

25

FYI -- another attachment to the Chapel Watch Village follow-up memo.
JB

-----Original Message-----

From: Gary Waldo [mailto:gary_waldo@med.unc.edu]

Sent: Monday, September 26, 2005 4:43 PM

To: Cal Horton

Cc: JB Culpepper; Bill Thorpe; Jason Baker; Kevin Wolff; Laurin Easthom; Robin Cutson; Walker Rutherford; Will Raymond ; Bree Bean; Bruce Heflin; 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); Amy Chute; Jon DeHart; Demi Vlachos; Ronald Herring; Gary Waldo; Rachel Emerson; Renuka Soll; Jessica R Brack; Pat Flores; Helene Kepas-Brown; Jungsang Kim; Maria Piskor; Heather Schwartz
Subject: Response to George Cianciolo's letter

To whom it may concern:

Please find attached my response to George Cianciolo's letter to the Town Council from last week regarding the Maywood connector between Larkspur and Chapel Watch Village.

Sincerely,

Gary Waldo

303 Old Larkspur Way

MY NAME IS GARY WALDO AND I AM RESPONDING TO GEORGE CIANCIOLO'S LETTER TO THE TOWN COUNCIL. MY RESPONSES ARE HIGHLIGHTED IN UPPER CASE AND IMBEDED IN A COPY OF MR. CIANCIOLO'S LETTER

I'm sending you this message because business takes me out of the country next week and I will be unable to attend Monday evening's Council meeting. My understanding is that the Chapel Watch Village concept plan issues which you referred to the T-Board for comments will be coming back to you on that evening. Although my term on the T-Board ended in June, I was on the Board when it reviewed the Larkspur development and made a recommendation to Council regarding that SUP. Our recommendation was that Maywood be stubbed out for a connection to whatever future development occurred to the north. I spoke to the T-Board when it considered the Chapel Watch Village issues on August 9th. I would very much have liked to address the Council directly on the issue of connectivity which has become a major focus of the discussion regarding this project but I hope that you will allow me to share my thoughts with you now.

This Council has very much been a proponent of connectivity between neighborhoods and I have been very appreciative of that stance. While much of the focus on connectivity has been to encourage pedestrian and bicycle connectivity, and while I am a very strong proponent of public transit in Chapel Hill, I believe that we cannot ignore the role of a road system in our community as we continue to grow. We hire transportation planners to help us plan for our future growth and the planners, following national guidelines, have determined that smart growth requires streets other than the major arterials to insure that the local trips do not rely entirely on the major arterials. DOES A PLAN FOR CONNECTING MILLHOUSE ROAD TO WEAVER DAIRY EXTENSION EXIST? THIS COULD SERVE AS A MORE EFFECTIVE ALTERNATIVE THAN MAYWOOD WAY FOR ALLEVIATING POTENTIAL FUTURE CONGESTION ON THE SURROUNDING ARTERIALS.

If I might make an analogy: In medicine it is a generally-accepted fact that a person is less-likely to survive a heart attack at age 40 than at age 60. The reasoning behind that fact is not self-evident but it can be briefly stated as this: At age 40, a heart attack usually involves a blood clot cutting off the blood supply in one or more of the major vessels (arterials) supplying oxygen to the heart muscle and the muscle quickly dies. At age 60, however, the heart has sensed the gradually narrowing of the major vessels (arterials) and has, over the years, begun creating a number of smaller vessels (collaterals) which can provide sufficient oxygen to the heart muscle to allow it to supply. In the case of our road system, if we rely entirely on our arterials we may find that when they become jammed we have an insufficient backup system (collectors) to relieve the distress.

Now, if I might comment on some of the specific issues: although the Town did not enforce its stipulation that a sign be posted on the stub-out at Maywood, I find it hard to believe that someone who is purchasing a \$500K+ home would not research future development plans in the area. If, as some Larkspur residents have claimed, purchasers were misled by real estate agents then they should contact those agents and demand redress. FAILURE OR NOT OF A PROSPECTIVE HOME BUYER TO ADEQUATELY RESEARCH FUTURE DEVELOPMENT PLANS IN NO WAY EXCUSES THE FAILURE OF THE TOWN TO ENFORCE ITS STIPULATION THAT A SIGN BE POSTED ON THE STUB-OUT AT MAYWOOD PRIOR TO THE ISSUANCE OF A CERTIFICATE OF OCCUPANCY. INDEED, MY FAMILY RESEARCHED THE FUTURE DEVELOPMENT POSSIBILITIES OF THE LAND SURROUNDING LARKSPUR PRIOR TO NEGOTIATING OUR CONTRACT. WE WERE AWARE OF MR. BUCK'S DEVELOPMENT PLANS BUT AT NO TIME DID WE FIND ANY INFORMATION THAT INDICATED LARKSPUR WAS DEVELOPED CONTINGENT ON MAYWOOD BEING CONNECTED TO ANY FUTURE DEVELOPMENT TO THE NORTH. INSTEAD WE WERE UNDER THE IMPRESSION THAT THE STUB-OUT WAS REQUIRED BY THE TOWN AND PROVIDED TO EASE A POSSIBLE FUTURE CONNECTION IF THE RESIDENTS NEEDED THE CONNECTION.

Regarding the issue of safety, I agree that this is a valid concern.

But right now that concern is an unproven fear in the Larkspur residents' minds and not a proven fact. At the August 9th meeting of the T-Board Phil Post showed one option which had the Maywood connector meeting the road in Chapel Watch Village at what was close to a right angle. Phil has also said at the CDC concept plan review that the developer would be willing to provide traffic calming within their development on the Maywood connector. I believe that this connector could be made with a 90-degree turn (ideally with a stop sign[s]) and additional traffic calming measures (such as in the Oaks) or speed tables to significantly slow southbound traffic from Chapel watch into Larkspur. Northbound traffic through Larkspur into Chapel Watch Village could probably be slowed with a speed table/crosswalk in the middle of the length of Old Larkspur. In addition, the connector road could be signed to ban commercial thru-traffic. PHIL POST ALSO INDICATED A SLIGHT PREFERENCE ON THE PART OF THE CWV DEVELOPER FOR A PEDESTRIAN AND BIKE ONLY ACCESS WHICH HAD THE ADDED BENEFIT OF ALLOWING MORE FLEXIBILITY IN THE PLACEMENT OF VEGETATIVE BUFFERS BETWEEN THE TWO NEIGHBORHOODS. THE TRAFFIC IMPACT ANALYSIS INDICATES A LOW USAGE FOR THE MAYWOOD CONNECTOR THAT SEEMS INCONSISTENT WITH THE IDEA OF MAYWOOD ALLEVIATING ARTERIAL TRAFFIC FLOWS. MOREOVER, WHY BUILD THE ROAD WITH INTRICATE TRAFFIC CALMING IF ONE OF THE STATED PURPOSES IS TO REDUCE ARTERIAL TRAFFIC. THERE ARE NO CLEAR ADVANTAGES TO CONNECTING THIS ROAD GIVEN THE SMALL SIZE OF THE TWO

DEVELOPMENTS AND THE CIRCULAR NATURE OF THE RESPECTIVE NEIGHBORHOOD ROADS.

My neighborhood (Chandlers Green) opposed the connection of Sweeten Creek Rd. with Silver Creek/SpringCrest with many of the same arguments being made by the Larkspur residents. Those fears proved to be unfounded and although traffic calming was eventually requested/warranted, it was the residents themselves that were the major speeders. Chandlers Green was also initially opposed to the building of ECHHS because of fears of what the close proximity of a high school would mean. The residents now greatly appreciate that proximity. My point is that neighborhood fears are usually greatly exaggerated and usually do not come to fruition. **IT SEEMS THERE IS ALSO SOME EXAGGERATION AS TO THE NEED FOR AND EFFECTIVENESS OF THIS CONNECTOR BY SOME OF ITS PROPONENTS.**

However, there is I believe, a compromise solution. The connector could be made with all of the necessary traffic calming (in Chapel Watch by the developer; in Larkspur by the Town). If, after the connector is open and functional, the traffic exceeds that for which the roads in Larkspur were designed (say 1500 cars/day or whatever staff determines) then the connector can be closed to all but emergency, bicycle, or pedestrian traffic using an emergency bollard system. There is recent precedent by Town Council for a similar compromise: that of the SUP for Binkley Baptist Church. There the concern was that the new driveway, with unlimited ingress/egress, might back traffic up at the Willow/Fordham light. Your compromise was to instruct the Town manager that a traffic study should be done in two years and if there was an issue with traffic backing up, the driveway would be made right in/out only. **THE LOGIC SEEMS SOMEWHAT CIRCULAR ... ONE OF THE STATED REASONS FOR BUILDING THE CONNECTOR IS TO ALLEVIATE ARTERIAL TRAFFIC BUT YOU MUST INSTALL INTRACATE TRAFFIC CALMING FOR SAFETY REASONS WHICH ADDS ADDITIONAL EXPENSE AND DECREASES THE LIKELYHOOD THAT ARTERIAL TRAFFIC WILL BE EASED. HOWEVER, IF TRAFFIC VOLUMES INCREASE (i.e. MAYWOOD ACTUALLY BEGINS TO EASE ARTERIAL TRAFFIC) THEN BOLLARDS WOULD BE INSTALLED AND THE ROAD WOULD BE CLOSED TO VEHICULAR TRAFFIC.**

The beauty of that compromise was that it didn't make a long range decision on what MIGHT be but rather, it said ¹let's see if we really do have a problem before we make a permanent decision.² **THE MOST PARSIMONIOUS SOLUTION IS THE COMPROMISE PROPOSED BY LARKSPUR RESIDENTS...PROVIDE PEDESTRIAN, BIKE, AND EMERGENCY ONLY ACCESS NOW. IF THE NEED ARRISES IN THE FUTURE, UPGRADE THE CONNECTION TO ALLOW FULL VEHICULAR ACCESS AS SUGGESTED IN THE MINORITY REPORT FROM THE TRANSPORTATION BOARD.**

29

I ask you now to use that same care with the Larkspur/Chapel Watch connection. Don't make a decision on what people fear MIGHT happen. If you allow the connection and it doesn't work, there is still a remedy. But if you don't allow the connection now it will be impossible to do it later. I believe that this is a reasonable option and I ask you to consider it.

Thank you for allowing me so much of your time.

Best wishes,

George

**RESPECTFULLY,
GARY WALDO**