

PROJECT NARRATIVE

and

STATEMENT OF JUSTIFICATION

Conditional Rezoning Application

For:

Weavers Grove Community

7516 Sunrise Road
Chapel Hill, NC 27514

Applicant:



88 Vilcom Center Drive, Suite L110
Chapel Hill, NC 27514

Civil Engineer:



Land Planner/
Landscape Architect:



Architect:



<u>Issue Dates</u>	<u>Description</u>
27 Jun 2019	Conditional Zoning

Written Narrative and Proposal Description

Weavers Grove Community

Habitat for Humanity of Orange County, NC plans to develop a thoughtfully designed residential community called Weavers Grove that will provide a significant amount of affordable housing for those earning between 30% and 80% of the Area Median Income. In addition, Habitat plans to partner with a market rate home builder to provide moderately priced housing for a variety of demographics at a lower price point which currently does not exist in Chapel Hill.

This development will be situated on ±32.0 acres east of Sunrise Road, between Ginger Road and I-40 at the northern edge of the Town of Chapel Hill's planning jurisdiction. The site consists of six separate parcels, which will be recombined and subdivided as necessary to accommodate the development. The site is bisected by a ridge that runs generally southwest to northeast. There is a perennial stream in the northwest corner of the site and an intermittent stream in the southeast corner of the site. Slopes on the site are predominately gentle and less than 15%, although there are a few small areas along the streams where slopes exceed 15%, including two very small areas where slopes exceed 25%. The predominant soils on the site are Appling Sandy Loam, with a small area of Wedowee Sandy Loam in the stream area in the northwest corner of the site.

The proposed community will include a total of 94 duplex and townhouse units that meet the criteria for Affordable Housing, as described below in the Affordable Housing Proposal. The community will also include a mix of condominiums, single family homes, and duplexes of various sizes, bringing the total number of residential dwelling units in the proposed community to 219. The community may also include several amenities and recreational facilities such as a café, community center, open pavilion, garage, community garden, dog park, splash play, playground, walking trail, gazebos, and an open area for lawn games.

The development's program has been carefully adapted to the site's natural features such as wetlands, streams, steep slopes and stream buffers. An existing power transmission line and associated right-of-way has also helped to inform the site layout. The resulting site layout maximizes the use of the site's developable area, while preserving sensitive natural areas.

The development layout provides adequate access to Sunrise Road and includes excellent internal vehicular and pedestrian circulation, with several cross-connections proposed throughout the internal street network. A sidewalk will be extended along the eastern edge of Sunrise Road to promote pedestrian connectivity. The street network layout and building placement take

advantage of the site's natural topography and focus most of the development on the site's natural ridges.

This development's impacts to neighboring properties have been considered carefully. Habitat began discussions with the neighbors in December, 2017 and has used feedback and input from the neighbors to inform the master plan included in this application. Since this development is mostly residential, the proposed uses are similar to the residential uses of the surrounding neighborhoods. However, to help buffer the neighborhoods to the south and east from the development, ample landscape buffers will be provided along the development's perimeter.

The architectural design of the residential and community structures will reflect a combination of traditional Farmhouse and Craftsman stylistic influences. Timeless, durable materials such as cementitious siding and brick veneer will be used with close attention to details, proportions and colors. The Habitat homes will be a blend of duplex and townhome designs, varying between 1.5-2 stories tall. Half of the homes will be built as 3 bedroom/ 2.5 baths while the other half of the homes will be four bedroom. Square footage of the homes will vary between 1,185 and 1,552. The price of the affordable homes will be based on each individual homebuyer's income and will be sold to those making 30-80% of the Area Median Income. An important design element in this community is the architectural integration between the affordable homes and the market rate homes.

Stormwater management and sedimentation and erosion control will be handled through the installation of temporary measures during construction and permanent measures will be installed when construction has been completed. State-of-the art technologies and methodologies will be used to meet stormwater and S&E requirements.



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Flexibility, Timing, and Clarifications Weavers Grove Community

If Council grants approval of this Conditional Zoning application, Habitat for Humanity of Orange County, as the applicant for this project, is requesting latitude in the following specific areas.

Infrastructure: It is our intent to build the road and utility infrastructure as shown in this application (as approved in the final configuration). The flexibility we are requesting is regarding the types of dwelling units, rear alleys & garages, the I-40 buffer, and the amenities/recreation areas shown on the application.

Builder Partner: Habitat is in discussions with several market builders and will likely partner with one or more to build somewhere between one-fourth and one-half of the dwelling units shown on our plan. It is also possible that one of our partners could be a senior housing developer. The balance of the dwelling units will be constructed by Habitat of Orange County. At least one of our partners will likely be selected and identified within six months of this application submittal date and prior to final action by Council.

Dwelling Units: We are requesting the following flexibility regarding dwelling units:

- Single-family and/or townhouse dwellings may be substituted in place of duplexes shown on the site plan.
- Single family, townhouses or duplexes may be substituted for any of the three-story condo buildings shown on the site plan.

Rear Alleyways and Garages:

One of the builder partners we are considering builds rear alleyways and garages, in a similar manner to the first phases of Southern Village. Our plan shows side driveway and front facing garages for the duplexes along our main entry drive. We request that our final approval include the flexibility to change to rear alleyways and garages if we partner with a builder that prefers that program. Our ZCP submittal would include an updated SWM Report that addresses any change in our impervious surface quantities and subsequent treatment.

Amenities/Recreation Areas: It is our intent to eventually raise enough money to build all the amenities shown on our plan; however, if our fundraising effort

doesn't raise enough contributions, we will build enough amenities to meet the Town's minimum recreation area requirements. We anticipate those minimum amenities to be:

- Village Green (excluding the splash play pool)
- Village Green Pavilion
- Walking trail system (excluding the gazebos)
- Possibly the dog park, community garden, kid's playground, or basketball court

The amenities most likely to fall into the "future if funding allows" category would be the **community** building, the café, and the community garage. If we are unable to raise enough contributions to construct and operate any of these community buildings, then we ask that we be allowed to substitute dwelling units on their sites.

Noise/I-40 Buffer: We are taking several measures to minimize noise from I-40 in our dwellings that are closest to I-40. There are numerous construction techniques that we will employ for those dwelling units to minimize outside noise. We also propose to construct an earth berm in our 100' I-40 buffer which should significantly reduce noise. It is permitted to remove vegetation and replant the I-40 buffer, so no waiver is needed. Since our I-40 buffer is so short in length any earth berm would be more effective if it were to be extended (1) to the northwest on our neighbor's property (we are in discussions with them about this option) and (2) to the east on our property between our pocket neighborhood and the Yukon Circle lots of Chandler's Green. We bring this topic up here since neither of these additional earth berm options are shown on our plans, but we do ask for those options to be allowed in our final approval.

Starting and Completion Dates: This item is just a clarification. Typically, any final approval includes a condition for start and completion dates. It is our intent to begin infrastructure construction shortly after receipt of ZCP approval. We also intend to construct all the infrastructure in a single phase (ie, all public street and utility improvements and storm water management). We request that we be given three years to begin construction work (infrastructure). We request that the completion date be eight years from entitlement approval. Ideally, we will begin infrastructure within one year of entitlement approval and complete infrastructure within two and one-half years after entitlement approval, but we request additional time to allow for unforeseen things that could hinder our best plans such as a shortage of funding. We also want a clarification that the completion date does not pertain to vertical building construction. This project is very similar to any large residential subdivision. Typically, for subdivisions the approval completion date is understood to mean the infrastructure not individual house construction. It often takes many years to build out all the homes in a subdivision. For example, out of the original 128 lots of Silver Creek (entitlement approval many years ago) there are still three undeveloped lots.

The following will be completed prior to the Completion Date in the entitlement approval:

- All public streets, including sidewalks and street trees
- All public utilities, including OWASA water and sewer
- All storm water management features
- Sufficient amenities to satisfy the minimum recreation space requirements listed in LUMO

- All buffer requirements
- Any Sunrise Rd improvements specified in the entitlement approval.

The following may be completed after the Completion Date in the entitlement approval:

- Any of the vertical building construction. [By the completion date many of the residential dwellings will have been completed, but some residential and several community buildings may not be constructed by the completion date.]
- The remaining amenities not included in the minimum required to satisfy the recreation space requirement in LUMO.

Phasing Plan: It is our intent to construct all the infrastructure in a single phase; however, in the event that the program changes, we request that the final entitlement approval allow us to include a phasing plan in the ZCP Application.

Weavers Grove: Amesbury Drive Weavers Grove Community

Town of Chapel Hill policy dictates that a project of this size that should have two points of access in case of emergency. The current plan shows the main access is via Sunrise Road with a second access via Amesbury Drive.

Habitat has been in discussions with the neighbors for many months and have learned that there are various opinions on the Amesbury Drive connection. In fact, during Concept Plan review, Council Member Rachel Schaevitz encouraged the neighbors to communicate with the council so they could better understand the desires of the neighbors since there was a bit of discrepancy. Some Chandler's Green neighbors that live in the vicinity of Amesbury Drive do not want a connection of any kind between our neighborhoods while others feel that an emergency/pedestrian/bike connection makes sense. We wish we had an alternative location other than Amesbury, but unfortunately do not. Therefore, we are proposing an "emergency only/non-vehicular" access. The Chapel Hill Fire Department has been requiring a 20' roadway width in recent similar projects so we are proposing the same. It will be signed for vehicular "one-way in" only, which would provide access for emergency vehicles into our neighborhood if the need arose in the future.

In following the Town's guidelines for walkable and bikeable communities, the access can also be used by pedestrians and bikes (in and out) when not needed for emergencies.



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Affordable Housing Proposal Weavers Grove Community

Habitat for Humanity of Orange County is a local nonprofit organization affiliated with Habitat for Humanity International. Habitat provides affordable homeownership opportunities for families who live and/or work in Orange County and live in substandard housing. In this community, Habitat will partner with individuals who earn between 30% and 80% of the area median income (AMI) to provide a greater mix of income (up from the typical 30-60% range).. Habitat was incorporated in 1984, and completed its first home in 1987. Over the past 30 years, Habitat has nearly 300 affordable homes throughout the County. Through its new home construction program, Habitat uses donations and volunteer labor to construct energy-efficient, green-certified, high-quality homes, and then sells those homes to qualifying families. The buyers receive an affordable mortgage, and mortgage payments are recycled to build future homes. Homebuyers are required to contribute 275 hours of sweat equity in education classes and toward the construction of their own and other Habitat homes.

Habitat sells its homes using deeds of restrictive covenants requiring 99-year affordability to buyers who earn 80% or less of the AMI. In addition, Habitat maintains a right of first refusal on all of its homes, and a shared equity agreement with all of its buyers that allows buyers to share a percentage of the appreciation of their property based on the ratio of their first mortgage and the original sales price of the home, which is determined by a market appraisal at the time of sale. In these ways, Habitat ensures that the community's investment of funds and labor will be preserved if the original buyer sells the home while also helping homebuyers build equity in their home

In carrying out its homebuilding and community strengthening activities, Habitat educates and empowers its homebuyers through a series of relevant workshops and one-on-one trainings. Habitat also educates the broader community about the crisis in affordable housing by introducing and involving hundreds of new volunteers from all walks of life in its work each year. Habitat promotes the positive value of diversity by uniting people of varied economic, religious, social, and racial backgrounds to work together toward a common goal –building affordable housing for those who need it in our community.

While developing the concept plan for the proposed residential community, Habitat Board and Staff adopted the following guiding principles:

- Aesthetically pleasing, creating new styles and designs for Habitat's homes
- Mixed income, with integration of affordable and market rate homes
- Attention to environmental impact and long term sustainability
- Significant impact on affordable housing crisis
- Good stewards of scarce land
- Foster good relationship with adjacent neighbors

Habitat will serve as the master developer for this community and, in addition to building all of the affordable homes, Habitat will seek a partner or partners to build moderately priced, market rate homes throughout the remainder of the project. There is ample research that mixed income neighborhoods benefit the residents of those homes, including improved health conditions and education outcomes for lower income children. Not only will the smaller, moderately priced market rate homes fill a serious gap in the Chapel Hill housing market, they will also provide for greater overall economic diversity as well as opportunities for interaction and programming amongst residents. The site is designed to encourage interaction among the market rate and the Habitat homeowners and their families, and to foster a sense of community among all of the residents regardless of age, background, or economic status.

Chapel Hill native and Habitat for Humanity International CEO Jonathan Reckford has said "I am convinced that the best model for building stronger communities comes from mixed-income, mixed-use development that enables people to live near the places where they work. I am delighted that Orange County Habitat has developed this plan for a robust community that will benefit those who work to provide key services to Chapel Hill."

The architectural design of the residential and community structures will reflect a combination of traditional Farmhouse and Craftsman stylistic influences. Timeless, durable materials such as cementitious siding and brick veneer will be used with close attention to details, proportions and colors. The Habitat homes will be a blend of duplex and townhome designs, varying between 1.5-2 stories tall. Half of the homes will be built as 3 bedroom/ 2.5 baths while the other half of the homes will be four bedroom. Square footage of the homes will vary between 1,185 and 1,552. The price of the affordable homes will be based on each individual homebuyer's income and will be sold to those making 30-80% of the Area Median Income.

To qualify for a Habitat home, applicants need to have lived or worked in Orange County for the past year, demonstrate stable income for the past two years, and have a low debt to credit ratio. Applicants must have overcrowded, cost-burdened, subsidized, or substandard housing to qualify for a Habitat home. Prospective homeowners must put in 275 hours of "sweat equity" labor on the construction site and in training classes on financial education and home maintenance. When their home is complete, they pay closing costs and repay a monthly affordable mortgage, usually over 30 years.



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Public Art Proposal Weavers Grove Community

While a specific art project has not been developed for the Weavers Grove Community at this time, Habitat for Humanity of Orange County recognizes the important of art as a form of expression and communication, among other societal benefits. Art can bridge the gap between different cultures and develop a strong sense of community. It is our hope that throughout the approval process, we can determine the right art project, or possibly multiple projects, that will honor the name of the community: Weavers Grove. Habitat chose the name “Weavers Grove” to represent a diverse group of people being woven together to create one community. The art installation should be collaborative, embrace diversity, and allow multiple voices from the community to be represented.

In the past, Habitat has worked with various local artists in many different ways including textile artist Elaine O’Neil, muralist Michael Brown, UNC Professor Dana McMahan, and local artist Chris Berndt.

Response to Concept Phase Review Comments Weavers Grove Community

Below is a summary of the comments received from the Community Design Commission and Town Council during the Concept Plan phase. Each comment is followed by a response in bold type. Please note that Carol Woods is no longer a co-applicant with Habitat for Humanity on this site, a recent development since the Concept Plan phase.

- Incorporate more integration:

Response: Integrating the Habitat housing with the balance of the housing on the project is an important objective to the development team. The current plan includes approximately 43% Habitat housing and the remainder will likely consist of two or more levels of market rate housing, creating a variety of housing opportunities within this architecturally integrated development. Integrating the homes with the original partner, Carol Woods, was challenging due to the need to provide services to seniors in one location. However, once a new partner is identified, the goal is that the Habitat homes and market rate homes will be integrated into the overall layout to the extent practicable.

- Sidewalks (on Sunrise and in neighborhood):

Response: A sidewalk has been proposed along Sunrise from Sweeten Creek Road to the project entrance, where it will connect to an extensive network of sidewalks throughout the proposed community. This will ensure a safe, walkable sidewalk from the Weavers Grove neighborhood all the way to Weaver Dairy Road.

- Full connection to Amesbury:

Town of Chapel Hill policy dictates that a project of this size that should have two points of access in case of emergency. The current plan shows the main access is via Sunrise Road with a second access via Amesbury Drive.

Habitat has been in discussions with the neighbors for many months and have learned that there are various opinions on the Amesbury Drive connection. In fact, during Concept Plan review, Council Member Rachel Schaevitz encouraged the neighbors to communicate with the council so they could better understand the desires of the

neighbors since there was a bit of discrepancy. Some Chandler's Green neighbors that live in the vicinity of Amesbury Drive do not want a connection of any kind between our neighborhoods while others feel that an emergency/pedestrian/bike connection makes sense. We wish we had an alternative location other than Amesbury, but unfortunately do not. Therefore, we are proposing an "emergency only/non-vehicular" access. The Chapel Hill Fire Department has been requiring a 20' roadway width in recent similar projects so we are proposing the same. It will be signed for vehicular "one-way in" only, which would provide access for emergency vehicles into our neighborhood if the need arose in the future.

In following the Town's guidelines for walkable and bikeable communities, the access can also be used by pedestrians and bikes (in and out) when not needed for emergencies.

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- Too much parking:

Response: The parking count was considered carefully as part of the design process. The number of spaces proposed with the current plan is only two spaces above the Town's minimum. Part of the parking strategy was to utilize parallel parking to the extent practicable in order to minimize impervious cover. Please note that the current plan proposes three significant permeable pavement parking areas.

- Connection to greenway master plan:

Response: The walking trail we are proposing could easily be connected to the future greenway path shown along I-40 on the greenway master plan.

- Design speed on streets:

Response: A 25 MPH design speed will be used for the final design of the streets per the Town's local street standards. Traffic calming measures will be explored as the street designs are finalized.

- Increase character/trees on Sunrise Road frontage:

Response: As mentioned above, Carol Woods is no longer a co-applicant and therefore the front lot along Sunrise Road is no longer part of the application. Carol Woods has

agreed, however, to grant the right-of-way required for our main entrance drive (Public Street "A") off Sunrise Road through their lot. This change results in a significantly reduced project frontage along Sunrise, with the only true frontage being north of the existing Henry lot. Habitat will work with Carol Woods to obtain easements that may be necessary to install entry features, signage, and landscaping at the main entrance. Habitat does not propose to make improvements to the frontage north of the Henry lot.

- Emphasize walkability of neighborhood in relation to street design:

Response: The current design proposes an extensive network of sidewalks and walking paths throughout the development. The sidewalks generally follow the streets and parking lots, but cross-connections between different streets and parking areas have also been provided.

- Stormwater Design is Critical:

Response: Our engineers have performed a thorough review of the existing conditions and have developed a robust stormwater management program for the project that will meet or exceed all applicable Town of Chapel Hill stormwater standards, which are among the most stringent in the state. The program includes eight (8) separate stormwater control measures (SCM's): three (3) stormwater wetlands, three (3) permeable pavement systems, a bioretention cell, and an underground detention system with a StormFilter.



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Statement of Consistency with Comprehensive Plan Weavers Grove Community

Below is a brief outline expressing several ways in which this project will embrace & conform to the ideas and themes driving the Town of Chapel Hill's Comprehensive Plan:

A Place for Everyone

The project proposes a significant amount of much-needed affordable housing to help those at or below 80% of the Area Mean Income (AMI) to achieve the dream of homeownership. Providing affordable housing is at the root of this theme of the Comprehensive Plan.

Community Prosperity and Engagement

This project will create significant construction opportunities in the short term, will create several permanent jobs in the long term and will provide 219 quality new residential dwelling units for people who will patronize local businesses.

Getting Around

The proposed community will be very walkable, with sidewalks throughout the development and walking trails throughout the natural areas to be preserved. Walk connections will be provided to Sunrise Road and to adjacent neighborhoods, as appropriate. It is anticipated that bus service will be extended to this new development so that public transportation is readily available within a short walking distance to a bus stop, if a bus stop cannot be built within the community. The majority of the Habitat homeowners in Orange County work either for UNC or UNC Health Care where parking can be challenging, especially for support staff. Public transportation will be a key component to connect these families to employment centers.

Good Places, New Spaces

This project complies with this theme by carefully integrating a new residential community into the existing fabric of the area neighborhoods.

Nurturing Our Community

A significant amount of natural area will be preserved on this property and opportunities for residents to immerse themselves in and enjoy the preserved natural areas will be provided. Also, state-of-the-art stormwater control measures will be designed for this project to ensure that all stormwater regulations are met and exceeded.

Town and Gown Collaboration

Close to one third of Habitat's homeowners work for UNC or UNC Health Care. This trend is expected to increase in this community since the location is convenient to campus and bus service will hopefully be extended to serve this community of homes. In addition, hundreds of volunteers help build homes each year through the university, including student athletes, UNC's employee forum, Apples service learning, and many other departments. UNC Chapel Hill boasts one of the strongest Habitat clubs in the country, encouraging students to volunteer and to host Habitat fundraising events throughout the year. UNC Health Care is also a strong Habitat partner, lending both financial resources as well as volunteer time to help build homes for UNC Health Care employees.

Statement of Justification Weavers Grove Community

FINDINGS OF FACT

The following information is provided in support of the four findings of fact as described in Article 4.5.2 of the Chapel Hill Land Use Management Ordinance.

FINDING #1: That the use or development is located, designed, and proposed to be operated so as to maintain or promote the public health, safety, and general welfare.

The proposed mixed income community will provide 94 affordable homes to individuals in Orange County who make between 30-80% of the Area Median Income. The Habitat for Humanity model allows first time homebuyers an opportunity to purchase a home, leading to strength, stability, and self-reliance. The homes will be green certified at a minimum bronze level with universal design elements. The neighborhood will be designed and operated to meet or exceed all development guidelines. Habitat for Humanity has built 300 homes in Orange County including a number of large scale subdivisions. All infrastructure will be constructed to applicable state and local standards and the project will be operated so as to maintain or promote public health, safety, and general welfare.

FINDING #2: That the use or development complies with all required regulations and standards of this Chapter, including all applicable provisions of Article 3 and 5 and the applicable specific standards contained in the Supplemental Use Regulations (Article 6) and with all other applicable regulations.

The submission for a new Habitat for Humanity of Orange County community is in compliance with the Land Use Management Ordinance and all other land development regulations and standards, including the Use and Dimensional standards defined in Article 3, the Application Procedures outlined in Article 4, the Design and Development Standards set out in Article 5, and any Special Regulations for particular uses in Article 6. Habitat has outlined a few exceptions in the “Flexibility, Timing, and Clarification” document including encroachments into the Resource Conservation District and the I-40 Interstate Buffer.

FINDING #3: That the use or development is located, designed, and proposed to be operated so as to maintain or enhance the value of contiguous property, or that the use or development is a public necessity.

The proposed Habitat for Humanity of Orange County community is located on Sunrise Road, off of Weaver Dairy Road, and is bordered on one side by the Chandler’s Green neighborhood, by a private property on the other side, and by Carol Woods across the street. The use is consistent with other residential neighborhoods that currently exist along Weaver Dairy Road and with light commercial along Weaver Dairy Road and we believe the project will maintain or enhance the value of contiguous property. The development will also include a significant amount of affordable housing, which has been identified by the Town of Chapel Hill as a public necessity.

FINDING #4: That the use or development conforms with the general plans for the physical development of the Town as embodied in this chapter and in the Comprehensive Plan.

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Energy Management Plan Weavers Grove Community

- a) Energy Efficiency Strategy / ASHRAE Performance:
 1. Compliance with Advanced Energy SystemVision for New Homes 2019 and other voluntary initiatives, including:
 - 14.5 SEER heat pumps
 - Electric tank water heaters with efficiency factor of 0.93
 - Filtered whole-house mechanical fresh air ventilation system per ASHRAE standards
 - Total duct leakage shall not exceed 3% of the conditioned square footage
 - No incandescent building lighting is permitted; all exterior lighting shall use LED lamps
 - Energy Star Appliances and low-flow plumbing fixtures
 - R-49 attic insulation
- b) Sustainable forms of energy:
 1. None proposed in baseline design
 2. Optional:
 - I. Photovoltaics
- c) NC Green Power:
 1. N/A
- d) Indoor air quality, access to natural lighting and utilization of any proposed sustainable energy:
 1. Sealed crawl spaces with approved drying mechanism
 2. Filtered whole-house mechanical fresh air ventilation system per ASHRAE standards
 3. Low- or no-VOC paints
 4. Kitchens and baths mechanically exhausted to the exterior
 5. Thorough, verified air sealing of building envelope
 6. Use of overhangs, gutters and covered entrances for moisture management
 7. Radon-ready house / passive mitigation system installed (convertible to active system)
 8. High-efficiency vinyl windows with low-E coating
 - i. All habitable spaces shall have windows for natural light
- e) Commitment to energy efficiency:
 1. Homeowner instruction in operation of home systems
 2. Energy guarantee for heating and cooling; current average monthly cost below \$30
 3. Employing Universal Design techniques on ground floor levels assists with aging-in-place, creating incentives for long-term / lifetime energy-saving habits by homeowners
- f) Transportation management:
 1. A Transportation Management Plan will be provided for the project as part of a future ZCP application and it will include recommendations for carpooling and use of transit facilities.