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Sandy Cook

From: Amy Chute [amychute1@yahoo.com]
Sent: Friday, September 23, 2005 9:49 PM
To: Sandy Cook
Subject: Fwd: Larkspur

Sandy,
 Here is another letter from a Larkspur resident. Thanks.
 Amy

Anne Menkens <amenkens@email.unc.edu> wrote:

Date: Tue, 13 Sep 2005 15:21:43 -0400
 From: Anne Menkens <amenkens@email.unc.edu>
 To: kevinfoy@townofchapelhill.org, edickens@townofchapelhill.org,
 sally@ibiblio.org, ed.harrison@mindspring.com, hillcc@nc.rr.com,
 mark@cdpl.org, dverkerk@nc.rr.com, windsorcircle@mindspring.com,
 edithwiggins@nc.rr.com
 Subject: Larkspur

Anne J. Menkens
 207 Old Larkspur Way
 Chapel Hill, NC 27516
 919-933-9663

Mayor and Council:

I am writing to add my voice to the chorus of voices from Larkspur residents about the connecting road between our development and Eubanks Road. I bought my house in Larkspur through the Orange County Housing and Land Trust Program.

I know many of my neighbors have spent much time and energy listing all the safety reasons to oppose the cut through. I won't waste my time repeating their arguments, except to add one more anecdote – I myself was passed by another car on Old Larkspur Way as I drove through at the speed limit the other day – an event that calls into question board members' assumptions about the "calming" effect of our street's curves and available on-street parking.

I am primarily writing to dispute Marie Eldridge's comment, made at the August 16, 2005, Transportation Board Meeting: "These people are trying to create an elitist enclave....This is just like the Oaks and Meadowmont." This is an insulting, uninformed statement. Further, as an Orange Community Land Trust Homeowner in Larkspur (which includes several homes designated for lower- or middle-income individuals and families), I take personally the accusation – made by Eldridge and others more opaquely – that my neighbors and I are elitists, little committed to the community, or just another group that "wants to live in a cul-de sac," as Eleanor Howe was quoted as saying in the Chapel Hill News (August 27).

Larkspur is nothing like Meadowmont or the Oaks. We are bordered by the railroad tracks on the west (trains go by every day), and heavy-duty power lines cross backyards on the northern

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side of the development. We are less than half a mile from the Orange County Landfill and listen to traffic noise from I-40 from our front porches. There is no golf course here or country club, as the Oaks has, nor are there family friendly services on Eubanks of interest to us. There are no restaurants, swimming pools, grocery stores, fitness gyms, as in Meadowmont. With a cut through we will have access to a UPS distribution center, Calvin Mellott's truck bays and office buildings, the recycling center, the landfill and the Town Operations Center.

Those of us in the Orange Community Housing and Land Trust program moved here from rental properties in Chapel Hill. I moved from Glen Lennox, which is near geographically but far removed in every other way from the Oaks and Meadowmont: I know the difference between those neighborhoods and Larkspur. My neighbor down the street is a single mother of four who moved from a small apartment where she didn't even have her own bedroom until she bought her home in Larkspur. We are not elitist, and we haven't found our neighbors to be elitist. I've heard no one involved in the protest to the cut through complain about the fact that the proposed development is for rental units. We know we ourselves are part of a housing boom in Chapel Hill, one that's been going on since I moved here in 1988, and we don't begrudge other people living nearby.

We're also not unreasonable, and if we heard a good reason for having a cut through, other than the fact that it's been in the plan, we would not oppose it. So far, I haven't heard any good arguments. I can't believe David Bonk, who was quoted in the Chapel Hill News Article, really thinks there would be "only five to 10 additional trips per day." Has he forgotten that Carolina North is to go in just south of us? Does he realize how desperate drivers are to avoid having to stop at the lights on Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard? He should try driving or walking on Weaver Dairy Road Extension at rush hour and see how many drivers have discovered that convenient short cut.

A cut through for emergency vehicles and pedestrian traffic only would be sufficient for our safety and that of the new residents at the townhouse development going in. Open access would just change the very nature of our neighborhood to shorten some commuter's drive time at the risk of our children's safety.

Please consider voting against allowing permanently opened cut-through.

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Anne J. Menkens
v: 919-843-8542
f: 919-843-5563
anne_menkens@unc.edu

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