

Council Committee on Economic Sustainability Meeting Notes
November 3, 2017
Chapel Hill Public Library, Room A

Attendees: Mayor Pam Hemminger, Council Member Nancy Oates, Council Member George Cianciolo (Chair), Council Member Michael Parker, Council Member Ed Harrison, Council Member Jessica Anderson, Roger Stancil, Flo Miller, Mary Jane Nirdlinger, Loryn Clark, David Finley, Ben Hitchings, Jeanne Brown, Beth Vazquez, Fred Lampe, and Meg McGurk.

Chair George Cianciolo opened the meeting at 8:05 a.m.

Updates

(Please see slides linked throughout for additional information.)

[Economic Development](#)¹

- Economic Development Officer Dwight Bassett said the Town is interviewing public relations firms and hopes to hire a firm by the end of the month to promote stories about economic development in Chapel Hill.
- The Town is cohosting a business retention and learning event with Orange County on November 14, 2017.
- TSI Healthcare was featured this week on [WCHL/Chapelboro](#)²
- Three inquiries this month:
 - Human Services (50-75 employees) seeking 30-40K SF in enterprise zone
 - Development seeking 237,600 SF
 - Restaurant relocation seeking 2-3K SF

[Planning and Zoning](#)³

- Planning and Development Services Director Ben Hitchings reviewed one new concept plan: a drive thru window at Dunkin Donuts, which requires a Special Use Permit.
- Mr. Hitchings provided an update on the application for the Greystar Retirement Apartments, a proposal for 190 senior living apartments on a 16-acre site on Homestead Road at Weaver Dairy Extension. The public information meeting October 25th was canceled, but the applicant has not rescinded the application.
- Mr. Hitchings briefly reviewed active projects in the Blue Hill District (Ephesus-Fordham). The Greenfield Place and Hillstone Chapel Hill projects have now received Form District Permits.
- Mr. Hitchings described a possible process improvement for applicants reluctant to bring forward requests for Special Use Permit (SUP) modification. Mr. Hitchings said a focused SUP presents an opportunity to provide more certainty to applicants that the Council will only review what is new.
 - Town Manager Roger Stancil said that expense and time are the biggest deterrents to applicants in coming back with requests for modification.

¹ <http://www.townofchapelhill.org/home/showdocument?id=37685>

² <http://chapelboro.com/town-square/stories-town-chapel-hill-economic-development>

³ <http://www.townofchapelhill.org/home/showdocument?id=37687>

- Council Member Michael Parker moved and Council Member Jessica Anderson seconded a motion to recommend that a proposal for a focused SUP process be brought to the full Council for consideration (the motion was adopted unanimously, 6-0).

Business

Incentive Policy⁴

- Dwight Bassett summarized the conversation on incentives that began in the spring of 2016. He reviewed previous incentives—Carraway Village, which was incented to encourage commercial development, and Wegmans, for which performance benchmarks were set for job creation, tax base growth, and sales tax growth—and the goals of the draft incentive policy.
- The committee discussed the following points:
 - Council Member Jessica Anderson stressed that any incentive policy needs to be clear about who the Town will incent and why.
 - Council Member Nancy Oates asked if it is worth giving an incentive to a business whose employees live elsewhere.
 - Mayor Pam Hemminger suggested setting a threshold for sales tax, property tax, and employment.
 - Council Member Michael Parker asked if the Town should give preference to projects that would allow for collaboration with Orange County and/or the State.
 - The committee suggested that, in order for a business to be eligible for an incentive, 70 percent of employees be required to work at the Chapel Hill site at least 60 percent of the time.
 - Mr. Bassett suggested setting aside \$20,000 to be divided into four small grants as a tool to nudge the ecosystem.
- Chair George Cianciolo suggested Mr. Bassett return to the committee in January with a refined incentive policy and explore creating a small fund for grants.

Other Committee Discussion

- Mayor Hemminger announced that Carrboro is building a new municipal services building for library and office space. She said Carrboro is also reviewing a proposal for a new hotel with meeting space.
- The Assembly of Governments meeting is scheduled for November 16th.
- Mayor Hemminger recognized Council Member Cianciolo for chairing this committee.

Motion to adjourn at 9:59 a.m.

⁴ <http://www.townofchapelhill.org/home/showdocument?id=37689>