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SUMMARY OF TRANSPORTATION BOARD ACTION

Subject: UNC Chapel Hill Development Plan Modification

Meeting Date: June 3, 2003

Recommendation: The Transportation Board voted 6-0 to approve the following comments:

Vote: 6-0

• **UNC development:** Based upon the information meetings given by the University for the Public and the Boards and the written reports reviewed by the Transportation Board, the following points should be considered by Town Council:

Part 1 Parking Decks and Access

1. Moving the parking deck from the south edge of campus and eliminating the connecting road between Manning and Mason Farm Rd. is a major change.

2. This change moves parking towards the center of campus which is contrary to the original UNC development plan and will increase traffic on Country Club and South Columbia St. It will also increase traffic on the up hill portions of Manning Drive, Raleigh, Oteys and Mason Farm Rd.

3. It will reduce the incentive to use alternative means of transportation since it will make it easier for employees to park closer to the campus and the hospital.

4. The addition of a parking deck on Jackson Circle will make it even more difficult for cyclists and pedestrians to navigate the south end of campus. It will also be unpleasant next to the nearby student housing. If it is built the university needs to improve sidewalks and bike routes in the area and make sure there is adequate space for buses. For example the new parking decks have sidewalks that dead-end and incomplete ADA sidewalk (curb cut) ramps. The on street parking on Mason Farm Rd should be eliminated and converted to bike/bus lanes on both sides.

5. The addition of a parking deck by the cemetery and theater will increase traffic in the area. If it is built it is important to extend the existing bike lane all the way to Raleigh Rd. A traffic light will need to be installed to make sure residents can leave their neighborhood. The sidewalk on the

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north side of Country Club should be improved. (Now it is highly eroded chapel hill gravel.) The university visitor lot already provides parking for the Paul Green Theater. Behind it are utility lines and right of way. Has the visitor lot been investigated as a place to put a small parking deck and/or chiller plant? Also how noisy is the chiller plant? How will it compare to the university cogeneration plant and the other chiller plants?

6. The suggested idea (see Heidi Perry memo) of having reduced parking fees reduced parking should be implemented. Currently, after an employee buys a parking permit, there is no incentive to sometimes take public transportation, walk or bike.

7. The entrance to the Cemetery Parking deck is very close to the entrance to South Rd. Since it will serve employees it will result in traffic back ups at the morning and afternoon rush times. The closing of the current access point between the Paul Green Theater to Ridge St. near the Davis Library will force even more traffic onto Country Club Rd.

8. The University projected traffic count estimates differ greatly from the 2025 traffic report estimates. The assumptions made in making the UNC estimates need to be carefully analyzed.

Part 2 Married student housing

1. Since the decision has been made to move married student housing further from the campus and closer to the bypass, it is important to make access as easy as possible and to make sure university residents can easily access the Glenn Lennox and Kings Mill Rd neighborhoods where children parks, elementary school, botanical garden and stores are located so driving is not necessary. It is also important that the design make it easy for neighbors (including university employees) to reach campus and places north of campus safely without having to drive.

2. Because of inadequate sidewalks (especially curb cuts/ ramps) many of the married students (or grandparents) push strollers in the street. It is vital that a continuous link of sidewalks exist along Mason Farm and the connecting streets to married student housing.

3. The elimination of the road between Manning and Mason Farm and the elimination of an additional exit, will result in more traffic backups. It is also dangerous that the most southern student housing has only one exit.

4. The current design shows no easy way for university students in the new housing to reach the bus. A bike/pedestrian path (suitable for strollers!) needs to be built from the southern part of Mason Farm to the F

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lot, Family Practice and Manning. As a minimum, steps need to be built from the Family Practice driveway to the bus stop at the F lot and from the new student housing to the F lot so buses can be accessed. Also bus pullout needs to be built at the bottom of Manning so buses can drop off/pick up passengers.

5. The university and town should request (again) that the Manning/ 15-501 intersection have pedestrian walk lines/ signal head. Safer ways should be designed so the public can cross Fordham Rd from the campus to the Botanical Garden and southern neighborhoods.


6. The impact of changes made in the housing dimensions and the new utilities on the mass transit corridor and proposed connector road needs to be clarified. The mass transit corridor needs to be corrected. Also the option of continuing the transit corridor to the North of campus needs to be protected. Some of the proposed construction may block this corridor.

These items were approved by T-Board 6/3/03 to be given to town council for the hearing on 6/13/03 additional comments or suggestions may be made after our 6/17/03 meeting.

Aye: Cianciolo, Hintz, Howe, Koontz, Lathrop, Hicks

Nay: None

Prepared By:

Loren Hintz, Chair 
David Bonk, Senior Transportation Planner

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Sent: Tuesday, May 27, 2003 5:20 PM
To: Town Council
Subject: parking on campus

Dear Mayor and Town Council members,
In light of the planned upcoming changes in the construction of UNC parking decks, I wanted to share my thoughts with the council about my concern that UNC is not terribly long-range in its plans for accommodating parking on campus.

Attached is a letter (pdf format) to the council members with my thoughts on this. The contents of the letter are repeated below. For a campus that is currently trying a PAY AS YOU GO parking plan, go to Carnegie-Mellon's website:
<http://bizservweb.pc.cc.cmu.edu/parking/Pay+As+You+Park/default.aspx>.

Thank you for your time. My letter follows:

5/23/2003

To: The Chapel Hill Town Council

RE: UNC's new plans for 2 parking decks.

A few weeks ago I came to the presentation in the Town Council Chambers given by the university concerning their revisions to the parking plans for campus. They have replaced one parking deck with two, one of which is on North Campus behind the Paul Green Theater.

I suggested that the university might want to look at these new constructions as the perfect time and place to try a "pay as you go" parking plan, where there could be card readers that would allow the driver the option of "occasional" parking. For example, an employee could pay for 12 days a month, or 5 days a month. Or, an employee could pay for MWF or TTH parking. Or a host of other methods that would not require the purchase of a full-blown valid-every-day parking permit. Unfortunately, I find the University parking planners unable to embrace or to even consider any type of possible creative solution to the parking woes on campus.

The university is guilty of what I call a "no-incentive" program by only offering a one-size-fits-all parking plan. One can only purchase a permit that can be used every day--there is no option for those who might wish to purchase a permit for one or two days a week, or 5 days a month. Then, once the permit is purchased, there is no incentive to use occasional alternative transportation methods. If one has paid for parking every day, then why not drive every day? The parking staff will tell you it's because the employees want a fulltime permit, but since they have never offered a one-, two-, or three-day option, they don't actually know that. And while some forms of part-time parking (such as purchasing 5 days a month) might only be possible by building a card reader and gating a lot or deck, others would be easy to implement now. MWF could have a MWF on the card, TTH could have TTH. No rocket science involved. Such a system might have employees asking themselves how much they really need to drive,

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and opting for a lesser permit. If there were people driving only occasionally, they would open up spaces for others, thus delaying the possible need for even more parking facilities down the road.

Also, I think the pay scale is extremely unfair. Why should an employee making over \$100,000 pay only \$3. or \$4. a month more than an employee making \$25,000? This is especially unfair when the lower-wage workers include many housekeeping employees who have to arrive at work much earlier than public transportation is running. It also does nothing to encourage those at the higher end of the pay scale to consider transportation alternatives.

As long as there is nothing to shake up this daily dependence on cars, we are doomed to continue to try to "fix" the problem of unsafe roads by widening existing roads (whether it is to accommodate cars or bicycles) and building more parking facilities, which in turn brings more traffic and more congestion to the streets, and starts the cycle all over again.

I urge the Town Council in its discussions with the University to encourage them in every way not only to throw answers at how to accommodate more cars, but to REALLY look hard at creative solutions which could result in FEWER cars that need accommodation.

Thanks for your time.
Sincerely,
Heidi Perry