

PLANNING COMMISSION

The charge of the Planning Commission is to assist the Council in achieving the Town's Comprehensive Plan for orderly growth and development by analyzing, evaluating, and recommending responsible town policies, ordinances, and planning standards that manage land use and involving the community in long-range planning.

RECOMMENDATION FOR CONDITIONAL ZONING APPLICATION FOR 2217 Homestead

January 17, 2023

Recommendation: Approval ☒ Approval with Conditions ☐ Denial ☐

Motion: John Rees moved, and Elizabeth Losos seconded a motion to recommend that the Council adopt Resolution A (Resolution of Consistency).

Vote: 7 – 0

Yeas: Jonathan Mitchell (Chair), Elizabeth Losos (Vice-Chair), Wesley McMahon, Chuck Mills, John Rees, Louie Rivers, Stephen Whitlow

Nays:

Recommendation: Approval ☐ Approval with Conditions ☒ Denial ☐

Motion: John Rees moved, and Elizabeth Losos seconded a motion to recommend that the Council approve the Ordinance A, with the attached comments as supplements and conditions to their recommendation

Vote: 7 – 0

Yeas: Jonathan Mitchell (Chair), Elizabeth Losos (Vice-Chair), Wesley McMahon, Chuck Mills, John Rees, Stephen Whitlow

Nays:

Commission Notes to Council:

Housing Diversity

There is an opportunity to include smaller units in this project. See, for example, the approved proposal for 710 N. Estes Drive. While ~2,000 square foot, three bedroom townhomes address an important housing need, purchasers would pay in the \$400,000s or more for these units today. At this price level, the target market for the market-rate units will consist of households with

incomes well above the Chapel Hill median. A more diverse mix of units would help address the full range of housing needs.

Given the site's proximity to multiple parks, schools, the Seymour Center, and a future BRT stop (0.6 miles), somewhat higher density than the proposed seven units/acre seems appropriate. More height also seems appropriate, provided that it tapers town along the boundary with the Courtyards development. For reference, the Future Land Use Map prescribes "typical" heights of 4-6 stories here.

Impacts on the Existing Neighborhood

The final ordinance (if any) should formalize the developer's proposal for an enhanced landscaping buffer adjacent to the Courtyards, including appropriate canopy preservation and root zone protection during construction.

It should also address any lingering concerns about stormwater runoff toward the Courtyards.

Road Connection to the Courtyards

Commissioners did not reach a clear consensus on this issue. Some felt that some kind of limited connection (e.g., bike/pedestrian and emergency-only) was appropriate given the vulnerable population in the neighborhood and the limited usefulness of the connection (compared to, for example, the connection at Stanat's Place). Others advocated for a full connection, which would provide a more efficient route for delivery vehicles and avoid setting precedent that could prove challenging to apply in a principled way in the future. Some wondered how much cut-through traffic would actually materialize, and whether the Town should perhaps take a wait-and-see approach to limiting the connection.

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