

33

From: Carol Abernethy **On Behalf Of** Cal Horton

Sent: Tuesday, September 27, 2005 2:41 PM

To: 'Rikki Mangrum'

Cc: JB Culpepper; Bill Thorpe; Jason Baker; Kevin Wolff; Laurin Easthom; Robin Cutson; Walker Rutherford; Will Raymond ; Bree Bean; Bruce Heflin; Cal Horton; Catherine Lazorko; Emily Dickens; Flo Miller; Ralph Karpinos; Sabrina Oliver; Sandy Cook; Toni Pendergraph; Bill Strom; Cam Hill; Dorothy Verkerk ; Ed Harrison; 'Edith Wiggins'; 'Jim Ward'; Jim Ward (w) ; Kevin Foy; Mark Kleinschmidt ; Sally Greene (w)

Subject: Email RE: Feedback on closing roads between Larkspur and Chapel Watch

A copy of your email message has been forwarded to each Council Member, Council candidate(s) and to senior staff members.

*Carol Abernethy
Exec. Asst., Manager's Office
Town of Chapel Hill*

From: Rikki Mangrum [mailto:rikki@nc.rr.com]

Sent: Tuesday, September 27, 2005 10:17 AM

To: Town Council

Subject: Feedback on closing roads between Larkspur and Chapel Watch

Dear Council Members,

I have watched with some interest the developments in the debate regarding connecting Larkspur to Chapel Watch. I thought it might interest you to have some feedback from a resident of Northwood, which requested not to be connected to Larkspur several years ago.

I live in the center of Northwood and my children attend Seawell Elementary school. My children have friends in Larkspur, Parkside, and Northwoods. We are strong proponents of walking, biking, and using public transportation. Because Hunter Hill Road is connected to Larkspur only by a walkway, it has been a simple matter for me to require my children to walk or bike to their friends homes. In their minds and mine, we "can't drive there." In Northwood, we have noticed walkers coming from Larkspur to enjoy our wooded oasis – there are two groups of women walking for exercise, a few dog walkers, and a couple of adults with stroller babies. I think there is even one man who walks through Northwood to catch the NS bus. I like the fact that we can walk or bike through Larkspur and Parkside to get to the Northern community park, which is both safer and more pleasant than going down Martin Luther King Blvd. When my kids are older and more sensible, I hope they will be able to bike to Smith and Chapel Hill High. On the other hand, the closure of Hunter Hill has made for some awkwardness in planning the new school bus routes and on days when I collect my children from school by car, I am driving an extra couple miles because I cannot go through Larkspur – I have to go to MLK Blvd, then loop around on Eubanks Rd. The same is true whenever I am headed towards east Homestead or Carrboro. Keeping the road closed has definitely prevented a convenient shortcut to Homestead Rd.

My point in sending you this note is that I feel that you should have some honest feedback on what your past decision has accomplished. If the political direction of Council decisions on roadways is to encourage residents to walk or bike, then keeping Hunter Hill closed has succeeded. Northwood has access to Larkspur and points south, and residents of Larkspur are definitely using Northwood as a safe haven for exercise. If the political direction of the Council is to maximize connectivity for all vehicles, then closing Hunter Hill was a mistake. It was also an assumption on the part of both the Council and residents of this area of town, that Larkspur and Chapel Watch would be connected, and this assumption aided the Council in determining that Hunter Hill could stay closed. If no new connection is made, then a substantial

21

area of land up here that may still be developed, will have only MLK and Rogers Rd. as their access to Homestead.

As a resident, I don't personally support Larkspur's request that their road be closed. Their streets are very wide, with good visibility, and they have sidewalks throughout. They have a recreational area for young children, and community space for older ones. Larkspur has been planned – well planned even – as a suburban community, unlike Northwood, which was a rural community even as little as ten years ago. When my kids go into Larkspur, they don't play on the streets with their friends the way they do in Northwood. Homes in Larkspur have nice, grassy yards for ball games, whereas in Northwood the streets are pretty much the only place you can play ball without hitting trees! Larkspur will have access to traffic calming measures allowed by the Town, which Northwood does not. I find it hard to accept that Larkspur residents want to make the same arguments that we made two years ago and it pains me that they seem flippantly to suggest that Rogers Rd. could bear all the negative impacts of continued growth in this area of town.

Yours truly,

Rikki Mangrum
103 Walden Place
Chapel Hill NC 27516

35

Amy Chute <amychute1@yahoo.com> wrote:
Date: Wed, 28 Sep 2005 10:54:17 -0700 (PDT)
From: Amy Chute <amychute1@yahoo.com>
Subject: Larkspur Transit Coverage
To: mayorandcouncil@townofchapelhill.org

Hello Mayor and Town Council,
Thank you very much for your time and attention at the Public Hearing on Monday night regarding the Chapel Watch Village proposal. I, along with many of my neighbors in Larkspur, appreciated the opportunity to speak directly to you about this important issue.

I am writing you today to clarify a point that was brought up at the meeting by Town Staff regarding the proposed transit route *through* the Larkspur development. **It is not necessary to open the Maywood Connector to vehicular traffic to achieve transit coverage for Larkspur.**

1. The Town Staff have listed a bus stop near the intersection of Old Larkspur Way and Maywood. If this bus stop were moved ~500 feet East out to Weaver Dairy Road, the same transit coverage can be had in Larkspur. We would all be within the 1/4 mile buffer zone to walk to a Weaver Dairy bus stop.

In fact, if the bus route stayed on WDE, the Northwoods neighborhood would get additional transit coverage at the Palafox and Lonebrook intersections with Weaver Dairy. This section of Northwoods neighborhood does not currently have coverage. (See attached Chapel Hill Transit Map.)

2. Chapel Watch Village already has transit available on the NS line since it sits directly across the street from the Eubanks Park N Ride. So, there is no transit coverage area to be gained by sending the a bus *through* Larkspur and into Chapel Watch Village. (See attached Chapel Hill Transit Map.)

3. Larkspur is bordered by the Rail Road tracks to the West, so there will never be additional citizens on this side who could benefit from service on Old Larkspur Way. (See attached Chapel Hill Transit map for location of RR tracks.)

I hope you will agree that transit concerns should not cloud this issue about whether or not to open Maywood to full, vehicular traffic. There are other, more substantive issues that we ought to be considering in this decision. I invite Town Staff to verify all points made in this letter.

Thank you very much for your consideration of these important transit issues.

Sincerely,
Amy Chute
Chair, Larkspur Safety First Committee