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Planning and Zoning
Growth Management
Market Analysis
Real Estate Consulting
Appraisal

C L A R I O N

June 22, 2005

Mr. W. Calvin Horton
Town Manager
Town of Chapel Hill
405 Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard
Chapel Hill, NC 27514

Re: Rogers Road Small Area Plan

Dear Mr. Horton:

Pursuant to your request, Clarion Associates has prepared a set of ideas describing how a process might be designed and implemented to prepare a Small Area Plan for the Rogers Road area in Chapel Hill's Planning Jurisdiction.

One way for the Town to proceed would be to set out a general framework for the project (along the lines suggested below or an alternate approach), and invite proposals for Town review.

A Small Area Plan process is best pursued, we believe, under the leadership and direction of a Steering Committee. In the past, Chapel Hill has successfully used a group for similar initiatives made up of the sitting Planning Board, supplemented with additional citizens appointed by the Town Council. In this case, because part of the area is outside of Chapel Hill's corporate limits and because of the importance of the Green Tract, representation from Orange County government would likely also be appropriate. Citizen involvement throughout the process would be critical, including outreach to residents, non-resident owners, institutional representatives, representatives of the development and design communities, and representatives of nonprofit and environmental organizations.

A Small Area Plan is data-intensive. Work needs to be programmed at the front end of this kind of process to prepare information about the area. Examples of information that would be needed include data about: topography, drainage characteristics, historical development patterns, existing and planned transportation systems, water and sewer availability, property ownership patterns, character of existing development, streams and wetlands, and institutional linkages.

One way to organize a project of this kind would be to construct a work plan and schedule that might contain the following components:

- Set up website, advertise for / recruit applicants for Steering Committee
- Council establishes area to be studied, appoints Steering Committee
- 1st Meeting of Committee
 - *Orientation*
 - *Review of Proposed Process, Map of area to be studied*
 - *Preliminary Discussion of Issues*
 - *Hand out cameras for photo exercise ("Likes and Dislikes")*
 - *Discuss Open House - - where, when, agenda*
 - *List topics for future discussion*
- Community Open House
 - *Present Map, Process, Schedule*
 - *Invite comments and participation*
 - *Break into Small Groups for discussions*
- 2nd Meeting of Committee
 - *Bring back cameras*
 - *Presentation of Existing Conditions*
 - *Discussion of topics identified at 1st meeting, Open House*
- 3rd Meeting of Committee
 - *Present results of visual exercise – Likes and Dislikes*
 - *Discuss opportunities, constraints, trends facing area*
 - *Begin discussion of Goals for the area*
 - *Discuss possible approaches to managing development in area*
- Community Forum
 - *Present Draft Goals*
 - *Discuss possible approaches to managing developments in the area*
- 4th Meeting of Committee
 - *Discuss ideas from Community Forum*
 - *Discuss Interim Report to the Town Council*
- Interim Report to the Council
- 5th Meeting of Committee
 - *Present first draft of Area Plan*
 - *Reactions, discussion, suggestions for changes*

- 6th Meeting of Committee
 - *Present revised draft of Area Plan*
 - *Reactions, discussion, plans for final Community Forum*
- Community Forum
 - *Review of Draft Small Area Plan*
 - *Break into Discussion Groups to focus on specific topics / areas*
- 7th Meeting of Committee
 - *Committee to recommend final changes to draft, based on Forum*
 - *Prepare for Council Public Hearing*
- Council Public Hearing
- Council Action
- Prepare Plan for Publication


This proposed process would involve approximately 6-8 meetings of the Committee and 2-4 community events, leading to submittal of a draft plan to the Council for Public Hearing. We would expect a process of this nature to take approximately 9-12 months to complete.

Expectations of staff support for a project of this nature: If this project were undertaken by a consultant or other outside organization, staff assistance would be required to assemble background information and maps; set up and maintain a link on the Town's website; attend Planning Board (aka Rogers Road Committee) meetings; review products and offer advice to consultant throughout process; and copy / distribute materials for Planning Board and Council meetings.

If the Town were to seek consultant assistance for a project of this nature, we expect that a budget for the required services as outlined above would likely need to be in a range of approximately \$60,000 - \$80,000. A good approach would be for the Town to set out a general framework for the project, and invite proposals for Town review.

I hope these suggestions are helpful.

Very truly yours,



Roger S. Waldon

cc: J.B. Culpepper, Acting Planning Director