

LUMO Update
Council Questions
4/24/2024

“Can we include slide(s) in the presentation materials to:

- Include a chart or something similar that reviews/summarizes the LUMO topics discussed at previous work sessions and relevant take-aways from Council’s discussions.
 - **Staff response:** A summary will be included in the May meeting materials.
- Reminder of any outstanding policy issues, considerations, or questions that will be considered in future sessions (remind them of the schedule)
 - **Staff response:** A reminder of outstanding policy issues will be included in Wednesday’s presentation.

A few of the topics of interest for me are:

Community benefits: if possible please provide a table of the community benefits we’ve negotiated for project-by-project since 2020 along with information about what we can require through the LUMO, which things we would need to negotiate for, cumulative totals, status, and other pertinent information.

- **Staff response:** A table of negotiated community benefits will be included in the May meeting materials.

Specific Uses:

- Commercial office and retail development, especially around creating neighborhood commercial.
 - **Staff response:** The most viable methods for achieving more commercial/retail development involve: (1) making it easier to receive approvals for these types of projects, (2) supporting the type and amount of residential density required to make commercial development successful, (3) adopting more mixed-use districts that allow a variety of small-scale commercial uses. Each of these strategies is being explored as part of the LUMO update.
- Diverse housing especially creating more middle housing and addressing the question of student housing.
 - **Staff response:** Staff are continuing to explore opportunities to support more missing middle housing.

More Council discussion is likely required on the topic of student housing. As discussed during the February 21, 2024, Council work session, the Town cannot regulate housing based on the identity of potential residents. The Town can likely expect that off-campus housing demand associated with the university will

continue to grow for the foreseeable future. The FLUM notes that such housing should be located in areas with easy access to transit, campus, and shopping.

- Environmental issues, the natural areas map, and applying the resiliency lens
 - **Staff response:** Staff will present an update on the natural areas tool at an upcoming meeting.

Staff are continuing to work on strengthened environmental protections through updates to the Town's stormwater management rules and landscaping standards.

- By right development
 - **Staff response:** This is the main topic for the May meeting.
- Can staff provide an overview or summary of the topics of discussion from previous LUMO sessions in Appendix A so readers can more easily look back at content from previous meetings.
 - **Staff response:** This will be included in the May meeting materials

Specific questions:

Typology:

“Staff are postponing additional discussion on design and dimensional standards...”

- What is the new timeline for this work? How does it play into everyone's work between now and next fall?
 - **Staff response:** We anticipate that this work will take at least 4-5 weeks. We will explore options to check in with the CDC and Council on this work before the summer break. If that is not feasible, this topic will be a top priority for discussion in the fall.

“The CDC's comments are attached. Staff and the consultant's team will incorporate the CDC's feedback where possible.”

From the CDC memo:

- “We believe this “As of Right” provision warrants further discussion.” Can you provide further information on the CDC's discussion or reasoning. And/or can we please invite the CDC chair to come share insights with us on Wednesday evening?
 - **Staff Response:** The CDC has not provided more detail on this point and has not discussed it in a public meeting.
- “Only two of the 22 cities could be considered “College Towns”. This concern has been raised earlier. Can you provide an explanation for why cities were chosen and some

ideas of other college towns we might want to look at – if that hasn't already been done. Did the CDC have suggestions?

Staff Response: Narrowing the focus of the design study to “college towns” would not meaningfully improve the study. Staff have reviewed examples of relatively new multifamily developments from a variety of college towns and found that there is generally little diversity among the examples. The styles represented in each of the examples are also represented in the Typology Resource Guide.

The CDC did not have specific suggestions for which communities would be more appropriate but did note that we “should explore developments in similarly sized communities which are also College Towns in fast growth, technology driven economies.”

The consultant team approached this study from a different perspective. The team first identified the types of buildings that are likely to be proposed in Chapel Hill based on regional development patterns. The team then worked to identify good examples of these types of buildings from a diverse set of communities.

Many of the communities represented in the study are part of metropolitan areas that are likely to experience development pressures similar to those experienced by the Triangle region as a whole. These regional development pressures are the largest driving force for Chapel Hill and need to be top of mind when looking for examples to learn from. In this way, at 11 of the communities represented in the guide are at least partially aligned with CDC's recommendation: they are metropolitan areas (resembling the Triangle as a whole) that include major universities.

By focusing on a broader pool of communities than typical college towns, the Typology Resource Guide is able to reflect a more diverse set of perspectives and better capture the regional development pressures that impact Chapel Hill.

- A number of the items include topics that we worked to address for Blue Hill and other areas including on-site and off-site public space, public realm, screening parking decks, placement and screening for utilities. For Items 2 – 7, are there any policy decisions or key considerations that council should know about or weigh in on at this time?
 - **Staff Response:** The main questions associated with these items are technical rather than policy-driven. Together with the consultant team, staff will continue to consider the feasibility of incorporating CDC's comments into the draft standards.

Item #9 speaks to building length which is also something we discussed at length for Blue Hill where we adopted maximum lengths, pass-throughs etc... after the fact. As

one who raised concerns about showing Texas donut drawings in the Shaping Our Future plans, I'd like to know more about how we are approaching/thinking about building sizes. What are the policy areas, key considerations you are looking at as you do this work?

- **Staff Response:** Staff anticipate that most of CDC's recommendations in Item # 9 (building length limits, setback and height variations, and building step downs) will be incorporated into the draft standards. Staff will not recommend regulations for building color or materials as these fall outside the Town's zoning authority.

Used correctly, dimensional standards like those suggested by CDC can have significant benefits for the public realm. Potential impacts on project feasibility are among the most important considerations when determining how to regulate these features. These standards should not unduly limit creative project designs or prevent developers from responding to challenging site conditions. The consultant team uses models and mock-ups similar to those found in the Typology Resource Guide to determine whether certain standards would be overly restrictive.

Affordable Housing Analysis

- For smaller projects, please share information about other community benefits such as greenway connections, green space or other community benefits that we often look for and how those play into this work.
 - **Staff response:** to be included in May meeting materials
- Would like to widen the discussion of by-right plus negotiations to include other community benefits and want to understand where we are on this.
 - **Staff response:** to be included in May meeting materials