

**M E A D O W M O N T**  
OF CHAPEL HILL  
*Community Association*

AGENDA #3a(7)

December 20, 2002

Mayor Kevin Foy and Town Council Members  
306 North Columbia Street  
Chapel Hill, NC 27514

Dear Mayor Foy and Council Members:

On behalf of the Meadowmont Community Association, the Board of Directors asks that you treat this letter as a petition to Council at your January 6, 2003 meeting. We will be in touch with the Town Manager's office to confirm whether our petition is on that agenda; if so, a member of our Board will come and briefly present our request to the Council.

Our Board recently voted to seek the town's assistance and advice regarding the street barriers on Old Barn Lane and on Faison Road, which were erected according to the settlement terms of a lawsuit. We understand why the barriers exist, and that they are scheduled to be removed on July 23, 2003. However, we have a number of safety concerns that we believe town officials are in the best position to evaluate.

There have been two incidents that have caused us to question whether the barriers present avoidable safety problems.

The first was on June 8. There was a telephone conduit box fire on Faison Road, but firefighters couldn't get to it because of the barriers. Fortunately it was a minor fire and didn't result in any major property damage, but it made us more aware of the potential problem of access should a major fire occur. After this incident the town asked East West Partners to modify the barriers, and East West complied. The barriers are now solid for two-thirds of the street width, but the final portions have a heavy chain across them. Presumably firefighters would cut this chain in an emergency.

The second incident occurred on October 27. Early that morning one of our residents placed a 911 call for her father, who was experiencing shortness of breath, memory loss and cold sweats. The 911 dispatcher asked for directions on how to get to the house located at 1217 Pinehurst Drive. The Fire Department First Responders took a circuitous route up Burning Tree and down Pinehurst. After placing the patient in the ambulance and leaving the Pinehurst home, the driver asked for directions on the quickest way out of Meadowmont. Unfortunately, the family member riding in the ambulance was a visiting relative from Chicago who didn't know his way around Meadowmont.

Fortunately, the resident's father is now doing well after an extended stay in the hospital. However, this incident again raises our concerns about precious minutes being lost in future emergencies if rescue vehicles have to take unnecessarily long routes to the location of the emergency, or cannot find their way around Meadowmont at all. Our concerns are heightened

because the street barrier on Old Barn Lane blocks the most direct route to the Meadowmont swimming pool where serious accidents are a possibility. And of course, the recent ice storm has made us all more aware of the need to have unencumbered access to all parts of the community in the case of area-wide emergencies.

We would very much appreciate having the town's police, fire and other emergency services experts examine this situation and determine whether the barriers need to come down now in order to better assure public safety and swift access for ambulances and other emergency vehicles. If town officials conclude that the town cannot require removal of the barriers, we would appreciate any advice and assistance about any other way we might get our safety concerns addressed.

Thank you very much for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Nancy Gabriel, President  
Meadowmont Community Association



David R. Hill, Manager  
Meadowmont Community Association