

## Amy Harvey

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**From:** Jeanette Coffin  
**Sent:** Tuesday, May 19, 2020 9:30 AM  
**To:** levine\_dan@hotmail.com  
**Cc:** Judy Johnson; Dwight Bassett; Allen Buansi; Amy Ryan; Hongbin Gu; Jeanne Brown; Jess Anderson; Karen Stegman; Michael Parker; Pam Hemminger; Tai Huynh; Amy Harvey; Carolyn Worsley; Catherine Lazorko; Flo Miller; Laura Selmer; Mary Jane Nirdlinger; Maurice Jones; Rae Buckley; Ralph Karpinos; Ross Tompkins; Sabrina Oliver  
**Subject:** RE: Comments on American Legion Site

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.

If your email is related to a development application or a particular issue being addressed by the Council, your comments will be made part of the record. If applicable, we encourage you to attend any public meetings related to the items addressed in your email.

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

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**From:** levine\_dan@hotmail.com [mailto:levine\_dan@hotmail.com]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, May 19, 2020 1:03 AM  
**To:** Town Council <mayorandcouncil@townofchapelhill.org>  
**Subject:** Comments on American Legion Site

**External email:** Don't click links or attachments from unknown senders. To check or report forward to [reportspam@townofchapelhill.org](mailto:reportspam@townofchapelhill.org)

Dear Mayor Hemminger and Town Council Members (and Manager Jones),

I hope this message finds you well in these difficult times.

I'm writing to share my personal perspective on the American Legion site, which is informed by being a resident of the adjacent Colony Woods neighborhood, a parent of Ephesus ES students past and present, an advocate for social justice and equity, and a born and bred Chapel Hillian.

Most importantly, **we should take the time necessary to analyze the opportunities for the site in a balanced way that represents the diverse set of stakeholders** for such a large and important site, something which I do not believe has been fully achieved to date because the previous committee led by former Council Member Schaevitz (before her election) had a narrow charge and did not have a diverse membership in any sense of the word.

We should refrain from jumping to the conclusion that the site should be used for one use only, as is advocated in the petition in front of you from the parks board that suggests--seemingly and distressingly outside of a Council endorsed process for soliciting advisory board input--that the Town dedicate the whole site as parkland.

**I believe our community is plenty talented and thoughtful enough to come up with a plan that protects significant portions of the property for recreation and conservation, while being smart about the need to develop portions of the site for affordable housing and market rate development to meet other equally important community goals** as identified in Vision 2020 and other community planning guideposts.

I should add that I have lived in Colony Woods for 12 years, regularly use the trails around the Legion property with my family, and one of my kids takes classes at the wonderful Studio A Dance Studio. In short, I appreciate the interest in preserving parts of the property for continued public use. **It would be an enormous mistake to dedicate all 36 acres to a park when we have underutilized parks nearby that could be improved upon, need continued economic development and tax revenues, lack sites to accommodate housing growth serving current and future residents of town, and do not have the financial resources to sustain a large investment in vacant land.**

As you know, the Town purchased the property (excluding transaction costs) for \$7.9M, a price that was influenced by a prior purchase contract from a multifamily developer who'd predicated their offer on rezoning. Given the lack of local support for that project and the zoning it needed, the price paid by the Town to the Legion was... generous, to put it politely.

As far as I know, we do not have a long-term funding plan in place for this property's acquisition costs let alone turning it into a park, and in the meantime it's not on the tax rolls generating revenues (all while our Town's finances will be hit hard by the impact of COVID-19 likely for years to come). Whatever one thinks of the prior Council's decision to buy the property at a valuation based on a level of development that many in the community opposed, the current reality is we paid a *lot* of money without a viable plan.

We'd be wise to recoup some of these costs by developing a significant portion of the site. **The good news is that 36 acres is a large amount of land, plenty to include open space/park/trails near Colony Woods/Ephesus ES while also developing much of the long-unused portions of site, with a focus on the portions fronting Legion Road and extending to the Legion Post that are almost completely unused** by the public anyway and have been that way for many decades. We could sell some land for market rate apartments and/or office/retail, reserve several acres for affordable housing development (capitalizing on it being one of the few undeveloped tracts I'm town that will score well for LIHTC rental), and use the proceeds of these developments to help preserve the remainder of the site for open space or a park.

Speaking of parks, keep in mind that Burlington Park is right around the corner, Ephesus Elementary and the Town maintain playgrounds, trails, open space, fields, tennis courts and pickle ball courts next to the school with typically plenty of excess capacity. **My neighborhood is blessed with lots of existing recreation areas and can add to them in a strategic way rather than taking all 36 largely unused acres and keeping them that way without reason** besides resistance to change or fear of new neighbors.

**A decision to not build on any of this land would be harmful to the current and future community, and would double down on our town's unfortunate tendency to be exclusionary of people all while we wax poetic about the "village" many of us were privileged (in all senses of the word) to grow up in.** We have a great opportunity to chart an inclusive, sustainable path that makes room for people of all income levels to live as neighbors, stewards Town resources both environmental and financial, and serves multiple constituencies rather than just one.

I recognize that my voice is in a minority at present. I suspect you are hearing from a particular subset of my neighbors, and I don't begrudge them at all. But please know that many of my neighbors and friends are focused on raising their young children, juggling work from home, dealing with lost wages, and other all-consuming concerns, and unfortunately simply have not yet had the bandwidth that some neighbors' life circumstances allow to publicly share their interests in a more balanced approach to the American Legion site. I hope and trust that Council and staff will see to it that these voices, as well as the voices of others across the whole town, have a chance for meaningful engagement in the months ahead.

Thank you for your service, I know it's hard work!

Yours,

Dan Levine  
410 Highview Drive

## Amy Harvey

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**From:** Jeanette Coffin  
**Sent:** Monday, May 18, 2020 9:54 AM  
**To:** cbuphoff@icloud.com  
**Cc:** Judy Johnson; Phillip Fleischmann; Linda Smith; Allen Buansi; Amy Ryan; Hongbin Gu; Jeanne Brown; Jess Anderson; Karen Stegman; Michael Parker; Pam Hemminger; Tai Huynh; Amy Harvey; Carolyn Worsley; Catherine Lazorko; Flo Miller; Laura Selmer; Mary Jane Nirdlinger; Maurice Jones; Rae Buckley; Ralph Karpinos; Ross Tompkins; Sabrina Oliver  
**Subject:** FW: Usage of Legion Property  
**Attachments:** Parks Greenways and Recreation Commission Request.pdf

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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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:** Carol Uphoff [mailto:cbuphoff@icloud.com]  
**Sent:** Sunday, May 17, 2020 10:33 PM  
**To:** Town Council <mayorandcouncil@townofchapelhill.org>  
**Cc:** Parks & Rec Dept <parksrec@townofchapelhill.org>; Development Services <developmentsservices@townofchapelhill.org>; Carol Uphoff <cbuphoff@gmail.com>  
**Subject:** Usage of Legion Property

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

Dear Mayor Hemminger, and Council Members,

This comes with all good wishes for your health and appreciation for your leadership in this time of COVID-19!

The below letter of petition, which you all are considering this week, has been shared on our neighborhood listserve in recent days.

I echo the Parks Greenways and Recreation Commission requests for :

1) Their immediate inclusion and participation in any planning groups for this property from here forward.  
2) The strong consideration of ALL of the Legion property acreage to be designated for Parks, Greenways and Recreation activities.

+++This is our last chance to preserve land for green space accessible, by foot and bike, to all in this part of town.+++  
3) The continued leasing of the dance studio space seems advisable for the potential income to the town, and consistent with recreational activities, at least until a comprehensive parks plan can begin to be developed. The larger Legion building should be closed.

The opportunity to walk over to the Legion space, around the pond, etc, has been really important to my mental and physical health during this stay at home time. Thank you for the upkeep of paths that is being done adjacent to the ballfield behind Ephesus Elem, etc.

I must say I have NOT missed the sound of Pickle Ball late at night. I do request that upon return of the opportunity to play, the stop time be adjusted to 9pm. If more courts are to be added, I ask that mitigation of the sound and light pollution effects be considered for the peace of all neighboring residential areas.

I look forward to more opportunities for the public to review of preliminary plans for what can be an amazing boon for this town, especially residents within walking and biking distance of the Legion property.

Thank you!  
Carol Brooks Uphoff  
603 Churchill Dr  
[cbuphoff@gmail.com](mailto:cbuphoff@gmail.com)

## Amy Harvey

---

**From:** Jeanette Coffin  
**Sent:** Monday, May 18, 2020 9:55 AM  
**To:** Mike Andrews  
**Cc:** Judy Johnson; Dwight Bassett; Allen Buansi; Amy Ryan; Hongbin Gu; Jeanne Brown; Jess Anderson; Karen Stegman; Michael Parker; Pam Hemminger; Tai Huynh; Amy Harvey; Carolyn Worsley; Catherine Lazorko; Flo Miller; Laura Selmer; Mary Jane Nirdlinger; Maurice Jones; Rae Buckley; Ralph Karpinos; Ross Tompkins; Sabrina Oliver  
**Subject:** RE: American Legion Property

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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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

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**From:** Mike Andrews [mailto:mikeandrewsnc@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Sunday, May 17, 2020 2:02 PM  
**To:** Town Council <mayorandcouncil@townofchapelhill.org>  
**Cc:** Parks & Rec Dept <parksrec@townofchapelhill.org>  
**Subject:** American Legion Property

**External email:** Don't click links or attachments from unknown senders. To check or report forward to [reportspam@townofchapelhill.org](mailto:reportspam@townofchapelhill.org)

Dear Mayor Hemminger and Council Members,

Several years ago I had the honor to serve on the American Legion Task Force as appointed by the Town Council. That experience and 35 years of living in the Colony Woods Community has brought me to one conclusion in regard to the Town's property on Legion Road:

The Eastside of Chapel Hill needs a Community Park. Here are some of my thoughts:

1. Our side of town is seeing unprecedented housing unit growth because of the lightly zoned Blue Hill designation. Hundred of families are moving to newly constructed, or currently being constructed, apartment units. Unlike most areas of Chapel Hill there is almost no green or recreational space in our neighborhood. The current pandemic crisis has highlighted people's needs and desire to get outside and enjoy fresh air and green space. This is our one and only chance to meet that need.

2. Given the town's upcoming budget challenges the smartest way to manage the Legion property is also the least expensive. For the next 5 years manage the Legion property as green space and natural areas. Keep the grassy areas mowed, work with volunteers who already have their hands up, to clear invasive/exotic plants from the wooded areas, and begin a plan to design a manageable trail system. This would create a wonderful open space for community newcomers and current residents and keep management costs at a bare minimum. The Council would have breathing room to come up with a more comprehensive plan over the next 5 years.

3. Continue the dance school lease on a year-to-year basis. They have proved to be good neighbors, and this arrangement would give the Town maximum flexibility while generating a small amount of cash flow.

The Eastside of Chapel Hill is under assault from unprecedented growth, immense increases in traffic, and pressure on our schools and public services. The creation of a community park, which was recommended several years ago by a Task Force on which I served, is a needed, necessary step in continuing our Eastside neighborhood as the liveable community which attracted us in the first place.

Thank you for your consideration,

Michael L. Andrews  
1605 Fountain Ridge Road  
Chapel Hill, NC 27517

919-949-6936

## Amy Harvey

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**From:** Jeanette Coffin  
**Sent:** Monday, May 18, 2020 9:56 AM  
**To:** Mary Andrews  
**Cc:** Dwight Bassett; Judy Johnson; Allen Buansi; Amy Ryan; Hongbin Gu; Jeanne Brown; Jess Anderson; Karen Stegman; Michael Parker; Pam Hemminger; Tai Huynh; Amy Harvey; Carolyn Worsley; Catherine Lazorko; Flo Miller; Laura Selmer; Mary Jane Nirdlinger; Maurice Jones; Rae Buckley; Ralph Karpinos; Ross Tompkins; Sabrina Oliver  
**Subject:** RE: Legion Rd Property

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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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

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**From:** Mary Andrews [mailto:muandrews@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Sunday, May 17, 2020 1:56 PM  
**To:** Town Council <mayorandcouncil@townofchapelhill.org>  
**Subject:** Legion Rd Property

**External email:** Don't click links or attachments from unknown senders. To check or report forward to [reportspam@townofchapelhill.org](mailto:reportspam@townofchapelhill.org)

Dear Mayor and Council; Members,

Thank you. You have given us the opportunity for input into the long term future of Chapel Hill many times over. I appreciate you, our decision makers, every time you reach out. And I appreciate you for making the hard decisions. There are no easy answers.



**This email is to urge you to set aside Legion Park as a green space.** If we are thinking long term and paying attention to what Covid-19 is teaching, our balanced relationship with nature is our community's path to good health. Outside. Social distancing. Fresh air. Access.

**In one hundred years,** playgrounds will come and go, pickle ball courts will come and go, (more) housing and retail will come and go. But the trees -- the trees, and trails through them, will stand! They will provide respite from the heat, clean our air, put us in touch with sights, sounds and smells that resonate within, deepen our respect for our environment, and feed our souls in ways beyond understanding.

Grab this opportunity. This decision is timely and irreversible.. Once the green space is gone, it is gone! I urge you, I implore you, keep Legion Park a green space.

To a Healthy Community!

Mary Andrews

## Amy Harvey

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**From:** Jeanette Coffin  
**Sent:** Monday, May 18, 2020 9:57 AM  
**To:** Jody Jarowey  
**Cc:** Judy Johnson; Dwight Bassett; Allen Buansi; Amy Ryan; Hongbin Gu; Jeanne Brown; Jess Anderson; Karen Stegman; Michael Parker; Pam Hemminger; Tai Huynh; Amy Harvey; Carolyn Worsley; Catherine Lazorko; Flo Miller; Laura Selmer; Mary Jane Nirdlinger; Maurice Jones; Rae Buckley; Ralph Karpinos; Ross Tompkins; Sabrina Oliver  
**Subject:** RE: Petition to designate all 36.2 acres of the American Legion Property for use as a community park

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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Jeanette Coffin

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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

-----Original Message-----

**From:** Jody Jarowey [mailto:jjarowey@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Saturday, May 16, 2020 5:58 PM  
**To:** Town Council <mayorandcouncil@townofchapelhill.org>; All Agenda Materials <allclerk@townofchapelhill.org>; Manager <manager@townofchapelhill.org>  
**Subject:** Petition to designate all 36.2 acres of the American Legion Property for use as a community park

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

To: Town Council, Mayor, and Town Manager

I am writing in support of the petition to designate all 36.2 acres of the American Legion Property for use as a community park.

There is so little undeveloped land in Chapel Hill and in this part of town in particular.

Thanks,  
Jody Jarowey  
919 933-2402

## Amy Harvey

---

**From:** Jeanette Coffin  
**Sent:** Monday, May 18, 2020 9:58 AM  
**To:** Chris Deschene  
**Cc:** Judy Johnson; Dwight Bassett; Allen Buansi; Amy Ryan; Hongbin Gu; Jeanne Brown; Jess Anderson; Karen Stegman; Michael Parker; Pam Hemminger; Tai Huynh; Amy Harvey; Carolyn Worsley; Catherine Lazorko; Flo Miller; Laura Selmer; Mary Jane Nirdlinger; Maurice Jones; Rae Buckley; Ralph Karpinos; Ross Tompkins; Sabrina Oliver  
**Subject:** RE: Petition to designate all 36.2 acres of the American Legion Property for use as a community park

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Sincerely,

Jeanette Coffin

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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

-----Original Message-----

From: Chris Deschene [mailto:christopher.deschene@gmail.com]  
Sent: Saturday, May 16, 2020 5:57 PM  
To: Town Council <mayorandcouncil@townofchapelhill.org>; All Agenda Materials <allclerk@townofchapelhill.org>; Manager <manager@townofchapelhill.org>  
Subject: Petition to designate all 36.2 acres of the American Legion Property for use as a community park

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To: Town Council, Mayor, and Town Manager

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There is so little undeveloped land in Chapel Hill and in this part of town in particular.

Thanks,  
Chris Deschene  
919 933-2402

## Amy Harvey

---

**From:** Jeanette Coffin  
**Sent:** Monday, May 18, 2020 11:26 AM  
**To:** Mark Hollins  
**Cc:** Judy Johnson; Dwight Bassett; Allen Buansi; Amy Ryan; Hongbin Gu; Jeanne Brown; Jess Anderson; Karen Stegman; Michael Parker; Pam Hemminger; Tai Huynh; Amy Harvey; Carolyn Worsley; Catherine Lazorko; Flo Miller; Laura Selmer; Mary Jane Nirdlinger; Maurice Jones; Rae Buckley; Ralph Karpinos; Ross Tompkins; Sabrina Oliver  
**Subject:** RE: Legion property

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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:** Mark Hollins [mailto:[hollinsmark1@gmail.com](mailto:hollinsmark1@gmail.com)]  
**Sent:** Monday, May 18, 2020 11:18 AM  
**To:** Town Council <[mayorandcouncil@townofchapelhill.org](mailto:mayorandcouncil@townofchapelhill.org)>  
**Subject:** Legion property

**External email:** Don't click links or attachments from unknown senders. To check or report forward to [reportspam@townofchapelhill.org](mailto:reportspam@townofchapelhill.org)

Dear Mayor and Council Members,

We are writing to urge you to keep the Legion property as a park of undeveloped green space. Green space is shrinking in Chapel Hill, and the problem is especially acute on the east side of town. Rapid development in the lightly-zoned "Blue Hill" section will cause increased traffic, downstream flooding, and other problems in the coming years, as grass is gradually replaced by

concrete. Leaving Legion Park unspoiled will not reverse these changes, but it will prevent further development that would make them worse.

But more than that, having an actual Legion Park, with grass to have a picnic on, trees to admire, and trails to wander along, would increase the quality of life of everyone in Chapel Hill. Imagine an open space where people can breathe fresh air, with enough room to social distance! Please choose this option. Once green space is gone, it cannot easily be replaced. We owe it to future generations (as well as to those here now) to preserve as much as possible of Chapel Hill's remaining ecological heritage.

Sincerely,

Mark and Eleanor Hollins

805 Emory Drive

## Amy Harvey

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**From:** Jeanette Coffin  
**Sent:** Monday, May 18, 2020 12:28 PM  
**To:** ckille1@nc.rr.com  
**Cc:** Judy Johnson; Phillip Fleischmann; Linda Smith; Allen Buansi; Amy Ryan; Hongbin Gu; Jeanne Brown; Jess Anderson; Karen Stegman; Michael Parker; Pam Hemminger; Tai Huynh; Amy Harvey; Carolyn Worsley; Catherine Lazorko; Flo Miller; Laura Selmer; Mary Jane Nirdlinger; Maurice Jones; Rae Buckley; Ralph Karpinos; Ross Tompkins; Sabrina Oliver  
**Subject:** FW: Message from Website

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:** info@townofchapelhill.org [mailto:info@townofchapelhill.org]  
**Sent:** Monday, May 18, 2020 12:08 PM  
**To:** Town Council <mayorandcouncil@townofchapelhill.org>  
**Subject:** Message from Website

**External email:** Don't click links or attachments from unknown senders. To check or report forward to [reportspam@townofchapelhill.org](mailto:reportspam@townofchapelhill.org)

A new entry to a form/survey has been submitted.

**Form Name:** Contact Mayor and Council  
**Date & Time:** 05/18/2020 12:08 PM  
**Response #:** 305  
**Submitter ID:** 11155



IP address: 2606:a000:bfc0:80:410c:2573:ed60:fdb7

Time to complete: 3 min. , 10 sec.

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## Survey Details

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Page 1

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Submit the form below or email [mayorandcouncil@townofchapelhill.org](mailto:mayorandcouncil@townofchapelhill.org).

**1. Name**

carol J kille

**2. Residency\***

(o) I am a resident of Chapel Hill

**3. Message**

I support the Parks, Greenways, and Recreation's petition dated March 1, 2020 to designate the American Legion Property for use as a community park.

**4. If you would like us to contact you regarding this issue, please provide an email or telephone number.**

[ckille1@nc.rr.com](mailto:ckille1@nc.rr.com)

**Note: Mail sent to or received from the Town of Chapel Hill is subject to publication under the provisions of the North Carolina public records law.**

Thank you,  
Town of Chapel Hill, NC

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This is an automated message generated by the Vision Content Management System™. Please do not reply directly to this email.

## Amy Harvey

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**From:** Jeanette Coffin  
**Sent:** Wednesday, May 20, 2020 11:36 AM  
**To:** [jplayer@orangehabitat.org](mailto:jplayer@orangehabitat.org)  
**Cc:** Judy Johnson; Dwight Bassett; Allen Buansi; Amy Ryan; Hongbin Gu; Jeanne Brown; Jess Anderson; Karen Stegman; Michael Parker; Pam Hemminger; Tai Huynh; Amy Harvey; Carolyn Worsley; Catherine Lazorko; Flo Miller; Laura Selmer; Mary Jane Nirdlinger; Maurice Jones; Rae Buckley; Ralph Karpinos; Ross Tompkins; Sabrina Oliver  
**Subject:** FW: OCAHC letter re American Legion property.docx.pdf  
**Attachments:** OCAHC letter re American Legion property.docx.pdf

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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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:** Jennifer Player [<mailto:jplayer@orangehabitat.org>]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, May 20, 2020 8:27 AM  
**To:** Town Council <[mayorandcouncil@townofchapelhill.org](mailto:mayorandcouncil@townofchapelhill.org)>  
**Cc:** Delores Bailey <[Delores.Bailey@gmail.com](mailto:Delores.Bailey@gmail.com)>  
**Subject:** OCAHC letter re American Legion property.docx.pdf

**External email:** Don't click links or attachments from unknown senders. To check or report forward to [reportspam@townofchapelhill.org](mailto:reportspam@townofchapelhill.org)

Good morning, Mayor and Town Council:

We send along our well wishes for each of you during this pandemic. Attached you will find a letter from the Orange County Affordable Housing Coalition regarding the land on the American Legion Property. Please let us know if you have

any questions at this time. We look forward to continuing the discussion with you about this very important public project.

Best regards,

Jennifer

**Jennifer Player, MPA, CFRE**

President & Chief Executive Officer  
Habitat for Humanity of Orange County, NC  
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Orange County Affordable Housing Coalition

May 20, 2020

Dear Mayor and Council,

We are writing in our role as co-chairs of the Orange County Affordable Housing Coalition (OCAHC), which is comprised of a couple dozen representatives of local housing nonprofits and allied organizations. The purpose of this letter is to reiterate our firm commitment to ensuring that the former American Legion property be developed to include a meaningful amount of affordable housing, including units serving households earning less than 30% AMI.

We recently became aware of a petition to Council from the Parks, Greenways, and Recreation Commission asking that the entire 36-acre site be designated for use solely as a park. We have serious concerns with this proposal both from a process and policy perspective.

**On process:** Is it commonly accepted practice for Town-appointed commissions or advisory boards to petition the Council outside of a planned input process? This is not something we've heard of happening regularly, and it seems to deviate from the spirit by which these bodies typically carry out their responsibilities, which is to deliberate and add to established public processes by gathering community input rather than advocating on its own. We hope that if such advocacy is considered appropriate that these expectations will be made clear to the Housing Advisory Board and other bodies so the input Council receives is more balanced going forward.

**On policy:** OCAHC has always felt that dedicating the full 36 acres to open space and park land would be a major mistake. The Town paid \$7.9 million plus transactional costs to acquire the American Legion property, a valuation based on the property's potential to be developed, and did so largely to stop a multifamily developer from moving forward with a proposal that was not well liked by many citizens. While OCAHC certainly thinks the Town should look closely at preserving some of the land for parks, there is more than enough land to meet these interests while also creating much-needed affordable housing and leaving open the potential of market rate development (housing or commercial) to help the Town achieve other community goals and recoup some of its investment.

**Recommendation:** We appreciate that the Town has engaged in a community process in the past but do not think it broadly reflected potential site opportunities and diverse perspectives. The Orange County Affordable Housing Coalition encourages the Town to re-start its public process by forming a new committee to explore *design and financial* scenarios of how the American Legion could be put to broad public use to support multiple community goals including parks, housing, economic development, and more. OCAHC is happy to name a representative to participate in any such process.

Thank you for your continued attention to this absolutely critical public project,

Jennifer Player

Delores Bailey

OCAHC Co-Chair

OCAHC Co-Chair