trump administration closed it in February, to house its preschool programs and administrative offices. UVa now intends to use the property to expand its School of Continuing and Professional Studies and Reserve Officers' Training Corps,

or ROTC, programs.

UVa acquired the Oak Lawn estate in a \$3.5 million deal in October of 2023 and announced the property would be used by the university health system. How exactly was not clear.

"UVa Health will partner with the Fifeville Neighborhood Association and other community groups to explore how to best use the historic home to support community needs," the university said in a statement shortly after announcing the acquisition.

It now appears the property will instead go to the city school division on a rent-to-own basis.

On Tuesday, Charlottesville City Schools Superintendent Royal Gurley announced the school division had been alerted the UVa board would be voting on the matter at its upcoming meeting.

An agenda item titled "Lease of the Oak Lawn Property to the City of Charlottesville or Affiliated Entity" was added to the Board of Visitors Finance Committee's Friday agenda.

"The Charlottesville City Schools seek additional property within the City to expand their administrative offices and offer additional services to their students, and the University has an interest in protecting the historic nature of the Oak Lawn property while also using the property for educational purposes," reads a summary included in that agenda. "In order to accomplish these goals, the University proposes entering into a long-term lease with the City of Charlottesville, with an option to transfer ownership of Oak Lawn to the City of Charlottesville in the future, for such nominal or other consideration as the University's Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer may agree."

After losing the Federal Executive Institute prompted protests and even threats from Charlottesville teachers to boycott UVa's student teachers, Gurley said UVa's decision is an example of the community engagement the university and city have long sought.

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CHARLIE KIRK | 1993-2025

Virginia officials condemn killing of conservative activist Charlie Kirk

RICHMOND TIMES-DISPATCH STAFF

Virginia officials across the political spectrum on Wednesday condemned the fatal shooting of conservative political activist Charlie Kirk at a speaking engagement at a college in Utah.

Kirk, CEO and co-founder of the non-profit conservative advocacy group Turning Point USA, was shot while speaking at Utah Valley University. President Donald Trump announced on his social media platform Truth Social on Wednesday afternoon that Kirk had died.

"The Great, and even Legendary, Charlie Kirk, is dead. No one understood or had the Heart of the Youth in the United States of America better than Charlie," Trump wrote. "He was loved and admired by ALL, espe-

cially me, and now, he is no longer with us. Melania and my Sympathies go out to his beautiful wife Erika, and family. Charlie, we love you!"

Kirk spoke last year during the quadrennial mock presidential election at Washington and Lee University in Lexington. He was scheduled to appear at Virginia Tech on Sept. 24 as part of his college speaking tour.

In 2019, Kirk, then 26, played a key role in the establishment of a think tank at Liberty University called the Falkirk Center for Faith and Liberty. The aim of the think tank was to shape government policies, national institutions and American culture around Judeo-Christian principles.

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TESS CROWLEY, THE DESERET NEWS

Conservative political activist Charlie Kirk speaks, Wednesday, Sept. 10, 2025, before being shot and killed during a speaking engagement at Utah Valley University in Orem.