

10-25-2023 Town Council Meeting

Responses to Council Questions

ITEM #9: Open the Legislative Hearing: Conditional Zoning Application for Chapel Hill Life Sciences Center at 306 West Franklin Street

Council Question:

Can the applicant provide information on what accommodations for relocations have been made with or offered to tenants of the buildings to be demolished?

Applicant Response:

Longfellow is committed to the success of our current tenants and the future of downtown Chapel Hill as a whole. With that being said, our team is working diligently with each partner on their specific needs for timing and flexibility. Without commenting on specific negotiations or deals, our team has offered longer timelines, helped to find new space extremely close to 306 West Franklin Street, and other key business initiatives that will help support the long-term success of those businesses.

Council Question:

Stipulation 25: To whom will the showers be accessible and how?

Applicant Response:

The shower facilities will be accessible to all tenants & employees within the building, showers will be located internal to the building and will be accessed via card reader.

Council Question:

Stipulation 42: Can the staff provide some examples of either what the design principles might address and/or provide examples from other projects?

Staff Response:

An example of draft design principles from the UNC Health Eastowne project is attached. Design principles can cover a variety of topics including:

- *Ensuring human-scale design along the ground floor*
- *Screening of services*
- *Hardscaping and landscaping standards*
- *Relationship between the building and street (e.g., setbacks in building height)*
- *Site lighting*
- *Pedestrian and bicycle amenities and connectivity (e.g., shade, seating, etc.)*
- *Wayfinding*
- *Public art*

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Council Question:

Does the applicant have any preliminary ideas as to how/where parking needs that are not met on-site will be accommodated?

Applicant Response:

While there isn't a singular answer to parking for this development, there will be a low parking ratio onsite that is aided by the lower workers per square foot in life science developments as well as their non-traditional working hours – resulting in a lower push for traditional 9-5 working hours and parking needs. In addition to this on-site parking, we will be encouraging tenants to utilize the Town of Chapel Hill's Park & Ride, Biking, and other multi-modal transportation that will further be enhanced by future agreements and use of nearby Town of Chapel Hill parking deck offerings.

Council Question:

Will the retail space have the necessary venting and the like to accommodate a full-service restaurant?

Applicant Response:

Yes.

Council Question:

Is the applicant willing to consider making some of the retail space affordable (i.e., at below market rates) to assist start-ups and the like?

Applicant Response:

Longfellow is absolutely willing to consider making some retail space affordable. Through our extensive community engagement, we've heard specific needs from local businesses that are at the start-up level to foster the full economic ecosystem that creates a successful Franklin Street. In fact, one of the topics during last month's call with EMPOWERment Inc. was exactly this – of how we encourage and develop small businesses locally with attractive retail space in a building such as this.

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Council Question:

What are the infrastructure implications for this project, including: gas lines, available water, wastewater treatment, electrical sub-stations? Will these have to be increased/added in order to enable functionality?

Applicant Response:

A will-serve letter has been acquired from Dominion Energy for gas service. Sanitary sewer and water utilities are available in both W Franklin Street & W Rosemary Street. Upsizing is not anticipated, but detailed design calculations will be prepared in the construction drawing stage. The development team will continue to coordinate with OWASA to ensure utilities are adequately sized. The team has been coordinating with Duke Energy and are not anticipating any required upgrades at a substation level or to the circuits along West Rosemary Street for this development. The project will require a switchgear for the new power feed to the building, but this is common for this type of development.

Council Question:

Economic Impact — Estimated New Level for Longfellow is off by \$10,000 for total property tax revenue (Applicant's Draft Presentation, p. 2, Fig. 1.4; p. 10, Fig. 8.2); what is the accounting for that? No other level shows a difference.

Applicant Response:

Our economic consultant reviewed the numbers again and the \$10,000 discrepancy is due to rounding. We can include a note that says "Numbers do not total due to rounding," or update the table down to the nearest \$1,000.

Council Question:

Bicycle Shop Traffic Flow — The neighboring business has a driveway with slanted parking. The traffic flow currently continues through the area that is designated for a pedestrian/bikeway. What is to happen to this traffic flow given the new design?

Applicant Response:

The fire lane within the plaza will be used to access the parking spaces.