

**Habitat for Humanity Orange County
Rusch Hollow Lot 3A**

Statement of Justification for Special Use

The modification to the SUP for Rusch Hollow is requested in order to increase the size of lot #3 within the previously approved Rusch Hollow subdivision. The subdivision was approved in 2003 under the R-SS-C zoning for affordable housing. All of the homes within Rusch Hollow will be affordable to households earning 50% or less of the Area Median Income (AMI). Eight of the single family homes have been sold to qualified Habitat homebuyers, and four more are under construction and will be sold to qualified buyers by April of 2006. The remaining two lots in the Rusch Hollow subdivision are reserved for a duplex and a triplex that will provide 5 rental apartments for low-income elderly or disabled citizens of Orange County who are in need of affordable rental housing. Since receiving approval for Rusch Hollow, Habitat has acquired the property adjacent to lot #3 in Rusch Hollow. Through a proposed recombination and the modification of the existing SUP for Rusch Hollow, Habitat will be able to increase the size of lot #3 in order to better accommodate the triplex which is part of the original Rusch Hollow subdivision approval.

Because there is no significant change to the original Special Use Permit for Rusch Hollow, except to increase the size of one of the lots, the statement of justification for special use that was originally submitted is still applicable, and is included below, with minor edits made to reflect the current status of the approved Rusch Hollow subdivision.

FINDING #1

“That the use or development is located, designed, and proposed to be operated so as to maintain or promote the public health, safety, and general welfare”

The Rusch Hollow subdivision as approved consists of 3.03 acres and includes a public street extension off of Rogers Road and Rusch Road. The proposed modification to Rusch Hollow will increase its size by approximately 10,000 square feet, by increasing lot #3 from 5,500 square feet to 15,477 square feet. This increase will allow Habitat to choose an attractive design for the triplex that will fit in with the existing single-family homes now constructed in Rusch Hollow.

This subdivision has made sanitary sewer available to other parcels in the Rogers Road area including residences on Purefoy Road and the area within the Greene Tract that is to be reserved for affordable housing development. Residents on Purefoy Road have previously requested assistance from the Town of Chapel Hill for the extension of sanitary sewer to their homes. The extension of sanitary sewer proposed in this project will both serve current low income residents of the community and result in many more opportunities for quality, affordable housing in Chapel Hill.

This project is located in a very desirable area of Chapel Hill. Seawell Elementary School, Smith Middle School and Chapel Hill High School are all located less than one mile from this development. The site enjoys easy access many areas of Chapel Hill and Carrboro including major employment centers such as the university, and the thoroughfares close to this project experience less traffic than some of the other thoroughfares in Town. Habitat for Humanity has a waiting list of applicants who work in Chapel Hill and would like to live close to their employment. This project will provide those future homeowners with a safe, decent, well-built home of their own that is also convenient to their place of work. The rental units in the proposed project will serve the elderly and disabled, with priority given to current residents of the Rogers Road community. Residents of the Rogers Road community have requested that Habitat for Humanity provide housing options for elderly residents in the neighborhood who currently live in unsafe housing.

Habitat has a reputation for building quality affordable homes. Habitat for Humanity Orange County has built more than 100 homes in Orange County since the first one was finished in 1987. Habitat for Humanity serves households with incomes below fifty percent of the area median who live and/or work in Orange County and who currently live in substandard housing. Many of the clients that Habitat for Humanity serves are tenants of Chapel Hill Public Housing, or have Section 8 housing vouchers. By serving these households, Habitatfor Humanity offers a way for tenants receiving public subsidy to move into homeownership, and allows more of those waiting for public housing or section 8 vouchers to be served.

FINDING #2

“That the use or development complies with all required regulations and standards of this chapter, including all applicable provisions of Articles 12, 13, and 14 and the applicable specific standards contained in Sections 18.7 and 18.8 and with all other applicable regulations”

The proposed modification to the Rusch Hollow subdivision will comply with the required regulations and standards of this chapter, including all applicable provisions of Articles 12, 13, and 14 and the applicable specific standards contained in Sections 18.7 and 18.8 and with all other applicable regulations. The applicant is making a rezoning request to incorporate an additional 10,000 square feet into the original approved design, so that one of the lots within that subdivision can more reasonably accommodate a triplex. The proposed zoning classification is R-SS-C, which will allow the specific project elements including but not limited to lot size and building setbacks.

FINDING #3

“That the use or development is located, designed, and proposed to be operated so as to maintain or enhance the value of contiguous property, or that the use or development is a public necessity”.

This development will have a positive impact on the surrounding neighborhood. The homes that Habitat for Humanity has already built on the site are attractive and blend in well with the surrounding residences. A home that Habitat for Humanity built on Rusch Road is one of the

contiguous properties, and it is an attractive addition to the homes of Rusch Road. Habitat for Humanity neighborhoods become communities. The process by which the homes are built naturally creates the foundation for solid relationships and community spirit. Prospective Habitat homeowners must first help build other Habitat homes before they can own their own home. They are involved with the construction of their own home, which creates pride in the home and commitment to their neighborhood. By participating in the construction of their homes and attending classes in home maintenance and repair, Habitat homeowners are also better prepared to maintain their homes over the long term. New Homestead Place, an eleven-home subdivision constructed on Rogers Road by Habitat a few years ago is a quality neighborhood that Chapel Hill and this community can be proud of. Residents of that new subdivision are active in their Homeowners' Association and with the Rogers Road Neighborhood Association. This latest Habitat for Humanity project will have a similar positive impact on the neighborhood.

FINDING #4

“That the use or development conforms with the general plans for the physical development of the Town as embodied in this chapter and in the Comprehensive Plan”.

The Goal of the Comprehensive Plan on Housing is to “increase the availability of well-designed, affordable, safe, and sanitary housing for all citizens of Chapel Hill”. This project will definitely contribute toward achieving this goal. The Objectives of this section of the Comprehensive Plan include ‘Housing Availability’, ‘Housing Quality’, and ‘Housing Variety’. This project will clearly meet all of these objectives. Rusch Hollow will add 12 single-family homes affordable to households earning less than 50% of the area median income, and 5 rental units for low income disabled and elderly citizens. The modification will allow for better design of the triplex that will provide three of the rental units.

Section 7A of the Comprehensive Plan states the “The provision of housing at a cost affordable to all of Chapel Hill’s residents is a major priority for the Town”. It goes on to say “the Town will need to work with public agencies, private enterprises, and non-profit organizations to create housing opportunities for households of all income levels”. This project will help move the Town closer to its goal of providing quality, affordable housing for all residents of Chapel Hill.