

MINUTES OF A JOINT MEETING OF THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL,
 PLANNING BOARD AND APPEARANCE COMMISSION OF THE
 TOWN OF CHAPEL HILL, MUNICIPAL BUILDING,
 MAY 4, 1987, 7:30 P.M.

Mayor Wallace called the meeting to order. Council Members present were:

Julie Andresen
 David Godschalk
 Jonathan Howes
 Nancy Preston
 R. D. Smith
 Bill Thorpe
 Arthur Werner

Planning Board Members present were:

David Brower
 Berry Credle
 Pat Evans
 Don Francisco
 Alice Ingram
 Tom McCurdy
 Mae McLendon
 Julian Raney
 Alan Rimer

Community Appearance Commission Members present:

Ann Hamby
 Charles Nelson
 Donald Shaw
 Cassandra Sloop
 Dana Staats
 Larry Touchstone

Council Member Pasquini was absent, excused. Also present were Town Manager David R. Taylor, Assistant Town Managers Sonna Loewenthal and Ron Secrist, and Town Attorney Ralph Karpinos.

Human Services Center Committee Report

Mayor Wallace asked that Dr. Robert Seymour, representing the Human Services Center Committee, present the Committee's report, after which he would discharge the committee.

Dr. Seymour presented the report to the Council and asked that they read it and take into consideration. He said the report made 10 recommendations. He commented that the committee was available for questions. Dr. Seymour said the committee members were Billy Barnes, Charles Brooks, Ida Friday, Tommy Gardner, Biruta Neilson, and Peggy Pollitser.

Mayor Wallace thanked the committee for their work and discharged the committee.

COUNCIL MEMBER ANDRESEN MOVED, SECONDED BY COUNCIL MEMBER WERNER TO RECEIVE THE REPORT WITH APPRECIATION AND REFER IT TO THE MANAGER.

Council Member Smith encouraged the Manager to review the report as soon as possible and suggested having a public hearing soon so that a shelter would be in operation by this fall.

Council Member Andresen asked when the public hearing could be scheduled. Manager Taylor replied that it would be on the May 26 agenda.

THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY, (8-0).

UNC Land Use Plan Presentation

Farris Womack, Vice Chancellor said he and John Sanders, Eric Munsen, Gordon Rutherford, and Gene Swecker were present to answer questions on UNC's proposed Land Use Plan. He said throughout its development there had been cooperation between the Town Manager, his staff and the University. He said the Land Use Plan would be presented to the UNC Board of Trustees at their June 26 meeting and that on June 1 there would be a public meeting on the plan.

Gene Swecker gave the presentation on the proposed Land Use Plan. He said it was not a programming document, but rather a framework for development. He stressed that the proposal could not be implemented overnight but rather would occur in stages. He said the University maintained its desire to preserve the University Lake watershed and therefore proposed no development in that area. He said Horace Williams Airport would be continued to be used until an alternate site was developed. Mr. Swecker said the key to the Land Use Plan was the idea of promoting open space throughout the campus to complement the expansion plans. He stated that the proposed Land Use Plan called for moving roads and opening up spaces for trees and plantings to give better access to the entire campus.

Council Member Howes thanked the University for their presentation and said it had a number of exciting features as well as a number which would create concerns. He said this proposal needed community scrutiny and support.

Council Member Andresen asked what kinds of plans the University had for the Mason Farm area. Gordon Rutherford responded that there were no specific plans at present but that the Mason Farm area had land available for expansion and that the expansion would probably be facilities which would enhance the conference center.

Council Member Andresen asked how the University would utilize the Horace Williams Airport site if another airport were developed. Farris Womack replied that once again no specific plans had been developed, especially since it would probably be at least 10 years before another airport site was developed, but he said that it was possible the Horace Williams site could become a satellite campus with a variety of activities including a research park.

Council Member Andresen asked how the University planned to develop its new road network in the proposed Land Use Plan. Mr. Swecker responded that the road network would develop in a sequential nature as different aspects of the Land Use Plan was developed. Mr. Rutherford said the University had in its Land Use Plan noted those road improvements which were joint concerns of the Town and University and also those which were important for internal circulation on the campus.

Council Member Werner asked if the University's plan had been endorsed by the University Administration. Mr. Womack replied that the Administration had endorsed the plan in concept and the Board of Trustees would formally adopt the plan at their June 26 meeting. Mr. Werner commented that he was glad to see a lack of proposed development for the University Lake watershed area. He commented that it might be a good idea for the University to join in the efforts with Chapel Hill and Carrboro in promoting non-development of the area.

Council Member Werner commented on the proposal to close part of South Columbia Street. He asked why the University was making this proposal. Mr. Womack replied that the closing of that portion of South Columbia adjacent to the Health Sciences buildings would do important things for the campus and allow the creation of a health affairs complex not divided by a street. He said the proposal was to make the area now covered by South Columbia into a pedestrian greenway.

Council Member Preston thanked the University for going public with their proposed Land Use Plan. She asked if all the land in the proposal was owned by the University. Mr. Rutherford replied that the majority of the land was University owned.

Council Member Preston asked how the proposed network of roads would be financed, by the State or University? Mr. Rutherford replied that as the University was a State agency it would be a question of which funds would be used. He said he did not know at this point.

Council Member Godschalk stated that he was delighted with the plan. He said he liked the idea of using the Horace Williams site for other uses. He suggested that using the Horace Williams site for expansion could eliminate the feeling that the University only had areas to the south and west to expand. He said he hoped the planners' minds would be open to this suggestion.

Mr. Womack stated that the most valuable outcome of developing the Land Use Plan was the the process itself and the cooperation it promoted. He said the University was sensitive to the concerns about the airport but that the airport was a vital part of the University's medical program.

Christopher Fordham, Chancellor of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, thanked his colleagues for presenting the proposed Land Use Plan and thanked the Council for their leadership and for maintaining the ambience in Chapel Hill which had enabled the University to become one of the leading research facilities in the nation. He said the University's needs were ever changing and expanding and one of the main objectives of the land use plan was to facilitate both the function and the beauty of the campus.

Council Member Andresen said she would like to review the proposed land use plan in greater depth and asked that the Manager review the plan and present a report to the Council.

Council Member Thorpe asked to what level of detail did the Council want the Manager to review the proposal. Mayor Wallace said he would leave that up to the Manager.

Tom McCurdy, speaking as a member of the Planning Board, said that most plans of this type include information on the proposed number students, professors, etc. Mr. Womack replied that the University did not have any plans to increase enrollment, but that the science circulumns required large amounts of space for laboratories, etc.

Donald Shaw, speaking as a member of the Appearance Commission, asked if the University had given any thought to the open sky system in trying to identify a unifying theme to the height of the buildings. Mr. Rutherford responded that they had discussed the building envelopes and scaling to increase the perceived open space.

Charlie Nelson, speaking as a representative of the Appearance Commission, expressed concern about the possible closing of South Columbia Street. He asked what the University planned to do with the buildings which currently exist along that corridor. He expressed concern about the fraternity houses in particular. Mr. Swecker said that no definite plans had been made.

Ann Hamby, speaking as a member of the Appearance Commission, asked if the University owned the land between Cameron Avenue and Franklin Street where the proposed Pittsboro Street extension was proposed to be. Mr. Swecker said the Pittsboro Street extension was on the Town's Thoroughfare Plan and that the inclusion of this road in the University's Land Use Plan showed the University's support of the proposal. He said the University did not own the land.

John Sanders, speaking as a representative of the University's Building and Grounds Committee, said the last comprehensive long range land use plan for the University was completed in the 1950's. He said as a participant in the proposed land use plan it had been a good experience in developing a new, good plan and he hoped the cooperation which began with the plan would continue to exist.

Berry Credle, speaking as a member of the Planning Board, said he was pleased with the University's Land Use Plan, that it was something to be proud of and he hoped the atmosphere of cooperation would continue.

Olympic Festival Update - Community Appearance Commission

Cassandra Sloop, representing the Appearance Commission, gave a report on the progress being made to help beautify the Town for the Summer Olympic Sports Festival. She said the Commission was sponsoring an Adopt-a-Tree program to help pay for the planting of trees in strategic entranceways. Ms. Sloop said a landscaping firm had been hired to lay out the planting areas, and there will be hanging baskets for the downtown area. She thanked the Council for their support of the project and also urged the Council to direct the staff to develop and distribute the requests for proposals for the Master Landscaping Plan as soon as possible.

Council Member Preston asked how the plants would be watered, etc. Ms. Sloop said that there had been a number of volunteers who have agreed to help with this project.

Council Member Preston asked about the general maintenance of Town property during the Olympic Festival. Dana Staats, of the Appearance Commission, said that individuals had also volunteered to help with the upkeep of the entranceways.

Council Member Preston asked if the Commission had found a location for the Olympic Torch. Ms. Sloop said the Commission was still working on this and that the Chamber of Commerce was planning an event at parking lot #5 for when the Torch arrived. She said some comments had been made that maybe it could be kept in a receptacle there. Dana Staats said some one else had suggested locating the Torch at the Old Post Office on Franklin Street.

Council Member Andresen said she appreciated the work the Commission had done.

Council Member Smith said he was glad to see the Commission taking efforts to improve the entranceways in Chapel Hill and that he hoped they would expand their program to include other areas throughout town.

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Planning Priorities

Roger Waldon, Planning Director, said the Planning Department had three functions: current planning, long-range, and community development. He said the current workload was very heavy in all areas. He stated that the staff did not have flexibility in the scheduling of work in the current development or community development area, but did have some measure of flexibility in the area of long range planning. He pointed out the long list of projects which were currently on the Planning staff's agenda and gave a status report on those items under consideration.

The Planning Board expressed concern that the comprehensive planning process and report was not developing as it should. They felt the staff might be over-extending themselves and could use help. They suggested that the Council hire a consultant to help the staff produce the Comprehensive Plan. Several members felt the staff was too concerned with current development issues and were therefore unable to work on the long-range planning issues, and that the staff might not be qualified to produce a comprehensive plan. They felt additional staffing and the use of consultants were needed.

Not having reached any consensus on what was needed, at 11:00 p.m., the Council decided to recess the meeting to reconvene on May 13 at 5:00 p.m. to continue the joint meeting with the Planning Board.

A MOTION WAS DULY MADE AND SECONDED TO RECESS THE MEETING UNTIL 5:00 P.M. MAY 13. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY, (8-0).

The meeting recessed at 11:13 p.m.