Petition for a Comprehensive Review of Town Stormwater Regulations

Chapel Hill's stormwater management regulations were last comprehensively reviewed/rewritten in 2003. Since that time, environmental changes are accelerating. The North Carolina Climate Science Report, issued in June of 2020, stated that:

- …there is an upward trend in the number of heavy rainfall events (3 inches or more in a day), with the last four years (2015–2018) having seen the greatest number of events since 1900.
- It is likely that annual total precipitation for North Carolina will increase.
- It is very likely that extreme precipitation frequency and intensity in North Carolina will increase due to increases in atmospheric water vapor content.

Chapel Hill has long prided itself on being a leader in environmental protections. Our recently adopted Climate Action and Response Plan is evidence of this. As a next step in these ongoing efforts, we would like staff to focus on the area of stormwater management given the age of our regulations and the environmental changes that have already taken place and that are predicted to occur in the future. We recognize the importance of successful integration of high-quality stormwater management to achieving the Town's land use goals, as reflected in the recently approved Future Land Use Map.

Accordingly, it is requested that the Town undertake a comprehensive review of its stormwater management regulations to ensure that:

- The goals for the 2003 regulations remain valid (and if not, are updated)
- The regulations are directed toward meeting these goals.

Areas for review would include, but not be limited to, assessing whether:

- The storm events addressed by the regulations are still appropriate
- The rainfall timeframes are adequate
- The methods for stormwater management that are approved (BMPs, etc.) are state of the art and include green stormwater infrastructure and low-impact design
- Amounts of impervious surface permitted are appropriate for various development types, ground conditions, downstream issues, and topography.
- Watershed and sub-watershed plans include an appropriate range of evaluation criteria including natural flood protection and habitat preservation as well as engineering criteria.

Based upon the results of the review, the rules/regulations would be revised/rewritten as necessary. In making modifications, the Town would also assess the costs of any changes to

developers and property owners, as well as costs to the Town. It is hoped that this review and rewrite could be accomplished within 18 months.

Hongbin Gu
Tai Huynh
Michael Parker
Amy Ryan
Karen Stegman