

**COMMUNITY DESIGN COMMISSION**  
**SUMMARY OF**  
**CONCEPT PLAN REVIEW**  
**Rosemary Street Mixed Use**  
**August 16, 2000**

**OVERVIEW**

*Prior to submittal of a formal development application, all major development proposals are required to be reviewed while they are still at a "conceptual" stage. In particular, it is the intent of the "Concept Plan" review process that citizens and members of the Community Design Commission have an opportunity to review a site analysis and a conceptual plan in order to evaluate the impact of a major development proposal on the character of the area in which it is proposed to be located. This process is intended to take into consideration the general form of the land before and after development as well as the spatial relationships of the proposed structures, open spaces, landscaped areas, and general access and circulation patterns as they relate to the proposed development and the surrounding area.*

**BACKGROUND**

The Community Design Commission conducted a Concept Plan Review for this potential development on Wednesday, August 16, 2000.

The Concept Plan Review was for a proposal to construct a mixed-use development on a 1.04 acre site that is located at the northwest corner of the intersection of West Rosemary Street and Mitchell Lane. The site consists of five different lots, which are presently occupied by five houses and several gravel parking areas. The applicant is proposing to construct a mixed-use development that consists of 6,272 square feet of commercial floor area and 49 multi-family dwelling units. A total of 50 on-site parking spaces are proposed.

The site is located in the Town Center-2 (TC-2) and Residential-3 (R-3) zoning districts. The site is located in Orange County and is identified as Chapel Hill Township Tax Map 85, Block A, Lots 5-9. Approval of this proposed Concept Plan would require submittal of a Special Use Permit application and action by the Town Council.

**CITIZEN COMMENTS ON CONCEPTUAL PLAN**

Several citizens attended the meeting and spoke on the conceptual development plan. The following topics were discussed/addressed at the meeting by citizens:

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- Neighbors expressed concern about the limited amount of parking proposed for this development.
- Lack of other available off-site parking in this general area was mentioned by citizens.
- A citizen stated that it is not equitable to permit this site to have on-street parking, given the number of other tenants and businesses that have been denied the right to have on-street parking in front of their store locations.
- A neighbor said that the applicant is only proposing to provide one-half of the required parking required by the Development Ordinance for the proposed uses on this site, and asked: “Where will the excess cars park?”
- A neighbor stated a concern that this proposal is inconsistent with the goal of preserving the single-family character of the Northside neighborhood, which is a goal of the 2000 Comprehensive Plan.
- A citizen asked if fire trucks will be able to service this development, given the narrow alleys proposed on the site plan?
- One speaker suggested that this project will negatively impact the availability of parking spaces for other businesses in the general area.

### CONCEPTUAL PLAN REVIEW

The Community Design Commission reviewed the Concept Plan submittal and discussed the following topics:

1. Several Commission members supported the concept of having a mix of uses on this site, but believed that this proposal was too intense. One Commission member suggested that a project one-half the size of this proposal would have a more reasonable impact on the surrounding area.
2. The Commission encouraged the applicant to consider the concerns expressed by citizens about the Concept Plan, and to be sensitive to the heritage of the adjacent Northside neighborhood.
3. One Commission member noted that this proposal appears to match the vision for this area based on the 2000 Comprehensive Plan.
4. A Commission member was concerned regarding the height of the 4-story building, noting that they believe it is not appropriate to have more than a 2-story façade next to the sidewalk, in order to achieve a “pedestrian scale.” The member noted that it would be appropriate for the building to “step” back from the street after 2 stories, and then achieve a taller height (3 or 4 stories).

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5. The Commission expressed concern that the proposed ground floor commercial space with frontage on Mitchell Lane, may not be appropriate given the predominate residential character of this street.
6. One Commission member suggested having some office space on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor.
7. A Commission member expressed concern regarding the unusual angle of the floor level garage entrances.
8. The Commission generally supported a more significant buffer along the site's northern property line.
9. Several Commission members expressed concern regarding parking lot security on the proposed site.
10. The Commission encouraged the applicant, as part of a formal Special Use Permit application submittal, to revise the plans to show neighboring building footprints and land uses on adjacent lots.
11. One Commission member strongly recommended that the applicant to meet with the Town/University committee that is pursuing the possibility of affordable housing on West Rosemary Street.

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