

## 01-22-2020 Town Council Meeting Responses to Council Questions

### **ITEM #3: Approve the Housing Advisory Board's Recommended Funding Plan for the Affordable Housing Development Reserve**

#### **Council Question:**

The Empowerment application notes that the property they intend to acquire is adjacent to Town-owned lots. What are the Town-owned lots being used for currently and is there any opportunity or plan for collaboration between Empowerment and the Town to develop/add affordable units there?

#### **Staff Response:**

*The Town-owned land on Johnson Street is currently undeveloped. Housing and Community staff have had preliminary conversations with Empowerment about opportunities for utilizing the adjacent Town land and the land they plan to acquire to build a larger, contiguous project. We look forward to continuing to explore options for collaboration with Empowerment and will keep the Council informed of our progress.*

#### **Council Question:**

For the Town application, the project description states that Jay Street will have "community engagement activities" and Bennett Rd will have a "comprehensive community-led design initiative". The expected number of units is not significantly different, so why would the community engagement approach be different? Could the Jay Street process also include a community-led design initiative?

#### **Staff Response:**

*We propose robust community engagement for both projects that would engage community members in the design of the development. The key distinction is that we propose a development team to lead the community engagement process for the Jay Street, and that Town staff lead the community engagement process for the Bennett Road site.*

*At the September 18, 2019 [Town Council Work Session](#)<sup>1</sup>, the Council's feedback on the Jay Street was to procure a development team early to lead the planning and visioning process. This approach was recommended based on multiple factors, including: the smaller usable footprint of Jay St. than the other sites, the anticipated development would likely be a similar size and scope to surrounding community, staff's capacity to lead multiple community visioning processes at the same time, and the desire to move forward with the Jay Street project relatively quickly.*

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<sup>1</sup> <https://chapelhill.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=4135814&GUID=964ED0B2-5590-4A53-A7A5-E09507E79EB5&Options=&Search=>

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*While the Town would not be leading the community engagement process for Jay Street, the selected development partner will be expected to conduct extensive community engagement throughout the development process. One of the main criteria that we will use to evaluate potential partners that respond to the [Request for Qualifications](#)<sup>2</sup> is a demonstrated commitment to and success in conducting community engagement and generating community feedback for projects.*

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.townofchapelhill.org/Home/Components/RFP/RFP/348/2548>