

September 26, 2007

Chapel Hill Public Library Expansion
Town of Chapel Hill
Chapel Hill, North Carolina
Project #0619

STATEMENT OF JUSTIFICATION (SPECIAL USE PERMIT)

The Town of Chapel Hill is planning to expand the existing Chapel Hill Public Library located in Pritchard Park off Library Drive. The existing facility will be increased in size from the existing 28,000 SF to approximately 68,000 SF by additions to both sides of the existing library building. Improvements to Pritchard Park will also be made as a part of this application. The conceptual park elements are shown on the attached plans. It is anticipated that the building construction will be completed in 2010, and that the proposed Park improvements will be completed over the next ten years.

The library addition will include new public meeting spaces, an expanded circulation area, reading room, information services and technical support areas. The proposed Pritchard Park improvements may include a new paved greenway, a Belvedere, a playground, an outdoor seating area, and an Art Garden.

Very limited encroachments into the RCD are proposed as part of this application. The encroachments include a small portion of a paved greenway trail and a proposed bioretention area and associated square footage of outlet structure disturbance of approximately 3,000 SF. The project also proposes to restore a gravel roadway and parking area totaling approximately 12,000 SF, which are presently located within the RCD.

The proposed project is being designed to achieve LEED Silver rating. As a component of the process, the Owner has hired an independent Commissioning Agent, and the Designers have provided a proposed Energy Management Plan (attached).

The Owner has also reviewed the Council's previous considerations of sustainable development projects, and the Designers are proposing the following energy efficiency standards as a component of the Special Use Permit process. Standards "a" and "b" reflect the project's commitment to achieving a LEED Silver rating utilizing "enhanced commissioning" to assure the design intent is realized. Standards "c" through "h" are comparable to the standards the Council requested of the recently approved Special Use Permit for the Orange County Animal Shelter.

Proposed Energy Efficiency Standards:

- a. That the building be designed to achieve a LEED Silver rating.
- b. That the project include "enhanced commissioning" by an independent Commissioning Agent during the design process, construction and post-occupancy to ensure that building systems and design elements are performing as intended.
- c. That the Final Plan for the Special Use Permit incorporate a "20 percent more energy efficient" feature for all new construction relative to the energy efficiency standards of the American Society of Heating, Refrigeration, and Air Conditioning Engineers (ASHRAE), as amended and in effect at the time of Building Permit issuance; and



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- d. That other comparable standards generally recognized as applicable to building energy consumption, as amended and in effect at the time of Building Permit issuance, may be used by the applicant when incorporating the "20 percent more energy efficient" feature into their Final Plans; and
- e. That the application include an Energy Management Plan in the Special Use Permit Final Plan application, to include consideration of utilizing sustainable energy, currently defined as solar, wind, biofuels, and hydroelectric power, in the proposed development; and
- f. That the Energy Management Plan include consideration of the purchase of carbon offset credits and green power protection through coordination with the NC GreenPower program; and
- g. That the Energy Management Plan shall provide for an acceptable level of increased energy efficiency that ensures indoor air quality and adequate access to natural lighting, and allows for the proposed utilization of sustainable energy in a development.
- h. That the property owner report to the Town of Chapel Hill the actual energy efficiency achieved during the period ending one year after occupancy.

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 new work at the Library will located and designed so as to promote the public health, safety and general welfare in that it is being designed to be added to the existing facility. This addition will allow for the preservation of other natural areas, and will keep a compact design on a large, wooded site. Also, the layout utilizes the flattest areas on the site for the parking lot expansion. The additions for parking areas are adjacent to existing pavement and walkways in areas cleared in the initial stages of construction.

A new traffic study is being performed at the existing entrance drive in order to evaluate the need to add a signal, if warranted and permitted by NCDOT.

FINDING #2: That the use or development complies with all required regulations and standards of this Chapter, including all applicable provisions of Article 3 and 5, the applicable specific standards contained in the Supplemental Use Regulations (Article 6), and with all other application regulations:

This project will comply with all applicable provisions and regulations of Articles 3 and 5, except the following: Primary and Secondary Heights. The new building will rise up to approximately 57' in height in order to work into the existing grade of the site and to provide a multi-story facility that limits impacts to the site. The existing ordinance for this site and the R-1 zoning states that secondary height may be no more than 40' and the primary height 29'1". The primary height is 37' and therefore it is 8' above the ordinance..

Some existing steep slopes on the site exceed 25%. The project will disturb 20.8% of the 25% and greater slopes, as shown on sheet SA-2. All work in the area will be in compliance with the development ordinance for steep slopes.



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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:

The new addition to the Chapel Hill Public Library is a public necessity. The Library provides the community with cultural and educational opportunities. The project also includes four new meeting rooms to be available for community use.

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 Library expansion addresses the Comprehensive Plan as follows:

1. The proposed addition to the Library encourages the economic development goals expressed in the plan in that it provides for "institutional employees of medium scale" located in a transit services area.
2. The proposed addition will incorporate sustainable development elements, such as daylighting, energy-efficient systems, recycling, reuse of materials, etc., so as to achieve a Leed's Silver Certification.
3. The proposed addition is designed to promote environmental sensitivity by utilizing already cleared areas and areas with flatter slopes for the majority of the site expansion.
4. The proposed addition and the associated sitework will incorporate state-of-the-art treatment for stormwater runoff to minimize the effects of the development on the site.
5. The proposed building addition takes advantage of the existing system of pedestrian access and walkways so that routes are tied to existing trails throughout the Park and to a future greenway system.
6. Pedestrian paths and trails and conveniently located bike racks are shown on the plan to promote alternate means of transportation to the site.
7. Energy efficiency requirements are being made to meet standards for reductions in carbon emissions.

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