

MINUTES OF A PUBLIC FORUM  
FOR CITIZENS' COMMENTS AND WORK SESSION WITH VARIOUS TOWN BOARDS  
ON THE ROSEMARY SQUARE DEVELOPMENT AND CONTRACT, HELD BY THE  
MAYOR AND COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF CHAPEL HILL, MUNICIPAL  
BUILDING, MONDAY, JANUARY 7, 1985, 8:30 P.M.

Mayor Joseph L. Nassif called the meeting to order. Council members present were:

Winston Broadfoot  
Jonathan Howes  
Beverly Kawalec  
David Pasquini  
Nancy Preston  
R. D. Smith  
Bill Thorpe

Council member Marilyn Myers Boulton was absent, excused. Also present were Town Manager David R. Taylor, Assistant Town Managers Sonna Loewenthal and Ron Secrist, and Town Attorney Grainger Barrett.

Mayor Nassif opened the meeting for a brief presentation from the Fraser Development Company.

Mr. Whit Morrow, representing the Fraser Development Company complimented the Council, Town staff, consultants, review boards and citizens for their thoughtful and vigorous review of the Rosemary Square Project. He went on to summarize the results of the process involved in developing Rosemary Square.

Dr. Bill Kohn, representing the Downtown Chapel Hill Association, thanked the Mayor and Council for their attempt to revitalize downtown Chapel Hill.

Mr. Wade Dansby, speaking as a resident, expressed concern over potential added traffic complications in the North St. area. He also stated that there were already problems with speeding in that area.

Mr. Paul Morris, speaking as a citizen, questioned whether or not the project included permanent residential units for those persons wishing to live full time in the downtown area. Mr. Whit Morrow, of the Fraser Development Company, responded that the hotel will include suites which may be purchased by individuals.

Mr. Henry Whitfield, speaking as a citizen, questioned the proposed cost of a hotel room. Mr. Morrow responded that they expected the average rate per suite to be \$104.00 and \$45.00 to \$50.00 for a separate bedroom. These rates, according to Mr. Morrow, were about the range of the Carolina Inn plus 10%. Mr. Whitfield also expressed concern about the added cost for security in the new alleyways and the potential increase in rents for retailers.

Mr. Watts Hill, Jr., speaking for the Chamber of Commerce, enthusiastically endorsed the project.

Joe Herzenberg, speaking as a citizen, felt there had not been enough public discussion on this project, nor on the impact on the adjoining residential areas.

Council Member Broadfoot posed several questions to Town staff regarding the failure of the Town to receive an appraisal on the air rights above the parking lot. He stated he was against the selling of the air rights. Council Member Broadfoot also expressed concern about the traffic impact and the apparent lack of information on what effect this increased traffic would have on the surrounding areas. He went on to question whether this project would place pressure to create a one-way pairing of Franklin and Rosemary Streets.

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Town Attorney, Grainger Barrett, responded to Council Member Broadfoot regarding the air rights appraisal. He explained that an appraisal of the property had to take into account the limitations put on uses by the Town Council in its requests for proposals. Mr. Barrett also stated that the Town administration had an appraisal of the property, and that it was felt by the negotiating team that the value, or benefits being provided by the company for the air rights, was very close to the value of the entire property, land plus air rights. Town Manager Taylor then responded that though there was no separate appraisal for the air rights, he felt the proposal offered a fair return for the Town's interest. Mr. Taylor also stated that although the staff had not reviewed the traffic impact question in a formal report, there had been discussion on this topic, and methods identified that the Town might use to address this problem. Mr. Taylor went on to state that he saw no immediate pressure for one-way pairing of Franklin and Rosemary Streets, especially since the Council had expressed itself to be against such a move.

Council Member Smith asked the Manager to investigate Mr. Dansby's report of speeding in the North St. area. Mr. Taylor responded this would occur. Council Member Smith also stated in response to Mr. Herzenberg's statement that he felt that there had been ample opportunities for citizens to address this issue.

Council Member Kawalec expressed concern about destroying the pedestrian orientation of downtown Chapel Hill with increased traffic flow and the plans for increased parking facilities in this project. She felt a reduction in the number of spaces planned for the parking deck would be a possible solution; especially as the Town had recently purchased two other lots in downtown Chapel Hill which could be used for parking.

Council Member Thorpe suggested that the reduction in the number of spaces in the parking deck would not reduce the number of people looking for a parking space.

Council Member Preston expressed concern over where the police would park when attending court. She also inquired about the plans for better pedestrian flow. Mr. Whit Morrow responded stating that within the number of "reserved" spaces for retailers, hotel guests, etc., there would be spaces for these vehicles. He also stated he envisioned mid-block crossings, with lights, approximately opposite the NCNB Plaza area.

Mayor Nassif commented that he felt the Rosemary Square project and the addition of the Pearsall property to be just a beginning to adding to the downtown. Mayor Nassif felt the Pearsall property will help ease the parking problem by spreading it out rather than centralizing it as it has been in the past. He felt there were valid reasons for elimination of some of the parking spaces and that Council should address this issue, but that he felt the Town had taken a step toward making downtown Chapel Hill a more unique place.

COUNCIL MEMBER PRESTON MOVED FOR REFERRAL, SECONDED BY COUNCIL MEMBER HOWES. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY, (8-0).

Mayor Nassif opened the work session with Town Advisory Boards.

Lightning Brown, representing the Planning Board, stated that the Board felt the design of the project to be excellent, especially the use of pedestrian space, but it was concerned with traffic and safety within the project, and externally in the adjacent neighborhoods. The Planning Board suggested possibly one-waying of North Street from Airport Road to Henderson Street, and reducing the speed differential on Rosemary Street to reduce the potential traffic problems.

John Thomas, representing the Transportation Board, posed four questions which addressed concerns regarding the reasonable division of profits, the allocation of profits on an annual basis, limitations on parking, and the allocation of capacity based on annual parking space use hours.

Josh Gurlitz, representing the Community Appearance Commission, stated the Commission reviewed the project using four criteria: 1) how the project met the sky or skyline; 2) how the project met the ground; 3) the depth or 3-dimensional effect; and 4) the compatibility with the surrounding area. Overall, the Commission felt the project was good. With regards to the four criteria the Commission felt that the project got high marks with regard to the skyline, except for the end wall elevation of the section facing Henderson St. and the alleyway. The Commission felt the proposed plantings and surface materials would be very good, and that there was sufficient use of glass at various levels to aid visual penetration. With regards to criteria 3 & 4, the Commission felt there was good depth to the project and that it had a lot of identity, but also felt perhaps the entire mass of the buildings on Rosemary Street might appear too monolithic.

Al Wurth, a member of the Transportation Board, but speaking as a citizen, questioned the size and location of the parking deck. He felt there should be more information on by whom and how often the parking deck will be used.

Council Member Howes suggested Council have another work session to further discuss some of the questions posed at this meeting. He also asked Mr. Morrow if there were still plans to save the magnolia tree behind the old post office building. Mr. Morrow responded that if Council wanted to save the tree the company would try and that it would cost approximately \$10,000 to \$15,000.

Council Member Preston stated that saving the tree was something in which she was interested.

COUNCIL MEMBER SMITH MOVED FOR THE COMMENTS OF THE BOARDS TO BE REFERRED TO THE MANAGER, SECONDED BY COUNCIL MEMBER PRESTON. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY, (8-0).

Council Members agreed to continue the work session on Jan. 14, 1985 at 5:00 p.m. to further discuss the Rosemary Square project.

The meeting was recessed at 10:35 p.m. to re-convene at 5:00 p.m. on January 14, 1985.

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Mayor Joseph L. Nassif

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Nancy Wells, Information Services

