

CONCEPT PLAN REVIEW SUMMARY MINUTES
COMMUNITY DESIGN COMMISSION
WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 25, 2006, 7:00 P.M.

Chairperson Jonathan Whitney called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Commission members present were Mark Broadwell, Mary Margaret Carroll, Gretchen MacNair, Laura King Moore, Amy Ryan, and Robin Whitsell. Staff members present were Senior Planner Kay Pearlstein and Administrative Clerk Renee Zimmermann.

UNIVERSITY STATION MULTI-FAMILY DEVELOPMENT
(File 9880-56-2680)

A request for a Concept Plan to construct a multi-family residential development between I-40 and Weaver Dairy Road has been received. The proposed project includes seventeen buildings with 374 dwelling units including 374,000 square feet of floor area. The proposal includes 820 parking spaces. Access to the site is proposed from Weaver Dairy Road and Old University Station Road. The 42.64-acre site is located in the Mixed Use Office/Institutional-1 (MU-01-I), Residential-3 (R-3) zoning districts, and the Resource Conservation District. The site is identified as Orange County Parcel Identifier Number 9880-56-2680.

APPLICANT PRESENTATION

The design team consisting of York Residential, Ballentine Associates, and Cline Design presented their project proposal for a multi-family residential development.

CITIZEN COMMENTS

1. A resident of Coventry Condominiums, Jack Houston, expressed concern about the location for the proposed stormwater ponds. He noted that there were not any existing ditches along the proposed entry road and that surface water could run into under the existing adjacent buildings proposed close to the entry road.

He also asked for the expected number of school age children planned for in the proposal. He noted that when coupled with the adjacent Chapel Hill North residential proposal, a number of children could be catching school buses.

2. A resident of Cross Creek, Phillis Pomerantz, was concerned about the traffic. She said that Weaver Dairy Road has no sidewalks, and that residents of the area cannot walk to Timberlyne Shopping Center. She noted that it appears that a 10% increase in traffic on Weaver Dairy Road can be expected with this proposal.
3. Seymour Freed, a resident of Carol Woods, handed out information concerning noise and air-borne pollutants from I-40 and potential development impacts (he later hand-delivered a paper titled "University Station: I-40 Proximity, Revision 1 to the Planning Department on November 14, 2006).

He believes that the dwelling units proposed with the development are substandard, according to latest DOT standards. He stated that noise sensitive issues pose a serious problem and may jeopardize public health, safety, and welfare.

4. A resident on Cedar Fork Trail was concerned about drainage from the site. She believed that having only the single entrance off Weaver Dairy Road was a potential traffic problem.
5. A resident of Coventry, Jim Bogan, complained that the notice of the meeting arrived too late for many people to attend the meeting. He was also concerned with difficulty exiting the proposed driveway as well as traffic generated with the proposal in general. He was also concerned with development effects on the existing roads. He believed that there may be damage to Weaver Dairy Road incurred by the construction traffic.

He was also concerned with children who may live in the development and their access to bus stops on Weaver Dairy Road.

6. A neighbor of the development, Don Swezey, supported the cul-de-sac at the east end of the road. He wants the development's traffic concentrated at the west end for use of University Station Road and little traffic accessing Weaver Dairy Road at the east end of the development. He supported working with Chapel Hill North for a traffic route to keep additional traffic off Weaver Dairy Road.
7. A resident of Kensington Trace stated their concern for noise and traffic.
8. Arty Franklin, a resident of Weatherstone Condominiums asked about the buffer width along the Weatherstone property and what percentage of affordable units were being proposed and how that differs from the market rate. He also inquired about the drainage from the site pre and post development. He also asked about any changes to the Anglican Church as a result of the development.
9. Ed Montgomery, a resident of Coventry, supports the enhanced buffers. He expressed concern about how things are getting done. For example, he noticed from his window that trees were being taken down on the project site and he had received no notice of such activity. He would like the project managers to be more forth-coming and felt that neighbors were not being informed.

Secondly, Mr. Montgomery was concerned about the pond adjacent to Coventry. He felt that water from the pond could flood his basement.

10. Peter Krawchyk, a resident of Timberlyne wanted to know how the residents will access transit stops. He stated that some residents will be students and also children who will be taking buses. He recommended taking this fact into consideration with the design of the project. He stated that the project was supporting car use and not alternate modes of transportation.



The applicant responded to questions starting with the drainage issues. They said that no engineering had been done for this concept phase. They will be looking at that issue carefully during the course of the design work. The pond locations were at the lowest point but had not been sized. The applicant stated that drainage pipes would pass under Weaver Dairy Road at the proposed driveway corner.

The applicant responded to noise and buffer issues. They stated that a 20-foot perimeter buffer and a 100-foot I-40 buffer were required. Adjacent to Coventry, they proposed a 50-foot buffer and will vegetate the west side of the entrance drive.

They stated that the buildings facing I-40 may help to act as noise buffers. They agreed with a Noise Study needs to be undertaken.

They were concerned that residents felt information was being withheld. They stated that communication with the neighbors was important. Tree removal referred to by Mr. Montgomery was done in order to survey the property. The applicant wants to share what they can and be an open book for information.

COMMUNITY DESIGN COMMISSION QUESTIONS AND CONCERNS

1. Commissioner Robin Whitsell stated that communication is critical to the community. She is concerned with the density and use. She asked if this was really for families.

She is concerned with access both in and out of the site and supports the idea for traffic to go through Chapel Hill North.

She is also concerned with minimum buffer widths. She stated that she will review the Noise Study.

2. Commissioner Amy Ryan requested cross-sectional drawings that include I-40 in order to determine what can be seen and hidden on the site. She also asked if the stairways for the residential buildings were proposed to be enclosed. The applicant replied that they were not planning on enclosing them.

She asked the applicant to identify significant and rare trees as well as any significant tree stands on the property.

3. Commissioner Laura Moore is concerned with noise and traffic and supports the applicant's tackling of this problematic site. She asked that the applicant show all the adjacent buildings so they can see adjacent densities. She asked if the density was above the allowable density. The applicant replied they were not. She supported the two entrances and consideration of connection to Chapel Hill North.

She asked the applicant to find out from NCDOT when improvements to pedestrian and bicycle improvements were scheduled. She recommended that the applicant

improve pedestrian links to Chapel Hill North, increase perimeter buffers, and pursue traffic improvements.

4. Commissioner Gretchen MacNair supports the comments of the other commissioners.
5. Commissioner Mary Margaret Carroll supported the greatest density on the western portion of the development and to develop a relationship with the neighbors on University Station Road. She would like to see the majority of traffic using University Station Road.
6. Commissioner Mark Broadwell agreed that cross sectional drawings that include I-40 and the adjacent developments are recommended. He acknowledges that it is a marginal site and to try to move the buildings as far away from the noise areas as possible. He wants to review a Noise Study.
7. Commissioner Jonathan Whitney had questions concerning how school age children were being accommodated with the design.

SUMMARY

The Commissioners were concerned with traffic movements and volumes. They generally supported the majority of traffic from the development using University Station Road rather than Weaver Dairy Road. Drainage issues concerned the Commissioners and they believed stormwater management will be important. A Noise Report for noise generated by I-40 was an analysis that the commission believed needed to be done. They generally agreed the site was a difficult to develop.

Attachments: Letter from Marnie Clark
 Email from Adam Schaefer
 Information from Seymour Freed on noise and unacceptable housing units

Prepared for: Chairperson Jonathan Whitney *(Signature)*
 Prepared by: Kay Pearlstein, Planning Dept.