



January 23, 2023

Town Council
Town of Chapel Hill
405 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
Chapel Hill, NC 27514

Re: Petition for Limited Scope Review of Major Modification to Approved Conditional Zoning
Homestead Gardens
2200 Homestead Road

Dear Mayor and Council Members:

On behalf of the Homestead Housing Collaborative, Self-Help requests that the Town Council approve a limited scope review process for our forthcoming application for a major modification to the Residential – Special Standards – Conditional Zoning District (R-SS-CZD) for the parcel located at 2200 Homestead Road enacted by Ordinance 2021-05-19/O-3.

The application for major modification will allow the Homestead Housing Collaborative to develop the site more efficiently so that the project budget aligns with the funding available to the Homestead Gardens project, including the critical Affordable Housing Bond and Affordable Housing Development Reserve funding previously approved by Town Council, as described in previous updates to Council Members. A limited scope review process, with review limited to the Planning Board and Town Council and prioritized reviews by Town Staff, will help limit any construction cost inflation that may result from additional delays to the project schedule and ensure that the Homestead Gardens project realizes as much budget benefit as possible from the modified site plan.

Summary of Proposed Modifications

The proposed modification will eliminate the development of housing units north of the Resource Conservation District (RCD) shown in the site plan associated with the approved R-SS-CZD, which is the most expensive portion of the development and requires site infrastructure that substantially increases per unit costs for the entire project. The proposed site plan changes will reduce the cost of grading (fill), extending water and sewer service, and transporting stormwater across the RCD and reduce the need for extensive retaining walls. The proposed modification maximizes possible density on the remaining southern portion of the site and still meets the desired goals for the community, including: providing affordable rental and for-sale housing to underserved populations in Chapel Hill, providing family friendly outdoor spaces for all residents, providing a safe and well-connected community, linking the new development to surrounding properties through sidewalks, greenways, and public transportation, maintaining air and water quality, and providing recreational opportunities.

Justification for Limited Scope Review

Town Planning staff and the Town Attorney have determined that the Homestead Housing Collaborative's proposed changes to the site plan require a major modification only because the

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reduced unit count results in a “change in the...density of overall development” (LUMO 4.4.7(h)(1)). The proposed changes do not meet any of the other criteria for a major modification described in LUMO 4.4.7(h)(2)-(6). The proposed change in density will limit the intensity of development and any associated impacts of the project as the scale of all built elements will be reduced, including a reduction of built square footage, land disturbance on the whole site, and land disturbance and impervious additions in the RCD zones that do not exceed the 20% threshold detailed in the CZD ordinance. These reductions result in an increase in elements over the previously approved site plan such as tree coverage, buffer widths, and distance from adjacent residences. The project will continue to comply with all other conditions in the CZD ordinance.

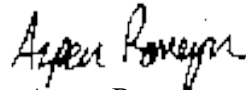
Despite the unprecedented construction cost inflation in recent years, Self-Help and our partners in the Homestead Housing Collaborative continue to advance the Homestead Gardens project forward with the goal of providing much needed affordable housing units in Chapel Hill as quickly as possible. The Council’s approval of a limited scope review for the major modification application will support the project’s advancement toward that goal.

We thank you for considering this petition.

Sincerely,



Graham Smokoski
Senior Project Manager



Aspen Romeyn
Project Manager