

To Mayor and Town Council  
 From Janet Kagan, Chair, Percent for Art Program, Chapel Hill Public Arts Commission  
 Re Streetscape Master Plan Review Committee Report  
 Date 10 April 2006

The Chapel Hill Public Arts Commission (CHPAC), in its formal role as advisor to the Town on arts related issues, would like to offer its expertise to initiate and direct a professional master plan for Streetscape in downtown Chapel Hill. The Streetscape Master Plan Review Committee has spent significant time and effort to respond to their mandate by the Town Council: ...to develop recommendations for physical improvements within the public right-of-way which will provide optimal environments for the businesses, residents, and visitors of downtown Chapel Hill. As noted in their Committee report of 6 March 2006, professional design expertise is necessary to guide and complete this important undertaking. The professional design of a streetscape master plan would provide a long-range and comprehensive approach to the pedestrian experience of Franklin and Rosemary Streets, and its successful implementation would be achieved through specific recommendations that could direct the work of appropriate Town departments.

I encourage the Town Council to plan and develop a new streetscape master plan that addresses issues of safety, accessibility, aesthetics, and sustainability as integral principles to any planning approach, documentation, and recommendations, and which incorporates the Downtown Initiative, on-going work by interests along West Franklin Street, the cultural facilities that influence our sense of place, and the Downtown Chapel Hill Small Area Plan. The CHPAC has a unique perspective on downtown as a geographic center of our community, and the energy and expertise to identify outstanding design professionals to produce a long-range plan for the design and development of our streets, sidewalks, lighting, wayfinding needs, signage, street furniture, refuse receptacles, crosswalks, transit bus shelters, utilities, and landscape.

Specifically, the CHPAC could complete the following tasks on behalf of a streetscape master plan for Franklin Street (from Boundary Street to Merritt Mill Road) and Rosemary Street (from Henderson Street to Merritt Mill Road):

- Identify nationally recognized urban planners, landscape designers, and artists with experience developing cohesive urban master plans;
- Organize a committee of representative interests to draft a Request for Proposal;
- Issue Requests for Proposals and respond to questions from candidate firms;
- Guide the evaluation of proposals for review by the CHPAC, Town staff, the Town Council, and the community at-large; and,
- Actively participate in the design of the plan.

Our collective experience and perception of downtown Chapel Hill is vital to our sense of community and place.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.