

MINUTES OF A WORK SESSION HELD BY THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL
OF THE TOWN OF CHAPEL HILL, MUNICIPAL BUILDING,
TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 24, 1985, 7:30 P.M.

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

- David Godschalk
- Jonathan Howes
- Beverly Kawalec
- David Pasquini
- R. D. Smith
- Bill Thorpe

Council Members Marilyn Myers Boulton and Nancy Preston were absent, excused. Also present were Town Manager David R. Taylor, Assistant Town Managers Sonna Loewenthal and Ron Secrist, Town Attorney Ralph Karpinos, and Walter Daniels, Whit Morrow and Phil Szostak representing the Fraser Development Company of North Carolina.

Mr. Philip Szostak, Architect, gave a presentation on the site plans for Rosemary Square. He pointed out various features in the design and presented a model of the three level parking garage which showed the inner and outer loops for traffic flow. He said retail space would be along Rosemary Street to visually separate the parking garage from the street. This would also include a covered arcade along the facade of the building. He said the proposal had two plaza levels with the first being on the same level as the Post Office. Mr. Szostak said the primary change in this site plan from the previous one reviewed with Council was the increase in size of the entrance to the Plaza from the Post Office alley area. He also said that along each side of the Plaza would be retail space, and Plaza Level Two would be the same level as that of the existing Papaguayo's restaurant in the NCNB Plaza. This level would contain hotel/condominium rooms around the perimeter and the main restaurant which would front Henderson Street and the Plaza.

Mr. Szostak said some of the major changes were the addition of more dormers on the buildings fronting Henderson and Rosemary Streets, arched facades, light sconces, three cupolas on the roofs to signify pedestrian entrances and a six-story watchtower in a corner of the Lower Plaza. He said the cupolas would be illuminated at night to aid in showing pedestrian entrances.

Mr. Szostak discussed the landscape design for the proposal. He pointed out that the pedestrian walkway along the Rosemary Street facade was a serpentine wall with built-in seating, dense ground covering and large trees expected to reach the second level of the building. He said the sidewalk would be done in a diamond pattern. There would be a "flower button" with one of symbols of the building at the entranceway on Henderson Street. The first plaza level would be floored with a diagonal pattern and the plantings would be at the edges of the courtyard in planter pots. He said there would also be a grid of lattice work on the side of the building which would allow for some of the plantings to grow up the side of the building. He also pointed out a lattice trellis for plantings to connect the alleyway with the courtyard.

Council Member Thorpe asked if the facade of Rosemary Square would be built of the same kind of brick as that on the Post Office. Mr. Szostak replied that it would be as close as possible.

Council Member Pasquini asked about the roof area, whether or not there were rooms in that area and if it could be reduced in height in order to reduce the height of the entire structure. Mr. Szostak replied that there were free standing rooms in the dormer areas of the roof, that those spaces not occupied by rooms contained the mechanical equipment and ductwork and that the height could not be reduced.

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Council Member Pasquini asked if the cupolas served any purpose other than aesthetic; how high were they and if their presence raised the buildings to the 90' maximum height allowed under the Development Ordinance and thus increasing the overall feel of the project? Mr. Szostak said that the cupolas served only to point out pedestrian entranceways. He said they were approximately 16 to 20' in height and with their inclusion the project was 90' in height. Mr. Szostak argued however that their inclusion did not increase the overall size of the project. He went on to say that the cupola was a major part of the Chapel Hill architecture.

Council Member Pasquini expressed concern over the footprint of the project saying that it did not fit in with the other buildings in its surrounding area. He also expressed concern over the amount of shading the buildings would cause both within the project and on the other businesses along Franklin Street. Mr. Szostak replied that the amount of shading on adjacent buildings was within the Development Ordinance stipulations. He said the interior courtyard would be almost fully shaded most of the year, while the Post Office courtyard would be in the sunshine. He said the interior courtyard would probably be used for outdoor activities more in the spring and summer months when the shade would be welcomed.

Council Member Pasquini said he would like site line drawings from Franklin Street made available to the Planning Board when this item was reviewed. He also said he was concerned over the amount of traffic which would be generated as a result of this project. He suggested that traffic would increase to the point where Rosemary Street would have to be one way. Manager Taylor replied that the the Thoroughfare Plan called for Rosemary Street to have a heavier traffic flow but did not call for it to become one-way and the staff did not anticipate anything different.

Council Member Pasquini asked when the plans for the security system for the parking garage would be ready and presented to Council. Mr. Whit Morrow replied that they were contracting with a security consultant to provide them with a security plan which included the use of 24-hour video monitoring, hotel security personnel, Town police, etc.

Council Member Thorpe said he appreciated the staff including in the memorandum the dates on which this proposal had been discussed. He said that both citizens and Council had had numerous previous opportunities to discuss these issues.

Council Member Godschalk said he liked the design of the facade and suggested eliminating the proposed parking spaces on Level O in order to lower the building. Mayor Nassif and Mr. Szostak both replied that the elimination of these parking spaces would not result in a lowering of the building.

Council Member Godschalk asked if it were possible to have a broader, more inviting accessway to Rosemary Square from Franklin Street. Mr. Szostak said that they had already had some conversations with property owners along Amber Alley. Mr. Walter Daniels said that they had thought about acquiring a building along Franklin Street but that there had to be an owner willing to sell at a reasonable price. He also said that the public had a special feeling for Amber Alley and might not like to see it changed. Mr. Morrow said that economically, it would be a good idea for one of the property owners along Franklin Street to open up his building into an arcade and that such an arcade would fit into the Rosemary Square project.

Council Member Godschalk asked about the spin-off effect of the project. He said the undeveloped lots across from Rosemary Square would probably be developed thus bringing Rosemary Street up to its current traffic capacity. Manager Taylor replied that this had been considered and said that the Thoroughfare Plan called for heavier traffic flow on Rosemary Street which would change the traffic flow classification of Rosemary Street which in turn would increase its capacity level.

Council Member Godschalk concluded by saying that the number of parking spaces proposed in the project might be reduced to help reduce the traffic impact. Manager Taylor said the Town had originally requested proposals for 250 parking spaces. The present proposal called for 325 public parking spaces and 175 private spaces. He said he hoped Council would not greatly reduce the number of spaces because of how it might affect the expected generated revenue from the project.

Mayor Nassif said that the number of parking spaces could be reduced, especially if the Town reduced and enforced loading zone areas in the downtown area. He said that there were other areas available for parking and that the Town should not try to center all the downtown parking in that one block.

Council Member Kawalec said that her main concern was the traffic impact, but that she was convinced that Rosemary Square was a charming and beautiful concept. She said she was ready to move ahead with the project and if the number of parking spaces could be reduced she would be in favor of it.

Council Member Howes said he had been excited about the project since its inception and he applauded the architects and developers for their proposal. He said he also had concerns about the amount of shading in the interior of the project but that the open access along the Post Office should help. He said he liked the idea of the clock tower and the diamond pattern in the courtyard. He concluded by saying that a modest reduction in the number of parking spaces would be agreeable to him.

Council Member Smith said he approved of the project and expected the architects and developers to do an excellent job. He said he did not want to eliminate any parking spaces and wished they could be increased. He said the Town needed to be able to eliminate parking along the streets in nearby residential areas for those people visiting the downtown area. He felt the residential areas should be used for parking by the residents only. Council Member Smith concluded by saying that the Town was trying to revitalize downtown Chapel Hill and that this project addressed that issue and that the Town needed to be looking for other projects as well.

Council Member Thorpe commented that he hoped they would not reduce the number of parking spaces in the proposed project.

Council Member Pasquini asked what had been arranged with regard to the transfer of prisoners to the Courthouse and for Postal Service use. Manager Taylor replied that provisions had been made for two vans in a secure area for Court use, and that there would be a specific number of spaces available for the Post Office use.

Mayor Nassif said he felt the project was a functional and sensitive arrangement. He said the Town was trying to infuse something back into Chapel Hill that it had lost, namely all ages of people at all times in the downtown area as well as residents in downtown, and that this project would help do that as well as help stabilize the downtown area. He said he felt the Planning Board should review the entire downtown area when discussing parking.

Council Member Smith suggested Council send the site plan to the Planning Board as presented.

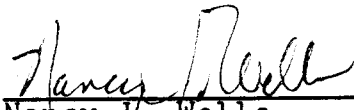
COUNCIL CONSENSUS WAS TO SEND THE SITE PLAN, AS PRESENTED, TO THE PLANNING BOARD FOR REVIEW.

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Council Member Kawalec suggested that the Council authorize the Mayor to speak for the Council as co-owner of the project at the October 1st Planning Board meeting. This was agreeable with Council.

A MOTION WAS DULY MADE AND SECONDED TO ADJOURN THE MEETING. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY, (7-0).

The meeting adjourned at 10:05 p.m.

Mayor Joseph L. Nassif



Nancy J. Wells
Town Clerk