



MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor and Town Council

FROM: W. Calvin Horton, Town Manager

SUBJECT: Chapel Ridge Petition Response

DATE: November 25, 2002

INTRODUCTION

On October 7, 2002, Ms. Kristina Bach, a resident of Brookstone Apartments, petitioned the Town Council requesting that the Town consider alternative options for vehicular access to the Chapel Ridge apartment complex. Specifically, the petition requests that the Town Council close the public vehicular connection between the Brookstone apartment complex and the Chapel Ridge development. This report responds to that petition.

BACKGROUND

On November 13, 2000, the Town Council approved a Special Use Permit for Chapel Ridge apartment complex. The Special Use Permit authorized a multi-family development with 180 dwelling units on 23.6 acres of land. The site is located west of Northfield Drive and south of Brookstone Drive (please see attached area map). We note that both Northfield Drive and Brookstone Drive are existing public streets.

The project is currently under construction and we anticipate that portions of the development will be available for occupancy early next year.

ACCESS AND CIRCULATION

The applicant's original proposal included vehicular access to the site from two points: Airport Road via Northfield Drive, and Homestead Road via Brookstone Drive. During the Public Hearing process the Council discussed traffic impacts at the Northfield Drive/Airport Road intersection. In response to concerns about turning movements at this intersection, the Council approved the Special Use Permit with the following stipulation:

Northfield Drive: Access between Northfield Drive and this development shall be limited to emergency access only, until such time as the Town Council approves measures to address the safety of turning movements along Airport Road and permits access for other than emergency purposes. Such changes shall not require a Special Use Permit Modification.

We have attached a copy of the approved Special Use Permit for the Council's reference.

DISCUSSION

Access to Chapel Ridge was a key topic of discussion during the Council's review of the project. We provided notification that the application was being considered in the following manner: signs posted at the edges of the site (including at the Brookstone connection), mailed notices to property owners within 1,000 feet, advertisements in the newspaper, and posting of the agenda materials on the Town's website.

During the Council's Public Hearing, discussion focused on safety concerns for turning movements into and out of Northfield Drive from Airport Road. In response to the discussion and concerns, the Council decided that traffic to and from the new apartments should be channeled through the signalized intersection at Homestead Road, requiring Chapel Ridge traffic to use the public right-of-way through Brookstone Apartments, with a condition of the approval that prohibits access from the new apartments onto Northfield Drive.

The petition requests that the vehicular access to Chapel Ridge via Brookstone Drive be closed. We note that Brookstone Drive is a public road, and that the Council has the authority to close a Town-maintained public road. In this instance, however, Brookstone Drive is the only approved point of vehicular access to the Chapel Ridge site. Thus, closing Brookstone Drive would leave the Chapel Ridge development without a point of access. We believe that such a situation would force the developer to apply for a Special Use Permit Modification, seeking an alternative point of access to the site. We do not recommend that the Council pursue this option at this time.

Regarding the alternative option of opening Northfield Drive to public vehicular access, we note that the approved Council Special Use Permit suggests additional study of Airport Road. At this time, no additional information has been presented to the Council regarding the safety of turning movements along Airport Road in the vicinity of Northfield Drive. We do not recommend that the Council make any changes at this time. We would expect to initiate a study of turning movements following the completion and occupancy of the Chapel Ridge development, and report back to the Council at that time.

CONCLUSION

We recommend that the Council take no action at this time. We will return to the Council with additional information after the completion and occupancy of the Chapel Ridge development.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Area Map (p. 3).
2. Chapel Ridge Resolution of Approval, November 13, 2000 (p. 4).
3. Letter from Kristina Bach, September 26, 2002 (p. 14).
4. Brookstone Petition, October 20, 2002 (p. 15).
5. Letter from Melinda DeJongh, October 28, 2002 (p. 17).
6. Letter from Nancy Jeannechild, October 29, 2002 (p. 18).
7. Letter and Materials from Kristina Bach, November 3, 2002 (p. 19).
8. Letter from Janis E. Dorr, November 5, 2002 (p. 31).
9. Letter from Kristina Bach, November 5, 2002 (p.32).
10. Letter from Herbert Slapo, November 6, 2002 (p. 34).