

MINUTES OF JOINT TOWN COUNCIL/PLANNING BOARD MEETING OF  
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 18TH, 7:30 P.M.,  
CHAPEL HILL MUNICIPAL BUILDING MEETING ROOM

Mayor Pro Tem Pasquini called the meeting to order. Mayor Howes was attending Homecoming festivities on Franklin Street and arrived at 8:25 P.M.. Council Members present were:

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| Julie Andresen    | Nancy Preston       |
| David Godschalk   | Arthur Werner       |
| Joseph Herzenberg | Roosevelt Wilkerson |

Mayor Pro Tem Pasquini announced that Council Member Wallace was absent, excused, this evening. Planning Board Members in attendance were: Chairperson Rimer, Board Members Credle, Guild, McCurdy, McLendon, Maltbie, and White.

Also present were Town Manager David R. Taylor, Assistant Town Manager Sonna Loewenthal, Town Attorney Ralph Karpinos and Planning Director Roger Waldon.

Mr. Waldon provided a brief overview of the Strategic Report to the Council and members of the Planning Board.

Council Member Preston stated that according to the table on page 67 of the Strategic Report, the Town attained its greatest density to date in the 1940's.

Mr. Credle stated that he had submitted three pages of comments relating to the Strategic Report to the Planning Department staff. He added that these items should be discussed as they directly impacted the future of the Town.

Mr. Waldon noted that the charts in the report were a good starting point for discussion. He noted that the Town's environment was "fraying around the edges", particularly in the areas of steep slope protection and air quality. He added that the priorities of community facilities and the environment often conflict.

Council Member Godschalk noted that the Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) had been proposed as a Countywide program.

Council Member Preston asked whether scenic views were designated in the Town's land-use plan. Mr. Waldon responded that a few key view areas are identified.

Council Member Preston inquired about sections of the report referring to the conservation of fossil fuels. Mr. Waldon stated that certain elements of the plan emphasize denser development patterns which will lessen distances travelled and will employ

alternative modes of transportation. Mr. McCurdy suggested the possible implementation of a bus system employing alternate fuels.

Council Member Werner stated that he was hesistant about adopting general policies. Chairperson Rimer noted that the Planning Board concurred with Council Member Werner's concerns. He added that charts in the back of each section outlined recommended policy guidelines.

Council Member Godschalk noted that before individuals are willing to buy TDRs (Transfer of Development Rights), they have to be able to see the possible benefits of such a transaction. He added that such transfers have worked well elsewhere, but additional incentives may be needed locally. Town Attorney Karpinos offered to provide information concerning the Transfer of Development Rights.

Mr. Rimer asked whether the Council would like the Planning Board to make recommendations on the Transfer of Development Rights. Council Member Godschalk responded that the Council is seeking to mold a strategy for handling Transfer of Development Rights. Council Member Werner added that the Council is seeking specific information to proceed with making hard choices.

Council Member Preston inquired as to the nature of concerns relating to the protection of steep slopes. Mr. Waldon responded that erosion is a major concern. He stated that extensive grading, cutting and filling contribute to the erosion problem. Chairperson Rimer stated that the Town needs to examine roads that feed steep slopes.

Council Member Godschalk asked for examples of the "frayed environment" cited by Mr. Waldon in his earlier remarks. Mr. Waldon listed air quality, erosion and stormwater quality as key environmental concerns. Council Member Rimer added that he is concerned about the preservation of open space.

Mr. Rimer stated that the design guildelines outlined in the Strategic Report look at conventional energy sources as well as good solar planning techniques. He added that attention should be paid to the codification of recycling facility requirements.

Mr. Waldon noted that the provision of affordable housing is made more difficult by higher development standards. He added that the institutional gap needed to be plugged, with adequate land resources and monies being made available to address these needs.

Council Member Herzenberg suggested that the Town staff provide a "human" example for each section of the report.

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Mr. Credle inquired what the Planning Board's role was in the evening's proceedings. Mr. Rimer responded that substantive comments were being brought to the attention of the Council for their consideration.

Council Member Preston stated that language relating to affordable housing on page 23 of the Strategic Report should state "at least 10%" instead of "less than 10%".

Council Member Godschalk asked what the Town's level of fair share commitment to affordable housing should be. He added the need for the Town to collaborate with the University in meeting the needs of student and faculty/staff housing, that should be reflected on page 19 of the draft report. Council Member Wilkerson stated that he had worked extensively with the Habitat for Humanity. He asked whether Council Member Godschalk was proposing the implementation of quotas. Council Member Godschalk stated that his goal is to assure that each community do their fair share of housing the low income people of the region. Council Member Wilkerson asked whether communities would be inclined to perform at a minimum level (i.e., their fair share). Council Member Godschalk responded that a minimum was being offered. Mr. Credle inquired how the Town's fair share would be established and administered. Council Member Godschalk responded that the Town would be responsible for meeting a minimum standard.

Mr. Rimer asked if there was any support for a real estate transfer tax. Council Member Werner responded that there had been discussion of this within the context of a larger program. Council Member Godschalk stated that local governments are selecting revenue programs from an expanding menu of ideas.

Mr. Credle stated that he favored a Town-wide tax to support affordable housing efforts.

Mr. Guild asked rhetorically, "Where does the final cost fall?" He stated that ultimately costs are borne by other housing units.

Mayor Howes noted that the Cities of Raleigh and Durham have earmarked some general fund monies for affordable housing.

Mr. Credle noted a reference on page 32 of the Strategic Report to a forty year commitment. Mr. Credle suggested that a periodic review would be in order. Chris Berndt, Long Range Planning Coordinator, noted that H.U.D. guidelines make reference to a twenty year time horizon for affordable housing.

Council Member Andresen mentioned the need to examine sites for the location of the Town's homeless shelter.

Town Manager Taylor urged the Council and Planning Board to focus their energies on identifying five policy debates for discussion at their next session. He specified issues such as road systems, density transfer (TDR), density bonuses, and commercial development.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:58 P.M.

CONTINUATION OF JOINT TOWN COUNCIL/PLANNING BOARD MEETING  
OCTOBER 18TH; THURSDAY, OCTOBER 27TH, 7:30 P.M.,  
CHAPEL HILL MUNICIPAL BUILDING MEETING ROOM

Mayor Howes called the meeting to order. Council Members Andresen (arrived at 8:30 P.M.), Godschalk (arrived at 7:45 P.M.), Herzenberg and Werner were present as were Planning Board Chairperson Rimer and Board Members Credle, Guild, McCurdy, McLendon, Maltbie, Raney and White and Parks and Recreation Board Chairperson Hershel Slater.

Also present were Town Manager David Taylor, Assistant Town Manager Sonna Loewenthal, Town Attorney Ralph Karpinos and Planning Director Roger Waldon.

Mayor Howes stated that the objective of the two sessions between the Council and Planning Board was to formulate a draft Strategic Report document to take the community for citizen consideration.

Roger Waldon, Planning Director, stated that the main planning problems facing the Town are: (1) traffic and transportation congestion, (2) lack of low and moderate income housing, (3) vanishing open space, (4) loss of Town character, (5) loss of pedestrian scale, and (6) depletion of available landfill space. He added that items approaching consensus solutions are: (1) cooperation between the Town and University, (2) Increased transit services and bikeways, (3) Establishment of an adequate public facilities ordinance, (4) Steep slope regulations, (5) Air and water quality monitoring, (6) Establishment of a non-profit housing corporation, and (7) Expansion of the recycling program.

In addition, Mr. Waldon outlined the more controversial planning issues facing the Town, including: (1) Compact development, (2) Design standards, (3) Limiting commercial development, (4) Connection of neighborhood streets, (5) Mandatory housing regulations, (6) Compilation of a Transportation Management Ordinance, and (7) Location of a new landfill site.

Council Member Godschalk asked why Mr. Waldon characterized parks and greenways as a problematic situation in his earlier remarks. Mr. Waldon responded that the Town does not have sufficient

resources to adequately meet the open space demands of a growing population.

Mayor Howes noted that Hershel Slater, Chairperson of the Parks and Recreation Commission was in attendance at this evening's proceedings. He invited Mr. Slater to address the Council and Planning Board members on the status of parks, greenways and related facilities.

Mr. Slater stated that the demand for many Town recreational facilities are far outstripping the available capacity.

Mr. Waldon also noted inadequacies in the number of neighborhood parks. Council Member Godschalk asked what standards had been used to establish this inadequacy. Mr. Waldon responded that a national survey of standards had been employed for this determination. Kimberly Brewer, Planning Department Staff Member, added that the Town is projected to need double the number of existing parks by the year 2025. She added that only 5% of the projected 2025 greenway needs are currently in place.

Mr. Waldon noted that developers are not anxious to make payments in lieu of parkland dedication. He noted that the Council's past policy has been to acquire land in lieu of monies. Mr. Credle suggested that the Town perform an inventory of open space.

The group turned its attention to Town Character. Council Member Godschalk questioned a statement on page 52 of the Strategic Report concerning the expansion of historic and appearance districts.

Mayor Howes noted the need to balance student housing and low-income housing needs with those of historic and appearance districts.

Council Member Werner noted that the downtown area has been historically student oriented. He added that many students felt that an anti-student bias is emerging in the Town. Council Member Werner stated that students have a stake in the future of downtown Chapel Hill, and should have input into the planning for it.

Town Manager Taylor suggested that the Council hold a debate on the future of the downtown area.

Mr. Raney asked whether the downtown area could ever be viable again. Council Member Herzenberg noted the importance of getting surrounding neighborhoods involved in the process of planning for the future of the downtown area. Mr. Rimer stated that the downtown area had received a tremendous amount of attention in the

last year. Mr. Rimer proposed a dialogue be opened with the Downtown Commission to discuss the future of the area.

Mr. Credle stated he felt that the downtown area is overemphasized. He cited limited parking as a frequent problem. He added that outlying shopping centers are becoming increasingly popular. Council Member Werner cautioned that the downtown debate should not overwhelm other important issues.

Council Member Godschalk stated that the City of Raleigh has recently introduced a new transit station which seems to be working well in the downtown area.

Mr. Waldon provided an overview of the 1986 Council Goals and Objectives report, focusing his attention on the consideration of activity centers. Council Member Godschalk asked whether certain types of activities should be encouraged in activity centers. Council Member Werner stated that some communities may see activity centers as a great idea, but may not want them in actual practice. He added that if the Town wants to encourage a pedestrian community, sidewalks must be provided.

Council Member Andresen noted that proposed policies in the community facilities section of the Strategic Report do not encourage creative approaches on the part of developers.

Council Member Andresen also stressed the need for establishing a water service policy for outside the urban service area. Council Member Werner stated that such a policy exists whereby OWASA provides service when other systems fail.

Council Member Godschalk stated that the most salient demographic fact evident in the Chapel Hill area is the increased number of retirees and the needs that accompany this segment of the population. Town Manager Taylor stated that recent statistics indicate that by the mid-1990's the United States will have a greater number of senior citizens than teenagers. Mayor Howes noted the daily increasing number of conflicts between the needs of older and younger citizens.

Ms. Maltbie stated that outlying commercial areas are more convenient than downtown to many citizens. She added that the transit system should be re-evaluated to see if it is serving the destination needs of the public. Council Member Andresen stated that she would like to see downtown attain greater vitality.

Ms. McClendon said that many people shopped in Durham before the advent of shopping centers in Chapel Hill.

Mr. Guild noted the variety of available methods to determine the projected Town population. Mr. Waldon noted that the population

projections in the Strategic Report would be even higher if the Town had not previously taken certain steps in the planning process. He added that increased population led to increased traffic and other planning problems.

Council Member Godschalk stated that population forecasts are unreliable. He added that the projection that the Town will be "filled" by the year 2025 is purely an artificial concept.

Mayor Howes stated that downtown Chapel Hill as a regional center ranks with the State Capital (Raleigh) as a recognizable point.

Mr. Waldon stated that transportation, in his opinion, is the most difficult problem facing the Town in the future. He noted the problems of increased traffic congestion, increased air pollution levels, and the proposed clustering of housing along transitway corridors. He added that arterial roads are currently clogged since there is not a good secondary road system in place.

Council Member Godschalk encouraged cooperation with the University in handling parking. He added concern that park and ride lot implementation does not appear to be proceeding smoothly.

Town Manager Taylor noted that UMTA (Urban Mass Transit Association) has approved the Park and Ride lot on Highway 54 in concept, adding that construction of the project by the Summer of 1989 is possible. He added concern that the Town is ahead of the University in terms of the Continuing Education Center project and related parking concerns. Mr. Taylor concluded his remarks by noting that the number of hours of service provided by the transit system have increased 22% over last year.

Mr. Raney expressed concern that buses contribute obnoxious fumes to the environment. He proposed that alternate means of mass transit be explored.

Ms. Maltbie stated that local roads should be better utilized. She added concern that collector streets are overutilized.

Council Member Godschalk stated that park and ride lots could be the potential core for future activity centers. He noted that Alexandria, Virginia has already implemented such a program.

Council Member Andresen stated that the report does not directly address pedestrians. She asked whether sidewalks should be emphasized in future goals of the Town. Council Member Andresen stated that she would like a section addressing the needs of pedestrians added to the report. Mayor Howes proposed the possible use of the greenway system as pedestrianways.

Mr. Guild stated that traffic problems occur at two peak commuting periods each day (early morning and late afternoon). He proposed that area employers be encouraged to make use of flextime, staggering the work hours of their employees. Mayor Howes raised the possibility of asking the North Carolina Memorial Hospital to consider such an alternative.

Ms. White noted parking problems at the University, whereby employees vie for parking spaces as close as possible to their worksites.

Mr. Credle stated that he had submitted his comments on the Strategic Report to the Planning Department.

Town Manager Taylor asked whether the Mayor and Council were comfortable with community consideration of the Strategic Report document at this time. Mayor Howes responded that it is critical to get the document to the public. He added the importance of beginning a broad community dialogue in an expeditious fashion.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:58 p.m..