

SUMMARY OF A WORKSESSION OF THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL
AND PLANNING BOARD OF THE TOWN OF CHAPEL HILL,
TEEN ROOM, COMMUNITY CENTER, WEDNESDAY,
FEBRUARY 5, 1986, 7:30 P.M.

Mayor Pro-tem Bill Thorpe called the meeting to order. Council Members present were:

- Julie Andresen
- David Godschalk
- David Pasquini
- Nancy Preston
- R. D. Smith
- Arthur Werner

Mayor Wallace and Council Member Howes were absent, excused.

Planning Board Members present were:

- David Brower
- Pat Evans
- Don Francisco
- Tom McCurdy
- Mae McLendon
- Meg Parker
- Al Rimer
- Bill Rohe

Planning Board Members Ingram and Raney were absent, excused.

Also present were Town Manager David R. Taylor, Assistant Town Manager Sonna Loewenthal, and Planning Director Roger Waldon.

Mayor Pro-tem Thorpe said it was good that these two boards could meet together to discuss the goals and objectives and the direction the Town will head in the next few years. He felt these discussions were on topics which represented the backbone of the plans for the future of development in Chapel Hill. He thanked the Planning Board for their work in developing questions and proposals.

Planning Board Member Don Francisco introduced a memorandum from the Planning Board to the Council in which the Board had listed notes on planning policy issues and a planning schedule. The first planning issue was the question of whether the development plan for Chapel Hill should involve a fixed urbanized area or allow for expanding boundaries.

Council Member Preston commented that the Town needed to be flexible with its boundaries to allow for annexation.

Council Member Werner said that the boundaries would be affected by the joint planning area and the Town's interaction with Orange County.

Council Member Pasquini said he felt Chapel Hill would expand in the future and that it needed to expand to increase its tax base, therefore he felt the development plan for Chapel Hill should allow for expanding boundaries.

Council Member Andresen suggested that the Town needed to have a fixed idea of the perimeter of Chapel Hill. She said there needed to be this fixed boundary in order to maintain the rural buffers around the Town.

Council Member Smith said the boundaries were set up by the political and geographical situation, with Carrboro, Orange County, and Durham County. He said these entities would affect where the urbanized areas of Chapel Hill would be.

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Council Member Godschalk said that the current land use plan allows for a 20 year transition period. He said the Town should view this period as the planning period, think what the area should look like in 20 years, and then draw the "boundaries" and plan within that area.

Planning Board Member Rimer commented that inherent in the question of static versus flexible boundaries was the implication of population growth. He said by having static or fixed boundaries the Town would be limiting the potential population growth.

The general consensus of the Council was to allow for expansion.

Planning Board Member Francisco stated the next issue as whether or not the development plan should include the goal for affordable housing. He said one way to allow for affordable housing was through higher density zoning.

Planning Board Member Rohe commented that this was a relative goal in that the Town would not be able to provide market priced housing but could provide medium priced homes through higher density zoning, subsidies, etc.

Council Members Andresen and Preston spoke in favor of planning for affordable housing but stated they felt it should be included only if it were a realistic goal.

Council Member Smith said that the goal of affordable housing should be looked at from the Chapel Hill Township perspective rather than just within the Town of Chapel Hill. He said there needed to be a concerted effort from all the governmental bodies within the Township to meet this goal.

Council Member Godschalk said the question should not be either the Town works toward affordable housing or it does not. He said the Council felt the Town should have this as part of its development plan as a goal to work toward.

Planning Board Member Francisco said the next issue was whether or not the Town development plan should encourage the retention of the character of established neighborhoods. He said that at present, the zoning in many neighborhoods encourages redevelopment.

Council Member Preston spoke in support of maintaining established neighborhoods. Council Member Smith echoed her sentiments. The general consensus of the Council was to encourage retention of established neighborhoods.

Planning Board Member Francisco stated the next planning issue as the question of office development. He said the Board needed to have some indication of whether or not more office development should be allowed.

Council Member Werner said he would prefer to see office growth through office parks similar to Eastowne.

Council Member Godschalk said that his view of the future of Chapel Hill included the need for office space. He said he did not want to have the development plan of Chapel Hill to create a shortage of office space availability.

The Planning Board asked for direction as to how the Council wanted to allow for increased office development.

Council Member Werner suggested reviewing the transitional zones for potential office development.

Planning Board Member Francisco stated the next issues as whether or not to allow for nonconformities and the potential for "up" and "down" zoning.

General consensus from the Council was to allow but not encourage nonconformities, and to allow for up and down zoning.

Planning Board Member Francisco said the next issue was whether or not the development plan should have new commercial development serve the needs of the community or the region.

General consensus from the Council was to have new commercial development to serve the community not the region.

Planning Board Member Bill Rohe stated the next issue as whether or not to include evaluations of individual neighborhood considerations in a neighborhood plan to be used as an integral part of the development plan for the Town.

General consensus of the Council was to include neighborhood plans in the development plan for Chapel Hill. Council Member Smith did question whether or not this might create an uneven balance in development if all neighborhood plans were not developed and pursued equally.

Planning Board Member Bill Rohe said the next issue was whether or not encouragement for the Town to acquire land for various purposes be included in the development plan.

Council Member Godschalk expressed the feelings of the Council saying that the Council was on record approving the desire for acquisition of land for greenways, etc. and the question of funding would be addressed in a bond issue.

Planning Board Member Bill Rohe said the last two issues were should the plan include a linkage between the land use plan and the transportation plan and should the timing of development be linked with these plans so that development did not exceed the capacity of the infrastructure, services, etc.

The general consensus of the Council was that the two plans should be linked and that developments should be timed so as not to exceed the capacity of the infrastructure, etc.

Planning Board Member David Brower said that the Board felt a work program needed established with specific goals in order to make the proposed goals and objectives of the Town. He said the Board suggested making changes to the Development Ordinance in the next two months, have the Design Manual reviewed by March, compile an updated land use plan map by July, and develop a more comprehensive program over the next 18 months. He said part of this would be a program to set up neighborhood planning programs which would be used in the development plan.

The Council agreed with the proposed schedule for reviewing and making appropriate revisions to the development policy.

Goals and Objectives

The Council and Planning Board discussed a draft memorandum of the Town's Goals and Objectives. (A copy of the draft goals and objectives incorporating the suggested changes will be distributed)

Schedule for Land Use Plan

The Council agreed in general with the proposal as presented to the Council by the Planning Board on January 27, 1986, which includes a having the staff prepare an interim land use plan to be presented to the Council in April with adoption to be in July and the establishment of a Community Task Force to assist the Planning Board in taking the draft land use plan into the community for reaction and input.

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The Council said they did not want the interim land use plan to be done in a hurry, fearing this might create a less than adequate plan. They were also concerned that changes in the development process would cease during this 18 month period, and requested that evaluations and proposed changes be continued to be brought to the Council's attention. Council Member Smith commented that he hoped the new land use plan would not be changed as soon as it is adopted because it did not meet the needs of a specific development.

Manager Taylor replied that the proposed changes to the Development Ordinance set for later in February would shift the development outlook for the Town. He said that the staff would use the proposed workplan from the January 27th memorandum and develop an interim land use plan for the Town to be adopted in July.