NEIGHBORHOOD ADVOCATE

"WHAT CHAPEL HILL RESIDENTS NEED AND DESERVE"

What is Needed: A full-time Town position for a "Neighborhood Advocate."

Job Description: The Neighborhood Advocate will act as a liaison between city government and neighborhoods with an emphasis on keeping communities informed of developments that could impact their lives.

For example, the Neighborhood Advocate should:

> Assist neighborhoods in understanding the development process. The Advocate should present programs that inform neighborhoods about how a development project moves through the Town of Chapel Hill's various departments, commissions, and committees.

> Aide neighborhoods that are having difficulty receiving information about issues that are, or have the potential of, affecting them.

> Help neighborhoods connect with other neighborhoods that have faced similar issues regarding nearby development projects or other development issues.

> Assist neighborhoods to obtain the information they need regarding zoning and subdivision issues.

What the Advocate's Job Does Not Include: The Advocate will not be responsible for mediating disputes between neighbors, neighborhoods, and neighborhoods and development applicants.

How it is Done in Other Cities:

> In 2001, the City Council of Austin, Texas approved a request from local activists asking for a neighborhood advocate position. The Neighborhood Advocate is in the City Manager's Office and reports to the City Manager.

> Kansas City has a "Neighborhood Advocate Team" in the Mayor's Office. The job responsibilities of this Team are broader than what I have proposed for the Chapel Hill position.

Guiding Principle for this Position: The guiding principle of Kansas City's Neighborhood Advocate Team that "when people organize and become more knowledgeable about how government works, they can help meet their community's needs." I completely agree. That is why I believe the residents of Chapel Hill need and deserve their own Neighborhood Advocate within the Chapel Hill Town Government.