

October 19, 2023

Judy Johnson
Town of Chapel Hill Planning Department
405 Martin Luther King Jr Boulevard
Chapel Hill, North Carolina 27514

Re: Chapel Hill Life Science Center Modifications to Regulations

The requested modification is necessary to allow for a cohesive and well-designed downtown project that meets the goals and intent of the Chapel Hill Comprehensive Plan. To develop this land as a life science, office, and retail project, modifications to height will be necessary.

BUILDING HEIGHT

Permitted Building Height (maximum):

- **Setback Height – 44’**
- **Core Height – 120’**

Proposed Building Height (maximum):

- **Setback Height– 140’**
- **Core Height (both buildings) – 165’**

The Land Use Management Ordinance Article 3.8.2 sets forth building height requirements. Under the TC-3 zoning district, the maximum building height at the setback is 44 feet and 120 feet at the core. A higher core and setback height are requested in order to provide a better overall project for the Town while also meeting the programming needs of the developer. Rather than building on all useable acreage on site, the developer wishes to provide a central courtyard space along Franklin Street designed for the public as well as a midblock pedestrian and bike connection. Additionally, a secondary plaza will be incorporated along Rosemary Street where there will be an activated frontage. Including these outdoor public elements are important in meeting the Town and Developer goals to create a sense of place. In order to accommodate this program, the building height must be increased to accommodate the needed floor area while allowing for more activated street frontages, increased public space, and a much-needed midblock connection between Franklin Street and Rosemary Street.

DISTRICT SPECIFIC PLAN

It is requested that the definition of a “district-specific plan” is modified as follows:

A plan, to scale, showing the approximate location of uses and structures proposed for a parcel of land as required by the applicable application and regulations, including but not limited to lot lines, streets, building envelopes,

reserved open space, major landscape features - both natural and manmade- and, depending on requirements, the location of proposed utility lines.

Given the location of this project downtown, it is important that the project team provides approximate location of the building envelope and open space/plaza spaces planned for the development. Modifying the district specific plan definition provides flexibility should there be slight changes in building design as the project moves into final plans.

Sincerely,
MCADAMS



Jessie Hardesty, AICP
Project Planner, Planning + Design