

COMMUNITY DESIGN COMMISSION

The charge of the Community Design Commission is to assist the Council in guiding the Town's vision on aesthetics, character, and function to focus community growth through advice, advocacy and implementation of the Council's policies and review of proposed development in key areas of the community.

RECOMMENDATION FOR CONDITIONAL ZONING AT 710 North Estes

August 23, 2022

Recommendation: Approval Approval with Conditions Denial

Motion: Ted Hoskins moved and Scott Levitan seconded a motion to recommend that Council deny this Conditional Zoning request.

Vote: 5-0

Yeas: Ted Hoskins
Scott Levitan
Susan Lyons
Megan Patnaik
John Weis

Nays: None

TRANSPORTATION AND CONNECTIVITY ADVISORY BOARD

RECOMMENDATION FOR CONDITIONAL ZONING AT 710 North Estes

August 23, 2022

Recommendation: **Approval** **Approval with Conditions** **Denial**

Denise Matthews, seconded by Katie Huge, recommended approval, with the following conditions:

- The developer should provide additional covered bicycle parking within the limitations of their impervious requirements.
- The developer should provide conduit or electrical access to the surface parking spots.
- The developer should provide a paved, ADA-accessible access point from the property's southern edge to Estes Drive if possible.
- Town staff should pursue safer means of travel for bicyclists and pedestrians in the area of MLK and Estes Drive adjacent to this property.
- The developer should provide 220-volt outlets in the garages to support electric vehicle charging.
- The developer should ensure there is sufficient lighting on-site to accommodate people with low vision.
- Town staff should request NCDOT officials attend a Board meeting and discuss pedestrian safety on Estes Drive.

Aye: 7 - Chair Heather Brutz, Vice-Chair Nikki Abija, Stephen Bevington, Mary Breeden, Brian Hageman, Katie Huge, and Denise Matthews

HOUSING ADVISORY BOARD

The charge of the Housing Advisory Board is to assist the Chapel Hill Town Council in promoting and developing a full spectrum of housing opportunities that meet the needs of the Chapel Hill community.

RECOMMENDATION N ESTES TOWNHOMES CONDITIONAL ZONING APPLICATION 710 N. ESTES DRIVE

Recommendation: Approval Approval with Conditions Denial

Motion: A motion was made by Mills, seconded by Mercer, that the N Estes Townhomes at 710 N. Estes Drive Conditional Zoning Application be recommended for approval by the Town Council.

Vote: 4-0

Ayes: Sue Hunter (Chair), Rex Mercer, Dustin Mills, Brandon Morande

Nays:

Prepared by: Emily Holt, Staff

ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP ADVISORY BOARD
INITIAL COMMENTS ON CONDITIONAL ZONING
-710 N Estes-

September 13, 2022

The Environmental Stewardship Advisory Board reviewed the Conditional Zoning application for 710 N Estes Townhomes at their meeting on September 13, 2022.

Below is a summary of comments made by members of the Board

- Stormwater Management Plan: provide more detail on anticipated runoff to developments on either side, and how plans have been updated along the way to mitigate those impacts.
- Energy Management Plan: indicated support for the proposed EV-readiness and solar-readiness. Provide more detail on the HVAC systems, appliance types, and the potential to commit to all-electric appliances.
- Green space: Expand the environmental impact assessment to address wildlife impacts, and clarify commitments for green space.
- Transit: Provide more information on how the proposed connectivity will encourage use of other modes including bus ridership and biking.
- Tree canopy: provide more information on what commitment can be made for preservation.
- Impervious surfaces: provide more information on how it can be limited to meet stormwater interests and provide green space.
- Landscape Plan: show more detail on proposed plantings, how plant installation will work with grade, opportunities for tree preservation, and opportunities for more plant material in the western buffer to mitigate heat load on adjacent units. Include elevation views to better demonstrate the relationship of landscaping to grade change and retaining walls.
- Bike parking: explore opportunities to expand parking and storage without putting more inside the units.
- EV charging: address the capacity for condo units.

PLANNING COMMISSION

The charge of the Planning Commission is to assist the Council in achieving the Town's Comprehensive Plan for orderly growth and development by analyzing, evaluating, and recommending responsible town policies, ordinances, and planning standards that manage land use and involving the community in long-range planning.

RECOMMENDATION FOR CONDITIONAL ZONING APPLICATION FOR 710 N Estes

September 20, 2022

Recommendation: Approval Approval with Conditions Denial

Motion: John Rees moved, and Wesley McMahon seconded a motion to recommend that the Council adopt Resolution A (Resolution of Consistency).

Vote: 6 – 0

Yeas: Jonathan Mitchell (Chair), Elizabeth Losos (Vice-Chair), Wesley McMahon, Chuck Mills, John Rees, Stephen Whitlow

Nays:

Recommendation: Approval Approval with Conditions Denial

Motion: John Rees moved, and Wesley McMahon seconded a motion to recommend that the Council approve the Conditional Rezoning, with the attached comments as supplements to their recommendation.

Vote: 6 – 0

Yeas: Jonathan Mitchell (Chair), Elizabeth Losos (Vice-Chair), Wesley McMahon, Chuck Mills, John Rees, Stephen Whitlow

Nays:

Commission Notes to Council: PC members had a generally favorable view of the project, noting that the site plan has improved considerably in recent weeks. From a housing perspective, the proposal seems in line with the Town's needs. Members noted that the current plan seems at least somewhat responsive to concerns raised about excessive re-grading and clearcutting, as well as architectural quality, among other aspects. Nevertheless, the PC wishes to bring two concerns to the Council's attention:

- First, Lock7 has committed to complying with the current 25-year flood standard for stormwater control, not the 100-year standard that the Aura developer agreed to. Members worry about the long term, and difficult to remediate, consequences of designing new developments to meet stormwater standards that many view as no longer sufficient. Lock7 states that complying with a 100-year standard would increase costs by approximately \$500,000, and complying with a 50-year standard would increase costs by approximately \$250,000. Lock7 also states that increasing stormwater storage capacity could also necessitate more tree removal. (Members would like to see more tree preservation, not less). Members pointed out that a reduction in guest parking (currently 20 spots) could create more space for stormwater control measures. We recommend that the Council consider whether a higher stormwater standard is appropriate, and how to weight the potential trade-offs.
- Second, as alluded to above, members believe that the proposal for 20 guest parking spots may be excessive when there are dozens of rarely used street parking opportunities on Somerset Drive south of the existing neighborhood. These guest parking spots effectively increase the overall internal parking ratio from 2.1 to 2.4, with attendant consequences for transit-oriented development, construction cost and affordability, and impervious surface. (Aura's parking ratio is 1.55, before backing out retail parking.) Lock7 expressed openness to reducing guest parking but stated that Town officials previously cautioned Lock7 that some of the Somerset parking might not remain available indefinitely. The PC is not aware of any Town plans that would impact the majority of the street frontage in question. Therefore, we recommend that the Council consider asking for a reduction in on-site guest parking. In doing so, the Council might also clarify any future plans that might impact street parking on Somerset Drive south of the existing neighborhood (and the extent of any such impacts).

On a side-note, members expressed concern about the 26ft wide internal street width that we understand Lock7 must maintain to meet fire code. We understand that the Fire Marshall administers that requirement, not the Council. Nevertheless, we wonder whether the trade-offs involved in the 26ft standard are justifiable (e.g., additional maneuvering space for larger fire trucks vs. impervious surface and decreased pedestrian friendliness) and would welcome dialogue between the Council and the Fire Marshall on this subject.

Prepared by: Jacob Hunt, Planner II
 Jon Mitchell, Planning Commission Chair