

Sandy Kline

From: Carol Abernethy
Sent: Monday, January 08, 2007 12:31 PM
To: 'Richard Leber'
Cc: JB Culpepper; Bill Strom; Bill Thorpe; Cam Hill; Ed Harrison; Jim Ward; Jim Ward (w) ; Kevin Foy; Laurin Easthom; Mark Kleinschmidt; Sally Greene (w); Adam Schaefer; Catherine Lazorko; Roger Stancil; Sabrina Oliver; Sandy Kline; Bruce Heflin; Flo Miller; Ralph Karpinos; Toni Pendergraph
Subject: Email RE: Residences at Chapel Hill North

Thank you for your email. A copy has been forwarded to each Council Member and to senior staff members.

*Carol Abernethy
Exec. Asst., Manager's Office
Town of Chapel Hill*

From: Richard Leber [mailto:rich_leber@hotmail.com]
Sent: Monday, January 08, 2007 6:47 AM
To: Town Council
Subject: Residences at Chapel Hill North

Dear Mayor and Town Council Members,

I will not be able to attend your meeting this evening. I wanted to share with my thoughts and to give you some suggestions as you consider approving the Residences at Chapel Hill North and deal with the larger question of the impact of other potential developments on this project.

Thanks for all you do for the residents of our town!

Richard Leber

As you consider approving The Residences at Chapel Hill North tonight, I'd like to share with you some advice I was given as a newly minted Officer in the Army Engineering Corp. After obtaining an engineering degree and an MBA, my first military assignment was six months of basic military engineering training at Ft. Belvoir, Virginia

One of my first courses was on modeling storm water run-off. The instructor reviewed several concepts like – land contours, average flow, soil and surface conditions, instantaneous flow, and 25, 50 and 100-year flood conditions. He then gave us great "real world" advice - the best thing to do to confirm your model is to observe first hand how water flows across a piece of land in a heavy rain storm. Does the mathematical model you've developed truly fit what you see in front of you? Are there surprises – like a winter spring that is in the area you're evaluating? Is water concentrated into the area you are evaluating from a pipe draining a roof or another drainage area? Are soil and surface conditions what you thought? In other words – how valid is the data you have in your model?

As I look at the traffic study done by the town engineer, I'd like to suggest that you look at several sensitivities to this "base case". The article in yesterday's Chapel Hill News quoted the traffic engineer as stating only traffic studies that developers have given him are included in the base case. He then applies a "factor" of a 3 to 5% yearly growth to account for traffic load from future projects. Why not evaluate traffic load from a 5 to 10% growth for a few years - or an estimated "layered" growth rate that could be achieved if many of the projects being evaluated are actually develop? I think changing the parameters of future growth rates would be a simple modification to the town traffic model.

It also like to suggest the problem with the model may be not what may happen inside the "study area" – The Residences at Chapel Hill North, Timberlyne Commerce Center and University Station – but what's happening

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outside the study area. As I frequently walk to the grocery store and other businesses in Chapel Hill North, I can tell you Perkins already carries a lot of traffic on to MLK – even during off-peak hours like mid-morning. We all know the reason for this – the very popular large grocery store as well as many other successful offices and businesses in the shopping center. Some of this traffic clearly comes off I-40 as Chapel Hill North is an easy place to access for these "out of the area" shoppers.

I think a "realistic" traffic study will point to a suggestion by Scott Radway and others – plan to spend the resources to align Perkins at Banks on Weaver Dairy. A second major multiple direction access into and out of Chapel Hill North will take a lot of local traffic off MLK – one of main access routes for UNC and Carolina North. If Town Council decides to take limited action at Chapel Hill North by not resolving a major bottleneck, aren't we all suffering from lack of sales tax growth as well as contributing to future planned "grid lock"?

And one last suggestion – we live in a "limited resource" economic system. Does it really make sense to ask the state to spend money on a bike route to RTP when money could possibly be spent to improve the access to Chapel Hill North area? We tend to focus on improving parking and access to downtown businesses (rational for Lot 5?). Why not focus resources on making already successful commercial areas even more successful and accessible? How many towns in North Carolina would love to have "access issues" for a major shopping center off I-40 while also being on one of the major roads to UNC and Carolina North?

Let's do some very creative planning for this area before it is too late.