

October 21, 2020

To: Chapel Hill Mayor and Town Council

From: Residents in the area of Mason Farm Rd., Whitehead Circle, and Purefoy Rd.

**Subject: Petition for improvements to neighborhood infrastructure to promote safe walking and biking and improved connectivity to adjacent neighborhoods and campus**

Our neighborhood, while small, is disproportionately impacted by car traffic generated by employees of and visitors to UNC Hospitals and regular events at Kenan Stadium and the Dean Dome. We live adjacent to UNC and reasonably close to downtown Chapel Hill and green spaces like Merritt’s Pasture and Jones Park but face a number of challenges that limit our ability to safely and easily access these amenities. These include:

- Traffic that regularly fails to stop for stop signs on Mason Farm Rd.,
- Poor sight lines and a lack of sidewalks on narrow Purefoy Rd., which leads to conflicts between cars and pedestrians walking to campus,
- Difficulty crossing the major roads that surround our neighborhood, and
- Limited influence on UNC’s extensive expansion plans for south campus, which present both challenges and opportunities for neighborhood residents.

Over the past six months, the neighbors have taken steps to identify improvements we believe will promote walking and biking in the area and better connect us to adjacent areas and amenities. A list of potential improvements was developed by neighborhood residents over email, then distributed to neighbors via a survey to identify the highest priority items. Six potential improvements received support from 75-100 percent of survey respondents and form the basis of this petition.

Specifically, we request that Council direct Town staff to address the following **high-priority improvements selected by neighborhood residents**:

Requested improvements	Support for improvements by petitioners																				
Restripe faded pavement markings at the intersection of Whitehead Rd. and Mason Farm Rd. and reduce the distance between the markings to increase the visibility of cars simultaneously approaching the intersection.	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●					
Add a crosswalk at the intersection of Whitehead Rd. and Mason Farm Rd. with a curb cut at the northern side of Mason Farm Rd.	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●					
Add "no outlet" or signage visible from Mason Farm Rd. to deter cars from turning onto Whitehead Rd.	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●					
Repave Whitehead Rd. to repair areas made uneven though water/gas line repairs.	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●					
Request that town staff coordinate with UNC to ensure neighborhood input regarding pedestrian and bike connectivity as South Campus evolves, especially as relates to the redevelopment of Odum Village, the expansion of the business school, and the town's proposed plans for the intersection of Oteys Rd. and Fordham Blvd.	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●					
Given the infeasibility of installing sidewalks along Purefoy Rd. between Mason Farm Rd. and S. Columbia St., research and install traffic calming measures that slow cars and protect pedestrians who have no choice but to walk in the road.	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●					
	<b>Petitioners</b>																				
	Mychal Weinert and Stephen Whitlow	Laura and Daniel Turbert	Richard and Susan Moody	Rachel Gelfand, Shoshana Funk	Anna Kang	Sangeeta Varanasi	Mary CekayAllen	Ravikant Varanasi, Sai Varanasi	Sandy Alexander	Jeff Bryant	Shanna Bryant	Joe & Megan Canady	John Northen	Mary Lucasse	Bart Barefoot and Vigdis Engebretsen	Maryann Feldman	Eve Mersfelder	Rick Allen	Maggie Conger	Kimberly Brewer	Tabitha Alexander

### **Lower priority improvements for the Town's consideration**

While the above items reflect our top priorities that we ask Town to address in this petition, we understand that the Town is currently updating its Mobility & Connectivity Plan. To inform the update, we offer the following additional potential improvements for Town staff to consider, each of which is in keeping with the goals of the Mobility & Connectivity Plan and is supported by a majority of respondents to the neighborhood survey:

- Add at least one self-activating pedestrian crossing on Cameron Ave. between Ransom St. and Merritt Mill Rd.
- Request that Town staff coordinate with UNC to secure a public pedestrian easement into Jones Park in the general area of Hibbard Dr. and Mason Farm Rd. and install a foot path.
- At the intersection of S. Columbia St. and the westbound Fordham Blvd. offramp, reprogram the walk signal to trigger red lights at the intersection to allow pedestrians to safely cross S. Columbia St.
- Request that Town staff coordinate with UNC to provide easier and safer pedestrian and bike access across S. Columbia St. between Briar Bridge Ln. and campus, near the Neuroscience Research Building, including a curb cut on the eastern side of S. Columbia.
- Add sidewalks on the west side of Ransom St., especially between McCauley St. and Cameron Ave.

**Petitioners addresses**

Laura and Daniel Turbert	420 Whitehead Circle
Richard and Susan Moody	406 Whitehead Circle
Rachel Gelfand, Shoshana Funk	423A Whitehead Circle
Anna Kang	419 Whitehead Circle
Sangeeta Varanasi	350 Whitehead Road
Mary CekayAllen	426 Whitehead Circle
Ravikant Varanasi, Sai Varanasi	350 Whitehead Road
Sandy Alexander	401 Whitehead Circle
Jeff Bryant	402 Whitehead Circle
Shanna Bryant	402 Whitehead Circle
Joe & Megan Canady	424 Whitehead Circle
John Northen	418 Whitehead Circle
Mary Lucasse	503 Oteys Road
Bart Barefoot and Vigdis Engebretsen	503 Whitehead Road
Maryann Feldman	1306 Mason Farm Rd
Eve Mersfelder	413 Whitehead Circle
Rick Allen	426 Whitehead Circle
Maggie Conger	421 Whitehead Circle
Kimberly Brewer	301 Purefoy Road
Tabitha Alexander	401 Whitehead Circle
Mychal Weinert and Stephen Whitlow	428 Whitehead Circle