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ATTACHMENT 1**Dana Stidham**

From: Mangiamangia@aol.com
Sent: Wednesday, January 17, 2007 11:05 PM
To: Kevin Foy; billstrom@nc.rr.com; laurineasthom@gmail.com; sally@ibiblio.org; ed.harrison@mindspring.com; hillcc@nc.rr.com; markkleinschmidt@gmail.com; FourSeasons709@aol.com; jimward@nc.rr.com
Subject: Comments regarding University Village missed inclusion.

I emailed the following comments to the Clerk shortly before 3:30 PM on Wednesday, after meeting with Planning staff earlier in the day. I was surprised to hear that no comments in opposition to the project were presented. I have additional concerns, including parking and traffic, which I hope to address at future hearings. Thank you for your attention.

Forwarded Message:

Subj: Letter for Town Council
 Date: 1/17/2007 3:29:26 P.M. Eastern Standard Time
 From: Mangiamangia
 To: townclerk@townofchapelhill.org

Regarding January 17, 2007 Public Hearing on University Village

Unfortunately, I am unable to attend tonight's meeting. Please distribute and read into the public record.

Dear Mayor Foy and Town Council:

I have great concern over the amount and intensity of development proposed for University Village. Its approval requires creating an entirely new zoning district, whose guidelines are reminiscent of an all-you-can-eat buffet, a veritable smorgasbord of developer delicacies.

The Mixed Use-Village zone amendments deviate so substantially from the original, that its resemblance is in name only.

NOTE As reported, floor area ratio is to double, from .6 to 1.2, even though it appears on Dimensional Matrix 3.8-1 that maximum FAR in the MU-V zone as .5. Even an FAR of 1.0 would result in a high intensity project before aggregating the residential component.

NOTE Residential densities are proposed to increase from 15 units per acre to 20. The present standard of 15 has produced the mix of residential uses that are visible today at Southern Village and Meadowmont, where single family homes coexist with apartment type, multiunit structures and townhomes. Those densities do not include the double dipping of commercial floor area, which allows the developer to realize the maximum commercial use in addition to the maximum residential use. The proposed 20 units per acre results in a development proposal which is exclusively comprised of multiunit buildings. That would seem inconsistent with a "village" concept, which presumably was the original intent of the designation.

NOTE Increasing the maximum height from 60 to 85 feet would, once again, seem to reduce the village or human scale of the development. Furthermore, coupling taller buildings with reduced setbacks, creates canyons which evoke urban city centers, rather than outlying neighborhoods, where lower intensities distinguish and help to establish a sense of place, differentiated and respectful of maintaining a "downtown."

While the project addresses affordable housing in a proactive manner, that in and of itself, should not preclude you from considering its shortcomings or from further analysis of its perceived benefits. For example, the significant increase in commercial and office square footage, plus the 140 room hotel, should be analyzed for its impacts on employment and wage generation. Will more jobs of low and moderate income levels be created

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than could be accommodated by the 30% affordable housing units that will be constructed? If so, then the project will actually export an affordable housing deficit for the city to absorb elsewhere, rather than assist in alleviating the present shortage.

Is there a demonstrated demand for the additional commercial retail square footage and does the Chapel Hill real estate market have the elasticity to absorb such an increase, or will it likely result in additional vacancies at existing locations? While it not the responsibility of city government to protect existing businesses from competition, neither is it advisable to double the allowable intensity of new development with full knowledge of the negative impact that it will likely visit on its' existing tax base.

Density, by itself, is not a "green" concept. Only when coupled with reduction elsewhere does it achieve that level. Preserving an environmental easement on a portion of a parcel, while permitting higher intensity development on the balance is a good example. This proposal seems to lack the trade-off that would be perceived as a public benefit in exchange for granting the developer increased rights to sell more units. The increased affordable housing units do not offset the increased development right. Five additional units per acre translate to a potential increase of 56 units. Instead of the thirty units of affordable housing that would be required with this proposal, the developer is offering sixty. In other words, if there is a linkage between the increased density and the affordable housing, the town should push for all of the units above the present density. If you can't build affordable when the land is effectively free, when will you be able to build it?

The proposal to increase residential density to 20 units per acre, if approved, still leaves over twenty units "on the table" which the developer could potentially ask for later as a right of use.

Another issue which cuts against application of the "green" label to this project is the 64% impervious surface ratio. An interpretation of North Carolina law apparently permits this level of overdevelopment, which is immediately apparent at first look at the site plan. It would clearly be worthwhile for the town to take a hard look at this extremely lenient situation. I apologize for having neither the time nor legal expertise to further research the possibility to challenge this, but its benefit would be obvious.

Finally, the cumulative effect of this property combined with the massive amount of other construction that is in the pipeline, should give the Council great pause before increasing allowable levels of development within a zoning district. It hardly seems like developers need to be given additional incentives in order to break ground in Chapel Hill.

Sincerely,

Elliot Baron
215 Westside Drive,
Chapel Hill