

Amy Harvey

From: Jeanette Coffin
Sent: Monday, September 20, 2021 9:18 AM
To: Robert Beasley
Cc: Colleen Willger; Chelsea Laws; Dwight Bassett; Adam Searing; Allen Buansi; Amy Ryan; Andrew Creech; Camille Berry; Hongbin Gu; Jeanne Brown; Jeffrey Hoagland; Jess Anderson; Karen Stegman; Michael Parker; Pam Hemminger; Paris Miller-Foushee; Robert Beasley; Tai Huynh; Vimala Rajendran; Zachary Boyce; Amy Harvey; Ann Anderson; Carolyn Worsley; Laura Selmer; Loryn Clark; Mary Jane Nirdlinger; Maurice Jones; Rae Buckley; Ran Northam; Ross Tompkins; Sabrina Oliver
Subject: RE: Vote No on Resolution Authorizing Property Exchange and Letter of Intent for Rosemary-Columbia Street Hotel Property September 22 Agenda Item

Thank you for your correspondence with the Town of Chapel Hill. The Mayor and Town Council are interested in what you have to say. By way of this email, I am forwarding your message to the Mayor and each of the Council Members, as well as to the appropriate staff person who may be able to assist in providing additional information or otherwise addressing your concerns.

Again, thank you for your message.

Sincerely,

Jeanette Coffin



Jeanette Coffin
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From: Robert Beasley [mailto:rcbeasley@gmail.com]
Sent: Sunday, September 19, 2021 8:00 AM
To: Town Council <mayorandcouncil@townofchapelhill.org>
Subject: Vote No on Resolution Authorizing Property Exchange and Letter of Intent for Rosemary-Columbia Street Hotel Property September 22 Agenda Item

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Mayor and Town Council Members,

I am writing you to voice my perspective on the [Rosemary Street - Columbia Street Hotel Development Proposal](#), and to urge you to vote against the Resolution to Authorize the Town Manager to sign a Letter of Intent on an Exchange of Property Associated with the West Rosemary Hotel Project (2021-05-19/R-2).

I only recently learned of this development proposal in June, 2021, at which point I became concerned with the proposed development. In speaking with several residents and members of the community about this proposal, I have found no one outside of the Mayor, Town Council and Town Staff with any level of awareness of the proposed hotel. The most frequent response I hear is 'do we really need another hotel in downtown Chapel Hill?' In going back and reviewing the Town Council session where the developer reviewed the proposal I found very little public comment during the hearing, with concerns raised regarding the negative impacts this development will have on the Northside Neighborhood. Several Town Council members raised concerns about the Concept-Plan, which have yet to be addressed by the developer.

My own perspective on the Rosemary Street - Columbia Street Hotel Development Proposal is that it is a project the Town needs to say 'No' to ASAP, and prevent the developer from dragging out their proposal for the next year or two. I am concerned that the developer will ultimately wear down the Town Council to approve one more downtown hotel that 1) destroys the skyline, 2) violates the height limits and towers over the Northside Neighborhood and Historic Town Hall, 3) causes additional traffic and parking issues for the Northside Neighborhood, 4) further degrades downtown's aesthetic with one more ultra urban monstrosity that sticks out in size and design like a sore thumb -- with this one boxing in the Historic Town Hall and forever diminishing its presence in the Downtown District, while giving the Town A) one more hotel downtown that is only heavily occupied for University related events, B) one more service industry business that is likely to pay wages that will not be a living wage for most of its workers, C) another lost opportunity for a local business that can actually bring visitors to downtown Chapel Hill on a regular basis.

In speaking with Mayor Pam Hemminger, she indicated the development proposal would be a way to combat Chapel Hill losing hotel revenue to Durham and Wake County during University events, and that there could be value in its 'extended stay' option that will put occupancy taxes in the Town's coffers instead of people relying on Short Term Stay Rentals (this was shortly after the Town Council passed the STR policy in June). In looking back at the Public Hearing and developer provided information, it appears to me that the 'extended stay' justification is flawed. In reviewing the Concept-Plan presentation, the extended stay attribute just means a room meant to be used for more than one night, with a small fridge and maybe an additional sink. From my experience as a business traveler and vacationer, most modern hotels have these features, and the 'extended stay' branding for this is a misleading oversell.

Mayor Hemminger and Town Council Members, I ask you to consider my perspective and points on this item, and to Vote No on the upcoming Resolution to Authorize the Town Manager to sign a Letter of Intent on an Exchange of Property Associated with the West Rosemary Hotel Project. Approving the proposed resolution at this time sends an unjustifiable and unearned message of support to this developer, and will further send the Town down a path of wasted Town Staff resources, and one more development that damages Chapel Hill's identity and the value and draw of the Downtown District.

Sincerely,

Robert Beasley