

Huse Street Residential

Concept Plan Application

22 March 2022

Developer's Program

The project includes multiple 4-5 story apartment buildings as well as townhomes, stacked townhomes, and some cottage units in 12 clusters around the perimeter of the project. Many of the townhomes will have their own parking space. And the apartments are proposed to have some under-building parking. Additional to that there will be surface parking spaces to be shared by all residents and their visitors. The apartments will be urban style buildings with access through a central lobby space and units accessed off interior corridors. The design will be a contemporary style and include a mix of materials such as brick and aluminum storefronts on the ground level, and a mix of fiber cement board and batten siding along with metal on the upper floors. The apartment buildings will be 4 stories on a podium with parking below, with the taller massing in the center of the project. Stacked townhomes will be 4 story and will be located on the Old Chapel Hill Road and Pope Road frontages. Shorter and less dense 2- or 3-story townhome development will be located along the western side. A pocket neighborhood of cottages around the old farm pond is proposed as part of the community. These lower density structures will act as a transition between the denser apartment housing and the adjacent single-family homes.

The community building will include interior amenities such as a fitness center and co-working space. The project will have exterior site amenities available to all residents: pool and club house, playground, outdoor green gathering spaces, and dog park as well as multiple locations for outdoor seating. The interior sidewalks and playground would be welcoming to all neighbors.

The project is proposed to have two access drives - one from Old Chapel Hill Road and another across Pope Road from Olde Coach Road. This will provide multiple options for access to the project and will help with emergency and service access. The project is close to public transit on Old Chapel Hill Road, where a Chapel Hill Transit route can carry passengers into downtown Chapel Hill. The project is also close to I-40 for easy access for commuters. Additionally Old Chapel Hill Road and Pope Road provide alternate routes to Durham and Chapel Hill.

Code compliant landscape buffers will be provided adjacent to existing residential development. Some reduction of streetside buffers may be requested. Some trees will be preserved but the majority of the tree coverage requirement will be met with new plantings.

The property is irregularly shaped, approximately 9.7 acres in size made up of 6 individual parcels. The Huse Street right of way will likely be closed and a new private street created to line up with off-site driveways and streets on Old Chapel Hill Road and Pope Road.

The current concept includes plans for redevelopment of most of the property, and includes retention of the existing farm pond, though that pond may be reduced in size. The pond will be part of the green space that runs through the site and will provide an interesting focal point in the development. Stormwater management will be located underground and will be separate from the farm pond.

There will likely be an RCD zones surrounding that pond. An RCD encroachment will be requested if that is the case.

Statement of Compliance with Comprehensive Plan

The proposed residential project is being designed to comply the Comprehensive Plan. And to comply with the adjacent North 15/501 Focus Area in the Future Land Use Map. The project, while not technically within that zone, is adjacent to it and works to meet the desires of the Town for new residential development.

The main applicable concepts from the Comprehensive Plan are Community Choices, and Sustainability.

Community Choices:

The project will provide small apartments in an urban style building. This gives Town residents a choice of apartment style living which is not garden-style walk up, but a more urban framework. The building will be an urban style corridor loaded facility with interior amenities as well as site recreation facilities. This facility will be marketed to young professionals and empty nesters with a general breakdown of 20% studios, 50% 1-bedroom, and 30% 2-bedroom units. The majority apartment of units are 1-bedroom and studios. Other housing available within this same community will be 2-bedroom townhomes providing a diversity of housing options for a different market - a market which includes larger families. This variety allows for a more diverse mix of residents and a diversity in building massing within the development.

Sustainability:

This apartment project will take advantage of dense development to promote community sharing of amenities.

Charting Our Future Guiding Principals

The following principals are identified in the Town's Land Use Initiative published in December 2020.

1. Demonstrate the Town's commitment to effectively respond to the threats associated with climate change as well as environmental stewardship and resiliency.
2. Ensure equitable planning and development.
3. Encourage a diversity of housing types.
4. Promote distinctive, safe, and attractive neighborhoods.
5. Cultivate a vibrant and inclusive community.
6. Direct investment along key transportation corridors and promote construction of transit and multi-modal transportation options in concert with the Town's regional transportation partners.
7. Support and facilitate economic development, including the development of flexible and varied types of retail and offices spaces; job creation; innovation; and entrepreneurship, through redevelopment and infill development, in order to expand and diversify the Town's tax base to enable the Town's fiscal resiliency.
8. Provide appropriate transition between land uses and buildings of different scales.
9. Preserve and maintain Chapel Hill's appearance and create the quality of design and development the Town desires.
10. Cooperate and collaborate with all of the Town's regional partners especially the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and UNC Health.

The proposed multi-family project complies with the majority of these guidelines and does not contradict the others. Multi family use has been identified as a primary desired use in the adjacent zone (Sub Area A of the North 15-501 Corridor) in the Charting Our Future report. The 4-5 story height falls in the range of typical height and transitional height desired in this area. The townhomes provide a compatible transition between the higher density taller buildings of that zone, and the single family residential surrounding the development.

The project will implement sustainable design measures to promote environmental sustainability. Many recreational amenities will provide recreation opportunities within the neighborhood and reduce non-employment transit. New trees and understory plantings will be included in the design to provide parking lot shade, hardscape shade, building shade, as well as aesthetic benefit. Stormwater runoff from new impervious surfaces will be treated on site for both peak flow and for water quality improvement.

The project will offer urban style apartment living new to this part of town. Sidewalks will be added to the street frontage and within the development.

Statement of Compliance with Design Guidelines

The property to be developed is an irregular almost 10-acre piece at the northeast corner of and fronting Old Chapel Hill Road and Pope Road. Located in Durham County, the parcel is within the limits of the Town of Chapel Hill.

The Town has a Design Manual which provide guidance for the design of new projects, intended “to assure that new designs remain in continuity with the Town’s existing design ‘successes’ and at the same time inspire exciting and creative additions to the community’s blend of distinctive buildings from many eras” (p.1)

These guidelines regulate site design as it relates to services, utilities, and landscaping.

Stormwater Treatment - The project will meet stormwater quantity and quality controls at the time of final plan development and approval. An undergrown stormwater treatment facility is anticipated which will treat for both water quality and peak flow. The approximate size of this facility has been accommodated on the proposed layout plan.

Landscaping and tree protection - The project will meet most parts of this guideline including but not limited to: total tree coverage, parking lot screening, perimeter landscape buffers, and landscaping around the building. Some plantings will be added to the existing pond to add to its aesthetic appeal, increase native plantings on site, and to ensure erosion control. Because of the multiple overhead and underground utilities along Old Chapel Hill Road, and due to the large and irregular distance of the property line from the street edge, the applicant would expect to ask for a modification to reduce the street buffer planting or modify the location of the plantings.

Access and circulation - The project will be designed to comply with Town standards for circulation, parking, emergency access, and access for services such as utility maintenance and trash collection. Street frontage is approximately 1300 LF, and the applicant expects to have 2 driveway entries - one on Old Chapel Hill Road and one on Pope Road. The circulation within the site will make both entries accessible to all residents. There are no opportunities for internal connection to adjacent existing neighborhoods. Parking on site will exceed the minimum requirement, and will include under-building and surface spaces. The stacked townhomes will have garages but the majority of parking will be in shared surface spaces.

Parking and loading - The LUMO calls for 1-1.25 parking spaces per efficiency or 1 bedroom unit, and 1.4-1.75 spaces per 2-bedroom unit. Total required parking for this project would be a minimum of 307 spaces and maximum of 415 spaces. The concept plan accommodates 415 parking spaces total or an average of 1.6 spaces per unit. Bicycle parking will meet Town codes, and the majority of bicycle parking will be located inside buildings and in the central community space. Electric charging stations will be provided in multiple places on site as well as bike storage and bike wash station to encourage alternative transportation usage.

Street lights, signs and markings - It is not anticipated that public street improvements will be required.

Utilities and easements - There is electric service along the parcel frontage. There is also water service along the frontage.

Sanitary sewer may involve some extension of a sanitary main. A group of local developers is currently working with OWASA to determine the capacity of the existing sewer station to the south.

New easements will be recorded as necessary for utility mains and stormwater mitigation facilities on site, and also to close the Huse Street right of way and recombine the existing parcels.

Solid waste management - A trash will be collected in compactors and shared dumpster facilities in multiple locations throughout the site. Trash facilities will include recycling and cardboard dumpster collection. Access to the collection areas will meet Town and County requirements, or will accommodate private pickup.

Affordable Housing Plan

This concept plan proposes affordable housing and market rate units in a variety of housing options.

The units will be located spread throughout the project therefore will be constructed and leased concurrent with the market rate units. There will be a small number of cottages included in this development, which would be targeted for older individuals that need affordable housing.

The developer's goal is to have a rental community with project-wide blended average monthly rents equal to 30% of the monthly income for those in the 80% range of AMI.

The developer has started working with Town staff to formulate an affordable housing plan offering, possibly in a co-housing type of unit.