

August 1, 2001

Roger Waldon
Director of Planning
Town of Chapel Hill
306 N. Columbia Street
Chapel Hill, North Carolina 27516

Dear Roger,


As the town pursues updating and revising the development ordinance, it occurs to me there is one distinction that needs to be made within the banking industry, as it pertains to bank facilities.

The distinction is quite simple and relates to the significant difference between a staffed drive-through window, which accommodates customers in motor vehicles during banking hours, and a drive up automated teller machine (ATM). Drive-up ATMs are widely considered to be safer than walk-up ATMs for reasons which are obvious. One factor, however, that is often overlooked is the fact that drive-up ATMs are heavily used during "off-peak" non-banking hours. Thus these facilities provide for safety and serve to reduce traffic counts at banks during business hours, as customers using drive-up ATMs have both the freedom and safety to conduct transactions in the evening and very early morning, outside of normal business hours. Our peak ATM usage in existing locations includes the 6 PM-8 PM time frame.

This is very different than drive-through windows that are staffed during normal banking hours and simply accommodate customers who wish to perform banking transactions during those times without coming in the bank.

I sincerely hope that a distinction between applications for these two very different methods of delivering financial services can not only find its way into the revised development ordinance, but that the decision-makers for developments will look favorably upon requests for drive-up ATMs, since they truly represent a way of reducing traffic during peak periods. If you would like any further details regarding this, don't hesitate to give me a call.

Sincerely,



James L. Carter
Senior Vice President
Orange-Chatham Community Executive

JLC/ph