

Hillstone Chapel Hill

Ephesus/Fordham Form District Certificate of Appropriateness

Project Narrative & Statement of Compliance

December 27, 2016



1. Developer's Program

The developer's intent with the Hillstone Chapel Hill project, is to develop approximately 323 market rate dwelling units on the existing +/-6.5 acre parcel at 1730 Fordham Blvd. in Chapel Hill, North Carolina. The dwelling units will be constructed in two (2) buildings. Both buildings will have frontage on the proposed Type-A collector street that will be constructed across the northern boundary line of the site.

Building 1 has additional frontage on the Fordham Blvd. Service Road and consists of approximately 227 dwelling units configured in a five (5) story building that wraps around a five (5) story parking deck. Several wings of dwelling units protrude from the 'wrap' portion of the building. This building also contains a leasing office and club / amenity spaces. The private pool / amenities courtyard for the development is enclosed on three (3) sides by this building.

Building 2 has additional frontage on Legion Road and consists of approximately 96 dwelling units configured in a four (4) story "L" shaped building, built over a podium that provides 1 level of garage parking situated below street level. There are two (2), small, outdoor amenity areas that are associated with this building.

2. Statement of Compliance with the intent of the current Form District Regulations and the Regulating Plan

Hillstone Chapel Hill is designed and engineered to be fully compliant with the intent of the Chapel Hill Land Use Management Ordinance (LUMO), Section 3.11, Ephesus / Fordham Form District, in addition to the underlying code, ordinance and guideline requirements of The Town of Chapel Hill. Compliance will require approval by The Chapel Hill Community Design Commission (CDC) of a Certificate of Appropriateness that will include several Design Alternatives.

The following proposed Design Alternatives will provide an equivalent or better result that meets the purpose and intent of LUMO Section 3.11:

- a. Build-to Zone
- b. Ground Floor Elevation

- c. Block Length
- d. Building Pass-Throughs

3. Description and Analysis of Adjacent Land Uses and Existing Site Conditions

- a. The Western boundary of the site consists of the Fordham Blvd. Service Road NCDOT right-of-way (R/W). There are no vehicular, bicycle or pedestrian connections from the Service Road to Fordham Boulevard or beyond, along the length of the site frontage. The Service Road itself is a two (2) lane ditch section that connects with Fordham Boulevard on to two blocks to the north and south.
- b. The Northern boundary of the site adjoins the existing Quality Inn Hotel, with its driveways and parking facilities. The Quality Inn property is uphill from the site with existing storm drainage structures that traverse the site. Elevations on this adjoining property range from 0 to 10' above the existing site driveways within 20 feet of the common boundary line.
- c. The Eastern boundary line consists of the Legion Road R/W. There are existing single and multi-family developments across the street from the site. Legion Road is the boundary of the Form District at this location. It is a two (2) lane curb & gutter section with a single side street (Turnberry Lane) across from the site.
- d. The Southern boundary line adjoins the back side of the existing Rams Plaza Shopping Center. This property is situated 10' to 20' lower than the proposed development site and the area adjoining the site consists of back-of-building service access areas and the garage bay doors of the existing Mr. Tire Auto Service business.
- e. The site topography is generally sloping from the northeast corner to the southwest corner with 45' of vertical fall across the site.
- f. The soils on the site are White Store soils, (WsB, WtC2 and WwC) varying from loam, to clay loam and Urban Land complex soils. These types of soils are typical for this area and we do not anticipate any soil related issues with regard to site grading or construction.
- g. The drainage patterns for the site as mentioned under item e. are sloping from northeast to southwest across the site. The portion of the site that fronts along Legion Road sheds most of its runoff to the south and onto the Rams Plaza property. The portion of the site that fronts the Fordham Boulevard access road sheds its runoff to the south and west. A portion of the runoff is currently carried through an existing drainage pipe and discharges onto the Rams Plaza property at the midway point of the common property line. The remaining portion discharges along the service road and down to the southwest corner at the common corner with Rams Plaza. The intent with the proposed design is to maintain these same drainage patterns as closely as possible.

- h. The primary Environmental Constraints of the site are the shape of the site and its vertical relationship to the adjoining properties as discussed above.
- i. There are no significant environmental features on the site. (ie. Rock outcroppings, streams, hardwood forest areas, steep slopes, etc.)
- j. Existing Vegetation on the Service Road portion of the site consists of a few parking lot shade trees that are in poor condition and strings of mixed pines & small hardwoods along the north and south boundary lines. Existing vegetation on the Legion Road portion of the site consists of a stand of mixed pines and small hardwoods that has grown up around and on top of an old soil / debris pile left from previous parking lot construction. There are approximately twenty-four (24) significant pines and oak trees in this area that will be removed to facilitate construction of permanent site facilities.

4. Proposed Design Alternatives:

In accordance with the town of Chapel Hill Land Use Management Ordinance, Section 3.11, Ephesus / Fordham Form District:

- **Build-To Zone (BTZ):** (Sec. 3.11.2.4.2.d) – new roadway frontage
 - Requirement: “building façade in btz (min. % of lot width), type a frontage: 80%”
 - $757 \text{ lf building} \div 946 \text{ lf of r/w} = 80\%$
 - Site constraints:
 - Bow tie shaped lot makes it difficult to meet the requirements of section 3.11
 - 159 lf of frontage is non-buildable due to its location at the narrow part of the lot
 - Other constraints:
 - 42 lf of frontage is needed for parking and trash/recycling access
 - 24 lf of frontage is needed for a fire apparatus access road
 - Design alternative:
 - 300 lf of frontage developed as pedestrian plaza
 - Utilization of landscape walls, berms, decorative paving, lighting, seating and planting to define the streetscape
 - $586 \text{ lf building length} + 300 \text{ lf pedestrian plaza} = 886 \text{ lf of buildable frontage / amenity area}$
 - $886 \text{ lf pedestrian plaza} \div 946 \text{ lf r/w} = 93\% \text{ developed frontage in the btz}$
- **Ground Floor Elevation:** (Sec. 3.11.2.4.3.e)
 - Requirement: “ground floor elevation, residential (min/max) 2’ / 4’”
 - Ground floor elevation between 2’ and 4’ above adjoining back-of-curb
 - Site constraints:
 - Site elevations vary by 43’ across the property (from 320 at legion road to 277 on the service road)

- Sloping roadways force ground floor elevations to be less than 2' or more than 4' above the roadway at many locations
- Design alternative:
 - Provide stoops, ground floor balconies, stairs and ramps (for building code required accessibility), where feasible, along street frontages
 - Provide secondary private sidewalks, above retaining walls, to limit elevation difference from ground floor to the nearest sidewalk to 4' maximum
- **Block Length:** (Sec. 3.11.2.4.c)
 - Requirement: "block length (max.) 400' "
 - Site constraints:
 - Bow tie shaped lot makes it difficult to meet the requirements of Section 3.11
 - Triangular shaped building sites limit constructability on the narrow end of the triangle, leaving little room for buildings beyond code required roadways.
 - Adjoining properties and roadways' topographic relationship to the site limits opportunities for meaningful cross access
 - Design alternative:
 - Reserve +/- 2,604 sf of land, at the narrow portion of the lot, for future r/w dedication
 - Make the reserved area 91' in width to accommodate a future type 'a' frontage
- **Building Pass-through:** (sec. 3.11.2.4.1.e)
 - Requirement: "building pass-through required every 200'"
 - Town council granted authority for CDC to authorize pass-through spacing up to 400'
 - Site constraints:
 - Bow tie shaped lot makes it difficult to meet the requirements of section 3.11
 - Small, triangular shaped building sites force Construction of structured parking to meet code requirements and create a viable development
 - Site relationship to adjoining properties and roadways makes pass-throughs ineffective or superfluous
 - 12' to 13' of elevation change between fronts and backs of buildings forces rear building entries to be located 1 floor below the 'ground floor'
 - Design alternative:
 - Utilize the 'bow tie' shape of the lot to provide crossing pattern pedestrian connections from the 4 corners of the site to the central pinch point, maximizing pedestrian opportunities from both on and off site
 - Provide on-site pedestrian amenities at key locations to activate the streetscape: pedestrian plaza, streetscape, pedestrian connectors
 - Provide opportunities for adjoining property owners to make pedestrian / bicycle / vehicular connections to and through the site