



THE UNIVERSITY  
of NORTH CAROLINA  
at CHAPEL HILL

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**ATTACHMENT 2**

August 3, 2004

The Honorable Mayor Kevin Foy  
and Members of the Town Council  
Town of Chapel Hill  
306 North Columbia Street  
Chapel Hill, North Carolina 27516

Dear Mayor Foy and Members of the Town Council:

This letter is a request for the abandonment of the right-of-way of an approximately 0.2 mile section of Laurel Hill Road, located between Coker Drive and the 15-501 Bypass, from the Town of Chapel Hill to the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill for use by the North Carolina Botanical Garden (please see the accompanying map).

The Garden, represented by Director Peter White and Curator Jim Ward, has met over several years with a committee from the Morgan Creek-Kings Mill Neighborhood Association to identify concerns and mutual interests with regard to this proposal. Those meetings were very constructive and the Garden staff has come to an agreement with that committee on how to address neighborhood concerns. We stand ready to work with the Town on the elements identified in our discussions with the neighborhood or other related issues that may be raised by the Town.

We seek this closing for the following reasons:

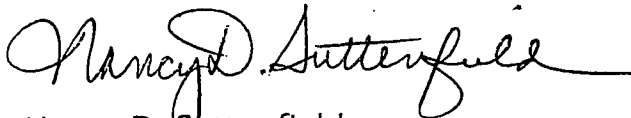
1. **Safety.** The road separates the Garden's visitor parking lot from the Totten Center and the main display garden. All garden visitors and volunteers, including vulnerable populations of children visiting with school groups and families and the elderly, cross this road in visiting the Garden. We know that some 45,000 people annually visit our building and suspect that this is a conservative estimate of total visitation to the outdoor gardens and nature trails.
2. **Unifying the Garden lands.** Closing the road to through traffic will create a seamless visitor and educational experience and allow the Garden to physically display one of the Garden's key themes: the smooth transition from human gardens to nature's gardens. Closing the road will allow an

enhanced visitor path network and will allow our proposed Visitor Education Center to embrace the planted Garden to the west, as well as the Nature Trails and Meeting-of-the-Waters Creek to the south. While we will respect utility access and will seek dedication of a pedestrian and bike pathway within this corridor, we will also create new gardens where there is now paving.

3. Teaching effectiveness and visitor experience. The closing of the road will allow us to complete the sound wall, decreasing traffic noise and improving the teaching effectiveness and experience of all visitors to the Garden.

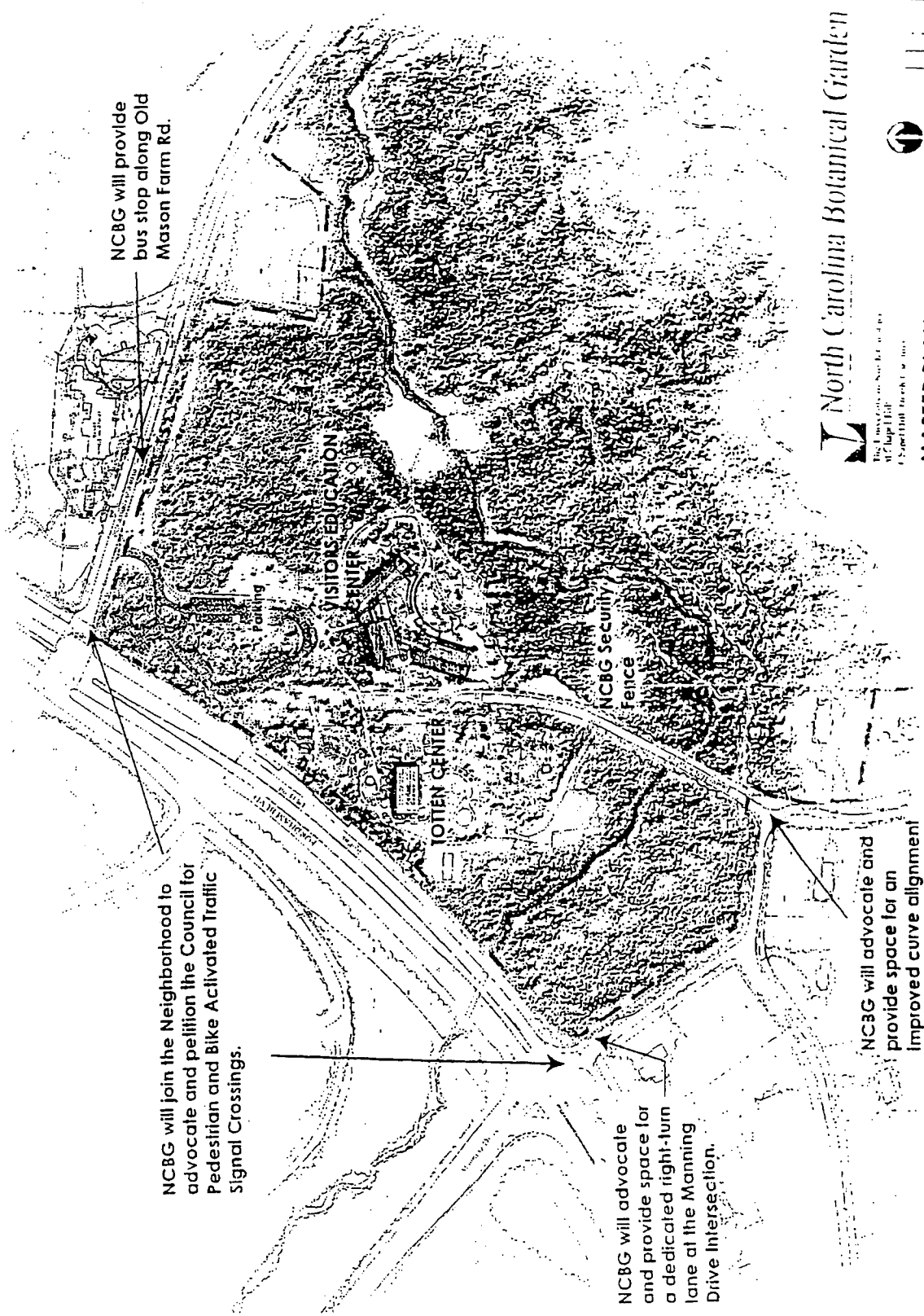
Closing of this segment of Laurel Hill Road to through traffic will enhance the educational and recreational opportunities at the North Carolina Botanical Garden, a tremendous asset to all citizens of Chapel Hill, the Triangle, and the State. We believe that this can be done in a way that meets the concerns of the Garden's neighbors and the greater community.

Sincerely,



Nancy D. Suttentfield  
Vice Chancellor for Finance and Administration

cc: Steve Allred, Executive Associate Provost  
Cal Horton, Manager, Town of Chapel Hill  
Jonathan Howes, Special Assistant to the Chancellor  
Leslie Strohm, University Counsel  
Peter White, Director, North Carolina Botanical Garden



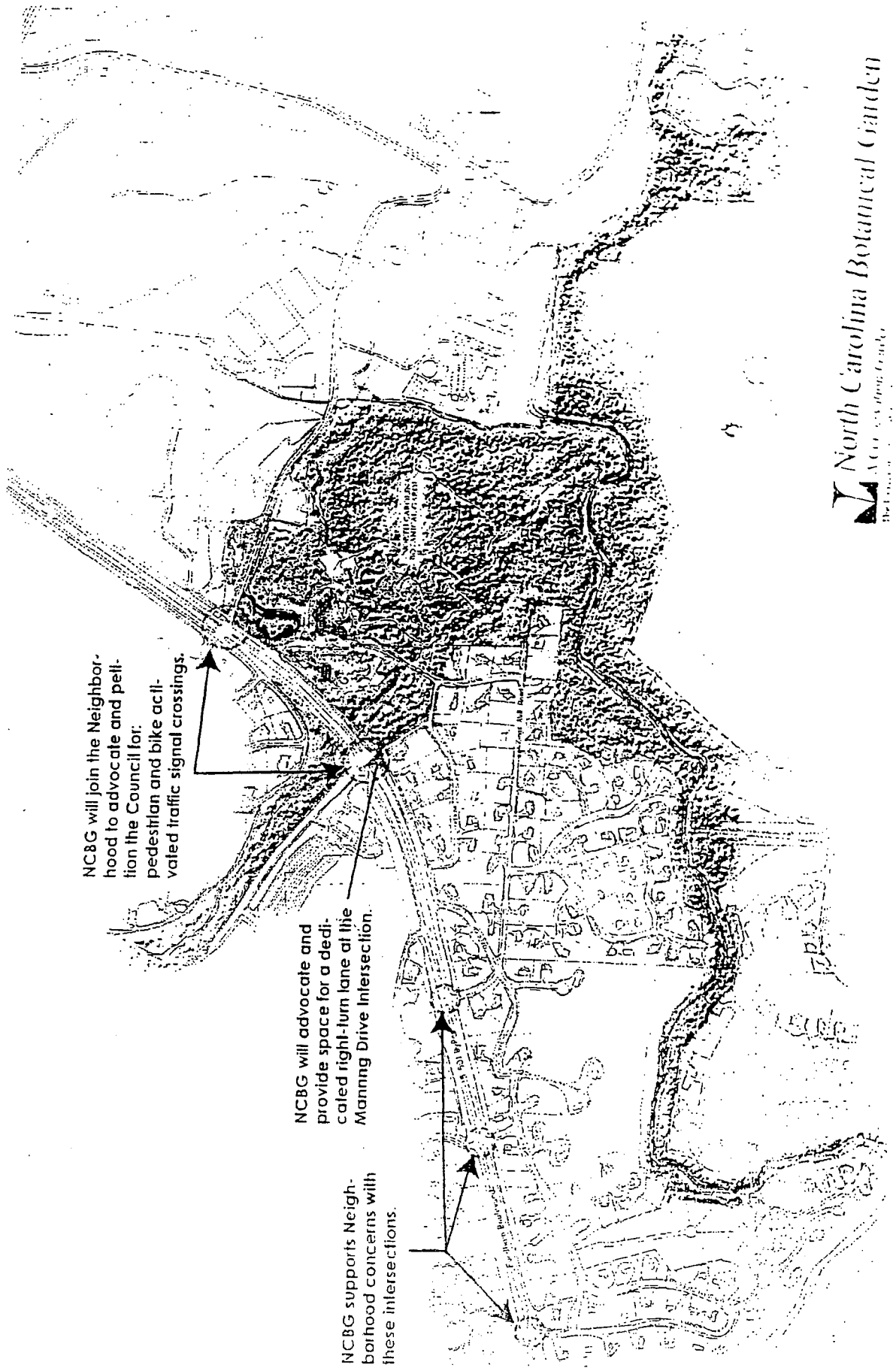
NCBG will provide bus stop along Old Mason Farm Rd.

NCBG will join the Neighborhood to advocate and petition the Council for Pedestrian and Bike Activated Traffic Signal Crossings.

NCBG will advocate and provide space for a dedicated right-turn lane at the Manning Drive Intersection.

NCBG will advocate and provide space for an improved curve alignment for Laurel Hill Road





NCBG will join the Neighborhood to advocate and petition the Council for pedestrian and bike activated traffic signal crossings.

NCBG will advocate and provide space for a dedicated right-turn lane at the Manning Drive Intersection.

NCBG supports Neighborhood concerns with these intersections.