

AMERICAN LEGION POST 6



P.O. BOX 2323
CHAPEL HILL, N.C. 27515

July 15, 2004

Chapel Hill – Carrboro City Schools
Board of Education
Lincoln Center, Merritt Mill Road
Chapel Hill, NC 27516

In his letter dated January 8, 2004, to Cal Horton, Manager, Town of Chapel Hill, Neil Pedersen, Superintendent, requested that the American Legion property of 35.12 acres be included in the Land Use Plan of the Town of Chapel Hill. Due to many justifiable reasons, as follows, The American Legion requests that the Chapel Hill – Carrboro City Schools Board of Education reconsider this request and remove the American Legion property from the potential school site list.

Home of American Legion Post 6 for 49 Years

Chapel Hill, Post 6 of The American Legion has occupied the property on Legion Road for the past 49 years during which time we have been able to provide a **meeting location for Veterans who have served in World War II, Korea and Vietnam Wars, and the major conflicts in Lebanon/Grenada, Panama, Persian Gulf, and now Iraq.** The Post presently has over **210 members** from the Chapel Hill/Carrboro area.

Limited Road Access

The American Legion location was previously considered as a potential school site during the preparation of the comprehensive Plan. **On January 31, 2000,** during a work session on the draft Comprehensive plan the **Town Council agreed by consensus to delete a proposed school site in this location.** The reasons cited for the deletion were that accesses to the location, in particular local intersections, were inadequate for this use and that the site should be preserved as open space.

Flood Plain Consideration

A creek is located on the East back side of the property that could affect any future building or use in that area due to the 300 feet limitation as specified in the new town ordinance. This could involve approximately 7 acres. **A lake located in the front** is also served by a stream and would require consideration for disposal. This could involve approximately 5 acres. The combined area amounts to 1/3 of the space available.

Main Building Facility

The **building facility is currently valued at over \$600,000** and provides space for many community affairs. It is the only facility of this type available in the Chapel Hill/Carrboro area. Upon approval of the American Legion property in the Land Use Plan, the future of these community benefits may become jeopardized by our inability or limited ability to continue the maintenance and renovations of the facility. Each future renovation expenditure must be evaluated.

Emergency Services and Facilities

On 2 occasions in the past 2 years **Duke Power Company** has used the outside and inside area of the Post for a control headquarters and a parking area for a wide variety and multitude of service vehicles required to **restore electrical power** in the area due to ice storms.

The **American Red Cross** has designated the location as an **emergency shelter** area in the event of a disaster.

Fire Drills and training sessions on the grounds near the lake are conducted by The Chapel Hill Fire Department.

Community Recognition Services

American Legion Baseball Team. Support is provided for 2 teams, Juniors and Seniors with more than 30 youth involved.

Breakfast celebration is provided each year for all the **Police Dept., Fire Dept., and EMS** personnel in appreciation for the services that they provide to the area.

Designated location by the **Red Cross for Blood Drives.**

Local and District location for American Legion **High School Oratorical Contest** and the VFW **Voice of Democracy Essay Contest.**

40 & 8 Voiture **tuition scholarship** selection for **3 local area nurse students.**

Selection of **Boys State and Girls State** attendees from the local High Schools.

Veteran Related Ceremonies

Memorial service on **Memorial Day** in May each year.

“Love America Day” in February sponsored by American Legion Auxiliary.

Flag Disposal Ceremony on **Flag Day** in June each year.

Recognition of Veterans on **Veterans Day** in November each year.

American Legion and VFW District meetings are frequently held here.

Community Use of Property

In the past year the American Legion property has served the community by providing a facility for the following organizations and activities:

Boy Scout Troop 820 meets every Thursday, except in the summer time, that has grown to a maximum of 90 members. To increase their membership more space is needed.

The **Village Band** meets for practice every Monday evening.

Additional Veteran Organizations such as **Veterans of Foreign Wars, 40 & 8 Voiture, and Ladies American Legion Auxiliary** meet every month.

All telephone directories for Chapel Hill and Durham are delivered from this location to businesses and residences each year. Office space and outside space is required for 3 to 4 weeks to park truck trailers and vehicles involved in the distribution of the telephone directories.

Several **Cub Scout Packs** conduct their Pinewood Derby events here.

Boy Scout Courts of Honor and Ceremonies are held at this location.

Parking area is provided for the vehicles owned by **Boy Scout Troop 39**.

Police Department Retirement Parities.

An additional small building on the property is used for a **youth dance studio** where dance lessons are provided for approximately 100 students.

20 Wedding receptions, reunions, birthday & other celebrations for a **wide variety of people and groups** are held here on an average each year.

10 Non-profit organization have used the facility for benevolent fund raisers during the past year.

30 Recreational and entertainment events have been held by **Duke & UNC Fraternities & Societies**. This total also includes other groups such as UNC Hospital and several misc. organizations.

Significant Property use Examples in Past Years

Start up location for several local Churches in the area. Weekly services conducted while organizational plans were completed to move to permanent locations. An example is Advent Luthern Church on Erwin Road.

Rotary Club used the facility for a temporary meeting place weekly for a year until the Country Club could complete renovations of their facility.

Sertoma Club conducted bingo events weekly for many years.

The American Legion Post 6 of Chapel Hill would like to emphasize that the property on Legion Road is a real asset to the Community of Chapel Hill and Carrboro and that it should continue to be preserved for an indefinite time in the future. Approval of the property on the Land Use Plan as a potential school site will have a great effect on the American Legion's future ability to continue the multitude of services provided in the past. Any future consideration to the renovation of the building, improvement of the property, or extended use by the community must be given serious consideration due to the delay time of up to 1 year to 18 months that could be necessary for the School acquisition process to be completed. The American Legion in Chapel Hill could find it necessary in such a situation to discontinue and disband the Post rather than seek another location and build a new home.

Your serious and sincere consideration for the future of Chapel Hill Post 6 of the American Legion and the services that are currently being provided to the Chapel Hill/Carrboro community will be appreciated. The removal of The American Legion property on Legion Road from the potential school site list on the Land Use Plan is solicited.

Robert Patton
Adjutant

Alvin Hackney
Commander

CC: Mr. Cal Horton, Manager, Town of Chapel Hill, NC.

Approved by Chapel Hill Post 6 American Legion Executive Board at a meeting on July 8, 2004.