

March 27, 2018

Town of Chapel Hill Mixed-income Community
2200 Homestead Road
Chapel Hill, NC 27516

 **MHAworks**
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Re: Developer's Program

Introduction

This is a request for review of a Concept Plan by Chapel Hill for the Town of Chapel Hill Mixed-income Residential community project located at 2200 Homestead Road.

The Town of Chapel Hill is working to create a mutually supportive, self-sustaining mixed income community, providing a housing opportunity for some of our most at risk and underserved populations. The Town engaged a design consultant who first met with Town staff, potential development partners and community stakeholders. After receiving community input at two public meetings, the consultant has proposed approximately 130 units of mixed type residential housing. The design consultants' anticipate that the parcel will be developed by the Town, possibly in collaboration with one or more partners.

General Site Description

The property is approximately (14) fourteen acres and is located on the north side of Homestead Road. The lower half of the site, approximately (5) five acres, has been identified as developable. The site contains an existing farm pond, community gardens with support structures (shed), an unoccupied ~6,000 SF building formerly housing a dance studio and a gravel parking lot. Portions of the site are heavily wooded and a thicket of bamboo is located east of the pond. At the east is an adjacent property that is currently scheduled to be redeveloped as a residential community. A residential community of connected homes, Vineyard Square, is located to the north. The west property line is defined by a rail road track that connects from the north to UNC's central campus. On the other side of the track is The Episcopal Church of the Advocate.

Access, Circulation, and Mitigation of Traffic Impacts

Primary vehicular circulation for residents and visitors to the property of the site is proposed to originate from Homestead Road. At the east of the project site, a vehicular connection is proposed to occur to the proposed residential neighborhood. A secondary, secure access point from Homestead Road is proposed adjacent to the rail road tracks to provide emergency access only. Internal to the site, vehicular circulation and parking are organized to minimize the interaction between pedestrian and automobile. A bus stop is proposed to be located adjacent to the primary property entrance on Homestead Road. A developed greenway network, which ties into the Town's Greenway trail system, is proposed to circulate through and throughout the project site in a way that benefits the residents of the community and enhances the property's natural features.

Arrangement and Orientation of Buildings

The site design focuses vehicular traffic and parking patterns to the perimeter of the site to mitigate the opportunity for pedestrian and vehicle interaction. The orientation of buildings for both site design options creates an interior courtyard for families to gather and play. The arrangement and orientation also provides spaces for pedestrian paths to develop and opportunities for interaction to occur with the landscape and community gardens.

Natural Vegetation and Landscaping

The existing site contains open green areas and portions of dense woods as well as the existing pond and creek system. The project is proposing that existing natural site features be retained and enhanced to promote outdoor social and recreational activities and support the residential community uses.

Impact on Neighboring Properties

Although the Town's development of the property is greater than the current land use, the goal is to provide housing available across a range of incomes in a manner that will minimize the developed impact on surround neighbors. The average height of the buildings is proposed to be between 2 and 3 stories tall. The scale and architecture of the buildings will be residential focused; reflecting the character of the surround properties. The neighboring properties will benefit from the enhanced natural amenities of the site and the greater connectivity to public transportation and the greenway trail system. The reconstructed pond and renovated and enhanced community garden will also provide value to the neighboring community.

Erosion, Sedimentation, and Stormwater

The existing pond is proposed to be rejuvenated and rebuilt to provide storm water management for the site. The current old farm pond has severely silted up. The scope will be to dredge and reshape the pond to provide a permanent water quantity and quality control management system that meets the Town's runoff control requirements. The pond may be also used as an interim sediment management device during the project construction, along with silt fencing and other approved S&E Devices. The final configuration of the pond will either be as a constructed wetland with a short term water storage element, or as a permanent wet pond with a littoral shelf around the perimeter for safety and aquatic habitat enhancement.