

Amy Harvey

From: Jeanette Coffin
Sent: Tuesday, June 21, 2022 10:25 AM
To: Kathryn Desplanque
Cc: Sarah Vinas; Colleen Willger; Adam Searing; Amy Ryan; Bervely Joassaint; Camille Berry; Jeanne Brown; Jess Anderson; Karen Stegman; Lauren Williams; Michael Parker; Pam Hemminger; Paris Miller-Foushee; Tai Huynh; Amy Harvey; Ann Anderson; Carolyn Worsley; James Baker; Laura Selmer; Loryn Clark; Mary Jane Nirdlinger; Maurice Jones; Ran Northam; Ross Tompkins; Sabrina Oliver
Subject: RE: Huse Street development

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.

Again, thank you for your message.

Sincerely,

Jeanette Coffin



Jeanette Coffin
Office Assistant
[Town of Chapel Hill Manager's Office](#)
[405 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.](#)
[Chapel Hill, NC 27514](#)
(o) 919-968-2743 | (f) 919-969-2063

From: Kathryn Desplanque <kathryn.desp@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, June 21, 2022 8:31 AM
To: Town Council <mayorandcouncil@townofchapelhill.org>
Subject: Huse Street development

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

Hello,

I'm a resident of Pope's Crossing and I'm emailing with concerns about the Huse Street development plan. I've been receiving updates on this through engaged citizens via the Nextdoor app. I live directly across the street from the proposed development.

In an affordable housing crisis, rezoning to permit for a giant rental area seems extremely confusing. UNC Chapel Hill students are our renters. I'm a professor at UNC Chapel Hill. Student off campus housing is not a pressing need so much as affordable housing for new home owners to buy.

You would be much better served, and so would residents, if this area was rezoned for a townhouse neighborhood for purchase. Obviously some buyers would elect to rent to students who could then live much more affordably as roommates, instead of trying to live in luxury rentals.

This area does need amenities like a dog park and a park for children. But we don't need more rental complexes that will drive up traffic. This area is not well served by public transportation at all. I am a cyclist and I will not bicycle through this neighborhood. We are too near multiple highway exchanges, the lighting is poor, and the traffic circles are not pedestrian friendly and have no sidewalks built into them. Any proposal that assumes that alternatives to driving are feasible here are profoundly naive.

I see that there are moves to slow down the developers from advancing this process. I ask that you deny their rezoning proposal and invite developers to build housing to buy such as townhomes. I ask that you build infrastructure so that cyclists and pedestrians can traffic this area such as connecting all sidewalks, extending sidewalks to traffic circles, and improving night lighting.

My voice joins a chorus of people on the Nextdoor app who have complained this on the following two threads which your council should review and add to your numbers of complaints. You will find the names and neighborhoods of those who have complained as metadata to constitute a significant data set of residents and tax players who do not want this development:

42 comments here: https://nextdoor.com/p/n9C6kYzX4Fxl?utm_source=share&extras=MzQ3ODMxODM%3D

96 comments here:
https://nextdoor.com/p/C-wcx3hslYCW?utm_source=share&extras=MzQ3ODMxODM%3D

And you are undoubtedly aware of this petition with 521 signatures contesting these developments: <https://www.chalt.org/pause-to-plan-development-in-north-east-chapel-hill/>

Without Chuck Berlin's careful watch and communication, residents would be entirely unaware of these developments. I strongly encourage you to involve him in this process to help determine sustainable ways of rezoning the Huse street area in a way that promises to build community and actually serve current and future residents.

Best,

Kathryn Desplanque, PhD

Best,

Kathryn Desplanque, PhD

Amy Harvey

From: Jeanette Coffin
Sent: Friday, April 29, 2022 12:20 PM
To: Mary Andrews
Cc: Adam Searing; Amy Ryan; Camille Berry; Jeanne Brown; Jess Anderson; Karen Stegman; Michael Parker; Pam Hemminger; Paris Miller-Foushee; Tai Huynh; Amy Harvey; Ann Anderson; Carolyn Worsley; James Baker; Laura Selmer; Loryn Clark; Mary Jane Nirdlinger; Maurice Jones; Ran Northam; Ross Tompkins; Sabrina Oliver
Subject: RE: so sad...

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.

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Sincerely,

Jeanette Coffin



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[405 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.](#)
[Chapel Hill, NC 27514](#)
(o) 919-968-2743 | (f) 919-969-2063

From: Mary Andrews <muandrews@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, April 29, 2022 12:17 PM
To: Town Council <mayorandcouncil@townofchapelhill.org>
Subject: so sad...

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Dear Public Officials....when will you learn to say "no" to accelerated development? Please take notice. I feel we're all being duped!

Sincerely, Mary Andrews (Fountain Ridge Rd)

e.e. cummings

...ever

ybody

wants more

(and more &

still More) what the

hell are we all morticians?"

By Charles Berlin

A recent article in the *News and Observer* alerted surprised residents near this corner of our town of not one, but four proposed large-scale residential rental developments. In aggregate, the proposed new housing projects would occupy 41 now-mostly-wooded acres, with 41 buildings, 1,094 rental units, and 1,896 parking spaces. These are arrayed close to each other along Old Chapel Hill Road from White Oak to Pope Road, and then up Pope Road a bit, near the intersection of 15/501 and I40. These proposals, which are requesting zoning changes from our town council to proceed, appear to be on a very quick time table, coming before council in the very near future.

I can only hope that council members pause to think this through with wisdom and forethought before forging ahead and rubber-stamping this enormous amount of development, which dwarfs in size Wegmans at the other end of Old Durham/Old Chapel Hill Road.

Last year, UNC and the Town commissioned a highly experienced urban planning consultant, Rod Stevens, to study the overall history and direction of residential development in Chapel Hill. His report concluded that Chapel Hill's development trends of the last decade have badly failed to meet the most important needs of this region, and are heading toward further failure unless we correct course. More specifically, he noted that the proliferation of expensive market-rate rental apartment buildings, and not much else, have shut out first-time buyers, young families, empty-nesters, seniors, etc, from planting roots here. As a result, the vast majority of people who work in Chapel Hill have to live elsewhere and, paradoxically, a large number of Chapel Hill residents commute to elsewhere in the region for their employment. He noted that we've badly failed to meet the need for "missing middle" housing. Stevens strongly recommended that, rather than continuing to build large-scale rental buildings with little connection to their surroundings, approved on a project-by-project basis ("the worst option"), there should first be planning for neighborhoods as a whole, including community involvement.

The proposed developments along Old Chapel Hill Road raise the following concerns:

- 1) We would be getting the one thing that Stevens indicated we don't need more of, which is primarily expensive market-rate rentals (with a smattering of nominally affordable rentals), rather than the "missing middle" and affordable ownable housing that is so important to the town's future vitality.
- 2) We would be getting – especially from the proposed White Oak project – another of what Rod Stevens referred to pejoratively as "ocean liners" plunked down willy-nilly and jarringly in low-rise surroundings.
- 3) We would be adding substantial traffic of 1,900 cars to the traffic on Old Durham/Old Chapel Hill Road. Despite current improvements of added sidewalks and bike lanes, this remains a two-lane road, which already struggles with frequent problems of back-up next to Wegmans at the Old Durham/15-501 intersection. And these additional cars will add to the slowly failing and congested 15-501 transit corridor, while the "Reimagining 15-501" project has yet to produce any clear solutions to this problem.
- 4) Development in this small area was strongly predicated on the placement of a light rail station contiguous to these proposed developments. Since the light rail project failed to come to fruition, and as local bus service remains meager here, the notion that the residents of these developments will be able to get around without cars seems highly unrealistic.
- 5) Loss of a significant amount of tree canopy and green-space: 41 acres of mostly-wooded property – the kind of large, beautiful, and ecologically necessary landscape for which Chapel Hill was once famous but which is now rapidly disappearing from our city – will be largely cleared of trees.
- 6) There has been, to my knowledge, zero community engagement by either the developers or the Town about these proposals beyond the tiny notices of required upcoming board and council hearings buried deep in the Town's website.

Based on the details of these proposals submitted to the Town, at least three of the projects (Gateway, 5500 Old Chapel Hill Road, and Huse Street) appear to have made some effort to preserve some green space and to limit density and building heights to a level compatible with the nearby neighborhoods (although still only offering rentals). Interestingly, all three of these projects are being proposed by regionally-based developers. The North White Oak Drive proposal however, is from an Atlanta-based corporation which had an Atlanta-based architectural firm present its proposal and announces on its website that it has developed/managed over 75,000 units nationally. This developer has requested permission to build two massive high-rise buildings with parking decks. Construction will entail building on much of the site's existing green space except for a protected stream in the middle, and would create 50% more housing density than the nearby Huse Street proposal, which has similar acreage.

And while The White Oak project notes its adherence to existing city LUMO requirements, it appears to be significantly at odds with the spirit and recommendations of the Future Land Use Map (FLUM)

which the city has labored so long to refine, and which all three of the other nearby proposals note and appear to make efforts to take somewhat into account in their designs. Specifically, the North White Oak Drive proposal appears to be at odds with FLUM, which envisions town homes and a four-story height maximum in this specially designated area to provide a “harmonious transition” from taller, higher-density buildings to the adjoining established single family neighborhoods and preservation of tree canopy.

Given these considerations, I strongly suggest

1) that the town council initiate a small-area study, with a moratorium on all of these projects until a more comprehensive plan for this small area is completed. Such a study could focus more directly on this area of the town – the overall neighborhood planning that Stevens strongly recommends – and address the larger issues (including the need for owner-occupied rather than rented housing) that together make for successful local development that serves its citizens well.

2) that council specifically not allow the White Oak proposal to proceed, given that this proposal appears to be greatly at variance with the needs of the neighborhood, FLUM guidance and the needs of the Town generally.

3) that the Town require all of these developers to engage the local community in dialog, and take this input seriously, in planning their proposals.

Finally, I urge any interested citizen to get more information about the above proposals and communicate your views to our mayor and town council, who represent your interests. And act quickly before council makes further decisions (tentatively May 4 for the White Oak project).

Charles Berlin lives in Chapel Hill’s Pickard Oaks neighborhood

The Local Reporter is committed to publishing a diversity of views on issues of local concern. Send guest columns or letters to the editor to editor@thelocalreporter.press. Submission guidelines can be found [here](#).

Amy Harvey

From: Jeanette Coffin
Sent: Friday, April 29, 2022 12:21 PM
To: Berlin, Charles S
Cc: Colleen Willger; Adam Searing; Amy Ryan; Camille Berry; Jeanne Brown; Jess Anderson; Karen Stegman; Michael Parker; Pam Hemminger; Paris Miller-Foushee; Tai Huynh; Amy Harvey; Ann Anderson; Carolyn Worsley; James Baker; Laura Selmer; Loryn Clark; Mary Jane Nirdlinger; Maurice Jones; Ran Northam; Ross Tompkins; Sabrina Oliver
Subject: RE: Grave concern about the White Oak concept plan you'll discuss on May 4

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.

Again, thank you for your message.

Sincerely,

Jeanette Coffin



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(o) 919-968-2743 | (f) 919-969-2063

From: Berlin, Charles S <cberlin@pitt.edu>
Sent: Friday, April 29, 2022 11:24 AM
To: Town Council <mayorandcouncil@townofchapelhill.org>
Subject: Grave concern about the White Oak concept plan you'll discuss on May 4

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

Dear Mayor and Town Council,

I'm writing to you with significant concerns about proposed plans by four different developers along Old Chapel Hill Road. The concept plan for one of these, "White Oak Drive", will be coming before you at the May 4 meeting.

This behemoth, put forward by a big-money Atlanta based national builder of rental buildings, is the epitome of the "ocean liners" that Rod Stevens noted is leading Chapel Hill in an unfortunate direction, and is the exact

opposite of what our genuine needs are. Not only is our contiguous community gravely concerned about this for many reasons, but when this came before the Community Design Commission several days ago, the chair of that board, John Weis, harshly declared that this is “the worst plan I’ve ever seen,” appearing to be motivated solely by profit-seeking, without any redeeming merits for the real needs of our town, and he wondered if this developer should be allowed to do anything in our town. This has been exactly our community’s reaction, as recently voiced in dozens of comments on NextDoor. And unfortunately there has been zero community engagement of the immediate community by this developer.

This proposed building plan, carved out of some woods (and destroying two small structures that have been there for 70+ years), is massive in size, pushes its boundaries to the very minimum that code would allow, flaunts the recommendations of FLUM in this specially designated area for height, setback, and tree canopy preservation, is 50% more dense than the nearby Huse Street proposal which has the same acreage, and is utterly incongruous with the immediate surrounding low rise community. It is so big that it requires two parking decks, and would dump over 800 more cars on to Old Chapel Hill Road, the only access, a road that despite recent addition of a bike path and side walk will always remain a two lane road (because of the bridge over I40 that would likely cost \$50,000,000+ to replace) and is already running into problems at the other end near Wegmans with frequent backups at the 15/501 intersection.

Unlike Blue Hill, which has not allowed council to have any say over the similar buildings sprouting there, this particular proposal requires a zoning change from council, so it is in your hands to shape what happens here.

PLEASE do not give any encouragement for this proposal, put forward by a national for-profit developer which meets NONE of our town’s real needs for owner occupied “missing middle” and affordable housing, and would do real damage to our immediate community.

A bigger issue here is that this is only one of four proposals now in the pipeline in this small corner of town, In aggregate, these proposals – all rentals and primarily market rate – dwarf the nearby Wegmans project, and if they go forward would cover 41 currently mostly wooded acres with 1,100 rental units and 1,900 parking spaces. A significant impetus for developing this in the past was predicated on there being a light rail station there, but of course this will not be the case. Suddenly putting down this magnitude of development– almost a small town in itself, further abetted by the huge development now rising on Mt. Moriah in Durham which abuts this corner of Chapel Hill – in our smaller person-friendly quiet neighborhoods, a quality of life for ordinary citizens that Chapel Hill used to be known for - raises many questions about issues of traffic, large acreage of tree cover loss, road structure within and between these developments and Old Chapel Hill Road, availability or lack thereof of public transportation, school impact, desires for the town to find ways to genuinely meet the real housing needs of our town, affordable housing concerns, retail/commercial options, the irreversible negative impact on the immediate neighborhood, etc., etc.

It is therefore crucial that planning for all this be done not on a project by project basis (which Rod Stevens labeled “the worst option”), but rather be done in a coordinated way looking at all these issues and proposals as a whole, affecting each other and the town in aggregate, to get this done in a more rational and integrated way. It is also crucial to involve the community in dialog about this, something entirely missing at this point. The Community Design Commission questioned why this hadn’t happened, and Cory Liles, the liaison to that committee, has indicated that there has been some internal discussion about this as well. Council should reinforce the essential need for this in a comprehensive way.

Respectfully,
Charles Berlin
Pickard Oaks

For some additional perspective, I recently authored an opinion piece about this published in both Chapelboro and The Local Reporter, which has elicited significant parallel and resonant response from many in our community. If you are interested, this can be found at: <https://thelocalreporter.press/wither-development-in-our-chapel-hill-neighborhood/>

Amy Harvey

From: Jeanette Coffin
Sent: Monday, May 02, 2022 10:54 AM
To: Emily Kiser
Cc: Colleen Willger; Adam Searing; Amy Ryan; Camille Berry; Jeanne Brown; Jess Anderson; Karen Stegman; Michael Parker; Pam Hemminger; Paris Miller-Foushee; Tai Huynh; Amy Harvey; Ann Anderson; Carolyn Worsley; James Baker; Laura Selmer; Loryn Clark; Mary Jane Nirdlinger; Maurice Jones; Ran Northam; Ross Tompkins; Sabrina Oliver
Subject: RE: Concerns on N White Oak development and surrounding projects

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.

Again, thank you for your message.

Sincerely,

Jeanette Coffin



Jeanette Coffin
Office Assistant
[Town of Chapel Hill Manager's Office](#)
[405 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.](#)
[Chapel Hill, NC 27514](#)
(o) 919-968-2743 | (f) 919-969-2063

From: Emily Kiser <emilykiser522@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, May 1, 2022 12:46 PM
To: Town Council <mayorandcouncil@townofchapelhill.org>
Cc: Doug Halverson <doug.halverson21@gmail.com>
Subject: Concerns on N White Oak development and surrounding projects

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Dear Town Council members and Mayor Hemminger,

We are Town of Chapel Hill residents at 110 Alba Lane and live in close vicinity to four currently proposed projects for the immediate surrounding area. (The four projects are linked at the bottom of this message). We are aware that the Council is set to discuss one of these developments at your upcoming May 4 meeting and wanted to voice our concerns about (1) the specific development up for discussion and (2) the four proposed projects as a whole.

1) The [North White Oak Drive multifamily development](#) for Council review and discussion on May 4 is of particular concern. While we have many concerns related to infrastructure (traffic, schools, etc.) we are aware that many of our neighbors will be contacting you to outline these concerns. Therefore, we'd like to focus our message on the comments made by the Community Design Commission at their [April 26 meeting](#) following their review of the N White Oak development proposal. As you know, this Commission reviews many development proposals and, in their objective review of this particular development, made the following strongly worded comments which we feel accurately express many of our concerns as well:

- "These buildings are very long - very big - you can easily see where you could cut them off at certain junctions just to make them smaller. That's sort of the goal of this Commission is to not have these sort of 'cruise ships', especially not next to single family homes. I feel like there really needs to be a way to have that transition because it does feel pretty stark next to just one story homes. And I also just worry about the whole topography. We all know we see a lot of giant brick walls that don't relate to anything... I just wish it was smaller." - Megan Patnaik
- "I am also kind of scared by the scale of these things and to think that we're just looking at one of several in the area is just doubly - triply - scary... I think I'm just going to stay scared about this whole thing." - Edward Hoskins
- "I see no reason for our town to approve a project that is so awful from a design perspective and requires zoning relief! So we're going to encourage with zoning relief a project that doesn't fit, that's overscaled, that the architectural design is banal. I am totally opposed to this project." - Scott Levitan
- "I just want to say this is one of the worst site plans I have ever seen. It basically is a developer's dream and a town's nightmare. And the complete lack of concern for the neighborhood, for the town, and the only concern is their return on their investment. It really makes me - I was a developer once - and this makes me sick to see the attitude of this project... I don't think this project should move forward in its current state at all. If it moves at all it's got to be drastically reduced and, even then, I'm not sure this developer should be developing in Chapel Hill." - John Weis
- "This needs to be looked at by the town staff in a more contextual way with the other projects, and I think we might have similar feedback for the other projects as well. But I'm very disappointed in this. This is not what we need. This looks like a product that somebody brought in and is just trying to force feed on this town instead of thinking about what we need." - Susan Lyons

2) In addition to our concerns on the individual project up for Council review and discussion on May 4, we are also concerned about the additional three projects that are being proposed for this area. We feel a more strategic and comprehensive approach should be taken when evaluating these projects as they are in such close proximity to each other. We recognize this is an area prime for significant development, especially given the recent completion of the sidewalks and bike lanes on Old Durham/Chapel Hill Road, but we feel it would be a disservice to the current community and the proposed additions if these projects were not coordinated with a grander plan and vision in mind. We are hoping the planning of any projects in the area will be coordinated such that each of these projects are less discordant with the surrounding area (i.e. single family homes and small/low profile businesses like Bouncing Bulldogs) and with each other and satisfy a diversity of needs relative to housing (Stevens Report, 2021), green space, retail, etc. (e.g. Meadowmont and Southern Village). With the bike lane and sidewalk projects on Old Chapel Hill nearing completion, it is prime time to comprehensively consider the best overall development plan for this area of town, and prioritize spaces that will in fact encourage foot and bike traffic, making the most out of the recent investments and in acknowledgement of the single lane traffic that has been further locked in by these new developments on each side of the road.

Thank you in advance for your thoughtful review and consideration,
Emily Kiser & Doug Halverson
(110 Alba Lane)

Four proposed projects for this area:

- 5500 Old Chapel Hill Residential: <https://www.townofchapelhill.org/government/departments-services/planning/active-development/5500-old-chapel-hill-residential>

- Gateway – East Lakeview: <https://www.townofchapelhill.org/government/departments-services/planning/active-development/gateway-east-lakeview-dr>
- Huse Street Residential: <https://www.townofchapelhill.org/government/departments-services/planning/active-development/huse-street-residential-5503-old-chapel-hill-rd>
- North White Oak Drive: <https://www.townofchapelhill.org/government/departments-services/planning/active-development/n-white-oak-dr-multifamily-development>

Amy Harvey

From: Jeanette Coffin
Sent: Monday, May 02, 2022 12:52 PM
To: Laura Gilliom
Cc: Colleen Willger; Adam Searing; Amy Ryan; Camille Berry; Jeanne Brown; Jess Anderson; Karen Stegman; Michael Parker; Pam Hemminger; Paris Miller-Foushee; Tai Huynh; Amy Harvey; Ann Anderson; Carolyn Worsley; James Baker; Laura Selmer; Loryn Clark; Mary Jane Nirdlinger; Maurice Jones; Ran Northam; Ross Tompkins; Sabrina Oliver
Subject: RE: Proposed North White Oak multifamily development

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.

Again, thank you for your message.

Sincerely,

Jeanette Coffin



Jeanette Coffin
Office Assistant
[Town of Chapel Hill Manager's Office](#)
[405 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.](#)
[Chapel Hill, NC 27514](#)
(o) 919-968-2743 | (f) 919-969-2063

From: Laura Gilliom <laura.gilliom@mindspring.com>
Sent: Monday, May 2, 2022 12:18 PM
To: Town Council <mayorandcouncil@townofchapelhill.org>
Subject: Proposed North White Oak multifamily development

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

Dear Town Council members and Mayor Hemminger:

I would like to add my voice to those of my neighbors in expressing concerns about the proposed North White Oak Drive multifamily development plans, especially in conjunction with the 3 other projects being proposed for this area.

I've lived on Alba Lane, a cul de sac off the south end of White Oak Drive, for 26 years. I'm delighted that the sidewalks and bike lanes on Old Durham Rd. are finally nearing completion, but I realize that it also makes the area more appealing to developers. Some amount of development of forested land in this area is inevitable, but I was hoping to see buildings

that at the very least 1) fit the scale of the neighborhood, 2) preserve tree canopy, and 3) help with our affordable housing crisis. The North White Oak project does none of these. It is a massive pair of buildings and parking decks that are too big and dense for the site even if they were the only planned development in this area, which they are not. This would be a jarring addition, like an “ocean liner” plopped on a small piece of land, in the words of a neighbor who spoke at last week's Design Commission meeting. And the two-lane Old Durham/Old Chapel Hill Road definitely cannot handle the traffic these projects would bring.

I agree with all of the comments by the public and Design Commission members who attended that meeting on 4/26, including the expressed desire to preserve the small historical buildings at the edge of the property. **I sincerely hope the Council will oppose this project, and also that you will consider the other three projects as a whole in terms of costs and benefits they bring to this area of our town.**

Sincerely,

Laura Gilliom
108 Alba Lane

Amy Harvey

From: Jeanette Coffin
Sent: Tuesday, May 03, 2022 11:30 AM
To: Sarah Ficke
Cc: Sarah Vinas; Colleen Willger; Adam Searing; Amy Ryan; Camille Berry; Jeanne Brown; Jess Anderson; Karen Stegman; Michael Parker; Pam Hemminger; Paris Miller-Foushee; Tai Huynh; Amy Harvey; Ann Anderson; Carolyn Worsley; James Baker; Laura Selmer; Loryn Clark; Mary Jane Nirdlinger; Maurice Jones; Ran Northam; Ross Tompkins; Sabrina Oliver
Subject: RE: White Oak Drive and Old Chapel Hill Road development plans

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.

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[405 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.](#)
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(o) 919-968-2743 | (f) 919-969-2063

From: Sarah Ficke <shficke@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, May 2, 2022 10:49 PM
To: Town Council <mayorandcouncil@townofchapelhill.org>
Subject: White Oak Drive and Old Chapel Hill Road development plans

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

To the Mayor and members of the Town Council of Chapel Hill,

I'm writing regarding the proposed apartment development on North White Oak Drive that was brought before the Community Design Commission on April 26, and related developments planned in that immediate area (Huse Street Residential, Gateway - East Lakeview Drive, and 5500 Old Chapel Hill). As a current resident of White Oak Drive, I'm extremely concerned about the plans for these developments as well as the way they are being processed.

These developments, which represent a substantial departure in land use (and zoning) for the area, present significant downsides in terms of infrastructure and environment without offering the kinds of benefits Chapel Hill actually needs.

First, the four proposed developments would add something like 1800+ new parking spaces - meaning cars - to a road that is two lanes wide with no turn lanes (and no shoulder or bike land on the bridge crossing I-40). The current sidewalk and bike lane upgrades are nice, but the area remains very car-dependent, especially for inhabitants working anywhere outside of downtown Chapel Hill (which is most people). The new Wegmans has already caused increased traffic, but the burden on the road with these developments would be enormous.

Second, taken together, these developments would represent significant deforestation, destruction of natural habitat for native wildlife, and loss of tree canopy that would increase the temperatures of the area and decrease the sustainability of our community. The meagre plantings included in the plans will not replace the decades-old oaks and other trees that currently cover the area, nor provide a home for the birds, animals, and pollinators that thrive in our neighborhood now.

Third, these developments (especially the North White Oak Drive plan) represent the same cookie-cutter generic apartment complexes springing up in communities across the triangle, with no unique reflection of Chapel Hill's town character or history. The North White Oak Drive plan includes the demolition of a historic gas station and related buildings, to be replaced by buildings that could just as easily be found in Cary, Raleigh, or any metro area on the East Coast.

Most importantly, these developments do not respond to the true need in our town for affordable housing. Market-rate rentals are out of reach for our teachers, bus drivers, and other workers making what is supposed to be a living wage in Orange County. What our town needs is a substantial amount of truly affordable housing (not just a few units) pegged to actual working people's salaries, and also housing that is for sale, not rent. Condos, co-ops, and other options that allow people to build equity and put down community roots will be much better for the long-term health of the town than these upscale rental units. I cannot support any development that isn't primarily priced for essential workers in our town.

I urge the town to seriously consider the short- and long-term impact of these projects, and to consider them together. Individually, each plan represents a lone complex surrounded by open land or comfortable buffer zones, but together they represent the development and paving-over of almost all of the natural habitat of this area of town and an exponential rise in population and traffic -- a very different proposition. I also urge the town to consider the impact on Durham County's schools, which service this area and are already enrolling more students than they are meant to hold.

Sincerely,
Sarah Ficke,
White Oak Drive resident

Amy Harvey

From: Jeanette Coffin
Sent: Tuesday, May 03, 2022 11:31 AM
To: Robin Segall
Cc: Sarah Vinas; Colleen Willger; Adam Searing; Amy Ryan; Camille Berry; Jeanne Brown; Jess Anderson; Karen Stegman; Michael Parker; Pam Hemminger; Paris Miller-Foushee; Tai Huynh; Amy Harvey; Ann Anderson; Carolyn Worsley; James Baker; Laura Selmer; Loryn Clark; Mary Jane Nirdlinger; Maurice Jones; Ran Northam; Ross Tompkins; Sabrina Oliver
Subject: RE: North White Oak Project

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.

Again, thank you for your message.

Sincerely,

Jeanette Coffin



Jeanette Coffin
Office Assistant
[Town of Chapel Hill Manager's Office](#)
[405 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.](#)
[Chapel Hill, NC 27514](#)
(o) 919-968-2743 | (f) 919-969-2063

From: Robin Segall <robinsegall@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, May 2, 2022 10:31 PM
To: Town Council <mayorandcouncil@townofchapelhill.org>
Subject: North White Oak Project

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

Dear Town Council Members and Mayor Hemminger:

We are writing in regard to our recent discovery that there are not just one, but four significant apartment housing projects (North White Oak, Gateway, 5500 Old Chapel Hill, and Huse Street) now on the horizon that will greatly impact our small neighborhood and several other small neighborhoods nearby.

We are long-time residents of the White Oak neighborhood having lived on Alba Lane for over 30 years now. After a long search in Chapel Hill for a unique wooded lot to build on, we chose to build our home on Alba Lane, have happily raised our family here, and formed lasting bonds with our neighbors. We have been excited recently by the addition of the

sidewalks and bike lanes to Old Durham Chapel Hill Road and are now stunned and frankly sickened to find out about the plans to build four very large multi-family projects within ½ mile of the entrance to our neighborhood.

We, of course, understood that at some point that some of the land nearby would be developed, but never imagined that it would happen in such an appalling and apparently disorganized manner. We are writing this letter to specifically address the North White Oak project which came before the Design Committee last week, but we also feel obliged to note that it makes no sense for the city not to consider all four of the projects together as they are virtually contiguous. We can't imagine that the city would not want to think about, as a whole, how this Old Durham Chapel Hill Road 'gateway' to our city would appear if these four projects go forward. If approved, these four projects would cause:

- A huge negative impact on the traffic on Old Durham Chapel Hill Road with ~1100 apartments and likely more than 1500 additional vehicles packed into a very small area.
- A potential eyesore at a 'gateway' to Chapel Hill with 5 to 6 story apartments with almost no green space on one side of the road, which will totally upset the character of the neighborhood.
- A massive impact on the responsible school system (Durham City/County) – is there no consideration by the City of Chapel Hill on this issue?
- Addition of 1100 more high-cost rental units with only minor additions of 'affordable housing' – who is going to be renting all these new units, especially since several huge new apartment complexes are already completed or are going in nearby? These projects do almost nothing to help Chapel Hill's affordable housing issue. Is there not some other reasonable use for some of this land?

Additionally, not one of the developers planning these projects have bothered to talk to our neighborhood; it's almost like they were hoping we wouldn't notice and these projects would slip on through the approval process. These projects will affect our neighborhood and daily life for years to come.

It was disturbing enough to find out about the four potential projects, but then we reviewed the more detailed plans for the North White Oak project coming before the Design Committee and we were even more dismayed:

- The preliminary project plans indicate removal of every tree on the property with the exception of some surrounding a dry creek (perhaps only because it is required) and construction of two 5-6 story buildings surrounding two parking decks to achieve an alarming housing density of 381 units. The street-side appearance is garden variety and not unique or special in any way.
- Sadly, there appears to be no real green buffer included and this from a now highly wooded site, just a minimal 10'-15' buffer.
- Just by itself, this project would likely introduce 400-500 vehicles to the Old Durham Chapel Hill Road corridor, recently nicely improved, but still only two-lane road with a limiting two-lane bridge nearby and which has already seen more traffic since the opening of Wegmans.
- Last, but not least, this project would totally demolish the two quaint old buildings that have been on the corner for close to 100 years and have long been a comforting landmark for locals.

We are asking that you as the Town Council Members give adequate consideration to the impact of the North White Oak project on the surrounding areas. We also ask that the Town Council and city planners consider all four of the aforementioned projects together before proceeding to next steps and making decisions.

We thank you in advance for your sincere consideration,

Robin Segall and Sid White
105 Alba Lane
Durham, NC 27707

Amy Harvey

From: Jeanette Coffin
Sent: Tuesday, May 03, 2022 11:38 AM
To: Peter Bird
Cc: Colleen Willger; Adam Searing; Amy Ryan; Camille Berry; Jeanne Brown; Jess Anderson; Karen Stegman; Michael Parker; Pam Hemminger; Paris Miller-Foushee; Tai Huynh; Amy Harvey; Ann Anderson; Carolyn Worsley; James Baker; Laura Selmer; Loryn Clark; Mary Jane Nirdlinger; Maurice Jones; Ran Northam; Ross Tompkins; Sabrina Oliver
Subject: RE: Concerns regarding N White Oak development and surrounding projects

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.

Again, thank you for your message.

Sincerely,

Jeanette Coffin



Jeanette Coffin
Office Assistant
[Town of Chapel Hill Manager's Office](#)
[405 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.](#)
[Chapel Hill, NC 27514](#)
(o) 919-968-2743 | (f) 919-969-2063

From: Peter Bird <peterbirdemail@yahoo.com>
Sent: Monday, May 2, 2022 8:41 PM
To: Town Council <mayorandcouncil@townofchapelhill.org>
Subject: Concerns regarding N White Oak development and surrounding projects

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

Dear Town Council members and Mayor Hemminger,

My wife and I have been a Town of Chapel Hill resident at 108 Alba Lane for 26 years. We live in very close proximity to four currently proposed projects for the immediate surrounding area. (The four projects are linked at the bottom of this message). We are aware that the Council is set to discuss one of these developments at your upcoming May 4 meeting and wanted to voice our concerns about the specific development up for discussion and the four proposed projects as a whole.

The [North White Oak Drive multifamily development](#) for Council review and discussion on May 4 is of particular consternation. We have serious concerns principally related to:

1. The density of units/residents being planned and its related impact on traffic and schools;
2. The scale of the buildings -- they're enormous -- completely out of keeping with the surrounding area;
3. The lack of any consultation with neighbors by the developer;
4. The disregard for the two historic buildings on the property (the former storefronts/markets on Old Durham Road) and their significance to the neighbors; and
5. The lack of affordable housing as a percentage of total units.

In addition to our concerns on the individual project up for Council review and discussion on May 4, we are also concerned about the three additional projects that are being proposed for this area. We feel a more strategic and coordinated approach should be taken when evaluating these projects as they are in such close proximity to each other and being developed simultaneously. We would expect that four projects of such scale would be coordinated to make the projects less discordant with the surrounding area (i.e. single family homes and small/low profile businesses like Bouncing Bulldogs) and with each other and satisfy a diversity of needs relative to housing (Stevens Report, 2021), green space, retail, etc. (e.g. Meadowmont and Southern Village).

Finally, with the bike lane and sidewalk projects on Old Chapel Hill finally nearing completion, it is prime time to comprehensively consider the best overall development plan for this area of town, and prioritize spaces that will in fact encourage foot and bike traffic, making the most out of the recent investments and in acknowledgement of the single lane traffic that has been further locked in by these new developments on each side of the road.

I sincerely hope the Council will oppose this project, and also that you will consider the other three projects as a whole in terms of costs and benefits they bring to this area of our town. Thank you in advance for your thoughtful review and consideration.

Peter Bird
(108 Alba Lane)

Four proposed projects for this area:

5500 Old Chapel Hill Residential: <https://www.townofchapelhill.org/government/departments-services/planning/active-development/5500-old-chapel-hill-residential>

Gateway – East Lakeview: [Gateway - East Lakeview Dr | Town of Chapel Hill, NC](#)

Huse Street Residential: <https://www.townofchapelhill.org/government/departments-services/planning/active-development/huse-street-residential-5503-old-chapel-hill-rd>

North White Oak Drive: [N White Oak Dr Multifamily Development | Town of Chapel Hill, NC](#)

Amy Harvey

From: Jeanette Coffin
Sent: Monday, May 09, 2022 8:54 AM
To: Lynda Hambourger
Cc: Colleen Willger; Adam Searing; Amy Ryan; Camille Berry; Jeanne Brown; Jess Anderson; Karen Stegman; Michael Parker; Pam Hemminger; Paris Miller-Foushee; Tai Huynh; Amy Harvey; Ann Anderson; Carolyn Worsley; James Baker; Laura Selmer; Loryn Clark; Mary Jane Nirdlinger; Maurice Jones; Ran Northam; Ross Tompkins; Sabrina Oliver
Subject: RE: Development on N. White Oak/Old Chapel Hill Road

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.

Again, thank you for your message.

Sincerely,

Jeanette Coffin



Jeanette Coffin
Office Assistant
[Town of Chapel Hill Manager's Office](#)
[405 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.](#)
[Chapel Hill, NC 27514](#)
(o) 919-968-2743 | (f) 919-969-2063

From: Lynda Hambourger <lhambourger@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, May 8, 2022 4:51 PM
To: Town Council <mayorandcouncil@townofchapelhill.org>
Subject: Development on N. White Oak/Old Chapel Hill Road

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

Greetings,

I live on Candlelight Court, near Old Chapel Hill Road. I understand that as many as 4 developments have been proposed along Old Chapel Hill Road between I-40 and E. Lakeview Drive. It is true that there is a good deal of undeveloped land in this area and I am not opposed to development per se. We need more housing, especially for low and middle income people. However, in reviewing plans to develop this area I hope you will consider:

- What would be the combined effect of multiple developments? All proposed developments in this small area should be considered concurrently, not separately.

- What would be the result of multiple developments if access to all of them is via only Old Chapel Hill Road, as currently proposed? Old Chapel Hill Road is a 2-lane road that is limited by the 2-lane bridge over I-40.
- What would be the effect on the public schools? Though this area is part of the Town of Chapel Hill, it is in Durham County and children in this neighborhood attend Durham County schools.

Thank you for considering these concerns.

Sincerely,
Lynda H. Hambourger
101 Candlelight Court
Durham, NC 27707

Amy Harvey

From: Jeanette Coffin
Sent: Monday, May 09, 2022 8:55 AM
To: eichhoernchen70@aol.com
Cc: Colleen Willger; Adam Searing; Amy Ryan; Camille Berry; Jeanne Brown; Jess Anderson; Karen Stegman; Michael Parker; Pam Hemminger; Paris Miller-Foushee; Tai Huynh; Amy Harvey; Ann Anderson; Carolyn Worsley; James Baker; Laura Selmer; Loryn Clark; Mary Jane Nirdlinger; Maurice Jones; Ran Northam; Ross Tompkins; Sabrina Oliver
Subject: RE: Issue of Upcoming Development Plans on Old Chapel Hill Road

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.

Again, thank you for your message.

Sincerely,

Jeanette Coffin



Jeanette Coffin
Office Assistant
[Town of Chapel Hill Manager's Office](#)
[405 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.](#)
[Chapel Hill, NC 27514](#)
(o) 919-968-2743 | (f) 919-969-2063

From: eichhoernchen70@aol.com <eichhoernchen70@aol.com>
Sent: Saturday, May 7, 2022 11:32 AM
To: Town Council <mayorandcouncil@townofchapelhill.org>
Subject: Issue of Upcoming Development Plans on Old Chapel Hill Road

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

Dear Mayor and Council,

I am disturbed by the thoughtless and reckless way this town is pursuing development, under the guise of concern about affordable housing. The developments which have been erected are all way out of the price range of affordable! Yet this is the justification for overdeveloping this town and getting rid of all the trees and green space?

WHY WHY WHY are you doing this? Because it puts money in your pockets? I just don't understand!

I am so saddened by the ongoing destruction of this once beautiful town.

Why are you not prioritizing green space and quality of life? There is already too much traffic on the roads, too many people living in this town.

PLEASE DO NOT DESTROY YET ONE MORE FOREST! Please don't do this development! PLEASE DON'T!

And most importantly, stop justifying it by saying you are building affordable housing because you are not.

Remember the Lorax.

Lizzette

Amy Harvey

From: Jeanette Coffin
Sent: Tuesday, May 10, 2022 4:40 PM
To: Berlin, Charles S
Cc: Colleen Willger; Adam Searing; Amy Ryan; Camille Berry; Jeanne Brown; Jess Anderson; Karen Stegman; Michael Parker; Pam Hemminger; Paris Miller-Foushee; Tai Huynh; Amy Harvey; Ann Anderson; Carolyn Worsley; James Baker; Laura Selmer; Loryn Clark; Mary Jane Nirdlinger; Maurice Jones; Ran Northam; Ross Tompkins; Sabrina Oliver
Subject: RE: Context to petition with 400+ signatures re Old Chapel Hill development

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.

Again, thank you for your message.

Sincerely,

Jeanette Coffin



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(o) 919-968-2743 | (f) 919-969-2063

From: Berlin, Charles S <cberlin@pitt.edu>
Sent: Tuesday, May 10, 2022 4:32 PM
To: Town Council <mayorandcouncil@townofchapelhill.org>
Subject: Context to petition with 400+ signatures re Old Chapel Hill development

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

Dear Mayor and Council Members,

As a resident who lives very near the four proposals for development at Old Chapel Hill and Pope, and who has written to you previously, I'm now reaching out to express my sincere thanks to all of you who strongly indicated in the recent Economic Sustainability Committee that this aggregate development should not be presented piecemeal to the town as has been occurring up to now, but instead should be put on hold until a more integrated plan for a "complete neighborhood" can be developed.

As the initiator of a petition which now has over 400 signatures and will be presented to you shortly on this very issue, I can share with you that there is significant sentiment among many citizens who live in this neighborhood as well as in other areas of Chapel Hill that whatever future development is approved in this location by council should indeed be shaped to meet the overall genuine needs of all the citizens of our town.

The success of such integrated planning of course depends entirely on how it is undertaken. I did have some concerns about the very preliminary discussion of this during the ECS meeting that I feel are important to share with you, and which I believe reflects concerns as expressed by many, many people on NextDoor, in personal communication to me, and represented in their petition signatures.

At the ECS meeting, Colleen Willger of the Planning Department spoke about an option of doing more integrated planning. A key slide she presented noted specific components to take into account in planning for a "complete neighborhood." These included "connectivity [streets, sidewalks, greenways, etc], Street sections and streetscape, Compatible buildings [placement, form, mass], Emergency access, Open space network, Shared parking, Service locations, Storm-water management, Gathering places, Neighborhood services, Other?"

While these are appropriate issues that should be considered, there appeared to be highly significant pieces of planning for a "complete neighborhood" that were not mentioned there. These included the crucial areas of green space/tree canopy, genuine traffic planning and congestion management forecasting for the present and future capacity along the two abutting traffic arteries, the degree of need for owner occupied and affordable housing vs rentals, whether commercial/retail components should be part of this, public amenities, etc. Some of this issues of course are ones that council has grappled with for a long time, and will need to make important decisions about going forward.

And most importantly, what seemed to be the noticeably missing was any clear statement about the vital role for the public to have a substantial part in the discussion of such planning, something that Rod Stevens strongly reinforced in listing the elements of successful neighborhood development planning. While in this meeting there was mention and in prior communication to me it was indicated that the usual channels for public involvement will be available, it's unclear to me what that means. I am concerned that email and three minute testimonials before boards and council do not in themselves offer a genuine opportunity for significant and deeper dialog and exchange of ideas, and finding solutions that can be embraced by all which will be consistent with what will best serve the town now and in the future.

Of necessity, genuine inclusion of the public with this reconfiguration of their neighborhood should involve a number of open and well publicized meetings with the community about this coming development from the earliest stages, where respectful exchange of information and ideas can occur, and planning decisions can then evolve taking such input seriously. I sat in many such meetings as the Wegman's project unfolded, and although sometimes contentious, it was my view that there was also a lot of creative thought, highlighting of previously unforeseen issues, and useful solutions put forward by citizens, which made for a better ultimate outcome that worked well for both the immediate neighbors and the town in general. This should most certainly also be the case for the upcoming proposals for development along Old Chapel Hill Road, which in aggregate is triple the size of the Wegmans project, with commensurate impact.

Respectfully
Charles Berlin
cberlin@pitt.edu
Pickard Oaks

Amy Harvey

From: Jeanette Coffin
Sent: Monday, September 12, 2022 3:19 PM
To: Berlin, Charles S
Cc: Carolyn Worsley; Sarah Vinas; Adam Searing; Amy Ryan; Camille Berry; Jeanne Brown; Jess Anderson; Karen Stegman; Michael Parker; Pam Hemminger; Paris Miller-Foushee; Tai Huynh; Amy Harvey; Ann Anderson; James Baker; Laura Selmer; Loryn Clark; Mary Jane Nirdlinger; Maurice Jones; Ran Northam; Ross Tompkins; Sabrina Oliver
Subject: RE: Serious Concerns about White Oak concept plan on 9/14 agenda

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.

Again, thank you for your message.

Sincerely,

Jeanette Coffin



Jeanette Coffin
Office Assistant
[Town of Chapel Hill Manager's Office](#)
[405 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.](#)
[Chapel Hill, NC 27514](#)
(o) 919-968-2743 | (f) 919-969-2063

From: Berlin, Charles S <cberlin@pitt.edu>
Sent: Monday, September 12, 2022 3:07 PM
To: Town Council <mayorandcouncil@townofchapelhill.org>
Cc: Colleen Willger <cwillger@townofchapelhill.org>; Judy Johnson <jjohnson@townofchapelhill.org>; Linda Convissor <linda_convissor@unc.edu>
Subject: Serious Concerns about White Oak concept plan on 9/14 agenda

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

I'm writing as a concerned citizen and as one of two designated neighborhood representatives who have been meeting for several months with the town planning department and the developers of the four large residential proposals at Pope and Old Chapel Hill Rds. I am also an active participant in the ongoing Complete Communities project.

Of these four proposals for which council will need to eventually decide whether to allow zoning changes, the White Oak proposal stands out as by far the most problematic of the group, with a range of issues that fail to serve the public interest, the needs of the town, or the immediate neighborhoods.

1) The density of this proposal is extreme, even in a FLUM focus area designated for more dense housing. This proposal asks for a density far higher than any of the other three pending proposals, and would be *triple* the density of the “5500” proposal immediately adjacent to it. By comparison with the nearby development now being built on Mt. Moriah Rd. just over the line in Durham near Home Depot which is jarring to many in its size and density, this proposal asks to build 100 *more* units than the Mt. Moriah property, on a plot of land that is 20% smaller.

2) The developer will be clear cutting virtually all the mature tree canopy in this wooded area aside from the protected stream buffer, with minimal buffers on its perimeters.

3) The bulk of these buildings is massive, far out of scale of the surrounding area, with two huge buildings and two parking structures. The Community Design Commission was *unanimous* in indicating that this proposal was “too dense, overwhelmed the site, and was not acceptable for the neighborhood...the project does not relate to the neighborhood south of Old Chapel Hill Rd...[and] should have an appropriate transition...that includes stepping down in height closer to Old Chapel Hill Rd.” The initial version of the proposal had a five story building fronting Old Chapel Hill, contrary to the FLUM standards for a lower height in this transitional zone. The proposal was subsequently lowered to four stories in the front, the maximum it could get away with there, adding more height further back to compensate, and the small setback was unfortunately kept the same. Comment by the CDC chair included that “This is the worst plan I’ve ever seen.”

4) This proposal consists entirely of expensive rental units, with no owner occupied housing. As we know all too well from the Stevens report, that would continue the trend of the past decade here of 90% of all residential construction being expensive dense rental buildings, which Stevens indicated seriously fails to meet the needs of significant segments of the population who would like to grow long-term roots in this town in the years ahead, and if continued could ultimately result in the town’s failure as a thriving community.

5) This appears to me to perhaps be an affordable housing subtly unfriendly proposal. The Housing Advisory Board indicated that the affordable rents proposed are not considered affordable in this market. Additionally, this is the only one of the four proposals that decided to explicitly and overtly note in its proposal that “...affordable housing *is not required offor-rent projects...*” which perhaps seems telling of their attitude about this, and goes on to explicitly indicate that they are “open to discussing options that best fit both the town *and the developer.*” [emphasis mine].

6) This proposal fails to take into account the core characteristics of “Complete Communities.” It does not have a variety of different housing options. It does not do its best to preserve and enhance green space. It does not offer any amenities to its contiguous neighborhoods. Its design does not lend itself to the ground level interactions that are so meaningful in Complete Communities. Both the planning department and the CDC recommended to the developer that this proposal be broken up into smaller buildings for that purpose, but these recommendations have been ignored, with the developer instead still putting forward these two massive buildings which pack in as many units as possible. While it does have some bike parking and sidewalks and one large lawn (hidden from the neighborhood by building mass), it appears to be the opposite of the sort of architecture and environmental milieu that has been espoused repeatedly by Ms. Keesmaat in her presentations. Mr. Parker quipped at a council meeting several months ago that he was hoping these proposals would be “a better Blue Hill.” Unfortunately this proposal appears to instead represent just another iteration of the many large rental buildings in Blue Hill that have been viewed by many in the community as a failure to bring to our city integrated, attractive, and connected development.

7) Given that this proposal requests 828 parking spaces, and the only access is Old Chapel Hill Rd., it can be estimated that if each of those cars makes one trip out and back per day, this puts an additional 1,600 cars per day on this street that is still only two lanes despite a recent NCDot upgrade. The other proposals add additional traffic, although in lesser amounts and have some additional accesses. Of the four, this proposal would contribute by far the largest amount of traffic congestion on this road (which has now absorbed Wegmans traffic, but these proposals will add a new and very large additional burden) and is very likely to impact all the current residents along Old Chapel Hill and Old Durham Rds. Some residents are now concerned that they will have significant problems making left turns out of their neighborhoods onto these roads with the arrival of these four developments, an issue which has become more of a concern since Wegmans' opening.

8) Perhaps one element underlying the above issues might be that of the four proposed developments, this one is from a huge national private development firm based in Atlanta which has done many buildings like this all over the country and seems to be intent on replicating more of the same here, while the two developers of the other three proposals are locally based, and came across in our interactions with them as being more thoughtful and genuinely sensitive to how their projects would fit with our community and the needs of the town. In our meeting with the project manager (and chief general counsel) of the White Oak proposal, he indicated he was familiar with our community as he'd done projects in Durham and Charlotte, yet he seemed unfamiliar with Blue Hill or the FLUM document when we brought these up. This also was the only developer meeting we had where in my eyes the developer became defensive to the point of verbal contentiousness when we raised various concerns, which left us feeling that neighborhood input mattered little with this project.

9) This proposal (along with the others) begs the question of whether it serves the true needs of the community in the long run, and to what extent council should address that. Both Rod Stevens and Jennifer Keesmaat concur that the need for additional residential units in Chapel Hill is 485 units/year. Since January 2021, 1,288 residential units have been newly entitled here, with an additional 3,199 in the concept or formal application stage for a total of 4,487 units now in the pipeline (source: planning department). In addition, units which were entitled in the year or two prior to that and still awaiting completion may bring this total to 5,000-6,000 total units that will soon remove even more of our green space, and continue to put more pressure on the town's budget given the cost to the city of whatever infrastructure it provides plus the cost of then servicing of these units. Why do we need roughly 12 future years of housing capacity to be built in such a short time here now, especially when the big majority of this appears to just be more big expensive rental building, which will (according to Stevens) gradually render us as another over-gentrified expensive traffic congested bedroom community? This just continues to perpetuate that developers (who likely make the most profit from these sorts of buildings) will continue to be setting the agenda for future town development, rather than our representative town council. In my opinion, it behooves council to instead put forth more explicit guidelines of what it view as being in the community's best interest (and therefore warranting zoning changes), and empower the planning department and review commissions to be guided by this as well (neither seems to feel that they have the mandate to assert much of this without council providing this guidance). I would suggest that a clear mandate from council that would help our town going forward to thrive, be a great place to live, and be inclusive, would include being clear about the need for owner-occupied and affordable housing; true preservation to the extent possible and enhancement of green space; size/density/mass/attractiveness of design befitting the community; access to public transportation/biking/walkability; meaningful standards for energy efficiency/water management/environmental issues; and not continuing to develop beyond the point of what our roadway systems can actually handle short of gridlock. While Ms. Keesmaat indicated that it was not in her scope of work to tell council how to put implementation of complete communities into practice here, it would appear that explicit guidance by council about this to developers and city departments would greatly help to steer development here in a direction that genuinely benefits the citizens of our town now and future, rather than still being steered by developers seeking to maximize profits.

Respectfully,
Charles Berlin

Bluefield Rd.
Chapel Hill

Amy Harvey

From: Jeanette Coffin
Sent: Tuesday, September 13, 2022 12:00 PM
To: Lew Brown
Cc: Colleen Willger; Adam Searing; Amy Ryan; Camille Berry; Jeanne Brown; Jess Anderson; Karen Stegman; Michael Parker; Pam Hemminger; Paris Miller-Foushee; Tai Huynh; Amy Harvey; Ann Anderson; Carolyn Worsley; James Baker; Laura Selmer; Loryn Clark; Mary Jane Nirdlinger; Maurice Jones; Ran Northam; Ross Tompkins; Sabrina Oliver
Subject: RE: Development on Old Chapel Hill Road

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.

Again, thank you for your message.

Sincerely,

Jeanette Coffin



Jeanette Coffin
Office Assistant
[Town of Chapel Hill Manager's Office](#)
[405 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.](#)
[Chapel Hill, NC 27514](#)
(o) 919-968-2743 | (f) 919-969-2063

From: Lew Brown <LewGBrown@hotmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 13, 2022 10:49 AM
To: Town Council <mayorandcouncil@townofchapelhill.org>
Cc: cberlin@pitt.edu
Subject: Development on Old Chapel Hill Road

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

Mayor and Council,

Chuck Berlin shared with me his recent email to you on the subject of development in this area. I have been a resident of Chapel Hill since 1982; and, in a previous life, I served as Assistant City Manager of Durham and Town Manager of

Southern Pines. I live in The Meadows, adjacent to the Legion property and near the area of the proposed developments.

I second all of the points Chuck makes in his email.

I am writing from Vancouver, where I am on vacation, so I can't attend this week's meeting. I can look out of my hotel window and see clogged streets. Tall apartment buildings everywhere. I see no new roads being built. I also see no new roads in Chapel Hill. I am glad to see the widening of Estes Drive. Think about the long-term impact of all the proposed development along and near Old Chapel Hill Road.

I understand that we have to grow and to expand our tax base. The challenge is to do this in a way that preserves the nature of our community and reduces the congestion and pollution on our roads. I invite you to observe the congestion around East Gate and Rams Plaza at rush hour as traffic from Fordham and East Franklin merges to get on the boulevard. It is only going to get worse.

Thanks for allowing me to share these thoughts.

Lew

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