

Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools
Lincoln Center, 750 S. Merritt Mill Road
Chapel Hill, North Carolina 27516-2881

The Board of Education

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Neil G. Pedersen
Superintendent

Valerie Foushee, Chair
Board of Education

September 11, 2003

Mayor Kevin Foy
Town of Chapel Hill
306 N. Columbia Street
Chapel Hill, NC 27517

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Dear Mayor Foy:

We are enclosing a copy of a letter to Chancellor Moeser regarding Carolina North. In the letter, we request that strong consideration be given to locating a school site in the Carolina North development. A rationale for this request is provided.

It is our understanding that the Horace Williams Citizens Committee is still meeting and will be completing a report with recommendations pertaining to the development of this tract. We would be more than happy to provide the Committee with any additional information that it may need regarding a school site in Carolina North.

Please share copies of the accompanying letter with the members of the Committee as well as with the members of the Chapel Hill Town Council.

Sincerely,

Valerie Foushee
Valerie Foushee
Chair

Neil Pedersen
Neil Pedersen
Superintendent

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Chair, Board of Education

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Chancellor James Moeser
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
Campus Box 9100
103 South Building
Chapel Hill, NC 27599-9100

The Board of Education appreciated the opportunity for the Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools to be represented on the Carolina North Infrastructure Advisory Committee last spring. Either Neil Pedersen or Steve Scroggs, Assistant Superintendent for Support Services, attended all of the meetings and participated actively in the discussions.

We believed that it was important for the school district to be involved in the process for two reasons. First, it is quite possible that a program related to our mission, such as the Frank Porter Graham Child Development Center, might be located on this campus. If so, we would be very interested in exploring some type of partnership arrangement whereby the program might be co-located with a school facility in Carolina North. This precedent has existed for years on the Frank Porter Graham campus and will be reinforced when the new wing opens at Smith Middle School.

Equally important is the impact that a large number of residences will have on the capacity of our schools. We have heard that there could be more than one thousand residential units located in Carolina North, approximately the same number as in Southern Village. Such a residential development, if targeted at graduate students and young faculty, will generate hundreds of children, most of whom will attend our schools. Even if the number of residences is small, this development will generate hundreds of new employment opportunities, which will increase the population in our school district. We need to ensure that there will be room for the students that Carolina North will generate.

The two largest mixed-use developments in Chapel Hill, Southern Village and Meadowmont, have elementary schools located in them on sites donated by the developers. You or staff members might want to visit Mary Scroggs Elementary School in Southern Village at around 7:30 a.m. and observe all of the children, many with their parents, walking or biking to school.

The design guidelines for Carolina North include the concepts of sustainability, walkability, accessibility, and mixed use. It seems readily apparent to us that a neighborhood school is essential if these guidelines are to be followed. At several meetings of the Infrastructure Advisory Committee we requested that strong consideration be given to providing a school site. We consider a school to be very much a part of a community's infrastructure. This is supported by the fact that an impact fee is levied on all new residences in the school district and that local jurisdictions, recently, have approved a Schools Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance.

The committee did not support this position. Instead, there is simply a recommendation to "Coordinate plans with the Chapel Hill-Carrboro School System to discuss the education needs of the Carolina North residents."

We do not believe that the report adequately addresses the need to locate a school in Carolina North. If the University is serious about creating a sustainable, mixed use community where residents can walk to public facilities and services, it seems to us that a school is essential. A school not only would meet our capacity needs, but also would serve as a community facility that supports the activities of the residents of the community. A school could be equally justified if it served as a partner with one of the University institutions located there. We respectfully request that as plans move forward, you give strong consideration to providing a school site in Carolina North

Our staff is available to work with your planners to accomplish this end. We would appreciate it if you would support further investigation of the request for a school site. Please let us know if this is possible and if there is anything else that we can do to promote this concept.

Sincerely,



Valerie Foushee, Chair
Board of Education



Neil Pedersen
Superintendent

Cc: Tony Waldrop
Steve Allred
Nancy Sutenfield
Bruce Runberg
Kevin Foy
Margaret Brown
Richard Williams
Roger Perry