

June 21 Meeting

At the meeting on June 21, the university and Ayers Saint Gross presented the possible design for Carolina North with a series of overlays. The overlays illustrated ways each design might function in relation to open space, transit/transportation, utilities, land use, parking, and the first phase of development. The university also discussed how the latest planning reflects the input of the community and the Leadership Advisory Committee.

Below are comments responding to information presented at the meeting, arranged by topic. Comment cards were provided at the meeting. Email carolinanorth@unc.edu if you'd like to add a comment.

Parking and Transit

- It appears that the road grid is inviting much traffic through the site which is what I thought we were trying to avoid. Paved trails for Maintenance vehicles and strategic delivery sites for trucks are necessary but avoiding continuous public car traffic circulating through the site would be a real plus.
- Consider greatly reducing the proposed on-site parking. More emphasis is needed on park and ride and the bus system.
- Remove surface parking lots, especially along MLK.
- I wasn't a big fan of comparing UNC's estimate of parking to the Town of Chapel Hill's minimum parking requirements of 2004, given that the town just eliminated these minimums for most land uses.
- Please provide the parking ratio numbers that you used for calculating the town and UNC estimates. The town numbers were partially based on what a private developer needed to receive a loan. Given access to public transit, the square feet to parking spaces would change with fewer spaces needed.
- Important to place parking on the perimeter and not on street.
- Peripheral parking makes most sense, to keep vehicles and pollution out of central area. Use of electric (rechargeable) golf-cart-like transport from parking to buildings. (If the Dean Dome can do it for handicap and big rams etc. — it does work!)
- I have concern about the embedded parking and the gridlock that will occur at the main arteries at the beginning and end of the work day.
- I find the number of parking spots daunting, given Chapel Hill's commitment not to widen streets. If you build that many parking spots, that many people will drive. If you build less, less will drive. I don't think it's unfeasible to build Park-and-Ride sites much further away from the site in the short-term even though I understand that more high-investment transit will take longer to get into operation. If this doesn't occur I think congestion will be horrible, especially on Estes and MLK.
- With so much land here why Park and Ride off-site rather than on perimeter?
- I agree with most people's concerns about the amount of parking. Chapel Hill has made a commitment not to widen its streets, and putting a potential 5,000-13,000 more cars on already clogged streets seems like a nightmare scenario. Why not limit parking (as is already done on

the main campus) and construct Park-and-Ride facilities to keep these commuters off the Town's smaller, less well-equipped streets?

- The numbers of parking/employee are not transit-oriented enough! If Carolina North does not make effective transit a reality, it will fail and ruin Chapel Hill.
- The presentation provided parking space estimates and square footage planned for the first 15 years. It would be helpful to tie this to expected numbers of residents, visitors, workers and daily trips. To promote transit-oriented development, the parking offered must be significantly less than average number of people on site at any given time.
- Likely way too much parking. What happened to the idea that parking ratios at CN will match those on the main campus? With a parking space per employee, mass transit use will plummet.
- In the initial estimate of parking (5000 parking spaces in 15 years) this seems exorbitant (this equals the number of employees that would work there). This would make the public transportation obsolete.
- It seems like the transit system relies too much on the regional transit "plans." We need to create our own efficient system within UNC and Chapel Hill.
- The transit plan forgets to take into account construction traffic.
- Push transit envelope a lot more.
- Consider rail corridor connection between central campus and Carolina North.
- Develop railroad as rail transit with Park-and-Ride lot only access from I-40 near Town of Chapel Hill Public Works. (new I-40 access)
- Concerned about access at Estes and Airport and Estes and MLK — will need traffic lights — but isn't Airport/MLK intersection too close to MLK/Estes?
- Transit hub is key. Need a parking plan that will sell to town in 1st phase — structured and limited parking. Place to park near I-40.
- UNC needs to assist in transit infrastructure at the beginning of the project.
- Support current bus service Homestead/Seawell/Estes.
- I have concerns about the impact of the increased traffic — 5,000 cars in 15 years — on the local road system. What changes in the road system will be necessary?
- There are no regional transit plans for MLK, therefore your plans are banking on false pretense. Please remove your pipe dream from these plans.
- Has UNC done comparative financial/neighbor impact studies between regional transit using MLK bus rapid mass transit and rail line mass transit? Bus rapid mass transit using MLK would be more flexible than using rail and rail line and less destructive of existing neighborhoods. Some of us don't consider the rail system a miracle, but think bus rapid mass transit using MLK a much better alternative.
- Please locate the C-shaped mass transit loop in a trench or a tunnel. If on the surface, assuming that there are many buses, CN will create a situation like the bus loop at Duke Chapel or South Columbia St. at the Health Sciences Library.
- Transit/transportation shows a lack of imagination; what about using part of runway for future VTOL aircraft; possible elevated rail to campus or I-40 remote parking, transport pods, etc?
- Keep north-south road for carpools and buses only. 5,000-13,000 cars traveling N-S on both sides of Glen Heights (Windsor Circle) is a problem.

- I would suggest the Weaver Dairy Rd. extension through the north area be put in place now — this would relieve a significant portion of MLK load by creating access to Homestead, thus to Eubanks, to Old 86 Hwy, Dairyland Rd, Hwy 54 and more ready access to points south via Hwy 15-501 and east-west to I-40 etc. Further, getting Weaver Dairy extension into the area would negate much of the objection to MLK Blvd. overload. There would be virtually no resistance from those bordering the initial access area to the Horace Williams-UNC property. This would be about one mile of roadway from Homestead to UNC North. A good investment! (This would avoid much of Carrboro and Chapel Hill.)
- I'm concerned the focus on the MLK corridor fails to take advantage of the existing rail corridor.

Housing

- Has any thought been given to affordability of new housing created at Carolina North (especially as if this new housing could be afforded by the people who would be employed on site — employed as maintenance and support staff, not as faculty)? This decreases commuting needs.
- 500,000 square feet for housing would equal about 200 units (about 2500 sf for each); not enough.
- Based on the original tenet that housing would be at the edges of the forested areas, there doesn't appear to be a site like this identified in your Phase I planning. The housing identified in Phase I is only in the more urban centers.
- Develop housing closer to Estes Drive since Estes will have upgraded transit.
- Integrated housing is good.

Area Health Education Centers (AHEC) and the Horace Williams Airport

- Great progress. I only hope the legislature isn't stupid enough to insist on the airport staying. Having an airport in the center of a thriving metropolitan area is pure insanity and a catastrophe just waiting to happen — especially when you realize there are five public schools within a one-mile radius of the runway!
- Issue related to AHEC use of transportation of MD/NSG to the health professional areas around state: has the University considered development of helicopter pad located near campus, to transport health professionals to airports (RDU or other nearby airports)? Might this quell the concerns of MDs and legislative people in maintaining this service?
- Unless you are selling this hard and successfully to the General Assembly, this remains wishful planning as long as the pilots' and general aviation lobbies manage to keep HWA open. Best work hard to get the airport closed because this plan of CN is much better than any that might have to be worked around the airport.

Buildings

- Will individual buildings be expected to meet LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) requirements? At specific levels?
- From a smart land use perspective, it makes sense to increase building heights to more than 6 stories — 10 to 12 makes better use of the available footprint.
- I think the building heights sound about right. More than 3-6 stories would be out of character for Chapel Hill. I think you can achieve a desirable urban feel at this building height level — like in D.C.

- The height of buildings in the center can definitely be higher as long as new construction ideas are implemented — green roofs, other green spaces, lots of south-facing windows.

Energy

- More emphasis needs to be given to developing buildings that are designed to require minimal or no supplemental energy to reduce or eliminate the need for a central utility plant.
- I think Carolina North should have solar power to provide electricity.
- Why is a central energy facility still being considered when smaller plants that use new fuels as they are developed makes much more sense?
- Landfill gas — yes (turbine)! Natural gas in long term? Small on-site landfill for future methane?
- If CN will be carbon neutral, how will carbon use be calculated and how will it be matched (what technologies, what are the priority technologies)?
- Great — geothermal energy — cutting edge and a model!
- Please leave the straight East-West orientation for roads for best solar use — don't make curves and different orientation for difference. The difference will be in making these buildings as solar-ready as possible.

Walking and Biking

- Consider providing paved bike lane and pedestrian connectors (not roads) into adjoining neighborhoods to make Carolina North more accessible to the community.
- I like straight streets. I disagree with those who spoke asking for curves. Straight streets are more ped-friendly. I hate walking on suburban cul-de-sacs.
- I, for one, am a fan of the rectilinear street grid. I think it will encourage walking in a way that winding suburban streets never could. As an avid walker (and someone who does not own a car), I have to say it is a lot easier, albeit less "picturesque" to walk through downtown and the older neighborhoods organized around a grid than to try to make my way through newer suburban neighborhoods with curving, often unconnected streets.
- Provide walking/biking connections to adjoining neighborhoods and larger community; for example, include a greenway along Crow Branch in 15-year plan.
- Create greenways, bikeways and sidewalks in the general area not just Carolina North property; build them early.
- The bike facilities described sound great.
- Separated bikeways and bike overpasses a la Davis, CA.
- Make sure building footprints leave enough room for large shade trees by roads and sidewalks.

Building Use

- I still like the idea of a library/community space — it could help create that sense of identity. And it will be needed by the research and family occupants.
- Has there been any consideration given to the availability of land/space for religious use?
- Please prepare to meet the challenge-question I've heard: why is UNC Law School moving to Carolina North, and what use will current Law School have?
- Thank you for providing one school site for K-12 students. The Chapel Hill-Carrboro Board of Ed and the Orange County Commissioner have passed new school construction standards that permit non-traditional school models. I encourage UNC to identify more than one site and to be

open to additional non-traditional sites, particularly if CN generates many school-age children in our district.

- Need retail and other taxpaying entities.

General

- The east-west plan works well in terms of transit access, open space and development staging. It will be critical (a miracle?) for town officials to collaborate on providing a transit system. Carolina North could be the most beautiful area in Chapel Hill.
- All the talk was about how the development should go forward, but not at all about what we lose by developing at all. Sticking to the original airport footprint is a first step, but I see no binding commitment to stick to the supposed 250-acre limit. For example, the unknown where, when, and what of the school is additional acreage not yet accounted for. And what comes after 50 years? We need to think about the kind of university we are (rural!) and what sets us apart. A commitment to land preservation would set us apart now, and probably a lot more so 50 years from now.
- The selected orientation of the site looks promising.
- Overall good planning — get on with it!
- CN would receive more favorable consideration if the University would demonstrate more innovative and sensitive design at existing UNC/neighborhood interfaces. Please shield the light fixtures in the student storage lot adjacent to North Haven (requested years ago).
- Congratulations for meeting the demands for green-ness and density, and good luck in meeting the endless challenges that some will continue to raise.
- I'm concerned about increased light pollution over CH. Can we assure full cut-off light fixtures, at appropriate levels, appropriately focused, with functional sensors and timers?
- I continue to oppose the development of this property. But this is a very responsive, lovely design. If this design were planned for a perimeter to town, I would be an enthusiastic supporter.
- With current university offices and departments relocating to Carolina North, what is the expected level of departure of leased space from the downtown? (i.e., how many square feet of office space in downtown will be vacated as university offices currently in downtown move out to Carolina North or the existing campus?)
- Green building/sustainable in every way/as much as possible/is the only way to go. The technology is here and growing. If the NC Botanical Garden can do it surely Carolina North can! Good session; thank you. Luanne and Jack both clear and excellent!
- Overall I like the plan. Still mega issues not yet addressed:
 - Transit — need a plan before submit a plan!
 - Fiscal equity
 - How to get housing and retail at start.
- There is room south of the runway to stick the development that juts north into the natural area. Wildlife (deer) won't be able to safely use the area south of the runway.
- I like the grid of streets; can they be more interconnected? Please keep the urban design (i.e., straight streets).
- Good to retain most open space but should place it in conservation trust.

- Infrastructure, school sites, and any other ancillary development should count in the 250 acre "promise."
- The University should be willing to put some legal constraints or something more than a verbal commitment in place to leave 75 percent of the site undeveloped during the 50-year build-out.
- Thank you for scrapping the North-South plan.
- Thank you for a lengthy and candid discussion time.
- Recommend providing undulations in the central spine. This will help the plan look more natural and will assist in slowing traffic. This will provide a more unique Carolina North and will be more comfortable to live and work in.
- Great ideas but environment needs to look new and modern; too rectilinear — a few curves would go a long way.