

Amy Harvey

From: Jeanette Coffin
Sent: Tuesday, January 31, 2023 3:31 PM
To: Amy Harvey
Subject: FW: 2217 Homestead CZD: Neighbor Comments (Jan. 25 TC Meeting)
Attachments: summary for Council Jan 25 V2.docx

From: Jeanette Coffin
Sent: Friday, January 20, 2023 2:51 PM
To: Adam Searing <asearing@townofchapelhill.org>; Amy Ryan <aryan@townofchapelhill.org>; Camille Berry <cberry@townofchapelhill.org>; Jeanne Brown <jbrown2@townofchapelhill.org>; Jess Anderson <janderson@townofchapelhill.org>; Karen Stegman <kstegman@townofchapelhill.org>; Michael Parker <mparker@townofchapelhill.org>; Pam Hemminger <pheeminger@townofchapelhill.org>; Paris Miller-Foushee <pmiller-foushee@townofchapelhill.org>; Tai Huynh <thuynh@townofchapelhill.org>
Subject: FW: 2217 Homestead CZD: Neighbor Comments (Jan. 25 TC Meeting)

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"Its going to be an Awesome day and an even Greater week.
Expecting nothing but good news, great things and positive interactions.
Ase'

From: Tasmaya Lagoo <tlagoo@townofchapelhill.org>
Sent: Friday, January 20, 2023 2:22 PM
To: Town Council <mayorandcouncil@townofchapelhill.org>
Cc: Judy Johnson <jjohnson@townofchapelhill.org>; dross39777@aol.com; Nancy Oates <neoates112@gmail.com>
Subject: 2217 Homestead CZD: Neighbor Comments (Jan. 25 TC Meeting)

Good afternoon,

Please see the attached comments regarding the 2217 Homestead Rd Conditional Zoning Application. The comments have been prepared by representatives of the adjacent Courtyards at Homestead neighborhood who have been thoughtfully and diligently engaged with this project since its inception.

All the best,
Tas



Tas Lagoo, Senior Planner

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2217 Homestead Rd Review: Comments from Courtyards Community

Summary of Key Points:

The two documents (attached) which contain a more complete set of notes have previously been sent to the TCAB, ESAB and the PC for their review. The following are the key points that we would like to highlight to the Council.

1)The Courtyards is the only Active over 55 Community in Chapel Hill. Residents are committed to “aging in place”. The median age is now between 75 and 80 and increasing. Our residents have all the attendant physical and mental challenges expected from this demographic. We often have residents walking with mobility aids on our streets as our residents are concerned about sidewalks that they feel are not safe. In recent months we have had one resident fall on the sidewalk necessitating a stay in hospital.

2)We welcome the Council’s adoption of Vision Zero in October 2021 which contains this final statement” ***Be it further resolved that the safety of all road users shall take priority over vehicular level of service and throughput and that vulnerable road users shall be given top priority in transportation decisions.***”

By any definition the Courtyards is a highly vulnerable community

3)As a community we welcome connectivity with 2217 so that bicyclists, pedestrians and emergency use vehicles but not cars can use this connection on Kipling Lane. Over the last few years our community has seen a steady rise in non- residents either walking or on bicycles using our streets to access Carolina North Forest.

4)Our recommendations which we have discussed with the Planning Dept and the Fire Dept over the last year are to make this Kipling Lane connection suitable **only** for emergency use vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists. We have also made the suggestion that delivery vehicles could be permitted to use this connection. In addition to our concerns over safety, because both roads from 2217 and Greenway Landing exit onto Homestead Rd only 100 yards apart, there is no clear Planning benefit of car traffic re-distribution, there is only risk to our community. Additionally, we are concerned that Greenway Landing will become a cut through route to 2217 due to the preferred left turn entrance into 2217 not having sufficient room for stacking on an increasingly congested Homestead Rd.

5)The developer has consistently expressed the view that they have no need for cars to use this connection and in their plans have narrowed the connection to the width required for emergency vehicles.

6)The TCAB has made the following recommendations on this connection to Council which we support.

That the proposed connection to Kipling Lane be an emergency -only option for motor vehicles in both directions. That the connection be open and made accessible and welcoming for bicycles, pedestrians and people with mobility devices in both directions.

We have also suggested to town staff that, if Council felt that was appropriate, the connection could also be used for commercial vehicles such as Amazon Prime, UPS, FedEx and other delivery trucks.

We believe that:

a) This position supports Vision Zero that Council passed unanimously

b) This position supports Council's philosophy and backing of Complete Community to move away from a car-centric town and towards a town that prioritizes pedestrians, cyclists and bus riders

7)The Planning Commission (minutes not yet available at time of writing) came to no consensus on a recommendation on the connectivity.

8)The Courtyards experienced significant stormwater issues along Greenway Landing in our early years so we are sensitized to this issue. We accept that the developer has made provision for 2 stormwater ponds but we still have some concerns and request that suitable assessment and mitigation measures are planned.

9)We welcome the developer's plan to plant a significant vegetation buffer along the western edge of 2217 and we also request that suitable protection of the mature trees within or on our property line be a condition of approval.

Courtyards Community.

2217 Homestead Road Development Review: TCAB 22nd November 2022

Summary:

While we welcome the interaction with neighbors and do not oppose development, we are very concerned about safety to our vulnerable residents and firmly believe that this connection through Kipling Lane to the Courtyards should be for pedestrians, cyclists and emergency vehicles only.

Key Points:

1. The unique and vulnerable demographics of Courtyards of Homestead, coupled with the Council's and TCAB's recent focus and commitment to Vision Zero in development review, requires a special focus on safety in street connectivity between these two neighborhoods.
2. Planning staff focus principally on 'car redistribution' flow between main roads (recall discussions on Stanat's Place development). In the 2217 development, the car-redistribution benefit is minimal. Cars would connect to the same Homestead Road less than 100 yards apart. This minimal benefit must be balanced against the serious safety concerns that car traffic along Greenway Landing would provide.
3. There has been a significant increase in cyclist and pedestrian use of Greenway Landing and Kipling Lane to access the UNC Forest over the last 2-3 years.
4. The close proximity between entrances to 2217 and Greenway Landing off of Homestead could result in Greenway Landing becoming a fast short cut into 2217 especially as cars back up on Homestead.
5. In previous discussions, the Fire Marshal, Planning Staff and the Applicant have agreed that this connection should be limited to emergency vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists. Most recently, town staff considered adding commercial vehicles to this list. Planning staff views have changed 3 times in our joint discussions on this connection from no car access through full car access and now to limited one way access.
6. The applicant sees no added value in having 'car access' through this connection and supports pedestrian, cyclist and emergency access only.
7. The recommendation by TCAB on a previous development plan for this specific site was to have pedestrian, cyclist and emergency vehicle access only through this connection to Kipling Lane and using bollards.

Background on Key Points

Courtyards at Homestead:

This small 63-home development is the only 'Active over-55 development' in Chapel Hill. Residents are committed to 'aging in place.' The median age of residents is now between 75-80 years old. Many residents have disabilities, require walking aids, wheelchairs or care givers to walk them. Others have hearing and vision and cognitive impairments. The slope of the sidewalks makes it difficult for people pushing wheelchairs or using walkers. They end up walking in the street.

Implications of Homestead Road Design in Traffic Flow up Greenway Landing:

Between the traffic light at Weaver Dairy Road extension and the railway crossing, new developments of 2217, Bridgepoint and 2200 will considerably increase traffic on Homestead. The entrance to 2217 is very close to the traffic light, and cars bound for 2217 will likely use Greenway Landing and Kipling to avoid waiting for cars to move through the traffic light.

Planning Staff and Connectivity Policy:

The Planning Department's default policy of "full connectivity" needs to be considered within the situational context of the specific development, the demographics of each situation as well as the other street users such as cyclists and pedestrians.

Vision Zero and Connectivity:

The residents at Courtyards have been encouraged by TCAB's and Town Council's recent focus on considering the impact of new developments on all street users and not just on car re-distribution.

The state limits access paths to Carolina North Forest and requires access to state approved entrances. There is a state approved access point in 2217 but this proposal does not provide for that access. Applicant should continue to provide that access.

Over the last 2-3 years there has been a very significant increase in cyclists and pedestrians accessing this official state approved entrance in 2217 via Greenway Landing and Kipling Lane. We expect that this increased use will continue via Greenway Landing/ Kipling and therefore a compelling reason to enhance cyclist and pedestrian safety along Greenway Landing and between 2217 and Kipling Lane.

Pedestrian and cyclist safety has been a key motivator for TCAB's and Council's support of Vision Zero and Complete Streets. Noticeably, the materials presented for review make no mention of the demographics or needs of the communities, the vulnerabilities of the residents and how to mitigate risks to the town's only active over-55 neighborhood.

Derek Ross, on behalf of Courtyards at Homestead.

Environmental Stewardship Advisory Board: 2217 Homestead Rd Review

Comments and Questions from the Courtyards at Homestead Residents

As residents next door to 2217 Homestead Road, we welcome new neighbors. As you conduct your review, we want to ensure you are aware of concerns specific to this proposal.

Topography:

The 2217 plot is one of the highest points in Chapel Hill, and the immediate subsurface is rocky (Bridgepoint, immediately across from 2217, has had significant issues with rock on the site and with large rocks situated on the edge of Homestead Road.)

2217 slopes down quite steeply east to west, and this has proven to be a significant flooding issue for the Courtyards Community from its inception. Town staff have worked to mitigate this issue, but residents continued to have flooding issues, which required them to provide new drainage channels for each residence that backed onto 2217. To this day we have residents who fear flooding surges.

Stormwater:

- 1) The grading plan for the 2217 shows that a section of the land on either side of the Tree Preservation Area (TPA) on the western boundary will be graded higher which would make the stormwater runoff path to the Courtyards even steeper, and the water would flow much faster and more powerfully into the Courtyards.
- 2) Erosion: The site plan shows a very steep slope right at the edge of the Tree Preservation Area (TPA) halfway up the western edge of the plot. We are concerned about erosion at this point and subsequent tree damage in this TPA. Possible mitigation strategies could be creating more space here by moving houses slightly away from the TPA or some form of restraining wall at the edge of the TPA.
- 3) Flooding of Kipling Lane and Capacity Concerns of Courtyards Pond. The 2217 land slopes down toward Kipling Lane Extension, shunting runoff down the steep slope of the paved road. A stormwater grate situated at the north edge of Kipling Lane could catch water before it floods

over the street. Water flowing down Kipling Lane would dump into the Courtyards retention pond, which town staff tell us is already at full capacity.

Buffer:

1) The applicant claims that a buffer is not required between the two properties. The plan shows 3 types of trees and bushes along the common boundary.

Does this meet town ordinance?

We would like the inclusion of these trees and bushes to be a condition of approval

Tree Protection:

1) Some large mature trees straddle the property boundary between 2217 and the Courtyards. These are a resource that took decades to grow. Grading up to the property line will damage the roots on the 2217 side and likely kill the trees.

Proposal: We request that these trees and their roots are provided several feet of additional protection as a condition of your approval.

Derek Ross, on behalf of the Courtyards at Homestead