



TOWN OF CHAPEL HILL

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

Town Council

Meeting Minutes - Final

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, September 13, 2023

7:00 PM

RM 110 | Council Chamber

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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ma In-Person Meeting Notification

Changes in Meeting Material content

- We are trying something new this fall to make our Agenda packets clearer and easier to navigate. You'll notice streamlined reports and more hyperlinks to supporting documents.
- Staff presentations will be posted after the meeting, not as drafts in the packet, to allow more time to prepare high-quality presentations.
- We will also produce an "information items" packet periodically, to share items that don't require Council action, but are important to the Council and community. Those packets will be published on our website.

View the Meeting

- View and participate in the Council Chamber.
- Live stream the meeting - <https://chapelhill.legistar.com/Calendar.aspx>
- Spectrum is replacing 1998 encoder that transmits programming to cable channel 18. It remains offline until complete.
- The Town of Chapel Hill wants to know more about who participates in its programs and processes, including Town Council meetings.
- Participate in a voluntary demographic survey before viewing online or in person -

<https://www.townofchapelhill.org/demosurvey>

Parking

- Parking is available but limited at Town Hall lots and the lot at Stephens Street and Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard.
- See <http://www.parkonthehill.com> for other public lots on Rosemary Street
- Town Hall is served by NS route and T route, and GoTriangle Routes of Chapel Hill Transit.

Entry and Speakers

- Entrance on the ground floor.
- Sign up at the meeting starting at 6:30 PM with the Town Clerk to speak.
- If more than 14 people sign up for an item, Council will reduce speaking time from 3 minutes to 2 min./person.
- Please do not bring signs.

ROLL CALL

Present: 9 - Mayor Pam Hemminger, Council Member 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

OTHER ATTENDEES

Town Manager Chris Blue, Deputy Town Manager Mary Jane Nirdlinger, Deputy Town Manager Loryn Clark, Town Attorney Ann Anderson, Affordable Housing and Community Connections Director Sarah Viñas, Business Management Director Amy Oland, Planning Manager Corey Liles, Planning Director Brittany Waddell, Planner Charnika Harrell, Police Chief Celisa Lehew, Affordable Housing Manager Emily Holt, Public Information Officer Alex Carrasquillo, Crisis Unit Supervisor Sarah Belcher, Crisis Counselor Kathleen Tuohy, Fire Marshal Rob Pruitt, and Deputy Town Clerk Amy Harvey.

approved.

OPENING

Mayor Hemminger called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm. All Council Members were present.

0.01 Mayor Hemminger Regarding Recent Incidents Involving UNC.

[\[23-0650\]](#)

Mayor Hemminger praised Town and University of North Carolina (UNC) police departments for their responses to two recent violent incidents on UNC's campus. She thanked all who had heeded warnings, taken safety precautions, and followed the guidance. She was proud of the UNC

students who had gone to the NC General Assembly to advocate for safer gun laws, she said. She mentioned the need for more mental health resources and pointed out that both the Town and University had crisis units available to the public.

0.02 Mayor Hemminger Regarding Passing of Former Mayor Joe Nassif.

[\[23-0651\]](#)

Mayor Hemminger offered condolences to the family of Joe Nassif, Mayor of Chapel Hill from 1978 to 1984, who had recently passed away. An architect by profession, Mr. Nassif had designed many unique Chapel Hill homes after moving to Town in 1964, she pointed out.

0.03 Mayor Hemminger Regarding the Chellani Family.

[\[23-0652\]](#)

Mayor Hemminger said that a recent head-on collision had taken the lives of Dhruva Chellani and his son, Kris, and had left his wife, Nina Chellani, in the hospital. The family had scheduled a grand re-opening of their Classic Carolina Store for the coming weekend, she said, noting that additional information could be found on the Downtown Partnership's social media page.

0.04 Mayor Hemminger Regarding 9/11 and Moment of Silence.

[\[23-0653\]](#)

Mayor Hemminger called for a moment of silence in commemoration of the September 11, 2001, attack on the World Trade Center in Manhattan. She expressed special gratitude to the First Responders who had gone into burning buildings and saved lives on that day.

0.05 Mayor Hemminger's Summary of Tonight's Agenda.

[\[23-0654\]](#)

Mayor Hemminger previewed the evening's agenda.

0.06 Proclamation: Hispanic Heritage Month.

[\[23-0655\]](#)

Council Member Miller-Foushee read a proclamation regarding National Hispanic Heritage Month (September 15 to October 15, 2023). The proclamation stated that Chapel Hill welcomed cultural diversity and had been inspired by the economic, social and cultural contributions of Hispanics. The Town was proclaiming the month to be Hispanic Heritage Month in Chapel Hill as well, she said.

0.07 Proclamation: Co-Responder and Crisis Responder Week.

[\[23-0656\]](#)

Council Member Parker read a proclamation regarding a rising demand for mental health and substance abuse services throughout the country. He read that the Chapel Hill Police Department (CHPD), was partnering with Orange County on a two-year pilot program that program included a four-person, mobile crisis team. That team would respond to emergency calls involving issues such as mental health and substance abuse that do

not require a police response, he read. He said that the Council was proclaiming the week of September 18, 2023, to be Co-Responder and Crisis Responder Week and was urging everyone to thank Crisis Unit members and community partners for their service.

CHPD Chief Celisa Lehew thanked the Council for the proclamation. She pointed out that the CHPD's Crisis Unit was currently celebrating its 50th year in operation.

0.08 Proclamation: Diaper Need Awareness Week.

[\[23-0657\]](#)

Council Member Berry thanked the NC Diaper Bank and its supporters for working to provide families with essential supplies. She read a proclamation that noted that one in three families struggled with diaper needs and that purchasing a sufficient supply of diapers could consume 14 percent of a low-wage family's post-tax income. The Council was proclaiming September 18-24, 2023, to be Diaper Need Awareness Week and encouraging community members to donate generously to diaper banks, diaper drives, and organizations that collect and distribute diapers to those in need, she said.

ANNOUNCEMENTS BY COUNCIL MEMBERS

0.09 Mayor Hemminger Regarding the NSBRT.

[\[23-0658\]](#)

Mayor Hemminger congratulated the Town's Transit team on achieving a major milestone in the North-South Bus Rapid Transit process by submitting a 2,800-page project ratings application to the Federal Trade Administration. A shorter, on-line version was available for those interested in reading it, she said.

0.10 Mayor Hemminger Regarding Upcoming Events.

[\[23-0659\]](#)

Mayor Hemminger said that information about a free community concert ("Live at Legion") on Saturday from 3:00-6:00 p.m. was available on the Town's Community Arts and Culture webpage.

0.11 Mayor Hemminger Regarding Future Work Session.

[\[23-0660\]](#)

Mayor Hemminger said that the Council would be holding a work session at the Chapel Hill Public Library at 6:30 p.m. on September 20, 2023.

0.12 Council Member Anderson Regarding Recent Incidents at UNC.

[\[23-0661\]](#)

Council Member Anderson shared her experience of having been locked down on UNC's campus for the second time in recent weeks because of an armed and dangerous person in the vicinity. She encouraged everyone to support North Carolinians Against Gun Violence and Moms Demand Action and to vote only for candidates who advocate for gun sense.

Mayor Hemminger pointed out that North Carolina's state legislature did not allow towns to enact their own sensible gun ordinances. She stressed the importance of reaching out to the groups that Council Member Anderson had mentioned and to the NC General Assembly.

0.13 Council Member Berry Regarding National Night Out and UNC ROTC 9/11 Stair Climb.

[\[23-0662\]](#)

Council Member Berry commented on National Night Out, which had occurred on August 1st. That and the University ROTC's annual 911 Stair Climb in Kenan Stadium had been an example of good moments that outnumber the bad, she said.

0.14 Mayor Hemminger Regarding New Timer.

[\[23-0663\]](#)

Mayor Hemminger said that staff would be helping public speakers with the timer. The three-minute opportunity to speak was not the only way to communicate with Council Members, she said, adding that Council Members welcomed email, calls and text messages as well.

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.

0.15 Dan Copeland Regarding LUMO

[\[23-0664\]](#)

Chapel Hill resident Dan Copeland criticized the comments and actions of some Council Members at a June 2023 meeting regarding the Land Use Management Ordinance and UNC Health's Eastowne project.

0.16 Kelven Hargraves Regarding Renaming Northside Recreation Center.

[\[23-0665\]](#)

Chapel Hill resident Kelven Hargraves said that the Town had not yet taken action on a 2022 petition from the Northside Action Group that had opposed renaming the Northside Recreation Center.

0.17 Ira Hargraves-el Regarding Nationality.

[\[23-0666\]](#)

Chapel Hill resident Ira Hargraves-el asked that he and others be recognized as Moorish Americans and that indigenous people's land and resources be maintained.

0.18 Audrey Divine Regarding Affordable Housing.

[\[23-0667\]](#)

Chapel Hill resident Audrey Divine expressed gratitude for the Town's work toward addressing the needs of older people by building places such as Greenfield Commons, where she lived. She shared her experience going to apply for a DHIC apartment and encountering a long line of other seniors applying as well.

0.19 Manager Chris Blue Regarding Changes to Agenda Process.

[\[23-0668\]](#)

Town Manager Chris Blue explained changes to the agenda process that staff had made over the summer. He said that the Council's agenda materials had been streamlined but included links to additional details.

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 Miller-Foushee, that R-1 be adopted, which approved the Consent Agenda. The motion carried by a unanimous vote.

1. Approve all Consent Agenda Items.

[\[23-0632\]](#)

This resolution(s) and/or ordinance(s) was adopted and/or enacted.

2. Enact the Annual Budget Ordinance Amendment to Re-appropriate Funds for Prior Year Encumbrances and Other Commitments.

[\[23-0633\]](#)

This resolution(s) and/or ordinance(s) was adopted and/or enacted.

3. Continue the Legislative Hearings and Defer Considering the Future Land Use Map Amendment and Conditional Zoning Application for Chapel Hill Crossing to September 27, 2023.

[\[23-0634\]](#)

This resolution(s) and/or ordinance(s) was adopted and/or enacted.

4. Open the Legislative Hearing for the Modification to the

[\[23-0635\]](#)

Residential-Special Standards Conditional Zoning District (R-SS-CZD) for Homestead Gardens Located at 2200 Homestead Road and Continue the Hearing to October 11, 2023.

This resolution(s) and/or ordinance(s) was adopted and/or enacted.

5. Amend the 2023 Council Calendar.

[\[23-0636\]](#)

This resolution(s) and/or ordinance(s) was adopted and/or enacted.

6. Adopt Minutes from March 22, 2023, and April 10, 19, 26, 2023 Meetings.

[\[23-0637\]](#)

DISCUSSION

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.

7. Concept Plan Review: The Reserve at Blue Hill, 1320 Ephesus Church Road.

[\[23-0638\]](#)

Architect Richard Gurlitz said that recent developments near Elliott Road Extension had changed the character and dynamics of Kings Arms Apartments, which had been built in the 1960s on 7.65 acres. As a result, the applicant was proposing to replace that building with a 212-unit apartment project that would have 319 parking spaces under and behind the building, he said.

Mr. Gurlitz outlined a proposal for one-, two- and three-bedroom apartments, 31 of which would be for those making 65 and 80 percent of the area median income (AMI). He said that the applicant understood the issues related to current residents and intended to help them either stay

on the site or relocate.

Mr. Gurlitz described a plan for 3-, 4- and 5-story buildings on sloping land. He said that impervious surface would be 43 percent and density would be 37 units per acre. He showed a three-pod layout and outlined a plan to save mature trees. He indicated locations on the plan for a children's play area, pool, community gathering space, dog park, and exercise trail. He had also been discussing a secondary public/private gathering area with Urban Designer Brian Peterson, he said.

Mr. Gurlitz characterized the site's existing stormwater system as rudimentary and proposed an on-site detention and filtration facility. He said that the project would include EV charging stations, be solar ready, and have only electric services. He discussed building materials, in-home office potential, and design features such as floor-to-ceiling windows, naturalized landscaping, and a bridge connecting buildings.

Planning Manager Corey Liles pointed out that Kings Arms was located along a future greenway and transit corridor and that it could be considered a smaller infill site. He said that staff's review had included long-range plan considerations and Brian Peterson's comments as well as those from the Community Design Commission were in the Council's packets. Adopting Resolution 6 would transmit comments to the applicant, he said.

The Council confirmed with Mr. Gurlitz that the plan was to delay construction for a year after approval in order to allow time for natural attrition. Mayor Hemminger said that the Town had learned through previous experiences that people need assistance with such transitions. In response to questions about specific financial and/or other resources that the applicant would offer in that regard, Mr. Gurlitz said they hoped to emulate some other similar situation that had been successful.

Council Member Searing confirmed that the current average monthly rent of \$1,200 would approximately double after redevelopment and that the proposed number of affordable units would be about half of what they currently were. Council Member Miller-Foushee commented on the impact of losing 30 affordable units and said that she wanted the conversation to include offering rents that were comparable to what was there.

Council Member Parker asked if construction could be done in phases to minimize the number of times a current resident would have to move, and Mr. Gurlitz replied that the applicant had discussed paying for moving residents somewhere else and then back again. Council Member Huynh verified that the applicant had held one public information meeting via ZOOM in which 15-20 residents and neighbors had participated.

The Council ascertained that the applicant had discussed including some neighborhood commercial space, such as a small coffee shop or food

trucks. They confirmed that sharing amenities with surrounding developments was a possibility. When asked if he was asserting that not having a parking deck would be more environmentally sustainable than reducing the site's overall impervious surface, Mr. Gurlitz replied that he was not, but it was a good question. The proposed that the amount of impervious surface was significantly less than what was allowed, he pointed out.

Kings Arms resident Jackie Wheeland stated that everything the Council said it wanted already existed at Kings Arms. Her sister, Jennifer Wheeland, said that she had been displaced from Park Apartments and did not want to be forced to move again, from Kings Arms. Karen Antle expressed fear that she and others would be left homeless in the way that some Park Apartment families had been. Victoria Washington expressed similar fears about displacement and told the Council that her rent at Kings Arms had increased from \$970 to \$1,200 in 2023.

Afifa Afifi, a Banbury Lane resident, said that the proposed project would increase building density from nine to 15 units per acre and leave her neighborhood facing cement blocks rather than trees. She asked the Council to consider the human element when rezoning or redeveloping an existing community.

Hamlin Park residents Elizabeth Steinberger, Sarah Henderson, Clarence Andrews, Brian Johnson and Bill Birken commented on potential stormwater effects. Ms. Steinberger, secretary of the Hamlin Park Homeowners Association (HOA) Board, read from a June 2023 letter to the Council regarding density and height concerns. Ms. Henderson, the HOA Board's vice president, described current flooding and showed a video to demonstrate that. Mr. Andrews and Mr. Johnson spoke about the causes of flooding, and Mr. Johnson recommended that the applicant reduce its proposed footprint and number of units. Mr. Birken commented on the potential loss of privacy at Hamlin Park and said that removing more than 30 families from Kings Arms would be eviction, not re-location.

The Council thanked the speakers for sharing their stories and some Council Members spoke about their own experiences with Kings Arms and/or its residents. They pointed out that one of the Complete Community goals was to keep people from being pushed out during redevelopment. They said that the proposed plan did not meet that standard and they advised the applicant to rethink the concept and propose a solution for tenants. Council Member Huynh encouraged the applicant to work collaboratively with residents and not push that responsibility onto a non-profit without compensation.

Mayor pro tem Stegman noted the large amount of new multi-family housing in the area and said that she would like to see something

different, such as townhomes or cottage courts, which could help address several of the plan's issues. Council Member Searing agreed and urged the applicant to heed the Community Design Commission's suggestions.

Mayor Hemminger said that she concurred with the Council's comments. The concept plan did not take care of community, create a better sense of place, or align with Complete Community, she said. With regard to the area's drainage problems, she confirmed with Mr. Liles that a culvert was being replaced under Ephesus Church Road but that he was not certain how that would relate to the issues being discussed. Council Member Searing asked staff to start looking at the effects of deforestation as well when making stormwater calculations.

A motion was made by Council Member Huynh, seconded by Council Member Miller-Foushee, that the Council adopted R-6. The motion carried by a unanimous vote.

CONTINUED DISCUSSION

8. Approval of the Affordable Housing Plan and Investment Strategy

[\[23-0639\]](#)

Mayor Hemminger left the meeting at 8:58 p.m. due to illness, leaving Mayor pro tem Stegman in charge.

Director of Affordable Housing and Community Connections Sarah Viñas proposed a five-year Affordable Housing Plan and Investment Strategy. She pointed out that most of the Town's prior AH plans had been either accomplished or outgrown and that primary AH resources had been exhausted at a time when costs were skyrocketing. She said that staff had been working with HR&A Advisors since January 2023 on updating the Plan, and feedback from the Council, residents and stakeholders was reflected in the current draft. Staff enthusiastically recommended approval, she said.

Phillip Kash, a consultant with HR&A, presented an overview of the Plan, which he said took a comprehensive approach to AH that centered racial equity throughout. The Plan addressed public subsidies, land use policy, and tenants' rights, he said. He noted that it focused on sustaining and up-scaling the Town's efforts to address a limited housing supply as well as decreasing homeownership opportunities, declining rental affordability, and ongoing displacement pressure.

Mr. Kash outlined how the Plan recommended reducing barriers to building homes, expanding and preserving affordable ownership and rental options, and increasing staff and funding capacity. He praised the Town's AH team and pointed out that fewer people had been running significantly larger and more complicated programs in Chapel Hill than in its peer communities.

Mr. Kash said that Chapel Hill would need about \$50 million to sustain its current level of AH efforts and to do all that it had planned through FY 2028. He said that the Plan included 14 recommendations and that the following five of those would have the greatest potential impact: refining the Inclusionary Zoning Ordinance and Inclusionary Housing Policy; dedicating consistent funding to provide low-income households with property tax relief; establishing a revolving loan fund; sustaining the recent level of gap financing to preserve or create homes for low-income renters; and dedicating new, consistent sources of funding. Mr. Kash recommended that the Town continue to use a mix of funding sources.

Council Member Parker verified with Mr. Kash that part of the \$50 million would be for capitalizing a Revolving Loan Fund, which would then be used for leverage to acquire properties. He asked how that Fund would be administered, and Mr. Kash recommended going to a third party, which should bring low-cost capital to the table.

In response to Council questions, Ms. Viñas gave examples of projects that were in the planning stages but not yet fully resourced. The Council confirmed with her that staff was continuing to look at all federal options. Mr. Kash commented that being a Town would be a disadvantage regarding a new \$85 million HUD competitive program. The Town probably would need to work jointly with Orange County in order to succeed with that, he said.

Council Member Anderson and Ms. Viñas discussed the Plan vis a vis the Town's five-year budget strategy, but Ms. Viñas pointed out that staff was not currently asking the Council to allocate funds or make a specific funding commitment. Staff was asking for approval of the Plan, which outlined key strategies and the resources that would be needed to pursue those, she said. The Council would make allocation decisions during its five-year budget discussions, she pointed out.

Council Member Miller-Foushee confirmed that Recommendation 13 in the Plan would formalize relocation assistance packages for residents facing displacement, and Ms. Viñas said that the Revolving Fund would be a key piece of that.

Mayor pro tem Stegman commented on confusion in the community regarding the Town's Housing Choice strategy, and Mr. Kash clarified that creating more homes and having more flexibility regarding home types would accommodate more new residents and take pressure off housing prices. It did not generally lead to lower prices, but it did lead to prices rising at a lower rate, he said.

Alice Jacoby, an Orange County Habitat for Humanity member, expressed support for the Plan and appreciation to the Council for prioritizing American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds for housing. She emphasized the

importance of taking every possible step and intervention to stop displacement.

Christine Abernathy, Director of Housing Justice at the Marion Cheek Jackson Center, pointed out that by working with community organizations the Town had created more than 40 AH units in the Northside, Pine Knolls and Tin Top neighborhoods. More than 50 children had moved back to Town and the African American population was rising for the first time in decades, she said.

Sue Hunter, representing the Housing Advisory Board, said that the Board had recommended adoption of the Plan with the condition that the Town pursue a \$50 million AH bond.

Delores Bailey, executive director of EmPOWERment, Inc., asked the Council to approve the plan immediately and not risk losing ground.

Council Members praised AH staff members for their good work and expressed support for moving forward with the Plan. They committed to dedicating themselves to examining the trade-offs and finding the needed funding to implement as much of the Plan as possible.

A motion was made by Council Member Huynh, seconded by Council Member Berry, that the Council adopted R-7. The motion carried by a unanimous vote.

- 9. Consider Leasing Space for the Police Department and Continue the Brownfield Remediation at 828 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.**

[\[23-0640\]](#)

Chief Lehw asked the Council to support having the Town Manager proceed with leasing space for the CHPD at The Parkline while staff continued to work with the state Brownfields Program regarding its current building at 828 Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard (MLK). She discussed several ways in which the current 41-year-old Police building was compromising staff safety. The Parkline, located on Fordham Boulevard, would be a safe, functional, accessible and sustainable space, she said.

Deputy Town Manager Mary Jane Nirdlinger said that the estimated \$82.8 million cost of constructing a Municipal Services Center (MSC) at 828 MLK was beyond the Town's debt capacity and that The Parkline site could meet the CHPD's needs. The annual \$1.5 million cost of leasing there would be less than the annual \$2.5 million debt payment on the Town's \$34 million MSC placeholder and well below a \$6 million annual payment on an \$82.8 million project, she pointed out.

Ms. Nirdlinger said that leasing space at The Parkline would allow time to right-size the MSC project and explore options for other Town departments. She said that the Town Manager had approved the request

and she recommended that the Council do so as well by supporting Resolution 8 as quickly as possible. Staff would continue working with the NC Department of Environmental Quality on a Brownfields agreement for 828 MLK Boulevard, she said.

The Council proposed having The Parkline building evaluated. They confirmed with Manager Blue that he was looking into hiring someone with expertise in the local commercial market to negotiate a lease. The Council and staff discussed other sites that had been considered and staff members explained that The Parkline was the preferred choice due to its size and parking availability.

A motion was made by Council Member Huynh, seconded by Council Member Anderson, that the Council adopted to R-8. The motion carried by a unanimous vote.

ZONING ATLAS AMENDMENT(S)

Zoning Atlas Amendment: The Zoning Atlas Amendment, to change the zoning designation on this property, is Legislative. The Council receives and considers public comment on the merits of the proposed rezoning, including opinions, when making Legislative decisions.

10. Open the Legislative Hearing: Conditional Zoning Application for St. Paul Village at 1604 Purefoy Drive

[\[23-0641\]](#)

Dr. Rose Snipes Bynum, representing St. Paul AME Church, presented an application for St. Paul Village, a proposed mixed-use development on Purefoy Road. She said that the project would be neighborhood-centric and walkable, and that 9.24 of its 20.37 acres would be greenspace. The building would include educational and recreational spaces and the project would support a diverse population, she said. She pointed out that the vision for St. Paul Village had not changed over many years of planning.

Dr. Snipes Bynum pointed said that the proposed plan aligned with several Town goals and met most, if not all, of the Complete Community checklist. It had been through three iterations with the Town's Planning Department, she said. She pointed out that 88 units (34 percent of market rate/25 percent of total) would be affordable for 30 years. There would also be 100 units for people 55 years of age and older, she said.

Planner Charnika Harrell stated that the proposal met all Complete Community goals and said that the Planning Commission and staff were recommending approval. She noted that the Town's legislative process required that the hearing be continue to October 11, 2023.

Council Member Anderson confirmed with engineering staff that the site was being designed to meet current stormwater standards and that the

applicant had worked with the Stormwater Department to reduce any impacts on the Research Conservation District. She confirmed with Dr. Snipes Bynum that Urban Designer Brian Peterson's comments had been conveyed to the architect, Perkins and Will.

Council Member Ryan asked about neighborhood engagement, and applicant team member Bernice Hackney described long-standing relationships with the Eubanks/Rogers Road Neighborhood Association as well as nearby Phoenix Place. In response to a question about unbundling parking fees from rents, the applicant agreed to test that in the model.

Sheryl Forbis, an Episcopal Church of the Holy Family member, and Susan Smith, a Church Women United member, urged the Council to support the project. Ms. Smith pointed out that St. Paul's AME Church had witnessed and been recipients of institutional and social denial for generations but had nevertheless been a model for other churches in the area and had received a Human Rights Award from Church Women United in 2006.

Kathy Hackney, a Chapel Hill resident, expressed support for the project and commented on how many who work in Chapel Hill could not currently afford to live there. Is the Town really the "Southern Part of Heaven" for the thousands who must drive 40-50 miles on Interstate 40 during rush hour, she asked.

Reverend Robert Campbell, a Chapel Hill resident, pointed out that the relationship between St. Paul's AME Church and the Rogers Road Neighborhood Association went back to 1956. The proposed development was "God sent", he said, adding that it would address the AH crisis, beautify the area, enhance the environment, and provide needed amenities for area residents.

Jim Eichel, a civil engineer and a 42-year Chapel Hill resident, mentioned his affiliations with CASA, Community Home Trust, and the Orange County Affordable Housing Advisory Board. He pointed out that Town staff had worked extensively and collaboratively with St. Paul Village representatives. He had reviewed the plans and found St. Paul Village to be a well-designed project that would benefit the Town, he said.

Kathy Kaufman, social action chair at Kehillah Community Synagogue, described the proposed development as a well-conceived example of the type of neighborhood that the Town desperately needed.

Eugene Farrar, political action chair for the Chapel Hill-Carrboro NAACP, pointed out that several other projects had been completed in Town while St. Paul's Village had spent a decade investing in the project.

Breckany Eckhardt read a letter from Chapel Hill resident Molly McConnell

that urged the Council to approve the project. Ms. McConnell pointed out that the applicant had not received any funding from the Town or Orange County and was offering an unprecedented amount of affordable housing.

Sarah Swan, an Episcopal Church of the Advocate member, said that approving the project, as proposed, would be a small but significant step toward addressing past injustices related to environmental racism and involuntary displacement.

Maria Palmer, representing Binkley Baptist Church, urged the Council to support the "grassroots effort by a historically disenfranchised community that had worked to lift everyone up, not just its own members". She said that the applicants had worked tirelessly to make their vision come true, and she urged the Council to immediately vote rather than referring the item to October.

Joan Pharr, an Orange County Justice United and Chapel of the Cross member, commented on inflation and the loss of purchasing power for median income households since the project began in 2006. She asked the Council to support the application without additional modifications.

Delores Bailey said that AH discussions since the early 2000s had included trying to have developers create affordable rental housing. The applicant's offer of 25 percent should, on its own, lead to Council approval, she said.

All Council Members spoke in support of the project and praised the applicants for their vision and persistence. Council Member Anderson pointed out that the Council would be discussing subsidizing projects during the upcoming budget season. Council Member Miller-Foushee said that Jerry Hargraves, a St. Paul AME Church founder, was her son's ancestor. Church members were continuing to build community in a way that spoke to their values, she said.

Mayor pro tem Stegman confirmed with Town Attorney Ann Anderson that a second hearing would be required.

A motion was made by Council Member Anderson, seconded by Council Member Berry, that the Council continued the Legislative Hearing to October 11, 2023. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 8 - Council Member Stegman, Council Member Anderson, Council Member Berry, Council Member Miller-Foushee, Council Member Huynh, Council Member Parker, Council Member Ryan, and Council Member Searing

Absent: 1 - Mayor Hemminger

APPOINTMENTS

11. Appointments to the Housing Advisory Board.

[\[23-0642\]](#)

The council appointed Sue Hunter and Joyce Powell to the Housing Advisory Board.

ADJOURNMENT

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