

Carlo Robustelli

From: Carlo Robustelli
Sent: Wednesday, June 04, 2008 4:34 PM
To: Carlo Robustelli
Subject: Strategic Plan work session

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

From: "Del Snow" <djdsnow@msn.com>
Date: Tue, 3 Jun 2008 22:57:50 -0400

I wanted to share some of my thoughts about the Strategic Planning process before your work session.

It seems to me that the impetus for a Strategic Plan is that Chapel Hill is at a potential turning point in its character. Do we go ahead and support high density residential and commercial development and tarnish what makes CH desirable in the first place, or are we selective about how we accommodate growth?

Population growth projections are made by designating appropriate parcels for redevelopment, developing estimates of types of future development, and then extrapolating the population growth. By assuming high density development, we end up with large population increases. If, at the other (undesirable) end of the spectrum, we planned single family homes on large lots, we would have a small population increase. But, it seems that we are being told that we need high density housing to accommodate the looming large increase in population! There is a some circuitous logic being used. A population surge can only be created by the type of development and zoning that we allow. One of the things that concerns me is that there does not seem to be a discussion about the infrastructure needs created by residential density. Police, fire, water, health care, schools, refuse, parks, and transit needs will increase at a high cost to the Town, and generally, residential units are revenue negative for the Town. Without adequate public facilities, quality of life will go down. Even if we do build high density housing, we cannot assume that growth rates will be constant-economic downturns and global warming (which may make the South less attractive) are examples of negative conditions out of our control.

The Comprehensive Plan Development Timing and Process theme states:

Goal: Promote orderly development and redevelopment to achieve appropriate and compatible use of land

Strategies: *Co-ordination of m/u development with transportation facilities, including transit service, sidewalks, & bikeways in addition to roads

*Develop a growth management protocol to address the provision of public facilities and services to support development

*The plans should be developed as a collaborative process between the Town (Council and Staff) and local residents.

I don't think that future mixed use growth should be top heavy in residential units. I wonder if there are any statistics available on the number of residents of Southern Village and Meadowmont who work within their mixed use development.

I hope that you can consider these thoughts during your Strategic Planning work session.

Thanks-
Del Snow