



TOWN OF CHAPEL HILL

Town Council

Meeting Minutes - Final

Town Hall
405 Martin Luther King Jr.
Boulevard
Chapel Hill, NC 27514

Mayor Pam Hemminger
Mayor pro tem Karen Stegman
Council Member Jessica Anderson
Council Member Camille Berry
Council Member Tai Huynh

Council Member Paris Miller-Foushee
Council Member Michael Parker
Council Member Amy Ryan
Council Member Adam Searing

Wednesday, January 12, 2022

7:00 PM

Virtual Meeting

Language Access Statement

For interpretation or translation services, call 919-969-5105.

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Para servicios de interpretación o traducción, llame al 919-969-5105.

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如需口头或
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919-969-5105.

Virtual Meeting Notification

Town Council members will attend and participate in this meeting remotely, through internet access, and will not physically attend. The Town will not provide a physical location for viewing the meeting.

The public is invited to attend. The Town of Chapel Hill wants to know more about who participates in its programs and processes, including Town Council business meetings and work sessions. Please participate in an voluntary demographic survey <https://www.townofchapelhill.org/demosurvey> before accessing the Zoom webinar registration. After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the webinar in listen-only mode. Phone: 301-715-8592, Meeting ID: 883 2593 3303

View Council meetings live at <https://chapelhill.legistar.com/Calendar.aspx> – and on Chapel Hill Gov-TV (townofchapelhill.org/GovTV).

OPENING

Mayor pro tem Stegman opened the virtual meeting at 7:00 p.m. and reviewed the agenda. She said that Mayor Hemminger had contracted COVID-19, despite having taken precautions and was recovering.

ROLL CALL

Mayor pro tem Stegman called the roll and all Council Members replied that they were present.

- Present:** 8 - Mayor pro tem Karen Stegman, Council Member Jessica Anderson, Council Member Camille Berry, Council Member Paris Miller-Foushee, Council Member Tai Huynh, Council Member Michael Parker, Council Member Amy Ryan, and Council Member Adam Searing
- Absent:** 1 - Mayor Pam Hemminger

Other Attendees

Town Manager Maurice Jones, Deputy Town Manager Mary Jane Nirdlinger, Deputy Town Manager Loryn Clark, Town Attorney Ann Anderson, Planning Director Colleen Willger, Assistant Planning Director Judy Johnson, Business Management Director Amy Oland, Human Resource Development Director Cliff Turner, Planning Manager - Long Range Planning Corey Liles, Director of Affordable Housing and Community Connections Sarah Vinas, Public Housing Director Faith Brodie, Affordable Housing Development Officer Emily Holt, and Deputy Town Clerk Amy Harvey.

ANNOUNCEMENTS BY COUNCIL MEMBERS

0.01 Mayor Pro Tem Stegman Regarding the Grand Opening of Seafood Destiny Express.

[\[22-0036\]](#)

Mayor pro tem Stegman announced the opening of Seafood Destiny, a family-run restaurant at the corner of Franklin and Columbia Streets. She encouraged all to support the new business.

0.02 Mayor Pro Tem Stegman Regarding a Public Information Meeting On Jay St. Affordable Housing Project.

[\[22-0037\]](#)

Mayor pro tem Stegman announced that a virtual public information meeting regarding the Jay Street project would be held on January 13, 2022 at 5:15 p.m.

0.03 Mayor Pro Tem Stegman Regarding Town Staff Hosting Opportunities for Public to Talk about ARPA Funds in January and February.

[\[22-0038\]](#)

Mayor pro tem Stegman said that Town staff would hold public conversations on a wide variety of issues during January and February 2022. She said that virtual office hours had been scheduled for 7:30-8:30 p.m. on January 13th and that additional information was available on the Town website. Topics would included how to spend American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds, she said.

0.04 Mayor Pro Tem Stegman Regarding Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday Events.

[\[22-0039\]](#)

Mayor pro tem Stegman announced that the community would honor the life and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. with events that would include a memorial banquet on January 16, 2022. The Chapel Hill-Carrboro NAACP would hold a virtual celebration on January 17th at 11:00 a.m., noting that additional information was available on the Town website.

0.05 Council Member Berry Regarding Community Policing Advisory Committee Recruitment.

[\[22-0040\]](#)

Council Member Berry mentioned that the Community Policing Advisory Board was recruiting new members and said that related information could be found on the Town website.

0.06 Council Member Searing Regarding Well Wishes for Mayor Hemminger and Recent Pedestrian Injury.

[\[22-0041\]](#)

Council Member Searing extended his best wishes for recovery to Mayor Hemminger. He also assured the public that the Council was addressing recent traffic accidents in which pedestrians had been injured in Town.

PUBLIC COMMENT FOR ITEMS NOT ON PRINTED AGENDA AND PETITIONS FROM THE PUBLIC AND COUNCIL MEMBERS

Petitions and other similar requests submitted by the public, whether written or oral, are heard at the beginning of each regular meeting. Except in the case of urgency and unanimous vote of the Council members present, petitions will not be acted upon at the time presented. After receiving a petition, the Council shall, by simple motion, dispose of it as follows: consideration at a future regular Council meeting; referral to another board or committee for study and report; referral to the Town Manager for investigation and report; receive for information. See the Status of Petitions to Council webpage to track the petition. Receiving or referring of a petition does not constitute approval, agreement, or consent.

1. Burwell Ware Request to Regulate Fast-food Drive-Throughs.

[\[22-0017\]](#)

A motion was made by Council Member Anderson, seconded by Council Member Huynh, that this Petition was received and referred. The motion carried by a unanimous vote.

2. Joel Hornstein Request for Underground Electric Lines on East Franklin Street.

[\[22-0018\]](#)

Joel Hornstein read his request that the Town install underground electric lines on East Franklin Street. He said that power outages had occurred in recent months due to crashes with power poles, and he outlined the

benefits of burying power lines.

A motion was made by Council Member Anderson, seconded by Council Member Huynh, that this Petition was received and referred. The motion carried by a unanimous vote.

3. Environmental Stewardship Advisory Board Request to Adopt New Electrification Policies for Chapel Hill. [\[22-0019\]](#)

Tom Henkel, speaking on behalf of the Environmental Stewardship Advisory Board, read a petition urging the Council to ban the use of natural gas in Town-owned buildings and in new private construction and renovation. Doing so would be in keeping with the Town's Climate Action and Response Plan, he said. He gave several reasons for replacing natural gas with electricity and said that the Town appeared to have the right to enact such an ordinance.

A motion was made by Council Member Anderson, seconded by Council Member Huynh, that this Petition was received and referred. The motion carried by a unanimous vote.

CONSENT

Items of a routine nature will be placed on the Consent Agenda to be voted on in a block. Any item may be removed from the Consent Agenda by request of the Mayor or any Council Member.

Approval of the Consent Agenda

A motion was made by Council Member Anderson, seconded by Council Member Huynh, that R-1 be adopted, which approved the Consent Agenda. The motion carried by a unanimous vote.

4. Approve all Consent Agenda Items. [\[22-0020\]](#)

A motion was made by Council Member Anderson, seconded by Council Member Huynh, that R-1 was adopted. The motion carried by a unanimous vote.

5. Amend Chapter 21-6 of the Town Code of Ordinances for No Through Trucks to include Henderson Street between Rosemary Street and North Street, and North Street between Henderson Street and Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard. [\[22-0021\]](#)

A motion was made by Council Member Anderson, seconded by Council Member Huynh, that O-1 was enacted. The motion carried by a unanimous vote.

6. Assign Exclusive Planning and Development Regulation [\[22-0022\]](#)

Jurisdiction over Two Parcels to Orange County.

A motion was made by Council Member Anderson, seconded by Council Member Huynh, that R-2 was adopted. The motion carried by a unanimous vote.

7. Call a Legislative Hearing for the Future Consideration of a Parking Payment-in-Lieu System, Land Use Management Ordinance Text Amendment, and Associated Policy on February 16, 2022.

[\[21-0950\]](#)

A motion was made by Council Member Anderson, seconded by Council Member Huynh, that R-3 was adopted. The motion carried by a unanimous vote.

INFORMATION

8. Receive Upcoming Public Hearing Items and Petition Status List.

[\[22-0023\]](#)

This item was received as presented.

DISCUSSION

9. Presentation of Classification and Compensation Study Results.

[\[22-0024\]](#)

Town Manager Maurice Jones summarized the Council's previous discussions regarding the need to examine the marketplace and identify steps to recruit and retain the best Town employees. He said that a study of the matter, which had been paused due to the COVID-19 pandemic, had been resumed in 2021.

Human Resource Department Director Cliff Turner explained what a Classification and Compensation Study was and said that 2014 and 2017 studies had found that Town's base pay to employees was lagging behind its peers.

Russell Campbell, a consultant with Management Advisory Group, Inc. (MAG), provided details on how MAG had approached developing a new compensation plan for the Town. He discussed MAG's review of the existing classification plan and its identification of shortcomings and areas of concern among different job groups. He said that MAG had conducted a survey of labor markets in the region, looked at benefits as well as salaries, and reviewed position descriptions. He had provided the Town with an updated Salary Administrative Manual and a couple of options for implementing the study's results, he said.

Mr. Campbell reviewed 14 criteria that MAG used to rank jobs and went

through a list of towns, counties and other organizations that defined the labor market in which Chapel Hill was competing. A market survey had revealed that the Town was having difficulty attracting a significant applicant pool, he said, adding that Chapel Hill was lagging with respect to competitive pay across the board. The Town's entering salaries were about 9 percent behind the market average, he pointed out.

Mr. Campbell said that the Town needed to address salary compression issues, since a large number of Town employees with varying years of tenure were clustered at the lower end of the pay range. He recommended increasing pay for those employees as quickly as possible and giving a general pay increase to all employees as well.

Mr. Campbell advised the Town to then start increasing pay ranges by some index in July 2023. He said that most organizations adjust pay ranges each year in order to stay competitive. He said that reclassification requests should be limited to once a year during the annual budget process, rather than when job responsibilities change. He recommended that the Town reinstate a merit or performance pay program and said that having a multi-year workforce plan would be hugely beneficial.

Mr. Turner stated that staff agreed with the phased implementation plan that MAG was recommending. However, MAG's recommendations had gone far beyond staff's original estimates and the Town would need to use a phased approach to implementation, he said. He proposed a first phase that would bring all permanent employees up to the new minimums and a second phase that would begin to address compression.

Mr. Jones said that the total cost for implementing Phase 1 in FY 2022 would be \$987,633 (\$774,379 from the General Fund). In FY 2023, it would cost \$2,668,439 (\$2,113,979 from the General Fund) in FY 2023, he said. He explained that staff would include the latter amount in FY 2023 budget projections, if the Council approved implementation of the plan.

Mr. Jones pointed out that \$400,000 had already been budgeted for the study in the current fiscal year, so an additional \$500,000 would be needed to begin implementing pay changes On February 1, 2022. He reminded the Council that it had discussed using excess 2021 Fund Balance for that purpose. He would return on January 26, 2022 with a resolution to approve the study's Phase 1 recommendations and funding, he said.

Council Member Anderson confirmed with Mr. Campbell that the Town could address compression by increasing base salary, as proposed, or by giving a percentage increase that would pull the lower end up and slow growth for those at or above the midpoint. She also confirmed that a

hybrid approach could be taken but would be more expensive.

The Council verified with Mr. Jones that the goal would be to build the salary raise into the Town's base budget for the next year and then discuss how to fund more than \$2 million every year thereafter. Council Member Ryan said that she supported improving employees' salaries, but wanted a better understanding of the budget implications before making a decision.

Council Member Huyhn asked Mr. Jones to return with information on what turnover had cost the Town over the past five years and the cost of hiring and training new employees. Council Member Searing asked about comparisons with neighboring jurisdictions, and Mr. Jones pointed out that Transit, for example, had increased starting pay but that others in the region had been guaranteeing periodic pay increases.

Council Member Miller-Foushee noted the correlation between the level of staff pay and the fact that 70 percent of Town employees could not afford to live in Town. Council Member Anderson mentioned a shortage of school bus drivers, and Mayor pro tem Stegman proposed sharing data from the study with them so that they could advocate with the School Board for higher pay.

Council Members generally agreed that employee pay needed to increase but they had different views on when and how to do so. Council Members Berry, Parker, Huynh and Miller-Foushee spoke in favor of moving forward for equity and social justice reasons as well as market competitiveness. They pointed out that Town staff's performance had been above and beyond for almost a decade (especially during COVID-19) despite being underpaid by about 10 percent.

Council Members Anderson, Ryan and Searing agreed that adjusting pay was a priority but advocated for folding that discussion into the upcoming budget cycle, since a pay raise might mean a tax increase. Council Member Ryan said that she would like to discuss having a more nuanced approach to remedying the compression issue as well.

Mayor pro tem Stegman argued against waiting because employee pay was so far behind where it should be. She agreed that the Council would need to make large budget decisions, but said she strongly favored going ahead and letting staff figure out how to do it.

This item was received as presented.

10. Consider Adopting a Resolution Supporting Funding for a Fourth Position for the Orange County Street Outreach, Harm Reduction and Deflection Program.

[\[22-0025\]](#)

Deputy Town Manager Loryn Clark proposed that the Council consider adopting Resolution 4, supporting a fourth position for the Orange County Street Outreach Harm Reduction and Deflection (SOHRAD) Program. She pointed out that the Community Safety Task Force had recommended the position and that the Council had allocated \$100,000 in the FY 2022 budget to implement Task Force recommendations.

Ms. Clark proposed that the Council discuss future funding for the position during its FY 2023 budget deliberations and address possibly sharing costs with the Partnership to End Homelessness. She said that adopting Resolution 4 would authorize the Town Manager to negotiate a funding agreement with Orange County for up to \$38,860 to support expansion of the SOHRAD program.

Corey Root, Orange County Department of Housing and Community Development director, described SOHRAD, a three-person team that had begun in October 2020 with a COVID-related grant to help people who live un-sheltered. She said that SOHRAD had helped more than 250 people find permanent, temporary, and transitional housing and had provided tents, sleeping bags, food, clothing, bus passes, transportation to medical appointments, and direct clinical support as well.

Ms. Root explained the ways in which COVID-related issues had added to SOHRAD's workload by more than doubling the number of households they worked with. She characterized the current homeless situation as urgent and said that the new position needed to be filled as quickly as possible.

Council Members verified that staff's recommendation was to fund the position through the end of June 2022 and then consider fully funding it during the upcoming budget cycle. They confirmed with Ms. Root that she was ready to immediately start the hiring process.

Shiala Baldwin, a social worker who has worked with the local homeless population, said that \$38,000 was not much money when considering that homeless people were dying on Chapel Hill streets. She urged the Council to move forward with funding the position immediately.

Tye Hunter, a Reimagining Community Safety Task Force member, emphasized the importance of SOHRAD's work and said that adding only one person would probably not be sufficient. He pointed out that SOHRAD freed Chapel Hill police officers to do what they were best at, which then contributed to safety for all.

Jackie Jenks, president of The InterFaith Council for Social Service (IFC), said that the IFC was not able to accommodate all of those who need housing and that SOHRAD had been keeping people from dying, away from emergency rooms, and out of jail. Despite the nation's recent move to

"pandemic recovery," the crises and the need for rapid response had not ended for those addressing the homeless issue, she said.

Delores Baily, a Reimagining Community Safety Task Force member, asked the Council to reinforce the Task Force's work by approving the funding request immediately.

Council Member Miller-Foushee said that SOHRAD had saved taxpayers money by keeping people out of the criminal justice and healthcare systems. She praised SOHRAD for its life-saving work and recommended that the Council immediately fund the position through June 2022.

Mayor pro tem Stegman characterized SOHRAD as a model program that had an impressive and important impact and had the support of all community sectors. She pointed out that funding the position had been the Task Force's primary recommendation.

Council Member Berry noted that the Council had previously approved \$100,000 to be used for moving the Task Force's vision forward.

A motion was made by Council Member Anderson, seconded by Council Member Berry, that R-4 be adopted. The motion carried by a unanimous vote.

11. Consider Authorizing the Town Manager to Execute Option to Ground Lease Agreements with the Developers of the Trinity Court and Jay Street Affordable Housing Development Projects.

[\[22-0026\]](#)

Mayor pro tem Stegman pointed out that this discussion would address only ground lease agreements for the Trinity Court and Jay Street affordable housing (AH) projects. The item did not involve project approval, she said.

Mr. Jones said the Trinity Court and Jay Street developments together could add more than 100 AH units and that the amount of needed subsidy could be reduced by millions of dollars if one or both of them were awarded 9 percent low-income housing tax credit (LIHTC) funding. He stressed that approval of the proposed ground lease agreements would not involve rezoning or project approval. The two projects would continue to make their way through the Town's entitlement and review process, he said.

Affordable Housing Development Officer Emily Holt provided background on the two projects and reviewed the current status of each. She proposed that the Council consider two resolutions that would authorize the Town Manager to execute an option to ground lease agreement with Community Housing Partners to redevelop Trinity Court and with the Taft-Mills Group and Community Home Trust to develop Jay Street.

Ms. Holt said that both projects had \$10-12 million budgets, which the developers were proposing to fund with a combination of LIHTC and bank financing. If a 9 percent LIHTC were approved for both, there would be hardly any funding gap, but it was unlikely that both projects would receive that award, she said.

Ms. Holt explained that a 4 percent LIHTC scenario would likely result in a \$2-3.5 million gap that the Town would close with a variety of potential sources and maybe additional financing. She outlined a series of actions that were required to submit complete and timely LIHTC applications. She listed several future project milestones prior to potential construction in fall 2023.

Brian Crawford, an attorney with Sanford Holshouser LLC, reviewed the terms of the option agreements and said that the Council would not be giving up its right to monitor project development. The option to lease agreement included restrictions that would ensure affordability for 99 years, he pointed out.

Ms. Holt said that staff had been advised to submit applications for any project that might be competitive in a given year. Staff believed that both projects had a chance, based on new 2022 scoring rules, she pointed out. She said that Trinity Court and Jay Street had aligned interests but were not really competing against each other. The two projects together could bring more than 100 AH units on line in the next three years, she said.

Council Member Ryan confirmed with Ms. Holt that half of the Town's \$10 million in AH bond funds remained uncommitted.

Robert Beasley, a Chapel Hill resident, said that he supported the ground lease agreement for Trinity Court but that Jay Street required more public discussion about its potential effects on traffic, pedestrian safety, and the environment. He pointed out that the 7.5-acre Jay Street site had been purchased with open space bonds and said that approving it for housing would erode trust.

Several speakers said that they were not opposed to having AH in their neighborhood but wanted the Council to slow the Jay Street process down. They were concerned about potential safety, connectivity, and environmental issues, they said. Pam Cooper, who lives at the intersection of Jay Street and Village Drive, said that an estimated 254 new trips would pass in front of her house daily on an 18-foot road that would need to be widened to 27 feet. She raised questions about the effects of that on her property and an old cemetery nearby.

Residents Susan Bolotin and Jack Berry warned of potentially dangerous traffic impacts, and residents Joanna Vajda and Tara Kachgal said they objected to open space bond money being used for a different purpose. Resident Trisha Lester, Penny Sparacino and Julie Pace said that the process was being rushed and that neighbors' voices were not being heard.

Rachel Eberhard, speaking for CASA, encouraged the Council to submit both projects. She said that one CASA project had been submitted three times before receiving the 9 percent tax credit.

Devin M. Ceartas, a community organizer and former Village West Homeowners Association president, proposed connecting the development to Bynam Street or Broad Street on the back side. He stressed the primary importance of building AH and proposed that the Jay Street development serve residents who made much less than 60 percent of the area median income.

George Barrett, executive director of the Marion Cheek Jackson Center, expressed support for moving forward. He said that Northside, Pine Knolls and Tin Top residents supported both projects and felt positive about having Jay Street nearby.

Delores Bailey, executive director of EmPOWERment, Inc., praised the Town for trying to reduce costs by submitting both projects for LIHTC funding. She said that a Council vote in favor would allow the Town to apply for LIHTC funding but would not mean approving the project.

Council Member Ryan said that she supported giving the developer the site control needed to apply for funding. Doing so would not approve any specifics or commit to any level of financing for the projects, she said, adding that many issues regarding Jay Street still needed to be worked out through a robust community process. Council Member Anderson agreed and proposed looking for models that required less subsidy, if the Town were not awarded the 9 percent tax credit.

In response to some of the speakers' comments about "conflicts of interest," Council Member Anderson said that it was important for the Town to have people from industry on its advisory boards. Those individuals were not violating any rules and not allowing them to serve would be a loss for the Town, she said.

Council Member Searing questioned supporting the resolution for Jay Street because the land had been purchased with open space bond funds. Even though it was legal to use that money for AH, it would set a terrible precedent, could prevent future donations of land, and would erode trust, he said. He raised the possibility of swapping land with the park system

and replacing green space that would be taken away.

Council Member Berry said that the Town knew more about the critical need for AH than it did when the Jay Street land was purchased for open space. Voting in favor of the resolution would not mean that she disregarded residents' concerns but affordable housing was needed more than open space, she said.

A motion was made by Council Member Berry, seconded by Council Member Huynh, that R-5 be adopted. The motion carried by a unanimous vote.

A motion was made by Council Member Berry, seconded by Council Member Huynh, that R-6 be adopted. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 7 - Mayor pro tem Stegman, Council Member Anderson, Council Member Berry, Council Member Miller-Foushee, Council Member Huynh, Council Member Parker, and Council Member Ryan

Nay: 1 - Council Member Searing

CONCEPT PLAN REVIEW(S)

Concept Plans: Presentations for Concept Plans will be limited to 15 minutes.

Concept Plan review affords Council members the opportunity to provide individual reactions to the overall concept of the development which is being contemplated for future application. Nothing stated by individual Council members this evening can be construed as an official position or commitment on the part of a Council member with respect to the position they may take when and if a formal application for development is subsequently submitted and comes before the Council for formal consideration.

As a courtesy to others, people speaking on an agenda item are normally limited to three minutes. Persons who are organizing a group presentation and who wish to speak beyond the three minute limit are requested to make prior arrangements through the Mayor's Office by calling 968-2714.

12. Concept Plan Review: South Creek Mixed Use Project, US 15/501 S.

[\[22-0027\]](#)

Principal Planner Corey Liles gave a broad overview of a concept plan for South Creek. He showed the 120-acre site across from Southern Village along Highway 15-501 on a map. It had been zoned Development Agreement 1 and was subject to a 2015 Obey Creek Development Agreement (DA), he said. He explained that the applicant was asking the

Town to reconsider that zoning in order to allow additional non-residential floor area.

Mr. Liles summarized the current proposal for a mixed-use development that would include approximately 650 townhomes and condominiums, retail and office space, public amenities, and a nature preserve. He reviewed advisory board comments, provided information about the Obey Creek DA, and noted that several of the Town's long-range plans would apply to the proposed development. He recommended that the Council adopt Resolution A, which would transmit its comments to the applicant.

Applicant Lee Bowman, representing Beechwood Homes, discussed some of the site's existing features, such as a creek, steep slopes, an eight-acre natural area, and two primary access points. He described how South Creek would include approximately 40,000 square feet of commercial space and a central green area surrounded by amenities.

Mr. Bowman said that Beechwood Homes envisioned a transit-friendly development that would include a wide variety of housing sizes targeted toward the "missing middle" resident. He said that the one- two- and three-bedroom units would range in size from about 800 to 2,000 square feet. Beechwood was committed to a sustainable approach, with solar rooftops, e-bike lending stations, and electric vehicle charging stations in retail areas, he said.

Planner Tony Martin described how the residential buildings would cascade down the slope and commercial buildings would complement and energize nearby Southern Village. He outlined a pedestrian-prioritized community with stoops and sidewalks and garages located at the rear of townhomes and underneath the condos. He discussed the proposed greenspaces, pathways, pedestrian trail, creek and 80-acre preserve, and said that South Creek would be a transit-oriented development surrounded by nature.

The Council confirmed with Mr. Liles that abandoning the Obey Creek DA would mean that it would have no bearing on the current proposal. Council Member Anderson said that work done by an Obey Creek Compass Committee made up of citizens would still be helpful to the applicant, however.

The Council asked if Beechwood Homes intended to incorporate AH for 60 percent and below area median (AMI), and Mr. Bowman said that they would need to think about that. The Council confirmed that the applicant intended to have no deck or structured parking, that the longest building dimension was about 75 feet x 245 feet and that the initial unit price range was \$300,000 to \$700,000.

Celie Richardson and Masha Halpern, both Lister Lane residents, objected to the proposed density and characterized South Creek as a "high rise" project. They opposed having a band shell at South Creek, they said, noting that concert venues already existed nearby at Southern Village and the Dean Smith Center. Ms. Richardson said that having buildings cascade down a steep slope would be an environmental violation and was inappropriate for the area. Ms. Halpern expressed frustration over a lack of communication from the Town and concern about the project's potential impacts on the natural environment.

Rebecca Vidra, a restoration ecologist at Duke University, said that building on steep slopes could cause extensive runoff that would continue after the project was built. She urged the Town to ensure that the riparian buffers were wide enough to protect the stream and said that a maintenance agreement would be needed to manage those buffers in the future. Additionally, the "park preserve" would not be a public park because there would be no parking available there, she said.

Ryan Burk, a Southern Village resident, characterized the proposed concept as another unfortunate high-density housing project. He took exception to the use of "missing middle," and stated that a seven-story condominium building was not single-family scale and \$300,000 to \$700,000 price points would not meet current and future residents' needs.

Orah Raia, co-founder of Housing Options for People with Exceptionalities (HOPE), said that HOPE was interested in a community that would have access to transportation and possible employment opportunities and would include people with and without disabilities. She urged the applicant to consider AH for those with disabilities, most of whom earn less than 30 percent of AMI.

Council Member Anderson emphasized the Town's desire to synchronize both sides of Highway 15-501, integrate South Creek and Southern Village, and make Highway 15-501 more like a boulevard. Council Members stressed the importance of having the commercial components of South Creek and Southern Village work together rather than compete.

Council Members Anderson and Ryan advised the applicant to keep stormwater out of the Resource Conservation District. Council Member Anderson recommended integrating environmental and climate actions from the start, and Council Member Ryan said that she would like to see a permanent preservation of the 80 acres.

Council Member Searing asked if the applicant had considered a conservation easement, and Mr. Bowman replied that they were open to feedback from the Town on how to do that.

Several Council Members noted the distinction between "middle income" and "missing middle" and said that the Town was looking for middle income level housing. Some said that price points should be at the lower end of what was being proposed. Council Member Huynh asked the applicant to consider developing some of the townhomes as live/work units. Council Member Anderson praised the HOPE model and expressed interest in having Chapel Hill showcase it.

Council Member Ryan said that negotiating with the NC Department of Transportation to get a light at Sumac Road would be key to making the area safe for pedestrians. She said that 7-story buildings at the street would be too tall but that four stories with step backs would be comfortable.

The Council stressed the importance of place-making at that southern entry to Town. Council Member Parker suggested adding variety by intermixing the townhomes and condos more. He proposed spreading the retail throughout the development to create a more natural and organic blend of elements and give people a reason to walk around.

Mayor pro tem Stegman reminded the public that a concept plan was just the beginning of a lengthy process and that there would be many opportunities for community input. She said that safety would be a huge topic, and she pointed out that there had been discussions in the past about a possible connector between South Creek and Southern Village. She encouraged the applicant to talk with HOPE and possibly with UNC and UNC Healthcare about subsidizing AH.

A motion was made by Council Member Anderson, seconded by Council Member Parker, that R-7 be adopted. The motion carried by a unanimous vote.

ADJOURNMENT

This meeting was adjourned at 11:15 p.m.