

PETITION

As you have heard in Justice United's petition to improve the living wage policy, affordable housing is connected and a priority. Orange County Justice United in Community Effort requests that the Chapel Hill Town Council expand the approved affordable housing study to include all affordable housing needs of this community, especially rental housing .

While the study proposed by the Community Home Trust and approved by the Council last year would have addressed the need for one and two-bedroom home ownership and provide useful information, expanding the study to include the need of all types of affordable housing, including rental, would assist the Council in making decisions on proposed development and re-development projects based on the affordable housing needs of the entire community.

Last fall we met with the Town Manager and Planning Department to gain insight on how this study could be expanded and improved to better inform the Council and the Community. The need for affordable housing, we believe, is as clear today as it was when the Orange Community Housing and Land Trust was formed in 1996 and the policy implemented in 2001. At the Affordable Housing System Roundtable discussion in January 2009, the majority of those present expressed the need for a comprehensive look at the needs of the community. A comprehensive study will confirm and inform the needs.

The Land Trust was formed, as you know, to continue to have homes affordable in perpetuity. Since its inception 86 homes are now owed by individuals that work in this Town - teachers, firefighters, UNC employees, OWASA employees....and about 80 more are planned. But affordable housing is not just one and two bedroom units owned by individuals making 80% of the median income. There is a need to review rental housing and homes larger than one and two bedrooms to meet the demand for affordable housing for those at 60% of median income up to 120% of median income. The Inclusionary Zoning policy that is now being reviewed to be an ordinance will help to meet some of these needs through home ownership. Payment in lieu funds will help a number of agencies that provide affordable housing in this community. It will, we believe, enhance the housing opportunities for low to moderate income workers from this community while being fair to the developers.

Therefore, we support the Inclusionary Zoning Task force recommendation that the policy become an ordinance and likewise, request that the comprehensive study on affordable housing needs be completed this year to inform the Council and community on affordable housing needs.

## **Background on Affordable Housing Study and Inclusionary Zoning**

Community Home Trust (formerly Orange Community Housing and Land Trust) – history (<http://www.communityhometruster.org>)

Affordable Housing System Overview – <http://tinyurl.com/housinggoverview>

Inclusionary Zoning Task Force report of November 20, 2006 and September 11, 2009