



TOWN OF CHAPEL HILL

Town Council

Meeting Minutes - Draft

Town Hall
405 Martin Luther King Jr.
Boulevard
Chapel Hill, NC 27514

Mayor Pam Hemminger
Mayor pro tem Michael Parker
Council Member Jessica Anderson
Council Member Allen Buansi

Council Member Hongbin Gu
Council Member Tai Huynh
Council Member Amy Ryan
Council Member Karen Stegman

Wednesday, March 4, 2020 **7:00 PM** **RM 110 | Council Chamber**

Roll Call

- Present:** 7 - Mayor Pam Hemminger, Mayor pro tem Michael Parker, Council Member Allen Buansi, Council Member Hongbin Gu, Council Member Karen Stegman, Council Member Tai Huynh, and Council Member Amy Ryan
- Absent:** 1 - Council Member Jessica Anderson

Other Attendees

Town Manager Maurice Jones, Deputy Town Manager Florentine Miller, Town Attorney Ralph Karpinos, Police Officer Rick Fahrner, Fire Inspector Donnie Morrissey, Communications Manager Catherine Lazorko, Interim Planning Director Judy Johnson, Economic Development Officer Dwight Bassett, Business Management Director Amy Oland, Transportation Planning Manager Bergen Watterson, LUMO Project Manager Alisa Duffey Rogers, Housing and Community Assistant Director Sarah Viñas, Affordable Housing Manager Nate Broman-Fulks, Senior Planner Kari Grace, Economic Development Specialist Laura Selmer, Senior Park Planner Marcia Purvis, Parks and Recreation Planning and Development Manager Bill Webster, Senior Planner Jake Lowman, Housing and Community Executive Director Loryn Clark, and Deputy Town Clerk Amy Harvey.

OPENING

- 0.01 Mayor Hemminger Regarding Moving Item #14 to Future Date. [\[20-0194\]](#)
Mayor Hemminger opened the meeting at 7:00 p.m. She pointed out that Item 14 (Elliott Road Extension project) had been moved to a later date.
- 0.02 Mayor Hemminger Regarding Council Member Absence. [\[20-0195\]](#)
Mayor Hemminger said that Council Member Anderson would be absent/excused.
- 0.03 Mayor Hemminger Regarding COVID-19. [\[20-0196\]](#)
Mayor Hemminger gave an update on Town preparations for an anticipated COVID-19 virus outbreak. She reviewed precautionary steps and recommendations from the U.S. Center for Communicable Diseases.

PUBLIC COMMENT FOR ITEMS NOT ON PRINTED AGENDA AND PETITIONS FROM THE PUBLIC AND COUNCIL MEMBERS

Petitions and other similar requests submitted by the public, whether written or oral, are heard at the beginning of each regular meeting. Except in the case of urgency and unanimous vote of the Council members present, petitions will not be acted upon at the time presented. After receiving a petition, the Council shall, by simple motion, dispose of it as follows: consideration at a future regular Council meeting; referral to another board or committee for study and report; referral to the Town Manager for investigation and report; receive for information. See the Status of Petitions to Council webpage to track the petition. Receiving or referring of a petition does not constitute approval, agreement, or consent.

0.04 Wayne Pein Request Regarding Former Petition and Deer Feeding. [\[20-0197\]](#)

Wayne Pein said that he had recently resubmitted a petition, which he originally submitted in July 2019, that the Town had not yet addressed. He had also recently submitted a petition regarding the Town's ban on feeding of deer, he pointed out.

A motion was made by Mayor pro tem Parker, seconded by Council Member Ryan, that this Petition be received and referred to the Town Manager and Mayor. The motion carried by a unanimous vote.

ANNOUNCEMENTS BY COUNCIL MEMBERS

0.05 Mayor Hemminger Regarding Wegmans Traffic Calming Measures Community Meeting. [\[20-0198\]](#)

Mayor Hemminger announced that a community meeting regarding traffic-calming measures at Wegmans would be held at the Chapel Hill Public Library (CHPL) on March 5, 2020, at 6:00 p.m.

0.06 Mayor Hemminger Regarding Council Committee on Economic Sustainability Meeting. [\[20-0199\]](#)

Mayor Hemminger said that the Council Committee on Economic Sustainability would hold its monthly meeting at the CHPL on March 6th from 8:00 a.m. - 10:00 a.m. and that it would be open to the public.

0.07 Mayor Hemminger Regarding Girls Empowered Motivated Spectacular (GEMS) Program. [\[20-0200\]](#)

Mayor Hemminger announced that the Chapel Hill Police Department would hold an open house for girls on March 10th from 6:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m. at the CHPL. She also described an eight-week program for young women, ages 14-21, to explore opportunities in community-oriented careers, and said that more information was available on the Town's website.

0.08 Mayor Hemminger Regarding Removal of Item #5 from Consent Agenda. [\[20-0201\]](#)

Mayor Hemminger noted that Item 5 had been removed from the evening's Consent Agenda while efforts were being made to improve the process.

CONSENT

Items of a routine nature will be placed on the Consent Agenda to be voted on in a block. Any item may be removed from the Consent Agenda by request of the Mayor or any Council Member.

5. Approve the Council Committee's Interview Rubric for Semi-Autonomous Board Applicants. [\[20-0182\]](#)

The Council deferred the item to the Town Council's March 25, 2020 consent agenda.

Approval of the Consent Agenda

A motion was made by Mayor pro tem Parker, seconded by Council Member Buansi, that R-1 be adopted as amended, which approved the Consent Agenda. The motion carried by a unanimous vote.

1. Approve all Consent Agenda Items. [\[20-0178\]](#)
This resolution(s) and/or ordinance(s) was adopted and/or enacted.
2. Remove Parking Services Fees and Rates from Annual Fee Schedule. [\[20-0179\]](#)
This resolution(s) and/or ordinance(s) was adopted and/or enacted.
3. Amend Chapter 12, Article II of the Town Code of Ordinances to Amend the Membership and Charge of the Parks, Greenways and Recreation Commission with Regard to the Cemeteries Champion Seat and Interests. [\[20-0180\]](#)
This resolution(s) and/or ordinance(s) was adopted and/or enacted.
4. Amend the Advisory Board Membership Policy's Attendance Section to Allow Each Full Board Membership to Consider Excusing an Absence Due to Special Extenuating Circumstances. [\[20-0181\]](#)
This resolution(s) and/or ordinance(s) was adopted and/or enacted.
6. Continue the Public Hearing for the Code of Ordinances Text Amendment to Chapter 11A and Land Use Management Ordinance Amendment to Section 5.9 Pertaining to Off-Street [\[20-0183\]](#)

Parking and Parking Payment-in-Lieu Policy to March 25, 2020.

This resolution(s) and/or ordinance(s) was adopted and/or enacted.

INFORMATION

7. Receive Upcoming Public Hearing Items and Petition Status List. [\[20-0184\]](#)

This item was received as presented.

8. Receive the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill 2019 Annual Development Plan Report on Transportation and 2019 Biennial Transportation Impact Analysis Update. [\[20-0132\]](#)

This item was received as presented.

DISCUSSION

9. Consider a Preferred Option for Fordham Boulevard Sidepath Project. [\[20-0185\]](#)

Transportation Planning Manager Bergen Watterson gave a brief overview of the Fordham Boulevard sidepath project that would reconstruct an existing sidepath between Cleland Drive and Ridgefield Drive and would build a new connection from Ridgefield to Willow Drive. She said that the project budget was just over \$1 million based on 80 percent federal funding and a 20 percent local match.

In response to previous Council comments and questions, Ms. Watterson outlined a plan for continued public engagement, discussed tree protection, and addressed the height of a screening fence. She said that 64 residents would be affected if certain streets in the area became egress only. The proposed sidepath would increase connectivity and mobility for all users, reduce traffic, and encourage alternative transportation, she said.

Ms. Watterson recommended that the Council adopt one of three resolutions: Resolution A would authorize the sidepath along Fordham Boulevard as described above; Resolution B would authorize a shared street concept, including a sidewalk on Hickory Drive; and Resolution C would be the shared street concept without the sidewalk on Hickory. She said that the Transportation and Connectivity Board had recommended Resolution A with conditions to maximally preserve the existing buffer, optimize noise abatement, and maximize safety for all users.

The Council ascertained from Ms. Watterson that a decision about who would maintain the fence had not been finalized, but that the Town would likely do so initially and then turn it over to property owners. Council Members confirmed that Town staff would continue to communicate with the community throughout different stages of the project and would solicit

feedback regarding traffic calming, landscaping, and the fence/buffer.

David Schwartz, a Chapel Hill resident, said that the shared street option would not be more expensive if a sidewalk were not required. He said that the Town should provide evidence that a sidepath would provide more safety and utility than would Option C. Mr. Schwartz talked about a time in the past when the neighborhood lost tree buffer in order to benefit the greater community. It would be a shame to remove what little buffer remained if the Town could achieve the same goals in a less harmful way, he said.

Mayor Hemminger suggested adding a community input session at 70 percent design. She confirmed with Ms. Watterson that staff would check with the NC Department of Transportation regarding the proposed ingress and egress to the neighborhood and that the neighbors would be involved in those discussions.

A motion was made by Mayor pro tem Parker, seconded by Council Member Stegman, that R-6 be adopted as amended. The motion carried by a unanimous vote.

10. Consider Authorizing a Memorandum of Understanding for the East Rosemary Downtown Redevelopment Project.

[\[20-0186\]](#)

Town Manager Maurice Jones introduced the item regarding a possible development on East Rosemary Street/Downtown. He read a proposed memorandum of understanding (MOU) with Grubb Properties that included a proposal to exchange properties with Grubb and construct a 1,100-space parking garage and a 200,000 square-foot innovation hub in the area. Mr. Jones said that the projected value of the project was \$50-80 million, and that a Certificate of Occupancy would need to be issued by September 30, 2021.

Economic Development Director Dwight Bassett discussed various components of the project, presented a proposed schedule, and outlined next steps. He said that Grubb Properties and the University of North Carolina-CH (UNC) were exploring the possibility of creating an innovation hub in the proposed new building. Mr. Bassett pointed out that the project would lead to job creation, and would consolidate parking for new and existing businesses. He presented drawings of what the proposed office building might look like.

Mr. Jones recommended that the Council authorize him to make minor non-substantive changes, sign the non-binding MOU with Grubb Properties, and proceed with drafting an Economic Development Agreement (EDA) for Council consideration.

Mayor Hemminger suggested that the word "approximately" be placed

before "1,100 parking spaces" in the MOU.

Council Members confirmed with staff that Grubb Properties intended to complete the office building by the year 2022. They verified that details, such as the amount of Grubb's annual parking lease payments, would be negotiated in the EDA, as would any cost-sharing agreement regarding land acquisition for an additional exit from the property. Council Members also confirmed that the Town would be the owner of the new deck, and they clarified that the EDA would need to be completed by June 2020.

In response to Council Members' questions, Attorney Bob Jessup explained that Grubb Properties would own the deck and adjacent property until the land swap occurred in the fall of 2020. Grubb would apply for entitlements on its own behalf, expecting a formal agreement for them to swap that ownership by the end of May 2020, he said. After the swap, Grubb would own the Wallace Deck and the Town would have an agreement to run that for them, Mr. Jessup explained. He said that the question of who would keep deck revenues would be worked out in the EDA.

Council Member Gu confirmed with Mr. Jones that details regarding any failure by Grubb to obtain entitlements and construct the office building would be worked out during EDA discussions. She verified that constructing the new parking deck would not be contingent upon whether or not Grubb Properties built the office building, and that the Town could not legally tie the two together. Mr. Jones said that such contingencies would all be part of the EDA.

David Schwartz, Historic District Commission chair, said that some had expressed concern about the scale and character of the proposed building in relation to the surrounding area. He questioned the idea of committing to a particular building size in an MOU before the concept had been through the review processes. He asked if the Town was obligated to approve a 200,000 square-foot building.

Mayor Hemminger replied that the building size was approximate and that such issues could be addressed during the entitlement process. Mr. Schwartz confirmed with her that an MOU was not a binding commitment, and would not, as written, obligate the Town to approve a 200,000 square-foot building on the site.

Mayor Hemminger said that members of Downtown faith-based organizations had expressed concerns about where people would park and how they would get to and from area churches during the construction process. The Town would continue having dialogues with them throughout the development process, she said.

Council Member Gu expressed concern about not having enough details to

know if the project would be good for the Town and community. She said that the Town would be making a huge commitment that would have a significant impact on its financial situation.

Mayor Hemminger agreed that the Town needed to make sure that the details were worked out. However, it was a tremendous opportunity, she said, and she characterized the Town's parking fund strategy as "solid". Mayor Hemminger noted that the new deck would be part of the Town's Parking Enterprise Fund and would not affect overall debt capacity for other projects. She hoped the proposal would become a win/win project, she said.

A motion was made by Mayor pro tem Parker, seconded by Council Member Ryan, that R-9 be adopted with an amended Memorandum of Understanding, to add the word "approximately" and correct the building start date. The motion carried by a unanimous vote.

11. Presentation: University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill Semi-Annual Campus Development Report. [\[20-0187\]](#)

UNC Architect Evan Yassky gave a six-month update on the status of the University's major capital projects. He said that an Outdoor Education Center, stormwater pond retrofit, and two renovations at the Taylor Campus health building had been completed. Projects under construction included a UNC Healthcare surgical tower project that was estimated for completion in 2022, a Medical Education Building that should be completed in April 2020, and the Curtis Media Center that would begin construction in the summer of 2020, he said.

Mr. Yassky said that the following projects were in design: a central generator plant for UNC Healthcare that should begin construction in spring 2020, a National Pan-Hellenic Council garden that UNC hoped to bid and construct during the summer of 2020, and a Porthole Alley project, which was moving forward and would include public information sessions in April 2020.

The Council determined that the finish date for a Curtis Building had been pushed to spring 2021 and that the new natural gas generator plant would replace other plants. They confirmed that none of the projects he had described would have significant parking or traffic impacts with the possible exception of Porthole Alley, which might attract more visitors. The Council confirmed with Mr. Yassky that the amount of demolition at Odum Village had been slightly reduced while UNC was endeavoring to obtain more funding.

Kristen Smith, representing the Chapel Hill-Carrboro Chamber of Commerce, invited the Council to 134 East Franklin Street the following

evening. In response, Mayor Hemminger praised the building, which she said included new technology and added vibrancy to that corner of Downtown.

This item was received as presented.

12. Open a Public Hearing and Consider Authorizing an Incentive Agreement for Well Dot, Inc. [\[20-0188\]](#)

Mr. Bassett opened the public hearing on an economic incentive agreement (EIA) with Well Dot, Inc., which he characterized as an exciting, fast-moving health/medical start-up that would employ at least 110 people. He said that the project would be a significant step toward revitalizing the Downtown area and would help the Town take its place nationally with regard to research and development.

Mr. Bassett explained that a \$900,000 incentive from the Town would take the form of a \$350,000 cash grant to Well Dot after two years of employment reporting and \$450,000 more, in \$56,000 increments over eight years, in parking credit. He said that a state grant required a local match that the proposed incentive would satisfy. The incentive amount was based on guidelines that the Town had adopted in 2018, he said.

Mr. Bassett said that Well Dot, Inc. would begin leasing property from Orange County in June 30, 2020 and was negotiating to expand that building. He recommended that the Council authorize the Manager to sign the incentive agreement.

Council Members ascertained that the state's contribution would be about \$3.8 million and that Orange County would provide incentives as well if Well Dot decided to acquire its building within 24 months. They confirmed that the negotiated parking rate for more than 50 spaces would remain at \$115 per space regardless of whether or not the Town restructured its parking fees. The Council affirmed that the increased property taxes would not be captured until 2022.

Mayor pro tem Parker congratulated Mr. Bassett on leveraging \$3.8 million in state funding and for moving the Town's strategy to have the Downtown area take its place on the national map ahead. Mayor Hemminger agreed and said that she was pleased with the strategy regarding parking spaces. Council Member Huynh expressed enthusiasm over seeing a company founded by UNC alumni return to Chapel Hill and said he hoped that others would follow.

A motion was made by Council Member Huynh, seconded by Mayor pro tem Parker, to close the public hearing. The motion carried by a unanimous vote.

A motion was made by Mayor pro tem Parker, seconded by Council Member Huynh, that R-10 be adopted. The motion carried by a unanimous vote.

13. Charting Our Future - Provide Feedback on the Revised Focus Area Maps. [\[20-0189\]](#)

Land Use Management Ordinance (LUMO) Project Manager Alisa Duffy Rogers presented future focus area maps that had been revised based on community and Council feedback. She described components of the Future Land Use Map (FLUM) and said that all elements would be before the Council on March 25, 2020.

Ms. Duffy Rogers asked the Council to provide feedback on the revised focus area maps, which provided guidance on both land use and height but were less prescriptive than before. She provided information on map changes and said that more specifics regarding transitional areas would be included when the LUMO was rewritten. The changes provided certainty without being as prescriptive as previous versions of the maps had been, she said.

Ms. Duffey Rogers said that she would provide all elements of the FLUM for feedback at the March 25th Council meeting. If the Council approved those, staff would make any revisions, hold a public meeting, attend various board and commission meetings, and update the Council in May 2020, she said. With that schedule, it would be possible to adopt the FLUM by the end of June, she said.

In response to questions from Council, Ms. Duffey Rogers said that there would be an opportunity on March 25th for Council Members to provide opinions on whether the guiding statements were strong enough. The next phase would include looking at areas in a more granular level and thinking about what the traffic implications might be, she said.

Council Members verified that "typical height" in 2049 referred to what staff thought it would most likely be. Ms. Duffey Rogers said that she was open to representing heights as ranges and to defining "typical" in a different way. She offered to change "stories" to "feet", and Council Member Ryan proposed simply adding a footnote that described stories as being in the 12-foot range.

The Council proposed minor changes that would make the maps less prescriptive and add more flexibility regarding height. Mayor Hemminger confirmed with Ms. Duffey Rogers that eight-story buildings would only be in the Downtown or along Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard from Rosemary to Hillsborough Street. She also confirmed that a map being presented would merely be a guide and that developers would need a permit to change any zoning.

Council Member Huynh recommended soliciting more feedback from younger members of the community, and Council Member Gu

recommended that the FLUM include transportation modes that the Town expected would be used in the future. Council Member Ryan stressed the importance of making sure that the project was congruent with what the Southern Area Task Force was doing. She expressed concern about traffic congestion in sub area A and building height in the West Rosemary Street area adjacent to the Northside neighborhood.

This matter was received as presented.

14. Authorize the Town Manager to Finalize Arrangements for Construction of the Elliott Road Extension Project. [\[20-0190\]](#)

This item was deferred to March 25, 2020.

15. Receive the Fiscal Year (FY) 20 Second Quarter Affordable Housing Quarterly Report (October 1 - December 31, 2019). [\[20-0191\]](#)

Assistant Director of Housing and Community Sarah Viñas reported on staff efforts to achieve the Council's affordable housing (AH) goals. She pointed out that the Town had established an investment plan to get more AH units on the ground and preserve those that already existed. The Council had also established an AH Development Reserve in FY 2015 and, a \$10 million AH bond had been approved in November 2018, she said.

Ms. Viñas displayed a graph that showed a steady increase in AH units over the last five years. She said that staff estimated developing 20 more and preserving 50 in the current year. She pointed out that this meant the Town was on track to meet its goal of developing 400 and preserving 300 AH units by FY 2023.

Affordable Housing Manager Nate Broman-Fulks provided updates on Town-initiated AH development projects. He discussed a recent MOU among non-profit members of The Homestead Housing Collaborative to begin negotiating a development agreement for a mixed-income/mixed-housing community on Town-owned property at 2200 Homestead Road. The group would bring a site plan to the Council in spring 2020, he said.

Mr. Broman-Fulks said that the Town had received proposals from six developers regarding a Town-owned site on Jay Street and that staff would present a proposal regarding the Town's Bennett Road property later in the spring. Staff had been designing a process and would propose using \$5 million in bond funds for outside agency and Town-initiated projects, he said. Staff anticipated sending proposals out in mid-March 2021 and a Housing Advisory Board and full Council review would follow, he said.

Mr. Broman-Fulks said that other Town initiatives on the horizon included:

a preservation strategy review; a CDBG public forum; Council consideration of CDBG, and HOME annual action plan; and a five-year consolidated plan. He said that an Employee Housing Pilot Program was approaching the end of its first year and that staff would update the Council on those results in coming months.

Council Member Stegman confirmed that cooperative housing and tiny homes were among the housing types being considered for 2200 Homestead Road and that extensive community engagement would be part of the Jay Street development process. She also confirmed that \$3.5 million in bond funds would be used for Town-initiated projects such as public housing, 2200 Homestead Road, and perhaps Jay Street, and that the Council would receive a funding plan in May 2020.

Ms. Viñas said that staff would provide the Council with a Public Housing Master Plan in April 2020 that would include present market value and options for Trinity Court. Mayor pro tem Parker suggested a modification regarding how AH spending was presented and emphasized the importance of obtaining an equal amount of community input from the areas where AH would be located.

Council Member Gu suggested including more demographic information in the report. Council Member Huynh proposed that staff include the total number of housing units developed in Town in order to compare that with the total number of AH units. He spoke in favor of using some bond funds to expand the Master Leasing Program and proposed that the Town explore modular construction and outside foundation grants for the three Town-owned projects.

Mayor Hemminger noted that people must qualify to be on the Town's public housing waiting list, which currently had about 300 families waiting. She confirmed with staff that Grove Park units would be available in August 2020 and that the Town would be able to rent those for 30 years for \$1.00 per month. She commented on the difficulties associated with moving people from the IFC Community House shelter to market rate housing and asked staff to provide more information on those pathways.

Mayor Hemminger asked that a Northside lot that the Town had transferred to Habitat for Humanity be shown in the staff report. She asked that co-housing/shared living be included among the Town's AH options and said that the 2200 Homestead Road parcel seemed appropriate for such housing. Mayor Hemminger encouraged staff to think about the best use of Town resources and not spread themselves too thin.

This matter was received as presented.

16. Consider a Request for Limited Review of a Special Use Permit Modification at Carraway Village, 3000 Eubanks Road.

[\[20-0192\]](#)

Interim Planning Director Judy Johnson gave a brief PowerPoint presentation on a request for a limited scope review of the Carraway Village Special-Use Permit (SUP). She described the original SUP and summarized the request to limit advisory board review to the Community Design Commission and Planning Board only. Ms. Johnson recommended that the Council adopt Resolution-A, which would limit the scope in that manner.

Council Members confirmed with Ms. Johnson that they were not being asked to approve changes to the actual SUP. The applicant would submit an SUP modification application and go through that process in spring 2020, she said. Mayor Hemminger verified that the applicant also had an SUP modification to increase the maximum height of its signs.

Council Member Gu asked about the applicant's justification for not needing Environmental Stewardship Advisory Board and Transportation and Connectivity Board review when it was proposing a storage facility and a gas station.

Ms. Johnson replied that the applicant had already received approval for an associated gas station and that its request to limit that to a standalone station would not increase traffic. The self-storage use had already been approved as well, and would not create more traffic than had been covered by existing SUPs, Ms. Johnson said.

Council Member Gu said that she wanted to hear from the other boards, nevertheless, and Ms. Johnson pointed out that doing so would mean bringing it to all required boards. Council Member Gu asked the applicant how he thought adding a gas station and storage facility compared to the original vision of the project.

Applicant Adam Golden, of Northwood Ravin, replied that they were responding to the market. He said that Northwood Ravin had been unsuccessfully trying for five years to attract various retailers.

Mayor Hemminger pointed out that the applicant was only requesting a limited scope review, and the Council voted (6-1) to adopt Resolution-A.

Council Member Gu said that she was voting against the modification because she did not like the significant change in vision for the site and did not support the project.

A motion was made by Mayor pro tem Parker, seconded by Council Member Stegman, that R-13 be adopted. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 6 - Mayor Hemminger, Mayor pro tem Parker, Council Member Buansi, Council Member Stegman, Council Member Huynh, and Council Member Ryan

Nay: 1 - Council Member Gu

CONCEPT PLAN REVIEW(S)

Concept Plans: Presentations for Concept Plans will be limited to 15 minutes.

Concept Plan review affords Council members the opportunity to provide individual reactions to the overall concept of the development which is being contemplated for future application. Nothing stated by individual Council members this evening can be construed as an official position or commitment on the part of a Council member with respect to the position they may take when and if a formal application for development is subsequently submitted and comes before the Council for formal consideration.

As a courtesy to others, people speaking on an agenda item are normally limited to three minutes. Persons who are organizing a group presentation and who wish to speak beyond the three minute limit are requested to make prior arrangements through the Mayor's Office by calling 968-2714.

17. Concept Plan Review: Bella Vista at Meadowmont Village Center, 100 Meadowmont Village Circle. [\[20-0193\]](#)

Planner Kari Grace introduced the Bella Vista at Meadowmont Village Center concept plan. She explained that such a new development at Meadowmont would require a Special-Use Permit (SUP) modification, rezoning, and modification to the Meadowmont Master Land Use Plan (MLUP). There had been various modifications to the MLUP since it was first approved in 1995, she said.

Ms. Grace outlined the concept for a 150,000 square-foot office/residential/commercial building and accompanying structured parking on approximately two acres within the Village Center. She said that the current Mixed Use Residential-1 zoning would not allow a building of that size, so the applicant was considering asking for a rezoning to Office/Institutional-3.

Ms. Grace showed a current aerial view of the site, which was predominantly surface parking, and reviewed Community Design Commission and Housing Advisory Board comments. She recommended that the Council hear the applicant's presentation, provide feedback, and adopt Resolution-14 transmitting comments to the applicant.

Mariana Molina, of Bella Vista Development Group and Craig Davis Properties, reviewed the project's goals and outlined her vision for a development that would activate the Meadowmont Village Center, boost existing businesses, provide office space, and bring condos to the area. She said that the proposed building would complement and enhance the existing environment.

Nicole Young, a landscape architect with SEPI Inc., gave a PowerPoint presentation on the plan to replace existing surface parking spaces and also provide additional parking in a structured parking area. She said that a traffic impact analysis was underway. She outlined a plan to improve a current stormwater system and preserve an adjacent stormwater pond/amenity. Ms. Young said that Meadowmont Village Center had not yet realized its potential to become the commercial hub that had been envisioned.

Kristen Hess, representing HH Architecture, showed images of the types of structure that the applicant intended to design. She described building materials and outlined a plan to connect indoor and outdoor environments with natural light and green amenities. She said that most of the parking would be below grade and that the surface level structured parking would be screened and made to look like the main building.

Ms. Hess discussed massing and step backs, and she showed drawings of how Bella Vista would look from various perspectives. She acknowledged that the building would be taller than anything else around it but said that it would blend into the area because its proposed location was set back and surrounded by trees. She said that the intent was to pursue LEED silver, at a minimum.

Council Members confirmed that the total number of parking spaces would be between 475 and 604 and they verified that one part of the deck would be wrapped with 5,000 square feet or less of office space and another part would be screened with building materials. They established that the current parking lot was full during UNC Healthcare's business hours but was wide open during after-hours and weekends. They verified with the Town Attorney that a MLUP modification would be a quasi-judicial proceeding.

In response to Council members' questions about parking, Ms. Molina said that people could park anywhere within Meadowmont Village, with the exception of some reserved condo spaces. She said that her team's intent was to maintain free parking for the community.

Meadowmont residents; Anne Boelitz, Ingemar Lanevi, Rollie Olin, Christine Khoury and Scott Falk; who were representing more than 100 others who had signed a letter, expressed objections to the requested

rezoning. They argued that the proposed 90-foot tall/150,000 square-foot structure would be greatly out of scale with the surrounding 45-foot structures in that small-scale, planned development. They argued that Bella Vista would affect their quality of life, decrease the value of their homes, and pose a risk to pedestrians and cyclists in an area that already had a dangerous level of cut-through traffic.

Bill Ferrell, Meadowmont Community Association on-site manager, said that board members believed that new development should conform to existing architectural styles and established guidelines. Residents' concerns about massing, traffic, parking and stormwater runoff were valid, and it would be most important to keep the stormwater pond as an amenity, he said.

Bill Ayrock, an attorney for UNC Healthcare, said that parking availability was a significant concern to UNC. He pointed out that the proposed floor area would represent more than a 50 percent increase over what the SUP currently allowed and that Bella Vista would add traffic to the busiest Meadowmont Village location. Given the scale of the proposed building, replacing lost parking spaces on a one-to-one basis would represent a significant reduction in parking, Mr. Ayrock said.

Jordan Qualls, who lives across the street from the proposed development, expressed support for the project. He said that many Meadowmont businesses had closed due to lack of daytime traffic and that a local owner would care more about how the area was maintained than the national real estate investment trust that currently owned the retail.

Barbara Mason, a Meadowmont Community Association board member, expressed support for the project and confidence in the applicant's quality of work. The applicant team had been willing to listen and had incorporated some resident feedback, she said. She pointed out that having the covered portico that the applicant described would make it easier for handicapped and elderly people to access UNC Healthcare. She said that Bella Vista could be a win/win for all.

Jim Joyce, an attorney with K&L Gates, said that his client, the property's ground lessor, had expressed concerns early on but had found the applicant to be responsive and willing to make changes. There would be more conversations later in the process, he said.

The Mayor and Council recommended that the applicant address the neighbors' concerns about mass, height, and positioning and work collaboratively with them to find parking solutions and address issues of scale. They agreed that the commercial component of Meadowmont Village had been suffering due to lack of foot traffic and that adding more retail would help that. The Council pointed out the proposed condos and

AH were desirable components, as was the prospect of having more people able to work where they live and play. Council Members said they liked the LEED goal and natural elements as well, and they praised the applicant for being receptive to feedback.

Council Member Gu, a Meadowmont Village resident, requested a Stormwater Utility Advisory Board (SUAB) review of the proposal.

Ms. Grace replied that such a review was not typically part of the concept review process, and Mayor Hemminger said that any commercial site would be required to address stormwater as part of the permitting process. Ms. Molina said that she probably would likely include a SUAB review, if doing so would alleviate concerns, but wanted to learn more about it first.

Council Member Gu said she hoped the project would improve traffic, parking, and bike and pedestrian connectivity. Mayor pro tem Parker pointed out that the proposed building step-back design might not be compatible with the area. He noted that the Town's Inclusionary Zoning Ordinance required that 15 percent of the condos be affordable, and he and Council Member Buansi emphasized that AH units should be on site. Council Member Huynh requested information on the amount of vacant commercial space at Meadowmont Village and on the office market in that general area. He also recommended that height be shown in feet.

Mayor Hemminger pointed out that having more commercial office space in Town was one of the Council's goals. Having local jobs would help reduce traffic and having people work where they live would mean less traffic coming into Meadowmont Village, she said.

A motion was made by Mayor pro tem Parker, seconded by Council Member Stegman, that R-14 be adopted. The motion carried by a unanimous vote.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 11:44 p.m.