

AMITY STATION – Revised Concept Plan Review
West Rosemary Street
Chapel Hill, NC

September 27, 2016

DEVELOPER'S PROGRAM

Introduction

This is a request for review of a Revised Concept Plan by Chapel Hill for the Amity Station development.

The project was revised from the previous March 2016 submission following additional input from residents of the Northside neighborhood, Town elected officials, representatives of the Jackson Center, and other community stakeholders. The input was received during multiple meetings and community work-sessions from May through August 2016. Five community work-sessions took place focused on the following topics:

1. Investigation of residential opportunities to create a diverse community that would welcome people of all ages including families.
2. Discussion of ways to create and use open space to enhance the project's sense of community.
3. Review of existing document including how the documents inform land use and neighborhood design.
4. Review of commercial, office, and other programming opportunities.
5. Review of the neighborhood and the building; Exploring pathways, scale, and massing.

Notable revisions from the previous Concept Plan submittal include the following:

- Relocation of vehicular traffic: No automobile traffic around the building adjacent to the single-family homes of Northside. Residents and visitors are provided automobile access directly from Rosemary Street.
- An increase in the height of the affordable building portion of the proposal from three to five stories.
- Revision to the scale and massing along the northern portion of the site adjacent to the single-family homes of Northside. The market rate building portion will remain six stories but step-down to the Northside neighborhood. At the northern property line, the building is designed at two stories in height with residential character (sloped roofs).
- An increase in the number of market rate apartments (143 to 169) and an increase in the number of affordable apartments (32 to 35).

- Elimination of the tenant courtyard entrance opening at Rosemary Street. The courtyard will be for the use of the tenants of the building only and not open to the public unless determined by the building residents.
- Revision of fire, emergency, and trash/recycling vehicular service from around the building to the courtyard.
- An increase in the amount of commercial/office space. The current plan proposes over 5,400 SF of commercial and office space and 5,800 SF of apartment amenity spaces for use by both housing developments that front and activate the ground floors of Rosemary Street and portions of Nunn Alley and Andrews Lane.
- 8,800 SF of additional potential flex commercial/office space at the 2nd floor (Andrews Lane elevation) fronting Rosemary Street. If the flex space is utilized for commercial/office use the total commercial, office, or apartment amenity space SF would be greater than 20,100 SF.

Consistent with the previous conceptual plan, building forms and material language are consistent with other multi-family, mixed-use projects of the region. At the building's base, or podium, stone work relating to the history of the Northside neighborhood is proposed. At the northern property line, the building is designed at two stories in height with residential character (sloped roofs and formwork more consistent with the adjacent single-family residential homes).

At grade residential units (market rate or affordable) may be accessed from the interior of the building or by front doors with porches that are directly adjacent to semi-public spaces. All above grade residential units (market rate or affordable) may be accessed by the front entry lobby or vertical circulation (elevators and stairs) to the interior of the building.

At grade commercial and office spaces are accessible along their frontage at the public right-of-way (either Rosemary Street or Nunn Alley). Above grade commercial and office spaces are provided a lobby accessed from Rosemary Street and elevator and stair access to the 2nd level.

Vertical circulation (elevators and stairs) provides access to the two levels of sub-surface parking. The parking will be for the use of building residents, commercial/office employees and general visitors to the building. In addition, partially covered surface parking is also provided with access from Andrews Lane for use by building visitors or residents.

The interior courtyard is imagined as a partially landscaped space for use by the residents of the building for recreation and congregation. The at-grade residences will be buffered by private patios from the semi-public central area of the courtyard.

The Revised Concept Plan makes optimal use of the limited building areas on the site and minimizes the impact on the single-family homes of the Northside neighborhood.

General Site Description

The property consists of two parcels comprising approximately 2.2 acres. It is located on the north side of West Rosemary Street at the current location of Breadmen's Restaurant. Existing vehicle and pedestrian access from Rosemary Street and Andrews Lane (east) will be maintained and improved. Pedestrian access to Nunn Alley on the west will be improved.

The Revised Concept Plan calls for the removal of Breadmen's Restaurant and the three residential buildings at the northern portion of the site. The proposed building uses the natural slope of the land (~12' of grade change from Andrews Lane to Nunn Alley) to provide for commercial spaces and residential apartments along Nunn Alley which effectively screen the sub-surface parking from off-site views.

Goals and Objectives

A development application will follow this Concept Plan review process. The developer's current intent is to construct the project as rental housing, but retain the potential for converting the units to condominium ownership in the future, should market conditions warrant it. In addition, the developer is proposing ~5,000 SF of flex commercial/office space on the 2nd floor of the building along Rosemary Street which could be converted to market rate apartments if the space is not leased for commercial/office use.

The developer's goals and objectives are closely aligned with the goals and objectives of the Chapel Hill 2020 Comprehensive Plan and downtown initiatives. The developer expects that a rezoning with an accompanying Special Use Permit will be necessary.

Amity Station's plan for affordable housing is unique and exceptional. It will create a substantial number of affordable units in the central part of town close to jobs, transit and commercial opportunities. Further, it will create permanently affordable rental housing while requiring no public subsidy or Town management responsibility.

Amity Station's affordable housing proposal is made possible by an agreement between a private developer and a private non-profit affordable housing developer that will include the transfer of property and the establishment of a partnership focused on creating a diverse, mixed-use development that would make the entire building attractive to a multi-generational tenant base.

The revised Concept Plan also includes an approach to commercial and office space that is not merely a token offer. It activates the entirety of the building's two to three floors along Rosemary Street frontage with commercial and office space opportunities that are responsive to the both pedestrian and vehicular traffic. The project includes below grade parking designated for employees and visitors that is efficient and safe to navigate. The commercial and office spaces will be designed to

meet the developing needs of a community that is actively searching for places to grow and nurture the next generation of Chapel Hill's business leaders.

Please see the accompanying compliance documents for further descriptions.

STATEMENT of COMPLIANCE WITH THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

CHAPEL HILL 2020 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN (CH2020)

Amity Station is proposed in accordance with the CH2020 Comprehensive Plan and recent downtown initiatives. This statement of compliance is provided with regard to general concepts in CH2020 as well as the objectives of the Downtown Imagined Plan.

Two general concepts within CH2020 Comprehensive Plan are Community Choices and Community Connections defined in the plan as:

Choices: The community would like more choices about where and how people can live and house their families and more choices about how they travel through town. The community also would like more choices about where to shop and how to meet daily needs. Community members also would like choices about where they can work and play in Chapel Hill.

Connections: The community also desires more connections and improved opportunities to meet others and to embrace the diversity of those who live, work, and play in the community. Community members want more connections in how they can get around and a real commitment to safe pedestrian and bicycle transportation. They want real connections between the decisions town leaders make and the ideals that the community has expressed in the Chapel Hill 2020 comprehensive plan. Chapel Hill wants a sense of connectedness from many perspectives.

Amity Station Compliance:

*The Amity Station development will contribute to **choices** regarding where to live, work, and play in Chapel Hill. This will be achieved by offering a variety of dwelling units – all in close proximity to town, school, and university services and amenities. The development will provide important **connections** for those who live and work in the community in the form of physical connections for pedestrians and bicyclists and with easy access to public transit. Also, opportunities for social connections will be provided with expanded housing choices provided close to a variety of commercial, institutional, and employment opportunities.*

CHAPEL HILL'S DOWNTOWN IMAGINED PLAN

Chapel Hill's Downtown Imagined: Community Visions Plan is being developed by the community to guide future development in the downtown. The proposed plan

includes the following statements describing the vision for Chapel Hill's vibrant downtown. The Amity Station development will contribute to this shared community vision for a vibrant and revitalized downtown.

- ❖ **Vision for Affordable and Multi-Family Housing:** Downtown, especially Rosemary Street, includes many housing types that are affordable to low and moderate income individuals and households.
- ❖ **Vision for Space for Youth and Teens:** Downtown Chapel Hill has physical spaces and engaging programs that attract, interest, and educate young people.
- ❖ **Vision for Desired Downtown Commerce:** Downtown Chapel Hill has a variety of businesses and entrepreneurial opportunities that serve all residents and visitors.
- ❖ **Vision for Entrepreneurial & Innovation Hub:** Rosemary Street – a center for creativity, growth and connections. Provides spaces and infrastructure for businesses, and supports an entrepreneurial ecosystem.
- ❖ **Vision for Connectivity and Mobility:** Chapel Hill is like a wheel with multiple spokes; the area has walkable, bikeable, and drivable connections within the downtown core and surrounding areas.
- ❖ **Vision for Managed Traffic Congestion:** Downtown Chapel Hill has a steadily moving, headache-free flow of traffic that mingles safely with pedestrians, bicyclists, buses, and other modes of transportation.
- ❖ **Vision for Bicycle Infrastructure:** Downtown Chapel Hill has a continuous bicycle system that is enjoyed by bicyclists of all ages and abilities and comprehensively connects downtown, neighborhoods, and the University.
- ❖ **Vision for Design District:** A design district has been developed for downtown that regulates the physical form of structures and provides a predictable development process.
- ❖ **Vision for Available Downtown Parking:** Downtown has parking opportunities that foster accessibility and safety for residents, visitors, and businesses.
- ❖ **Vision for Addressing Infrastructure Gaps:** Downtown Chapel Hill has continuous public works infrastructure such as easily-navigable sidewalks and is visually attractive because of the streetscapes and buried power lines.
- ❖ **Vision for Cultural and Arts Space:** Downtown Chapel Hill is a destination spot and focal point for cultural arts, entertainment, and recreation.
- ❖ **Vision for Buffers between Neighborhood and Commercial Areas:** A definition exists between the residential neighborhoods and the commercial uses in downtown that respects the neighborhoods and provides clarity for future developments and uses.

- ❖ **Vision for Historic and Cultural Center:** On Rosemary Street is located a historic and cultural center that celebrates the history and culture of the Northside neighborhood and the Midway community.
- ❖ **Vision for Development and Redevelopment:** Vacant, underutilized, and opportunity sites in downtown have been developed and/or redeveloped and revitalized.
- ❖ **Vision for Gathering and Green Spaces:** Throughout downtown are green gathering spaces where people of all ages and abilities enjoy themselves.
- ❖ **Vision for Partnership and Collaboration:** Downtown Chapel Hill is the vibrant, magical place it is because of the visions and efforts of many partners, including the partnership between the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and the Town of Chapel Hill.

Amity Station Compliance:

Amity Station will provide a unique sense of place and will contribute to the vibrancy and magic of Chapel Hill's downtown. The proposed diverse, multi-generational, mixed-use community will include residential space for students, retirees, University and downtown employees and will offer affordable residential opportunities. In addition, Amity Station proposes more than 20,000 SF of commercial and office space for a variety of businesses to grow, nurture, and contribute to the vitality of West Rosemary Street and Downtown.

The site currently contains a restaurant and three residential buildings with seven apartment units. As such, Amity Station proposes to redevelop an underutilized downtown property.

The proposed development, by its very nature, will be compatible with the surrounding areas, respecting existing development in the adjacent Northside neighborhood. The proposal works with the existing topography and transitions development within the context of the neighborhood. Parking will be tucked under the buildings to assist with minimizing the development's footprint.

Amity Station will provide a bridge between the adjacent Northside neighborhood and the remainder of downtown. Sensitivity is key with the buffer provided between the new residential development elements and the older Northside homes. Trees, bushes and decorative but effective fencing will be provided to the Lindsay Street properties, helping to limit the influx of pedestrian traffic into the neighborhood. At the northern property line the building is designed at two stories in height with a residential character (sloped roofs and formwork more consistent with the adjacent single-family residential homes). This architectural buffer and step-back respects the adjacent residences and further provides an opportunity for solar access to all adjacent properties.

Vehicular access is primarily provided by an at-grade Rosemary Street entrance to sub-surface parking. The entrance has been designed to accommodate vehicular traffic and bicycle and pedestrian movement without conflict. Additional parking is provided

at Andrews Lane utilizing the existing vehicular connection. Nunn Alley is not proposed to be widened or accessed by vehicular traffic as a part of this project. Instead, the project proposes that Nunn Alley's existing pedestrian and bicycle access be improved through re-surfacing, upgraded lighting, and the enhanced security element of the proposed adjacent commercial and residential spaces.

The streetscape improvements and activated commercial and office storefronts along West Rosemary Street will encourage biking, walking and promote connectivity throughout downtown. People living downtown tend to activate commercial success.

Traffic impacts on the surrounding areas will be minimized. Amity Station proposes an apartment to parking space ratio that exceeds downtown minimums. The ease of access to public transportation and frequency of service will make owning a car optional. The project intends to relocate an existing bus stop to the intersection of Nunn Alley and Rosemary Street. This overall transportation approach promotes better air quality and sustainability as well as energy conservation. Vehicular parking can be minimized with this holistic system and bicycle parking maximized.

The development will be a place that fosters a sense of community and will allow the residents to meet, both formally and informally. Diversity of residents will be promoted with a variety of floor plans offering a range of rental pricing. Efforts will be made to incorporate local art into the building and site design. The project's emphasis on creating a diverse, multi-generational community is reinforced by the creative and determined plans for affordable housing and commercial and office mixed-use integration.

Stormwater run-off from the minimized footprint of the development will be managed on-site with stormwater retention and water quality treatment to be sized to meet all Town requirements. The proposed stormwater facilities will constitute Best Management Practices to ensure that stormwater runoff does not impact neighboring properties.

The Amity Station development will be a showcase for appropriate and desirable design for downtown. The developer has a proven track record of building high-quality, successful developments. Amity Station will contribute to the strength and the economic prosperity of the downtown.

STATEMENT of COMPLIANCE WITH DESIGN GUIDELINES

CHAPEL HILL DESIGN GUIDELINES

Chapel Hill’s Design Guidelines provide design guidance. The purpose of the Design Guidelines “is 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).

The Chapel Hill Design Guidelines provide six categories of town-wide criteria for design. The Amity Station development demonstrates compliance with each of the following design criteria as identified below:

Design Criteria: Livability

Buildings and outdoor spaces should be designed to fit human scale, harmonize with design of streets, and accommodate pedestrian traffic.

Amity Station Compliance:

Amity Station will provide human scale architecture and outdoor spaces with building entrances and window treatment that harmonizes with the area. Benches and other pedestrian and bicycle amenities will be provided to maximize enjoyment of the outdoor space. The design of the commercial, office and residential storefronts will provide an engaging experience for pedestrians.

Design Criteria: Visual Impact

New public and private projects should be visually appealing, and compatible with other development in the surrounding area.

Amity Station Compliance: *Amity Station’s visual impact will be compatible with its location and in accordance with the height guidance of the Town Center zoning. High quality architecture with appropriate transparency will define the character of the development. The proposal will provide landscape buffering to the immediately adjacent land uses to the north. The project proposes a building height in between those of adjacent buildings of similar massing. The change in scale, massing, and architectural character enhances respect to the adjacent existing single-family residential homes while also further affording daylighting opportunities to existing neighborhood homes.*

Design Criteria: Vegetation

Landscape design concepts should preserve existing trees and incorporate native new trees and shrubbery. The landscape theme should be aesthetically compatible with that of the surrounding neighborhood.

Amity Station Compliance:

Amity Station's landscape theme will be aesthetically compatible with the surrounding area. Special attention will be provided to the Northside Neighborhood Conservation District and other adjacent development. Compatible street tree plantings are proposed along West Rosemary Street. Hardscape elements will be consistent with the Rosemary Street Plan and will be creatively designed to further enhance and activate the streetscape.

Design Criteria: Mobility

Land design concepts should provide a network of roads, bicycle paths and lanes, and sidewalks that give strong consideration to the safety of motorists, cyclists, joggers, and walkers.

Amity Station Compliance: *The main vehicular drive to Amity Station is proposed directly off Rosemary Street and is designed to manage the staging of vehicular traffic into and out of the building. Multiple pedestrian and bicycle connections will encourage safe movement throughout the site.*

Nunn Alley is not proposed for vehicular traffic as part of this project. Rather, Amity Station will work with the Town to improve the physical and material character of the pathway and will improve the security of the path by improving lighting and providing activation along the entirety of the Alley. Connection to the public transportation network will be an important element and, as part of that network, Amity Station proposes locating a bus stop at the intersection of Rosemary Street and Nunn Alley. This development will be a destination for residents choosing alternative modes of transportation.

Design Criteria: Activity Centers

Structures and complexes should enhance community life by use of "destination points" such as arcades, lobbies, and ground-level retail stores, while at the same time providing for safe movement of vehicles and pedestrians.

Amity Station Compliance: *The Amity Station development will be an important addition to the activity centers envisioned for the downtown ensuring a mix of land uses in the area. The project is envisioned as a diverse, multi-generational, mixed-use building. The development will foster a sense of community for residents, enhancing the values of the Northside neighborhood, and will allow the residents to meet, both formally and informally, as a community. The integration of the commercial and office*

spaces within the community will also provide opportunity for non-residents to interact with and engage in the activities at the new development.

Design Criteria: Views

Streets, buildings, and parking lots should enhance the urban environment by providing pleasant vistas and geographic orientations.

Amity Station Compliance: *The proposed development is designed to provide enhanced views from both within the new buildings as well as from the surrounding areas. Setbacks, building facades and roof lines will be carefully designed for compatibility with both existing downtown development and the Northside neighborhood. New street tree planting and the northern landscape buffer areas will promote views that are aesthetically pleasing and honor the downtown environment while remaining sensitive to the adjacent residential area.*