

## Amy Harvey

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**From:** Amy Harvey  
**Sent:** Wednesday, September 09, 2020 6:04 PM  
**To:** Town Council; CHALT  
**Cc:** Allen Buansi; Amy Ryan; Hongbin Gu; Jeanne Brown; Jess Anderson; Karen Stegman; Michael Parker; Pam Hemminger; Shakera Vaughan; Tai Huynh; Amy Harvey; Ann Anderson; Carolyn Worsley; Flo Miller; Laura Selmer; Mary Jane Nirdlinger; Maurice Jones; Rae Buckley; Ran Northam; Ross Tompkins; Sabrina Oliver  
**Subject:** FW: Petition for delay of Future Land Use Plan vote

Forwarding this to the Mayor and Council.

Amy Harvey

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**From:** CHALT <info@chalt.org>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, September 09, 2020 5:39 PM  
**To:** mayorandtowncouncil@townofchapelhill.org  
**Cc:** Amy Harvey <aharvey@townofchapelhill.org>  
**Subject:** Petition for delay of Future Land Use Plan vote

**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 Town Council:

The undersigned citizens of Chapel Hill petition the Town Council to delay any approval of the Future Land Use maps (FLUM). The impacts of COVID-19 on future land use priorities are not yet known. Without doubt in another year, the Council will have a better understanding of the nature of those potentially serious negative socio-economic consequences which can then be factored into guiding policy-making decisions.

To understand how our priorities will change, please consider the following issues that are likely to affect the content of future land use map approvals:

- **Transit funding** could be greatly diminished thus making it premature to change the maps that will guide future zoning. Up to now we've assumed a N-S BRT coming on line in a few years, as well as steps for improvements to 15-501 and growing our bus system. Inasmuch as a large focus of FLUM relies on density along transit corridors in order to take advantage of our free transit and planned future transit, we call into question approving future land use maps when our previous assumptions about transit turn out to be wrong.
- There is **far less public engagement** in town decision-making now because of the COVID crisis. When it occurs in virtual meetings, public comments are invited, but the stilted format discourages public participation on most issues. We find approvals made via on-line virtual meetings discriminatory as it tends to favor more wealthy and educated taxpayers who have the discretionary time to work from home or who can afford to retire.
- **UNC reopening:** There is no way to know the effects of an influx of 20,000 students into Chapel Hill. COVID may surge and create the need for further lockdowns. The health and safety of residents must remain an over-arching goal, above arbitrary deadlines.
- **Local economy and COVID:** A number of businesses have already shut down and we can expect more business permanent closures. Hotels, a source of income for Chapel Hill and the county, have been significantly under-booked,

resulting in a severe reduction in the occupancy taxes collected, as well as the loss of many local jobs. A number of prospective commercial enterprises (Project Triumph, Carolina Donor, 1165 Weaver Dairy Road and others) have either withdrawn or paused their applications.

- **Housing types will change:** As a result of COVID, less dense housing is sought by buyers because of safety concerns due to shared entrances, corridors, and elevators. The draft FLUM accentuates denser housing that may not be saleable in future markets. Retail, already stressed, will make “mixed-use” impossible to implement.
- **Opening of K-12:** The CDC and other experts are predicting that opening of schools in August is the biggest experiment yet in how to deal with COVID-19. Town needs to ration resources over the next two years because we can expect more working adults to stay home (including essential workers) at least part of the time and buying habits to change as the virus lingers and more and more families see income drop below the poverty line. If we have the usual seasonal flu, this process accelerates.
- **Local government priorities:** As local unemployment continues due to shutdowns and business closures, Chapel Hill government will be called upon to assist those who can’t pay rent or buy food.

It is widely understood that the post-COVID world will be different. We call on the Town Council to take a step back, save the resources reserved for engaging the public on the draft maps, and postpone further consideration of future land use maps until a post-COVID analysis can be held.

For these reasons, we ask that you call on the Town Manager to postpone further consideration of the future land use maps.

If you would like to add your “signature”, send your permission to [info@chalt.org](mailto:info@chalt.org).

Signers so far:

Del Snow, Dr. David Adalsteinsson, David Adams, Linda K. Brown, Bates Buckner, Gail Butler, Sylvia T. Clements, Atli Davdisson, Glen H. Elder, Jr., Neal Englert, Arthur and Debbie Finn, Mary W. Garren, Joan Guilkey, Tom Henkel, Charles Humble, Rudy Juliano, Candace Jean Kern, David Kiel, Fred Lampe, Katherine Leith, Julie McClintock, Amey Miller, Nancy Oates, Marshall Perry, Sandy Turbeville, Will Raymond, Ellie Reinhold, Dianne “Joey” Ware-Furlow, Dr. Pamela B. Schultz, Megan Whelchel