

Gordon Sutherland

(30)

ATTACHMENT 5

From: Phil Mason
 Sent: Friday, October 20, 2006 5:50 PM
 To: Gordon Sutherland
 Subject: FW: Email RE: Public Hearing

FYI

From: JB Culpepper
Sent: Friday, October 20, 2006 5:44 PM
To: Phil Mason
Cc: Gene Poveromo; Gordon Sutherland; David Bonk
Subject: FW: Email RE: Public Hearing

Phil – for the file AND I believe these are sidewalk request that we need to convey to Gordon. Though they were not presented at the Sidewalk Forum, they do seem appropriate for incorporation into the Sidewalk Construction Plan item he is preparing for the 20th. Please help Gordon with identification of the sidewalk deficiencies in this area that were presented at the October 18 Public Hearing for Chapel Hill North. Thank you, JB

From: Carol Abernethy
Sent: Thursday, October 19, 2006 12:01 PM
To: 'Suzanne Haff'
Cc: JB Culpepper; Bill Strom; Bill Thorpe; Cam Hill; Ed Harrison; Jim Ward; Jim Ward (w) ; Kevin Foy; Laurin Easthorn; Mark Kleinschmidt; Sally Greene (w); Adam Schaefer; Catherine Lazorko; Roger Stancil; Sabrina Oliver; Sandy Kline; Bruce Heflin; Flo Miller; Ralph Karpinos; Toni Pendergraph
Subject: Email RE: Public Hearing

Thank you for your email. A copy has been forwarded to each Council Member and to senior staff members.

Carol Abernethy
 Exec. Asst., Manager's Office
 Town of Chapel Hill

From: Suzanne Haff [<mailto:suzhaff@gmail.com>]
Sent: Thursday, October 19, 2006 11:32 AM
To: Town Council
Subject: Public Hearing

Dear Mayor and Council Members:

Thank you for the opportunity to address the Council last night. I was very tired and inarticulate and apologize if I didn't make good sense.

I hope that you agree that MLK Jr., Eubanks - Weaver Dairy, is an important (whether or not anyone planned or wanted it to be) gateway to Chapel Hill.

It is important, not just to Northwood, but to the community, that this gateway reflect Chapel Hill in a positive way.

We are not against the upcoming projects, and we know that money for sidewalks is hard to come by, but we hope you will find the time to look at this area as a whole and develop a proactive pedestrian and

10/23/2006

traffic plan that will allow for the present and future diversity of the area.

We encourage you to look at all sources to find the funds for pedestrian safety (~~minimally from Perkins to Northwood on the west side of MLK, Jr.~~)

Please convey to JB that we do understand the history and realize this situation is not at it's root poor planning.

FYI: The benches and trash cans at the two bus stops on the west side of MLK, Jr. are provided and cared for by a member of our neighborhood. (George Love)

We do care and work within our means to help this gateway reflect the best of Chapel Hill, even though we are not officially in Chapel Hill.

Please help us move safely. This is not a "want" this is a need to protect people and cut down on congestion we cause driving across the street.

Thanks for your efforts and work.

Sincerely,

Suzanne

Northwood Homeowners Association

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Suzanne Haff
107 Hunter Hill Road
Chapel Hill, NC 27516
(919)933-9329

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Claudia Sheppard, DVM
101 Autumn Lane
Chapel Hill, NC 27516
(919) 933.0713
s.t.sheppard@ieee.org

October 9, 2006

Dear Members of the Chapel Hill Town Council and Major Foy,

As a resident of the Northwood subdivision (between Eubanks Road, MLK Jr. Blvd. and Weaver Dairy Road Ext.), a mother of 2 young children, a pedestrian, a bicyclist, and a user of the public transit system, I urge you to improve the pedestrian safety along MLK Jr. Blvd. between Perkins Dr. and Weaver Dairy Road.

Currently there is no sidewalk along the western side of MLK Jr. Blvd. north of Weaver Dairy Road, and the existing pedestrian crossing at Weaver Dairy Road is insufficient and dangerous. Only the southern and eastern sides of this intersection have pedestrian crosswalks, leaving pedestrians in the northwestern quadrant stranded. Crossing at the existing pedestrian signal literally means risking one's life as the signal length is insufficient and right turning vehicles almost never look for pedestrians. When crossing there with my children, I have had many near-misses, and walking on the shoulder of MLK Jr. Blvd. with trucks and large vehicles speeding by is nerve-wracking. Since crossing at the intersection is so dangerous, I am now crossing MLK Jr. Blvd. without a light at Northwood Dr. I have found that to be safer because I can watch the traffic, cross to the center (there is currently a blocked off lane which will likely disappear once Weaver Dairy Road is reconfigured) and then wait to cross over all the way. However, I am very concerned that the traffic on MLK Jr. Blvd. will increase so significantly due to developments that are in progress or are proposed, that it will no longer be possible to cross MLK Jr. Blvd. At that point I would have to use my car for many very short trips to Chapel Hill North and Timberlyne. This situation works contrary to Chapel Hill's effort to reduce vehicular traffic.

Average daily traffic count on this stretch (Perkins Dr. to Weaver Dairy Rd.) of MLK Jr. Blvd. was 26,000 in 2005. The Town Municipal Operations Center is estimated to generate an additional 2000 daily vehicle trips, the majority of them will be using MLK Jr. Blvd. There are proposals for a residential development (Chapel Hill Watch – 120 residential units / 331 parking spaces) and a mixed-use development on Eubanks Road. In addition, there is the residential component of Chapel Hill North that you are currently considering. The master plan for this development did not include an estimate of how many vehicle trips would be generated by the 120 residential units and 242 parking spaces since it is part of the Chapel Hill North Master Plan. However, all of these developments and the prospect of Carolina North will certainly increase the traffic on MLK Jr. Blvd. significantly and therefore further endanger pedestrians.

The speed limit on the section (Perkins Dr. to Weaver Dairy Rd.) of MLK Jr. Blvd. is 35 mph. Speeding is rampant and I have not observed any efforts of the police to slow down the traffic.

I would also like to stress that the lack of pedestrian safety is not just a problem for Northwood residents. People using the two bus stops (MLK Jr. Blvd. at Chapel Hill North and MLK Jr. Blvd. at Northwood Dr.) need to cross the road at least once without a crosswalk. Eighty-six people board and alight the bus daily at those two stops. Residents of Larkspur walk through Northwood to get to Chapel Hill North or Timberlyne, and office workers daily cross MLK Jr. Blvd. to exercise in our quiet wooded subdivision.

In the past, I have approached the town council about this safety issue and was told that MLK Jr. Blvd. is a state road and that the DOT does not build sidewalks. It has been possible in other sections of town. If the town of Chapel Hill approves development of land around a subdivision, it has the responsibility of addressing the effects generated by this development. The fact that Northwood is not annexed is irrelevant since it is part of the Chapel Hill planning district and the town is impacting it directly.

The NC 86/MLK Jr. Blvd. Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety and Mobility Study has demonstrated the shortcomings of the NC 86 corridor and has developed a good set of recommendations. A sidewalk is needed on the west side of MLK Jr. Blvd. from Weaver Dairy Road Ext. to Perkins Rd. now and there needs to be a four-way pedestrian cross walk at the intersection with Weaver Dairy Rd. with signals that prohibit a right turn for vehicles when the pedestrian signal is activated.

I strongly urge the council to delay any possible development on the north side of town until the infrastructure has been updated to safely cross MLK Jr. Blvd. There have been enough pedestrian fatalities in town recently, and my hope is that the council will take this matter seriously enough to prevent more fatalities in the future.

Thank you so much for your time and consideration. Please contact me should you have any questions. I would be happy to show you the stretch of MLK Jr. Blvd. in question and the intersection with Weaver Dairy Road to demonstrate its hazards.

Sincerely,

Claudia Sheppard

October 15, 2006

Re: The Residences at Chapel Hill North

To the Town Council:

I apologize for the length of this letter, but I probably would have exceeded my 3 minutes had I been in Town to address the Council!

I am very concerned, not only about the application for the Residences at Chapel Hill North, but about the future of the entire NW Quad of Chapel Hill. I'd like to address the specifics of this application first and tie it into my larger concerns.

I live in Northwoods VI, one of 7 existing communities directly west of the MLK Jr Blvd and Weaver Dairy Rd intersection. These neighborhoods (Northwoods V, Northwoods VI, Parkside I, Parkside II, Northwood, Larkspur, and Vineyard Square) consist of over 500 homes and will soon be joined by Claremont, Chapel Hill Watch Village, and the Eubanks Rd Town designated Neighborhood Serving Mixed-Use Center, at MLK Jr. Blvd. and Eubanks Rd. Additionally, my neighborhood is scheduled to meet with RAM Development regarding concept plans for a Gateway development at the SW corner of WDR and MLK **and their plans for a Walgreens for the SE corner** as well. There is obviously a lot happening in a very small radius. I ask you consider these specifics:

1. Even after improvements are made, Weaver Dairy Road has limited capacity. As a member of CARR, I argued, along with other CARR members, in favor of a 3 lane WDR because it is populated by schools, shopping, Cedar Falls Park, and homes. The addition of 121 residential units and parking spots, with a matching number of EXTRA spaces, will be burden on WDR.
2. There is a large safety issue. One of the planned egresses from this development is at Perkins Drive and WDR. Some cars leaving Chapel Hill North use this intersection and it is already an extremely dangerous one. In order to have a clear view of coming traffic, cars leaving Chapel Hill North at Perkins Drive have to jut out because the view to the east is obstructed. This is at the same point where cars turning right or headed west on WDR have to move over to the right in order to avoid being in a left turn only lane. I would invite all of you to come and see this for yourselves because it is hard to believe such a poorly planned traffic pattern. There are currently no plans to obtain at right of way at this intersection in order to improve the visibility problem.
3. A similar problem exists at the other planned entrance/egress on MLK Jr. Blvd and Perkins Rd. There are no plans to obtain a right of way for a right turn only lane. Although the applicant may show pictures of this spot with no cars (!) traveling on MLK Jr. Blvd., with the abundance of projects on this corridor, traffic will be increasing exponentially. Cars slowing down significantly to make a right turn into the Residences at Chapel Hill North

while a large volume of traffic from the south is headed straight, pose a safety problem.

This brings me to the larger concerns that I have. Although I listed the 7 communities that are just to the west of this area, the real impact of traffic on this area is much larger because of the number of large developments in process just beyond this intersection. The SW corner of Homestead Rd and Seawell School Rd townhomes will most likely turn left at Homestead and WDR to get to shopping and I-40. The Townhouse Apartments and Northhampton Terrace at Hillsborough Rd. and MLK Jr. Blvd. will also add to the MLK Jr. Blvd traffic problem. The largest concern, of course, is Carolina North, the traffic impact of which can only be looked at with trepidation. Not considering the thousands of cars that Carolina North will attract, the other three projects alone will potentially add hundreds of trips to this area. (And don't forget Walgreens!)

This area must be looked at holistically. We need to take a step back and look at the quagmire that will be this quadrant of Chapel Hill five years from now, if each of these projects is approved and built piecemeal. We instead need to take the time to consider that the pieces of this puzzle all have to fit together and that each of these projects must be looked at in relation to one another and their effect on the Town as a whole. Perhaps the Town should consider forming a Northwest Planning Committee to consolidate information in this one area. Then, of course, you could always consider a temporary building moratorium in this corner until the Carolina North plans are more definitive....

I believe the property slated to be the Residences at Chapel Hill North should remain zoned MU-011. There seems to be a trend among developers to obtain an interest in a specifically zoned property and then apply for rezoning. We should not turn a blind eye to this practice. The MU-O/I designation is more cost effective for the town, generating a greater financial return. It is also a more appropriate one for this property which lies in close proximity to I-40. The high number of residences surrounding this property already create a walkable community. In any event, I hope that a new traffic study that takes pending projects into account will be done, along with analyzing the differing infrastructure needs between MU-01 and residential zoning. I would also like to know the impact of all the traffic on the Town's participation in the Community Carbon Reduction Plan, and, at the least, I hope that you consider scaling down any residential component of the plan.

Thank you for letting me share my concerns with you in this overly long letter.

Del Snow
111 Tremont Circle
Chapel Hill NC 27516

(44)

From: Chris Clemmons [mailto:chris_clemmons@yahoo.com]
Sent: Friday, October 13, 2006 11:16 AM
To: Town Council
Subject: pedestrian planning in northwood area

Dear Mayor and Members of the Chapel Hill Town Council,

I am writing to you as a resident of the Northwood neighborhood. I know you have received correspondence recently from other Northwood residents (including the President of our Homeowner's Association) concerning impending development and the lack of a comprehensive pedestrian plan. I concur completely with what other residents have expressed about this – it needs to happen, and it needs to happen now.

My wife and I moved to Chapel Hill and Northwood from downtown Raleigh about six months ago. Our neighborhood in Raleigh was bounded on one side by Capital Boulevard, which I believe is a sad example of what could happen to the Martin Luther King Boulevard corridor (particularly between Eubanks and Weaver Dairy, and particularly given anticipated development on Eubanks) if the needs of the automobile driver are put ahead of those of the pedestrian, bicyclist, and/or mass transit rider. Capital Boulevard has long been known as an ugly, traffic-ridden sore thumb that serves as an abysmally poor "gateway" northern approach to Raleigh. It basically created a wall of traffic and asphalt that isolated our Raleigh neighborhood from others.

Without careful and thoughtful pedestrian planning, I can see the same thing easily happening in Chapel Hill with MLK. In fact, it already has to some extent – much as I would prefer to ride my bike or walk from our house in Northwood to the Chapel Hill North or Timberlyne shopping centers, given current conditions it is basically safer and easier to drive. Do you really want current and future residents west of MLK or along Eubanks to do the same?

With more residences, businesses, and municipal facilities going in at Chapel Hill North and along Eubanks -- not to mention the "mystery development" that is being proposed on the north side of Eubanks – there is no doubt that we will have a tremendous increase in car traffic in our area. Why not plan for and even encourage an attendant increase in foot and bike traffic?

Don't just do it for Northwood, do it for Chapel Hill and the quality of life people associate with our town.

Sincerely,
Christopher A. Clemmons
207 Hunter Hill Rd
Chapel Hill, NC 27516
919-928-8390

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From: Suzanne Haff [mailto:suzhaff@gmail.com]
Sent: Thursday, October 12, 2006 2:44 PM
To: Town Council
Cc: northwoodhome@yahoogroups.com
Subject: Residences at Chapel Hill North/October 18th

Dear Mayor and Members of the Chapel Hill Town Council,

Thank you for your work and time guiding Chapel Hill to be a very special place to live and work.

I know that all of you have advocated for an environment of integrity as reflected in the ordinances of the town as well as the day to day life of us all.

We in the Northwood Neighborhood have the privilege of being the gateway community for the town, located directly NW of the intersection of Weaver Dairy and Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvds.

Recently we have had several new families with young children move into our neighborhood. As you might guess, Pete and I are not getting any younger. We all want to be able to walk to Food Lion and Timberlyne Shopping Center and we want to walk along MLK, Jr. between Eubanks and WDR to get to one or the other bus stop. We know that you want is to do that too, because that is part of what Chapel Hill is all about. That is what we say to folks when we go to other places - we are a town that walks, bikes, has a free public bus service.

As you well know this area is changing rapidly.

Soon all the large trucks, buses and other vehicles from the Town Operations Center will be heading east on Eubanks and then turning right onto MLK, Jr. Soon the Humane Society personnel and guests will be heading east and south along the same route. Soon, our future neighbors at Chapel Hill Watch will be heading east on Eubanks and south onto MLK, Jr.

Soon, our neighbors from the Residences at CH North will be running across the street, up and down MLK, Jr. to the two bus stops, or driving their cars up and down this same area. I'm not even mentioning the Johnny Morris property and others that are further down the road.

This is a wonderful small urban area where we are within walking distance to all our basic and not so basic (Chelsea) needs. Can we use this area safely? NO!

Does the town want us to drive to Harris Teeter, Food Lion, the post office, etc? NO! Of course you don't. What a waste of natural resources and degrading of the environment.

The time is NOW to develop and implement a proactively a pedestrian plan that will be a model for this gateway to Chapel Hill. Please make it easy for us to cross MLK, Jr.

Please don't tell us it's DOT roads, that it cost money.

Please implement a pedestrian plan now and have the Residences at CH North developers build pedestrian sidewalks for this area where residents of Chapel Hill can walk and wait safely for buses.

I remember talking with Tim Dempsey and other planning board members years ago when we both sat on that board

. Everyone agreed that the intersection of WDR and MLK, Jr. is too big, too ugly and there is not even a cross walk fi-om the NW comer. Is this what you want as your gateway?

Is this the way we put citizens first?

I have read what the RCHN project plans to do at Perkins.

That's good, but not enough. Please put a moratorium on development in this area until you have a pedestrian plan on the books and the money to implement and maintain the sidewalks (from the developers who will make enough money from these projects).

The money is small compared to the long range benefits.

I notice that we don't have reports from any of the boards/committees on the website yet and that there is a request to postpone the October 18th Public Hearing to November 20th.

I hope you will not hurry these decisions, but consider this carefully.

I ask you to consider whether that Finding #1 and Finding #4 (below) are really met by this development.

We don't want to abolish the development, we want to walk to the clinics and other services that are proposed.

And we invite those residents to walk in our neighborhood.

Please make this gateway that relects the best of Chapel Hill, a place for drivers to slow down, park on Eubanks, ride a bus, and smell the roses.

It's the right thing to do and now is the right time to do it.

Soon it will be too late.

Thanks for considering my request.

Sincerely,

Suzanne Haff

President, Northwood Homeowners' Association.

ps: I know you have studied the traffic plan of this project in relationship to the WDR/MLK,Jr. intersection.

Please come up and drive it.

Imagine the increase in traffic and how that will work in everyday life.

There must be a better way. Thanks again. suzanne

Special Use Permit – Required Findings of Fact

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;*

Finding #2: *That the use or development would comply with all required regulations and standards of the Land Use Management Ordinance;*

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; and*

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Finding #4: *That the use or development conforms to the general plans for the physical development of the Town as embodied in the Land Use Management Ordinance and in the Comprehensive Plan.*

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Suzanne Haff
107 Hunter Hill Road
Chapel Hill, NC 27516
(919)933-9329