

From: julie mcclintock mcclintock.julie@gmail.com
To: Megan Wooley mwooley@townofchapelhill.org

Subject: Community input page
Sent: Thu 8/22/2013 11:17 PM

Please add to the community input page

--Julie

On Aug 21, 2013, at 2:38 PM, Emily Lees <emilylees@bellsouth.net> wrote:

This is not an attempt to address any of the issues raised by either Sarah or Firoz. It is a plea for clarification in future discussions. It would be helpful if technical terms were used in a proper scientific matter. As many of us on this listserv know, in reading and interpreting data, we must be mindful of several things.

- Data are NOT collected by personal observation -- they are collected in carefully controlled studies with well defined variables.
- Percentages of total accidents in urban vs suburban, or urban vs rural (these are different) do not take into account the volume of traffic on each type of street. Thus, the type of question one should be asking is "what is the RATE of vehicular accidents in urban areas as compared to the RATE of vehicular accidents in suburban areas.
- Definitions are given a priori and are not twisted or interpreted to suit the researcher's/author's bias. Such terms as "suburban street" and "country road" need clear definitions. The term "suburban country road" is particularly misleading.
- Just because two variables occur together, causality cannot be inferred.
- Sources for data need to be given, not implied in a vague "The data shows this." (Incidentally, the word "data" takes a plural noun. Researchers never rely on just one datum.

Emily Lees, MPH, PhD

On 8/21/2013 12:49 PM, F Mistry wrote:

Hi Sarah,

Thank you for your email. I am sorry you are perplexed and bewildered by my position on Central West development. I have made my position clear in multiple emails in the past. Let me try again. I am forwarding it to a larger audience so that they may understand my position. Many people in the surrounding neighborhoods share this position.

First, I have always supported **making Estes safer for all**. The current lack of adequate sidewalks is a travesty which must be addressed immediately and independent of the Central West process. Further,

- I fully support the addition of signalized crosswalks to make it easier to cross.
- The addition of off-road bike paths and turn lanes is also essential.
- I also support the need for a crosstown bus service with frequent and extended service.

Second, whether we like it or not, **Estes is an essential (and only) cross-town thoroughfare** for this area. It must be kept safe, but **it must also support the traffic throughput or else it will choke us all**.

- **You have asked for two contrary wishes:** 1) you want the speed limit to be reduced to 20 mph from 35 mph; and 2) you support high density to-the-edge-of-the-road urban style development.
- the current traffic load already leads to **long backups** at Franklin and MLK
- **Reducing the speed limit in half reduces the traffic throughput in half** during rush hours and school hours. That is a simple law of physics.
- **Increasing high density development in Central West and Carolina North will probably double the traffic throughput.** The reality is that people will need their cars. We no longer live in villages where people go no further than 1 mile from their homes.
- **so what you are suggesting is a physical impossibility** - you cannot expect Estes to handle these changes without it coming to a stand-still. I hope that is not what you desire.
- **This may lead to having your worst nightmare coming true** - either a five-lane highway or perpetual honking traffic jams outside your window.

Third, the Steering Committee was charged with **developing a small area plan, and not saving the earth**. I shall not support feel-good ideas which hurt the quality of life of the residents of this area. The area under design is too small to come up with a meaningful solution to our larger problems. We can try to minimize problems, but we cannot use this area to "reverse" problems created elsewhere. Let us leave this larger discussion for another forum.

Fourth, we support **development appropriate to the area and in sync with the carrying capacity of it**. Hence, higher density residential (houses on smaller lots, townhouses, condominiums) with some retail and commercial on MLK would make sense. This development must occur **in phase** with Carolina North, so we do not end up with failed retail and half empty building like we have in downtown and Route 54.

Fifth, this **development must be in character** with the existing 17 neighborhoods in the area. We do not need an urbanized corner at MLK and Estes, like the ugly development along Route 54. None of the neighbors want tall buildings sticking out above tree canopies, or building to the edge of the road type development. The neighborhoods want wide tree buffers at the edge

of the road in keeping with Chapel Hill's green character. We do not want an urban type look which would be in-congruent with the surrounding neighborhoods. **Why are some members of the Steering Committee forcing their preferences on the larger population? We did not elect you on that platform.**

Sixth, **people come to Chapel Hill because** of its quality of life, its greenery, its good schools, its premier institutions (UNC and UNC Hospitals). They will not stop coming here because we do not have dense developments or a vibrant urban life. We are too small for that, and Carrboro or Durham offer them those options. We cannot be all things to all people.

Seventh, **I wish housing were cheaper**, but that is beyond our control. Will the landowners or developers commit to affordable quality housing for Central West - like \$100,000 condos? I hear the condos downtown go for over \$400,000. Do we need that in Central West?

Eighth, **the landowners are requesting us to raise the zoning for this area** from R1-R2 to almost R4-R5. I understand their motivation to maximize their profit, but I also appeal to their sense of good neighborliness to develop something which maintains our quality of life by keeping in character with the neighborhood, and even enhancing it by committing to include a plaza, a park or some such civic amenity. A commitment to affordable housing for our town workers would also sweeten the pot.

I hope the above clarifies my position. Let us make Estes better and safe, and have reasonable development in the area.

Thank you.

Regards,
Firoz Mistry

> Date: Wed, 21 Aug 2013 00:24:15 -0400
> From: sarhkamc@gmail.com
> To: fmistry@hotmail.com; tuttledavs@aol.com; mcclintock.julie@gmail.com
> CC: compplan@townofchapelhill.org
> Subject: Perplexed and bewildered by your positions
>
> Firoz, David, Julie, copied to Megan,
>
> The harsh light of reality is that I have had to walk along and cross
> Estes Drive for 28 years. I have been near death closer than I wish to
> be. The harsh reality is that the children are not feeling good about
> walking to school. The "data" is there in the pedestrian experience
> TODAY. It is not acceptable as it is TODAY. The traffic has to be slowed
> down if it is to be walkable. If it takes a commitment to a level of

> density like downtown Hillsborough or Carrboro to get a slower speed, we
> should consider this. The state is not going to let us slow down the
> speed without some urban development on Estes Drive. The urban street is
> safer, accidents per capita, than the suburban country road. The data
> shows this. There is a much higher risk of getting killed on a 35 mph
> suburban street
>
> The next generation is not buying cars like we did and they are choosing
> urban. The data for this existing TODAY. They are delaying marriage and
> child bearing, too. They carry lots of debt. The Boomer generation is
> about to sell off their housing stock to move to senior apartments. Note
> the average age for Coker Hills and Coker Hills West home owners. Most
> of them are boomers. These are ALL measured aspects to consider.
>
> Finally, the data is very clear that we are going to need to severely
> cut our carbon emissions. This requires changing how we use the
> landscape. Cities and towns across the nation are all changing the way
> they build to fit this new reality. Many of them are lowering traffic
> speed, putting in pedestrian and cycling facilities, considering
> buildings that have less HVAC expense, adding street trees, and limiting
> impermeable surfaces (which means taller, not wider, buildings).
>
> I do not understand why you three are protecting a wasteful and very
> unsafe car-centered vision for this area. Why don't you want to make it
> better for pedestrians and cyclists? What has been done before has not
> worked for peds and cyclists. The scale of the car makes it very
> unfriendly to pedestrians. Everything is too far apart. Sprawl has been
> unsafe for people and bad for the environment. I would like to see
> taller buildings so we can have more protected green spaces and
> parkland, less run-off. I would like to see development concentrated on
> the street to make transit work better, for less pavement, and to make
> destinations closer and easier to walk to. This means there is more
> green space on the backside of the parcels, toward the neighborhoods. It
> makes it more possible to have similar housing next to the old
> neighborhood. I would think that you would want this pattern. Setting
> back from the street with shorter, more numerous and wider buildings and
> more pavement among more buildings means putting more impermeable and
> ugly stuff nearer to the neighborhoods. It would mean the street
> remaining a raceway. It would mean less money for improved crossing
> facilities. I don't know how you come to the conclusion that this
> pattern is preferable. I wouldn't want to live next to all of that
> impermeable asphalt and roof-ville. Putting just single family
> residential means less opportunity for activities that support the
> existing housing, like retail and institutions on the street.
>
> You three have me perplexed. You want something, but you are not willing

- > to make the conditions right for it to happen. Based on the data and the
- > current planning practices, your vision just doesn't make sense.
- >
- > Sarah