

MEMORANDUM

TO: Chapel Hill Planning Board

FROM: Gene Poveromo, Development Manager
Curtis Brooks, Urban Forester
Emily Cameron, Landscape Architect
Mary Jane Nirdlinger, Special Projects Coordinator

SUBJECT: Proposed Schedule for Public Input on Potential Tree Ordinance Revisions

DATE: September 15, 2009

PURPOSE

We have developed a proposed schedule for gathering public comment and feedback on potential changes to the Town's Tree Ordinance. These changes to the Tree Ordinance are proposed to achieve objectives of the Town's Comprehensive Plan and improve protection of the tree canopy in Chapel Hill. The staff is proposing a two-part public input process to inform the Council's discussion of the issue and to support the development of ordinance language that accurately reflects the community's desires for tree protection.

As an initial step, Town staff has worked with a consultant to develop draft language for discussion. This language is not proposed for enactment but is a starting point to consider questions such as the following:

- Should standards for single and two family properties be requirements or should they be recommendations?
- Should requirements for single and two family properties only be applied to properties subject to other permits such as a ZCP or an RCD encroachment?
- Should single and two family properties of a certain size (e.g. <1 acre) be exempt?
- Should removal of certain types of trees (e.g. pines) be exempt from regulations?

After public input is heard, the staff will provide draft ordinance language or options to the Planning Board and Council for their review. The Planning Board's recommendation will be provided to the Town Council.

We believe this process allows for substantial public input and an opportunity to draft an ordinance that responds to that input. This would benefit the community by identifying shared goals related to tree protection and clarifying the impacts of a revised Tree Ordinance.

RECOMMENDATION

We recommend that the Planning Board recommend that the Council follow the proposed schedule for soliciting broad community input on the Tree Ordinance revisions process and that the Council hold a Public Hearing by Spring 2010.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Draft Council Memorandum with schedule and process
2. Draft Ordinance for Public Discussion