



THE UNIVERSITY
of NORTH CAROLINA
at CHAPEL HILL

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August 4, 2008

Mr. Ryan Mickles
Town of Chapel Hill
405 Martin Luther King Jr Blvd.
Chapel Hill, NC 27514

RE: Necessity of sidewalk on Country Club Road

Dear Mr. Mickles:

Thank you for taking the time to meet with us, as well as Alexis Chappell, president of Women in Law last week to discuss the necessity of a sidewalk on Country Club Road, beginning from the intersection of South Road, to just past Laurel Road.

As we mentioned, this is an important project for the law school and for the safety and security of not only law students, but undergraduate students, and community residents.

On average, approximately **600 trips per day** are taken on that road from students parking at the T-Lot or taking part in a tennis class down that path. This number does not include the numerous walkers, neighbors, or members of the public who play tennis or volleyball and must also walk down that narrow road measuring in width of approximately 22-23 feet. In addition, there is a day care with young children at the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints who are in the neighborhood.

As it stands now, there is no reasonable alternative path to reach the T-Lot and tennis courts other than walking directly on Country Club Road. While this is a quite neighborhood, we know that more than 350 cars drive on that road per day, and that is to/from the parking lot alone! In addition, there is traffic coming from Laurel Road which connects to 15-501. When you add members of the community, members of the several churches, and schools in the area, as well as police and other town vehicles, that number of cars on this small stretch could double the 350 cars we know about. With numerous instances of cars driving at high rates of speed down

Country Club Road, it will only take one driver who is not paying enough attention, or driving a little too fast for tragedy to strike.

As we are sure you are aware, a tragedy hit the Carolina Law community less than three months ago when Lisa Moran was struck and killed by a bus on Manning Drive. In that instance, the bus driver was not driving too fast, but Lisa slipped and fell into the street as she was going to try to cross in a non-crosswalk area. By the time the bus driver knew, it was simply too late. While such a tragedy may not have been easily preventable, a tragedy on Country Club Road is preventable. Without a sidewalk, there are more than 3,000 opportunities per week for a student or resident to be hit and killed on that stretch of Country Club Road. In a semester that ends up to more than 45,000 possible opportunities for someone to be hit and killed.

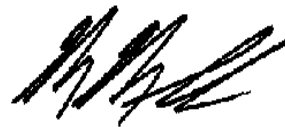
The Town of Chapel Hill, the University, and the law school have been lucky that there have been no serious injuries on this road in the past. As a community, we cannot afford to see how long that luck with last. It is essential for a sidewalk to be built on Country Club Road, and for construction to begin as soon as possible. We look forward to working with your Committee and are willing to assist in any way we can to make this project a reality.

Thank you for your time and please do not hesitate to contact us with any questions. We are also happy to meet with the Committee should that be helpful.

Sincerely,



Kelly Podger Smith
Assistant Dean of Student Services
919.962.1590
podger@email.unc.edu



Matthew Modell
Student Bar Association President
202.487.6343
modell@unc.edu

Dear Ms. Montana:

Thank you for taking the time to read the existing plans and to provide comments and suggestions.

By copy of the is e-mail, I will forward comments 1 and 3 to Ryan Mickles with the Town of Chapel Hill. These are issues that are better reviewed and responded to by the Town than the regional planning organization.

As part of the 2035 long-range transportation plan, we are looking at regional connections between Chapel Hill and the Southpoint Mall area. The connections you suggested will most likely be included in the plan. The actual construction of these bike lanes will depend upon the availability of funds and how these projects rank in priority compared to others.

We are working on a project to add bike lanes and sidewalks to Old Durham Chapel Hill Road between 15-501 and Garrett Road. This project is scheduled to be completed in 2010. While it doesn't provide a direct connection to the Southpoint area, it will in general improve connections between Durham and Chapel Hill.

Thanks again for your interest and for taking the time to contact us.

Dale McKeel, AICP
City of Durham/DCHC MPO
Bicycle & Pedestrian Coordinator
101 City Hall Plaza
Durham, NC 27701
919-560-4366
dale.mckeel@durhamnc.gov

From: Leslie Montana [mailto:
Sent: Tuesday, July 29, 2008 1:00 PM
To: Henry, Andrew; Beckmann, Ellen
Subject: bike-ped comments for CH/Durham

Dear Andrew and Ellen-

With great interest I have attempted to decipher some of the plans of your organization to improve transportation in the triangle. I scanned through the list of recommended improvements and if some of these are already stated, I may have missed them.

Here are my suggestions/comments:

1. One or more additional pedestrian crosswalks are needed on MLK Blvd in Chapel Hill between the intersection of Columbia and Hillsborough St (and probably further on towards Homestead). I would suggest one at North St/Town Hall. Many students live off MLK and cross back and forth this busy 5 lane street. Also, designated bike lanes on all of MLK would be extremely helpful.

2. Bike lanes along or connecting NC 54 East from Barbee Chapel (or where bike paths end) to Southpoint Mall area at 751 and on to Fayetteville Rd. There should be a way for people to connect to the Tobacco Trail bike path where it begins at Southpoint Crossing from CH and vice versa.

Bike lanes should also be added from Country Club Rd to the Glen Lennox shopping centers. I don't feel comfortable riding my bike with the traffic coming up and down the hill. People drive quite fast and often above the speed limit. Furthermore, it is very tricky to cross under the bypass (Fordham Blvd) as people are exiting off and on at busy times.

3. Side walk is missing or damaged on several portions of Rosemary St between Columbia St and Mitchell Lane.

I am actively trying to reduce car travel and use the bus, bicycle and walk more when possible and would like to continue. I bought a house in downtown Chapel Hill 10 years ago with this in mind. As things stand, biking and walking is still a challenge in many parts of the community. I am encouraged to see all of the plans for improvements and I hope that some of these suggestions will be taken seriously. Thanks for all your work.

Sincerely-

Leslie Montana

On Wed, Aug 13, 2008 at 3:00 PM, R. Vogt <vogtro@gmail.com> wrote:
Mr. Mickles,

First of all let me thank you for taking the time to consider my suggestions for community improvement. I figured the best way to describe the area in question was to post a map, showing the additions I propose. I have also included some photographs for reference.

The area of concern is the intersection of Barbee Chapel Road and I-54. My proposal is 2-fold:

1 - A sidewalk to be built starting at the Meadowmont Greenway (south side), running alongside Barbee Chapel Road and ending at the entrance for Downing Creek. This would connect several large communities, including Alta Springs, Downing Creek, and Finley Forest to the Meadowmont Greenway. It would provide safe access to the greenway for those residents that frequently jog or walk this route. I have marked this in blue on the map.

2 - My second proposal is for a footbridge or underpass to be built connecting the Meadowmont Greenway system that exists (and currently ends) on both sides of 54. This would have the effect of "completing" the Meadowmont greenway in a continuous loop, and also provide passage to this intersection that currently has 7 lanes of moving traffic and is impassible by foot or bike. Furthermore, it would allow the above mentioned communities access to Meadowmont Village by foot or bike. I have marked this in red on the map, and have attached a photo for reference.

I think the community would benefit greatly from these additions. I am more than happy to provide further details if needed. Thanks again for your time and consideration.

Robert Vogt



Date: August 20, 2008

To: Ryan Mickles
Town of Chapel Hill

From: Jeanne Brown,
Citizen, representing neighborhoods located along Mt. Carmel
Church Road

Re: Sidewalk Request and Ranking System

As we discussed, the purpose of my memo is to request that the Town of Chapel Hill re-evaluate the Sidewalk Ranking score for sidewalks along Mt. Carmel Church and Bennett Road. This request is based on the following criteria:

1. Traffic studies conducted by NCDOT indicate that this stretch of road is used by a high volume of traffic and should be considered an arterial. (Approximately 11,000 car trips per day)
2. Current pedestrian traffic uses the well-worn paths along Bennett Road to access transit, schools, shopping and more. In addition, bicyclists use Mt. Carmel Church Road to reach UNC and the Mountains to the Sea bicycle route.
3. Sidewalks in this area would provide pedestrian and bicycle access for hundreds of households to:
 - Transit stops at Bennett and 15-501 (less than ½ mile)
 - Southern Village retail shops
 - Mary Scroggs Elementary and Culbreth Middle Schools
 - Fan Branch trail (linking the schools through SV)
 - Southern Community Park
 - Morgan Creek Trail (future)

The current Sidewalk Ranking system uses distances of $\frac{1}{4}$ and $\frac{1}{2}$ mile as guidelines. The Sidewalk Ranking document indicates that these numbers are meant to be general guidelines only and that Town staff can use additional factors in choosing to rank projects. For our neighborhoods, the distances to some of these locations are greater than the $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ mile guidelines; however, sidewalks in this area would open our neighborhoods to many destinations and greenways. In so doing, this project would fit in with the Town's Bike and Pedestrian Access Plan and the Town's goal of modeling the "Complete Streets" program.

Thank you for considering our request for sidewalks in this area.

Max Smith
717 Old Mill Rd
Chapel Hill NC, 27514
USA

Chapel Hill, June 5th 2008

Dear Mr. Mayor ,

My name is Max Smith and I am twelve years old. I am in Sixth grade at Culbreth Middle School. I come from Paris. My parents, my sister and I relocated in Chapel Hill last year, and we are very happy to be here. It's a nice town, people are friendly, it's easy to practice sports and the weather is wonderful.

However, my sister Lily and I have a major concern. In Paris, we were used to move without our parents. We took the Metro to go to school; we took our bicycles to visit our friends; we walked a lot in the streets, to go on errands, to the market or to the Library. Since we arrived in Chapel Hill, we can't walk or use the new bicycles we had for Christmas. There are no pedestrian crossings, no bicycles paths... My sister is 500 meters from her school (Glenwood Elementary), but she can't ride her bicycle there or even walk to school because it's impossible for a pedestrian to cross Highway 54.

I cannot help my parents and go to University Mall to buy some food, because there is no bicycle path and no pedestrian crossing on Estes Dr or 15-501! Besides the fact that it is not healthy to be in a car when you could walk, we have lost a lot of our autonomy: we are completely dependant on our parents, and I understand that sometimes they feel like taxi drivers!

At the same time, we children are told every day that we have to exercise. I also know that there is an epidemic of obesity. So I don't understand why the Town of Chapel Hill can't equip the roads to help pedestrians, or people riding their bicycles.

I would appreciate your answer and if you could make a change.

Best regards, Max A. Smith



Comments on Chapel Hill Sidewalk Request Master List and the Chapel Hill and Regional
Transportation Priority Lists
Regina Blalock, Chair, Go! Chapel Hill Active Living by Design

I cannot attend the September 11th ALBD meeting, but I would like to offer the following comments and recommendations on the Chapel Hill Sidewalk Request Master List, Chapel Hill Transportation Priority List and the Chapel Hill and Regional Transportation Priority Lists.

- 1) **Crosswalk Improvement Plan Recommended (Complete Streets Approach):** Crosswalks that allow pedestrians to crossover roadways are a vital part of the transportation system, and the lack of crosswalks linking thousands of pedestrians to transit stops all over Chapel Hill is of particular concern (due to the high traffic counts, this a major concern along MLK blvd). Unfortunately, the road, transit, bike/ped plans are stand alone plans that do not take into consideration the infrastructure that links them.
- 2) **Recommended Changes to the Town's Sidewalk Ranking System:** The Town's Sidewalk Ranking System that establishes a sidewalk's priority does not appear to indentify improvements that would necessarily maximize pedestrian use, pedestrian safety, or address environmental impact. **Adoption of the TAC criteria for bike/ped ranking appears to be more comprehensive ranking system and may be preferred.** Other recommended changes to the ranking system include:
 - a) Improve procedures for citizen requests, and establish criteria for including citizen requested projects on the priority sidewalk list (e.g., 30% of residents have signed a petition). Once a criteria is established, citizen requests should carry a much higher weight than the current one point allocated on the Sidewalk Ranking System (i.e., current ranking does not distinguish between one request and one thousand, and a sidewalk proposal with signatures of 30% of a neighborhood should weigh much heavier on a project than a request from one citizen).
 - b) Include topography in the Ranking System (e.g., ranked the same on the priority list, Lake Ellen Drive, with very little contour is probably much safer to walk than Shady lawn Road, which is hilly and curvy and includes blind curves).
- 3) **Cost Sharing for Sidewalks on State Roads:** While not a current priority for the town, cost sharing for sidewalk construction on state roads should be a high priority when it is an issue of pedestrian safety or if pedestrian use can be increased substantially with installation of a sidewalk.
- 4) The Adopted 2009-2015 Chapel Hill Priority List identifies what I would consider most of the very highest priority bike/ped facilities needed in the town; however, Rosemary Street and Weaver Dairy Road improvements should be included.
- 5) **Focus on Comprehensive Neighborhood Complete Streets Improvement Plans:** ALBD has had success directly involving community groups to create comprehensive neighborhood multi-modal improvement plans. This approach has not only created comprehensive neighborhood improvement plans that includes bike lanes, sidewalks, lighting, crosswalks, etc., but has also had enormous citizen involvement that is seen as crucial for identifying the needs of our citizens (e.g., Northside Mutli-Modal Transportation Plan, Timberlyne Improvement Requests, and Ephesus Elementary Walkability/Bikability Plan).

-----Original Message-----

From: andrea_richardson@med.unc.edu [mailto:andrea_richardson@med.unc.edu]

Sent: Thu 9/25/2008 11:57 AM

To: Public Works

Subject: Sidewalk Request

To Whom It May Concern:

I am a resident of Alta Springs apartment community, located on Spring Meadow Dr. in Chapel Hill. The community is located off Barbee Chapel Rd. across from Finley Forest.

Many residents of Alta Springs are connected with UNC as students or employees and thus utilize one of the Chapel Hill Transit bus stops located at the Friday Center Park & Ride, NC 54 Park & Ride, Hedrick Building parking and Friday Center Drive stops. These residents must walk down a stretch of Barbee Chapel Rd. to cross over to Finley Forest and get to one of the bus stops listed above. In addition, residents must also take this route if they wish to utilize the NC 54/Meadowmont bike path.

This portion of Barbee Chapel Rd. has neither a sidewalk nor significant shoulder for residents to walk along safely. Cars often travel down Barbee Chapel Rd. at upward speeds of 60 mph (although the speed limit is 35 mph), just feet (and sometimes inches) from the pedestrians. This situation frightens me a great deal, and I would like to see something done to ameliorate its many dangers.

I feel a sidewalk and pedestrian crosswalk are necessary for this area of Barbee Chapel Rd., if not a stoplight to help the pedestrians cross more safely and calm the traffic in the area. If this is not possible, I would like to see more regulation of the speed limit at the very least. I fear for the safety and lives of everyone taking this dangerous path every day.

Please let me know if this is not the appropriate avenue for this request, or if there is anyone I can speak to in addition to your office to get something accomplished.

Thank you in advance for your consideration,

Andrea R. Richardson

Roger L. Lundblad
102-C Weatherstone Drive
Chapel Hill, North Carolina 27514-1587
919 929 5082
lundblad@bellsouth.net

September 7, 2008

Chapel Hill Police Department
832 Airport Road
Chapel Hill, North Carolina 27514

RE: Traffic Issues

To Whom It May Concern:

I was almost (agreed that almost only counts in horseshoes) hit in the intersection of Banks Drive and Westminster on the afternoon of Friday, August 29, 2008. I was in a designated crosswalk at the time – I note this since your department seems to place great credence in the safety provided by such designated crosswalks. The driver in question, as is the case with most motorists at that intersection, did not stop for the stop sign. I grant that the driver was occupied with the most important task of “texting” at the time.

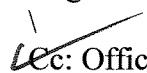
While this intersection is not the corner of Columbia and Franklin, it does have a fair amount of pedestrian traffic and should be safe for that activity. There is life outside of downtown Chapel Hill.

I would respectfully suggest that a designated crosswalk provides little, if any, safety or security for those of us foolhardy enough consider walking in this town. I would also suggest that more enforcement of traffic laws affecting pedestrian safety is required.

I do appreciate your efforts in the service of our community.

Sincerely yours,

Roger L. Lundblad


cc: Office of the Mayor

-----Original Message-----

From: joycebrown [<mailto:joycebrown@mindspring.com>]

Sent: Tuesday, September 23, 2008 4:47 PM

To: Ryan Mickles

Subject: Brick Sidewalk on University Drive

This is to request that serious consideration be given to including a brick sidewalk on University Drive between Ransom and Pittsboro Streets on the next bicycle and pedestrian plan for the Town of Chapel Hill. We in the Westside Neighborhood Association realize that this project is included in the present list of projects, but we would hope for an early buildout for this sidewalk. Thank you for considering our request.

Joyce Brown, Secretary,
Westside Neighborhood Association