

Amy Harvey

From: Jeanette Coffin
Sent: Wednesday, June 17, 2020 3:36 PM
To: CHALT
Cc: Judy Johnson; Amy Harvey; Carolyn Worsley; Flo Miller; Laura Selmer; Mary Jane Nirdlinger; Maurice Jones; Rae Buckley; Ralph Karpinos; Ran Northam; Ross Tompkins; Sabrina Oliver; Allen Buansi; Amy Ryan; Hongbin Gu; Jeanne Brown; Jess Anderson; Karen Stegman; Michael Parker; Pam Hemminger; Shakera Vaughan; Tai Huynh
Subject: RE: Please verify the following before voting on Elliott Road Extension Resolution

Thank you for your correspondence with the Town of Chapel Hill. The Mayor and Town Council are interested in what you have to say. By way of this email, I am forwarding your message to the Mayor and each of the Council Members, as well as to the appropriate staff person who may be able to assist in providing additional information or otherwise addressing your concerns.

If your email is related to a development application or a particular issue being addressed by the Council, your comments will be made part of the record. If applicable, we encourage you to attend any public meetings related to the items addressed in your email.

Again, thank you for your message.

Sincerely,

Jeanette Coffin



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From: CHALT [mailto:info@chalt.org]
Sent: Wednesday, June 17, 2020 2:46 PM
To: Town Council <mayorandcouncil@townofchapelhill.org>
Cc: Maurice Jones <mjones@townofchapelhill.org>; Pamela Schultz <pamela.b.schultz@gmail.com>
Subject: Please verify the following before voting on Elliott Road Extension Resolution

External email: Don't click links or attachments from unknown senders. To check or report forward to reportspam@townofchapelhill.org

Dear Mayor Hemminger and Town Council Members.

Tonight you are asked to approve a resolution that will empower the Manager to borrow up to \$7,250,000 to construct a road that was first envisioned to cost \$2.6 million that

will continue Elliott Rd across 15-501 through a flood zone to connect up with Ephesus Road.

We ask that you verify the following:

Please review the engineering drawings for this road before you approve the financing. How is the floodway and flood plain to be negotiated, culvert or bridge? What measures will be taken for the road to avoid interfering with the natural drainage of the area? What variances were required from the Department of the Environment? What storm water measures will be required in its construction? What flood period does the design cover? 10 year? 100 year? See image below of proposed road crossing floodway.

Please fully evaluate the impact on the Town's finances/budget/tax rates of adding \$7,250,000 to our debt, particularly considering this period of reduced sales tax revenues, etc. Chapel Hill is already committing to a new parking deck on E. Rosemary Street which will not break even for 20 years. Are we creating a fiscally unsustainable situation that is placing the financial future of the town on shaky ground?

Understand that approving \$7,250,000 debt would appear to be the true intent of the resolution. It seems unlikely that Park Apartment owners will contribute more than the \$1.5 million already offered for affordable housing. You will recall that the Park Apartments housed 200 families in affordable units that we've lost as a result of the 2014 Council approval of the Form Based Code District.

Find out the explanation for why the cost estimate for the road has tripled from \$2.6 to \$7.5 million dollars.

Finally as a community, there are many more worthwhile purposes we can identify - a new police station, flood control basins, additional affordable housing - where we could spend \$7,250,000, other than for this road through a floodway which will not reduce congestion on 15-501, and primarily benefits the developer, not the Town.

Thank you!

Julie McClintock for CHALT



July 29, 2020

Dear Manager Jones and Town Council,

Tonight the Town Council is asked to approve a contract for extending Elliott Road to connect with Ephesus Church Road.

The undersigned want to go on record as strongly objecting to this unwarranted expenditure of taxpayer money for the following reasons:

- The Town, not the developer, is asked to pay the cost of the road that benefits only the developer. The owner needs the road far more than does the Town. Why should the Town pay?
- Why should the Town agree to cover the full construction cost of the road even if bids are millions of dollars higher than anticipated, and even if there are overruns on the project? If the Town is to pay anything at all, shouldn't our costs be capped at, say, \$2.6 million? Shouldn't the developer be required to cover anything above the cap?
- Why should the Town assume maintenance costs on the road if the crossing of the floodplain is designed for 50-year flood events, when it is expected from recent experience that storms will repeatedly exceed that level and create damage requiring significant repairs?

- The original goal of the “Blue Hill” District was for the Town budget to increase town revenues more than costs, yet to date, it is losing money because it has failed to meet a fraction of projected office and retail development goals -- and the cost of services for residential units exceeds the cost of predicted property taxes.
- Contrary to claims being made, the road connection will not relieve traffic on 15-501. In fact it will increase 15-501 traffic coming from the increase in residential construction without any corresponding 15-501 improvements. The extension offers little reduction in turning movements at the nearby 15-501/Ephesus Church Road intersection.
- Elliott Road Extension will cross a floodway. The design drawings only accommodate a commonly occurring 50 year flood, not the 500 year floods (hurricanes) that have occurred several times since 2000. Why are we not building a bridge instead?

On this last point, Town Engineering Director Chris Roberts replied to our concerns about the adequacy of the engineering design. **Our concerns are not primarily with the Park Apartment(s) owner managing stormwater runoff from this site but rather the flood threat from the entire Booker Creek watershed. The culverts under the extended Elliott Road, limited to handling a 50 year flood frequency, will back up water and cause flooding damage upstream when increasingly common large flood events occur.**

We are calling on this Town Council to explain why they supported working with the Park Apartments owners when the end result was clear: the loss of affordable homes for 200 families in exchange for another high-priced apartment project. The offer by the owners of \$1.5 million in cash compensation falls far short of costs to house our least able, displaced citizens.

We are condemned to repeat our mistakes if we don't understand them. We ask that the Mayor and Town Council conduct a new benefit-cost analysis for the district. We believe the district is failing its initial objective -- to produce a net increase in Town revenue.

Finally, our largest objection is the approval of borrowing up to \$6,047,442 (revised RFP amount) to construct a road that was first envisioned to cost \$2.6 million that brings no demonstrable value to our Town. There are other Town responsibilities that are far more important recipients of those millions, e.g., affordable housing.

Signed,

Anne and Bill Brashear, Linda K. Brown, Arthur and Debbie Finn, Steve Fleck, Vivian Foushee, Laurel

Goldman, Joan Guilkey, Tom Henkel, Bruce Henschel, Charles Humble, Ramon Fernandez, Fred Lampe, Rita M. May, Julie McClintock, Molly McConnell, Susan Morance, John Morris, David Schwartz, Del Snow, Terry and Bob Vance, Neva Whybark, and Bob and Diane Willis