

**CONCEPT PLAN REVIEW SUMMARY MINUTES
COMMUNITY DESIGN COMMISSION
WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 28, 2005, 7:00 P.M.**

Chairperson Scott Radway called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. Commission members present were Mark Broadwell, George Cianciolo, Dale Coker, Chris Culbert, Eleanor Howe, Laura King Moore, Amy Ryan, and Jonathan Whitney. Staff members present were Acting Development Coordinator Gene Poveromo and Planning Technician Kay Tapp.

DOBBINS HILL PHASE II AND WILSON ASSEMBLAGE (Files 7.23.B.3, 7.23.B.3A)

Requests for Concept Plan Proposal have been submitted requesting to modify the Dobbins Hill Phase II and the Wilson Assemblage Special Use Permits. In 2005 the Town Council approved Special Use Permits for the Wilson Assemblage and Dobbins Hill Phase II developments. The approval of these Special Use Permits by the Town Council stipulated that the North Carolina Department of Transportation "Superstreet" project, located at the US 15-501/Erwin Road/Europa Drive intersection, be finished before the Wilson Assemblage project is occupied. The current Concept Plan proposals are seeking to delete the stipulation requiring the completion of the Superstreet project. Dobbins Hill Phase II and Wilson Assemblage development proposals are located on the north side of Dobbins Road, between Erwin Road and Sage Road (see area map on back). The sites are located in the Residential-4 (R-4) zoning district. The sites are located in Orange County and is identified as Chapel Hill Tax Map 27A, Block A, Lot 1, Tax Map 27, Block B, Lots 3, 3A, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, and 11.

CONCEPT PLAN PRESENTATION

The applicant presented a concept plan for proposed amendments to the approved Wilson Assemblage and Dobbins Hill Phase II Special Use Permits. The proposed amendments would remove the restrictions that withhold Zoning Compliance Permits from the Wilson Assemblage SUP until NCDOT approves a construction contract for the US 15-501 • Erwin Road Intersection improvements and the NCHFA approves Phase II of Dobbins Hill. In addition, the applicant is proposing to reduce the number of units proposed for the Wilson Assemblage from 149 to 129 due to the floor area cap approved in the SUP.

CITIZEN COMMENTS TO PLANNING BOARD

1. A citizen stated that although they were not opposed to affordable housing, they were concerned with the traffic impacts associated with the two proposed projects. The citizen believed that the applicant's proposal to reduce the number of dwelling units for Wilson Assemblage would not reduce traffic impacts. The citizen noted that the Planning Board and the Town Council supported the stipulation requiring the completion of Superstreet before the issuance of occupancy permits for Wilson Assemblage. The citizen also noted that based on recent conversations with NCDOT, the anticipated completion date for the Superstreet project is now projected to be sometime during the fall of 2007.

COMMUNITY DESIGN COMMISSION QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS

1. In response to a question by Commissioner George Cianciolo, the applicant stated that they are now proposing to offer the Town a \$500,000 bond the Town can use as a payment-in-lieu, if the applicant is unsuccessful in securing tax credits for the proposed affordable housing units in Dobbins Hill. Commissioner Cianciolo noted that the proposed payment-in-lieu is equal to approximately \$13,000

for each of the previously approved 32 tax credited dwelling units. The Commissioner stated that this proposed payment-in-lieu, per unit, seems low.

2. In response to a question by Commissioner Cianciolo, the applicant stated that they are proposing to use the project's entrance on Sage Road as the construction access point. The Commissioner suggested that the applicant not limit construction traffic access options to Sage Road and recommended that they consider using Dobbins Road as a second construction access point.
3. Commissioner Cianciolo expressed concern with traffic conditions on Sage Road and US 15-501. He noted that there are times when traffic on US 15-501 backs up between the Sage Road and Erwin Road traffic signals. The Commissioner reminded the Community Design Commission that the Transportation Board recommended that the Wilson Assemblage proposal include a full access connection to McGregor Drive. Since Superstreet may never be constructed, Commissioner recommenced that the Community Design Commission support the full access connection to McGregor. He also suggested that the Community Design Commission recommend a second construction access on Dobbins Drive.
4. Commissioner Chris Culbert read an email from Commissioner Charlotte Newby who was unable to attend the meeting. A copy of the email is attached.
5. Commissioner Jonathan Whitney asked the applicant to investigate if a vehicular connection to the adjacent apartment complex to the north (Walden at Greenfields) was possible. The Commissioner also expressed a concern with construction vehicles using the existing Dobbins Hill access road and recommended that construction traffic access the site from Sage Road.
6. In response to a question from Commissioner Mark Broadwell the applicant indicated that in order to begin constructing units on the Dobbins Hill site, the applicant would first have to construct stormwater and street infrastructure on the Wilson Assemblage site. The applicant also indicated that the Town would not issue a permit for land disturbance on the Wilson Assemblage site until the NCDOT signed a contract for the construction of Superstreet.
7. Commissioner Dale Coker stated that it was unfortunate that occupancy permits for the Wilson Assemblage project were tied to the completion of the Superstreet project. He anticipated that an updated traffic impact analysis would likely determine that the Sage and Erwin Road intersections along US 15-501 were operating below acceptable levels. Because that the completion of Superstreet is unknown and the traffic conditions on 15-501 are not likely to improve anytime soon he wondered if there would be a way to modify the approved Special Use Permit and allow the applicant to proceed with construction of the residential units.
8. Commissioner Amy Ryan stated that although the stipulation requiring Superstreet seemed unreasonable to the applicant, the roadway improvement is necessary and will improve traffic conditions on US 15-501. In response to a question from the Commissioner, the applicant indicated that although they could begin construction of the Dobbins Hill stormwater features on the Wilson Assemblage site, the financial success of the Dobbins Hill project depended on the applicant's ability to construct and occupy the Wilson Assemblage residential units without the Superstreet stipulation.
9. Commissioner Laura King Moore agreed that the applicant was in an unfortunate situation. The Commissioner suggested that the applicant provides a traffic impact analysis that includes a recommendation of how the project, including the construction of the Dobbins Hill units, could be phased without Superstreet. Commissioner Moore also identified construction traffic as a major concern.

10. Chairperson Scott Radway stated, especially in light of the fact that the start/completion date for Superstreet is unknown, any recommendation from the Community Design Commission should include a requirement to connect the Wilson Assemblage project to McGregor Drive. He agreed that the Dobbins Hill and Wilson Assemblage projects are linked and that the applicant's proposed temporary phasing plan seemed appropriate. Commissioner Radway supported a second construction entrance on Dobbins Road.
11. Commissioner Chris Culbreth recognized that traffic in the area was a problem, however he stated that he would be consider removing the Superstreet stipulation if the outcome includes constructing the affordable housing units.
12. Commissioner George Cianciolo made a recommendation that the Town Council reconsider opening the McGregor Drive connection. He stated that the connection to McGregor Drive has always been envisioned as a through street and its connection to the Wilson Assemblage project is especially imperative if the Superstreet project is not realized.
13. Commissioner Laura King Moore supported Commissioner Cianciolo idea.
14. Commissioner Dale Coker stated that it would be helpful to have a traffic impact analysis before making such a recommendation. He expressed concern that the recommendation to connect to McGregor will not improve traffic conditions. Although the recommendation sounds like a good idea, the Commissioner was hesitant to have the Community Design Commission endorse an idea that may make traffic conditions worse.
15. Chairperson Radway stated that he believed that the traffic impact analysis for the Wilson Assemblage project did not include an analysis of the McGregor Drive connection.
16. Commissioner Jonathan Whitney suggested that the Community Design Commission recommends, that if the Town Council considers the applicant's request to modify the Special Use Permits, that the Town Council requires 1) A traffic impact analysis of a vehicular connection to McGregor Drive; and 2) A second construction entrance on Dobbins Road.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO COUNCIL

1. Commissioner Cianciolo made and Commissioner Whitney seconded a motion to recommend, that if the Town Council considers the applicant's request to modify the Special Use Permits, that the Town Council requires 1) A traffic impact analysis of a vehicular connection to McGregor Drive; and 2) A second construction entrance on Dobbins Road.

The motion was approved unanimously.

2. Chairperson Radway noted that although the Commissions' comments generally support the applicant's ability to proceed with the project, the Commission remains concerned with removing the Superstreet stipulation from the approved Special Use Permit resolution.
3. Commissions Cianciolo stated that although he understands the applicant's concern with the Superstreet stipulation, he is also trouble with the prospect of the Council deleting the stipulation from the Special Use Permit resolution. On the other hand, considering the recent problems NCDOT is experience in completing other local highway projects (repaving I-40/completion of US 15-501

South), the Commissioner wondered if Superstreet would ever be constructed, and if not, would that fact prohibit any proposed development that impact this portion of US 15-501?

4. Commissioner Ryan believed that traffic along this section of US 15-501 would continue to be a problem with or without the Superstreet improvement and there should be a middle ground for development projects to proceed.
5. Chairperson Radway stated that if the Superstreet project is never realized, the Wilson Assemblage site may have to be developed differently. He suggested that at such time that the applicant returns with a formal Special Use Permit application there may be additional information from NCDOT on the status of the Superstreet project. He also hoped that the affordable housing would continue as a viable option for the applicant.

Prepared by: Scott Radway, Chair
Gene Poveromo, Staff *GP for SR*