

Joe Capowski to CH Town Council, about UNC Dev Plan Modification, June 19, 2003

My name is Joe Capowski, I live on Coolidge Street in the Westwood neighborhood.

An undergirding principle of UNC Dev Plan: Fewer employees drive to center of campus, more reliance on perimeter lots, park-ride lots, mass transit.

The modification before you tonight violates that principle.

UNC leaders justify the change because members of a campus committee prefer close-in parking. Claude Reins covered that well in Casablanca: I am shocked, shocked to find that people prefer to park next to their offices! Folks, that's just not reality in CH.

Pertaining to new Jackson Circle Deck:

This is not about hospital patients and visitors, only about employees.

The two decks, the ACC lot, and the current Jackson Circle lot total 5,000 spaces.

This for a 700 in-patient bed hospital, which also has 3,000 outpatient visits per day that are scattered throughout the day. Parking is generous if the spaces are allocated to patients and visitors.

The traffic projections presented by the University are irrelevant, because they don't include the new 4-lane hospital access road. This road was presented to you on Sept 10, 2001 in Addendum 2 of the UNC Dev plan. In her cover letter, Vice Chancellor Sutfenfield writes "I need to stress that in their approval of the Master Plan, the Board of Trustees clearly set forth their support for both the new access road and the regional transit corridor." Last week at the planning board meeting, George Alexiou termed the new access road, "A major drainage from the campus to the bypass". Since the major drainage road will have a major impact on traffic in the southern area of campus and in southern Chapel Hill in general, traffic studies that ignore it are of little value.

It is unbelievable that UNC and UNC Health Care need 12 lanes to the bypass, 4 on Manning, 4 on the new access road, and 4 on South Columbia, especially when the UNC Development and Master Plans both are founded on the principle that fewer people will drive individual cars into the center of campus.

Please notice that if UNC uses the traffic projections presented tonight to justify a major widening of South Columbia Street, it will be doing so for a temporary reason, only until the new access road is indeed built. How many homes would UNC and DOT take for a short-term-only need?

In conclusion, please reject the Jackson Circle Deck, as both unnecessary and in violation the plan's principles. Please also reject the traffic projections, and require that they be redone with the new access road taken into account.

Thank you for hearing me tonight.