



CORLEY REDFOOT ZACK INC.

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Town Operations Center
Town of Chapel Hill
Chapel Hill, North Carolina
Project #0226

STATEMENT OF JUSTIFICATION (SPECIAL USE PERMIT)

The Town of Chapel Hill is planning to construct a new Town Operations Center on an 88.6-acre site northeast of Millhouse Road, between I-40 and the railroad tracks. This new facility will replace the current municipal operations facility located off of Airport Road at Municipal Drive. The users of the new facility include all of the Public Works Department, as well as the Transportation Department and Housing Maintenance Division of the Public Housing Department. This application requests approximately 150,000 SF of facilities to include the following buildings:

- ◆ Transportation Department Administration and Operations
- ◆ Transportation Maintenance
- ◆ Public Works Administration
- ◆ Public Works Operations
- ◆ Public Works Fleet Maintenance
- ◆ Public Works Building Maintenance, with Public Housing Maintenance
- ◆ Surplus Storage
- ◆ Fuel and Wash Facilities

The initial phase of the project is anticipated to be completed by the end of 2006, with all additional phases completed by 2055.

FINDING #1: That the use or development is located, designed, and proposed to be operated so as to maintain or promote the public health, safety, and general welfare.

The new facility will be located on the northern edge of town, within an 88.6-acre site which is presently bordered by I-40 and the railroad tracks. The site will allow preservation of existing buffers of woods around its perimeter. The layout of the site will keep the large truck and bus storage areas next to I-40 to keep high noise levels as far away as possible, and away from office facilities and the few houses to the West of the site. There are two separate entrances into the facility to allow for separate movements by the buses and the Public Works vehicles. This separate arrangement will improve intersecting traffic along Millhouse Road and minimize potential vehicular conflicts on site. There will be a new traffic signal installed at Millhouse and Eubanks Road to improve safety.

The compound areas for Public Works and Transportation are enclosed and gated to protect Town vehicles and isolate the area from the public.

FINDING #2: That the use or development complies with all required regulations and standards of this Chapter, including all applicable provisions of Article 3 and 5, the applicable specific standards contained in the Supplemental Use Regulations (Article 6), and with all other application regulations:

This project will comply with all required regulations as specified in Finding #2, with the exception of two items. The first item involves Article 5.9.7, Minimum Off-Street Parking Requirement". This project proposes a total of 287 parking spaces to be built in Phase I, whereas, by the regulation table, the minimum number should be 391 spaces. We feel this amount will meet the existing and future needs of the facility and can preserve trees and natural areas if these spaces are not built at this time. Parking spaces will not spill onto adjacent streets or properties. The locations of additional spaces have been designed for construction in Phase II, anticipated to be built in the next 49 years.

The number of parking spaces is based on an actual needs assessment based on the number and time-of-day scheduling of current and projected employees. Using a required parking space number based on the square footage of the proposed buildings (1 space for every 350 SF for a Public Use Facility), as outlined in the LUMO establishes a higher number of spaces than the number actually needed. Unlike Town Hall or the Library, for example, the Town Operations Center, although defined as a Public Use Facility, has a much smaller percentage of spaces needed for visitors and, in fact, functions more like a "Maintenance and/or Storage Facility, which is a zoning category where required parking is based on the number of employees rather than on building square footage. The use of most of the building square footage on the site is for maintenance and storage functions, rather than typical administrative or public use functions, which accounts for the difficulty in correctly estimating parking needs using a building square footage ratio in the case of the Town Operations Center. In summary, the Town Operations Center does not completely fit any one of the use categories of the LUMO and, therefore, no one of the calculated minimum parking numbers provided in the LUMO for the various categories reflects the actual needs.

The other non-complying item is the secondary height of the new buildings. The fleet buildings for this project will require a height sufficient to allow daylighting components. Table 3.8-1 , Dimensional Matrix, has a maximum secondary height of 40'. These maintenance buildings require high bays to work on Town buses and large Public Works vehicles, such as, fire trucks and trash trucks. Additional heights are required to accommodate the clerestories needed for daylighting the workspace, which could be as high as 55'.

FINDING #3: That the use or development is located, designed and proposed to be operated so as to maintain or enhance the value of contiguous property, or that the use or development is a public necessity:

The new Town Operations Center is a public necessity. The Transportation Department provides bus services to all areas of the Town. The Public Works Department provides trash collection, fleet maintenance, maintenance of road and other public facilities, all road service and maintenance activities for the residential areas of the Town.



FINDING #4; That the use or development conforms with the general plans for the physical development of the Town as embodied in this Chapter and in the Comprehensive Plan.

The Town Operations Center conforms with the general plans for the development of the Town as if falls within an existing property zoned MU-R-1, which permits construction of a public use facility. The site is designated on the Land Use Map of the Comprehensive Plan as "Public Works Site".

The project addresses the Comprehensive Plan as follows:

The project meets the objectives of Ssection 11 A-9, specifically to develop and implement a long-term solution for the Municipal Operations Facility.

The proposed center encourages the economic development goals expressed in the plan by providing for "institutional employees of medium scale" located in transit service areas. The proposed center incorporates sustainable development elements, such as, daylighting, water re-use, energy-efficient systems, recycling and re-use of materials.

The proposed center is designed to promote environmental sensitivity by utilizing already cleared areas to for the majority of the construction. The proposed center is designed to provide state-of-the-art treatment for stormwater runoff to minimize the effects of development at the site.

The buildings that are proposed take advantage of the natural areas that remain and create pedestrian connections and access to other parts of the site and the future Greenway system.

Bus stops and bike/motorcycle racks will accommodate alternate modes of transportation to the site.

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