

## **Chapel Hill Town Council,**

Attached please find a petition from New Hope Audubon Society requesting the town promote a "Lights Out Chapel Hill" campaign going forward. This campaign will help birds during fall and spring migrations. Please share with Council and the Town Manager for the September 14 meeting.

We appreciate your consideration of this request and thank you for encouraging everyone to participate.

Sincerely,

Barbara Driscoll

President, New Hope Audubon Society

## **Lights Out Chapel Hill Petition**

The New Hope Audubon Society requests that Chapel Hill promote ***Lights Out Chapel Hill***, encouraging businesses, townhome and apartment communities and residents to turn off all outdoor and indoor lighting (including any upward facing lighting) during bird fall and spring migration periods. We would also request that Chapel Hill work with the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill to promote this program on campus during the fall and spring semesters.

Each year, between 100 million and 1 billion migrating birds die from collisions with windows and buildings each year. By eliminating the light escaping from homes and businesses, we can help birds stay on course.

Background information and specific ways that Chapel Hillians can help prevent the death of so many of our migrating birds are provided below.

### **Background:**

**What is Lights Out Chapel Hill?** This New Hope Audubon Society program in collaboration with the town of Chapel Hill promotes turning off all unnecessary nighttime lighting during the fall and spring migration to reduce bird casualties.

**Is there a problem?** Yes! An estimated 100 million to 1 billion migratory birds die from window collisions in the U.S. each year!

**What does migration mean for birds?** Many species of songbirds (warblers, thrushes, hummingbirds) migrate at night. This is millions of birds that use our eastern flyways. These birds are normally active during the day, except during migration when they travel between North America and South America. Some travel thousands of miles each way within weeks. Many birds travel 200-300 miles in one night. In North Carolina, 70 species have been documented as window-collision victims and of those several are designated as highly vulnerable species including Wood Thrush and Yellow-throated Warbler.

**Why do they migrate at night?** Birds migrate at night because cooler temperatures save them energy and there are much steadier tailwinds making flying more efficient. There are also fewer predators flying at night.

**Why Lights Out?** Light attracts and disorients migrating birds, confusing them and making them vulnerable to collisions with buildings and other urban threats.

**What can I do?** Turn off unnecessary exterior and interior lighting after 11 p.m. during spring and fall migration:

Fall: Sept 1- November 30

Spring: March 15-May 31

- Extinguish spot and flood-lights
- Reduce lobby and atrium lighting wherever possible
- Turn off interior lighting especially on upper floors
- Substitute task and area lighting for workers staying late or pull window coverings
- Down-shield exterior lighting to eliminate all light directed upward and horizontal glare
- Install motion sensors and automatic controls wherever possible
- When converting to new lighting carefully assess quality and quantity of light needed, avoiding over-lighting with newer, brighter technology

**Are other communities participating in Lights Out Programs?** Yes, there are over 40 large metropolitan areas participating including New York City, Philadelphia, Boston, Austin, Charlotte, Baltimore and San Francisco.

In North Carolina, Raleigh, Asheville, Charlotte, Winston-Salem are all participating, and Cary, Apex and Graham have proclamations or resolutions initiated.

**Petition:** In order to protect migrating birds, New Hope Audubon Society asks that Chapel Hill promote ***Lights Out Chapel Hill*** encouraging businesses, townhome and apartment communities and residents to turn off all outdoor and indoor lighting (including any upward facing lighting) during bird fall and spring migration periods. We would also request that Chapel Hill work with the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill to promote this program on campus during the fall and spring semesters.