

January 26, 2023

Judy Johnson  
Town of Chapel Hill Planning Department  
405 Martin Luther King Jr Boulevard  
Chapel Hill, North Carolina 27514

**RE: Aura South Elliott Justification and Statements of Compliance**

**STATEMENT OF JUSTIFICATION**

The proposed zoning brings the subject parcels into greater conformance with the Town’s Comprehensive Plan. The property is currently zoned OI-2 and R-5, and a WR-7 or R-6 zoning is requested to fulfill the themes and goals of the comprehensive plan elaborated on below. The property is located within the Town’s Blue Hill District but is not zoned with a corresponding Blue Hill zoning district. The WR-7 or R-6 zoning would allow for a multi-family development that would be compatible with the surrounding development and reflect the intent of the Blue Hill district by providing dense housing with pedestrian and transit access to the rest of the district and Chapel Hill as a whole. Statements below further support the case for the requested WR-7 or R-6 zoning district to permit a multifamily development.

**STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE WITH COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

Trinsic Residential Group is proposing a multi-family development on Elliot Road in accordance with the CH2020 Comprehensive Plan and the Blue Hill District Plan. The proposed plan addresses the following themes with their corresponding goals: A Place for Everyone, Community Prosperity and Engagement, Getting Around, Good Places, New Spaces, Nurturing our Community, and Town and Gown Collaboration. Similarly, it meets the intent of the Blue Hill District.

**THEME 1: A PLACE FOR EVERYONE**

Aura South Elliott meets the following goals under Theme 1:

- A range of housing options for current and future residents

One of the goals of Theme 1 is to provide a range of housing options for current and future residents. This property is located within the Blue Hill District and the proposed multi-family development would provide increased housing options within the Blue Hill District. The property would provide the opportunity for current and future residents to live within walking distance of local businesses, grocery stores, and transit stops.

**THEME 2: COMMUNITY PROSPERITY AND ENGAGEMENT**

Aura South Elliott meets the following goals under Theme 2:

- Promote a safe, vibrant, and connected community

A goal of Theme 2 is to promote a safe, vibrant, and connected community as well as foster success of local businesses. The site is located within the Blue Hill District, which provides residents with a variety of options to support local business restaurants, retail, and services. Overall, this residential development will contribute to a community that is well connected via transit access and safe, walkable connections to businesses in the district.

**THEME 3: GETTING AROUND**

Aura South Elliott meets the following goals under Theme 3:

- A connected community that links neighborhoods, businesses, and schools through the provision of greenways, sidewalks, bike facilities, and public transportation
- Connect to a regional transportation system
- Create a comprehensive transportation system that provides everybody safe and reasonable access to all the community offers

The proposed project will be well connected to the rest of the Blue Hill District and Downtown Chapel Hill. This location is a five-minute walk to regional and local bus lines (GoTriangle) on Elliott Road and Franklin Street that serve both the university and employers in Durham County (notably Southpoint and RTP). Combined, the bus systems provide bus service to the UNC Campus and UNC Hospital at less-than-five-minute intervals during peak travel times, as well as bus service on nights and weekends, a rarity in this region. The project will also be located along a variety of sidewalk and pedestrian networks which will provide walkable connections to local businesses and transit stops. Whether it is a moderate walk, a bike ride, a short drive, or hopping on the bus, future residents of the proposed multi-family project will have multiple transportation options to choose from to access nearby retail, businesses, jobs, and services.

**THEME 4: GOOD PLACES, NEW SPACES**

Aura South Elliott meets the following goals under Theme 4:

- Future land-use, form, and density that strengthen the community, social equity, economic prosperity, and natural environment
- A range of neighborhood types that addresses residential, commercial, social, and cultural needs and uses while building and evolving Chapel Hill's character for residents, visitors, and students
- Open and accessible common spaces for community gathering, cultural uses, and community development

The proposed development provides additional housing options to the Blue Hill District and will be consistent with the future land use plans for the area. The apartments will provide the desired density to this area and enhance the

vibrancy of the Blue Hill District for Chapel Hill residents by providing housing within the mixed-use district. The site design will include an amenity with a clubhouse and pool, offering opportunities for community gathering.

#### **THEME 5: NURTURING OUR COMMUNITY**

Aura South Elliott meets the following goals under Theme 5:

- Maintain and improve air quality and water quality, and manage stormwater to heal local waterways and conserve biological ecosystems within the town boundaries and the Extra-Territorial Jurisdiction

There is a stream buffer located along Elliott Road that will be taken into consideration in the development of the property. Proximity to commercial nodes, bus stops, and trails supports the Climate Action Plan, by promoting walking and biking or public transportation to reduce vehicle use and emissions, therefore reducing carbon footprint and improving air quality. Stormwater will be detained and treated onsite with an underground facility, ensuring that adjacent neighborhoods are not impacted from development.

#### **THEME 6: TOWN AND GOWN COLLABORATION**

Aura South Elliott meets the following goals under Theme 6:

- Promote access for all residents to healthcare centers, public services, and active lifestyle opportunities
- Housing for students that is safe, sound, affordable, and accessible and meets a demonstrated need conducive to educational and maturational needs of students, and **housing for Town, University, and Healthcare System employees that encourages them to reside in the community**

By contributing to the range of housing options, this development will provide residents of varying ages, including recent UNC graduates and employees, with new rental housing opportunities. The proposed project is less than 5 miles from UNC campus and UNC Hospitals and located along Chapel Hill Transit and GoTriangle bus routes which serve the university and other major employment centers in the region. Recent graduates whose employment is outside of Chapel Hill will also find appeal here due to its affordability and proximity to the Durham and RTP job cores, allowing Chapel Hill to diversify its population as students turn into young professionals.

#### **STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE WITH DESIGN GUIDELINES**

The Aura South Elliott multi-family project will be built in compliance with the Town's Design Guidelines.

The architecture will be carefully designed with high-quality materials and a design that fits within the overall community and will meet the massing, façade, and building footprint requirements of the Blue Hill District. Apartment buildings have been designed to create a central courtyard amenity space for residents, which will serve as the community and social hubs for the project. Parking will be structured internal to the building.

Landscape buffers will be designed in accordance with the Town's design manual and with the use of best practices to provide appropriate transitions between the building and streetscapes and adjacent land uses.

Vehicular connectivity will be provided to Elliott Road. Pedestrian connections to existing sidewalks will be provided throughout the project.

Stormwater management facilities, water, sewer, and other utilities will be provided in accordance with the applicable guidelines, standards, and regulations.

Sincerely,

**MCADAMS**