

Lightbridge

Urban Designer Comments 01-15-26

Submitted by Brian Peterson, AIA, Urban Designer, Town of Chapel Hill

The following comments are in reference to the drawing package dated 05-01-25 and elevations from April of 2025. Several design meetings have been held with the applicant team throughout the planning process.

Unlike the "District-Specific Plan" included with this application, building renderings, elevations, and other drawings are not binding documents. They represent potential designs but should not be interpreted as commitments from the developer. Likewise, comments on these drawings and on the district specific plan are not suggestions for new commitments from the developer. They are provided to help Town Council better understand the proposed project and some of its potential design features.

Site Plan

1. The day care use would add to the mix of services available in this portion of Chapel Hill.
2. Inclusion of some housing is a positive aspect of the project. While the townhouses might be a bit isolated within this block now, beginning to incorporate some housing into this Tymberline district points toward the future redevelopment of this entire area, which should move towards a mixed-use neighborhood, of housing, work, and retail/commercial, as a Transit Oriented Development.
3. The outdoor play area is proposed at the front of the building along Weaver Dairy Road. Anticipating that there will be some kind of enclosure for the space, suggest a fence type that will provide the appropriate security, but still be attractive along the Weaver Dairy Road frontage. For example, a typical chain link type of fence would not be appropriate from a visual perspective.
4. Suggest providing some shade structures or devices for portions of the play area.
5. The design of the landscape area between the townhouses and the back of the Walgreens should be dense enough to provide adequate screening from the pharmacy drive through.

Elevations

6. The proposed elevation concepts exhibit a material palette that is compatible with neighboring structures to the west.
7. The projecting canopies above the windows help provide some interest and depth to the elevations.
8. The entrance area to the building is receiving emphasized articulation as indicated in the three options. Option 1 does this most effectively, with the use of brick and the projecting integrated "fin" and overhang going around the corner, providing a "frame" of the entrance.
9. No elevation has been provided in the review packet of the front North elevation. As this is the primary elevation that will be viewed from the street it is essential that this façade receive adequate articulation commensurate with what is indicated for the South and East elevations.