



Regarding the Lloyd Street Property Development Proposal

September 25, 2018

Good afternoon, members of the Carrboro Board of Alderpersons:

My name is Seth LaJeunesse. I am a resident of Carrboro, and have been for 10 years. I am also a member of the community-based group known as NEXt. This organization is made up of a collection of residents of Carrboro and Chapel Hill who seek to take advantage of the potential we have here in our communities. This is a great place and we see many opportunities to make this place even better - an economically sound, environmentally friendly, equitable, sustainable, walkable and connected community that everyone can call home. It is as a representative of NEXt that I had hoped to speak to you tonight. I'm submitting my remarks instead.

We have reviewed the latest proposal for the Lloyd Farm property and had the following thoughts.

When considering the development of parcel of tract of land, planners often consider land's "highest and best use" – a phrase many of you are no doubt familiar with. As such, if we are to "develop" land, we have an ethical responsibility to do so with care for nature and for all people in our community. This is why we found the proposed development of the Lloyd property so distressing. As it stands, the Lloyd property development proposal, which has not substantively changed over the past 7 years, is antithetical to our concern for nature and for people. We found it surprising, no shocking, really, that both the Environmental Advisory Board and the Planning Board approved this auto-centric, impervious surfaced, exurban style of development.

In short, the proposed Lloyd property development and the B4 land use classification codified in Carrboro's Land Use Ordinance are "outward and backward-looking." That is, as proposed, the development would stand to serve predominantly people living outside of Carrboro and who would access the Lloyd property by motor vehicle (i.e., "outward looking"). Moreover, the proposal is substantively similar to its adjacent neighbor, Carrboro Plaza, the latter a relic of 1970's automobile-dominated development style (i.e., "backward looking"). Consider looking at satellite images of Lloyd property and Carrboro plaza and note the latter's striking loss of tree canopy.

Every person living in the town of Carrboro deserves a development that is "inward and forward-looking." That is, the property should primarily serve Carrboro residents, especially the estimated 3,000 people who live within 1/2 mile of the property, and the additional 15,000 residents who live within 1/4 mile of a bus line that serves it (i.e., the CW, F, CPX, CM Chapel Hill Transit bus routes).

It's worth noting that a less auto-centric development style could serve the less advantaged among us, as according to the American Community Survey, one in 10 of the residents who could theoretically access the Lloyd property on foot or by bus live in households without a motor vehicle available. And half of these households live in poverty.

As proposed, the Lloyd property development would facilitate vehicle access and circulation, little else. There are surface parking lots for every outparcel and a large surface lot that greets all visitors

of the proposed Harris Teeter. Researchers have documented that parking lots pose dangers to pedestrians and cyclists, especially older ones who tend to react more slowly to interactions with motorists. Parking lots also provide no other function than to park vehicles. They provide nothing that affords social exchange and community gathering, instead contributing to island heat effects, and exacerbated storm-water runoff events. And one shouldn't have to comment on the folly of placing an amphitheater near a highway.

Not to be prescriptive, but a few fundamental alterations to the layout of the proposed Lloyd property development would advance a lighter environmental footprint and a necessary social equity focus. For example, consider the following conceptual changes to the what is proposed:

- Consolidate the many parking lots to create a "park once" destination for visitors and residents toward encouraging healthy walking and cycling habits. Consider providing separate parking in the back of the Harris Teeter for those driving in solely for the supermarket, while mimicking the Weaver Street lawn in front of the supermarket, thereby welcoming neighbors and visitors to gather and socialize.
- Ensure the development provides enough bicycle parking, 50 percent of which should be covered as mandated in the Land Use Ordinance.
- Provide greater street connectivity within the property to welcome walking and cycling. Create an environment in which visitors to the property "park once or not at all." Specifically, we suggest constructing two streets from Highway 54 connected to a 2 x 2 complete street grid within the property.
- Provide more frequent transit service to the property and extend service hours in coordination with Chapel Hill Transit. Connect transit stops with accessible, safe, and comfortable pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure to facilitate multi-modal access to and from the property.
- Consider future redevelopment of Carrboro Plaza and how the Lloyd property can coordinate with such redevelopment, thereby creating a town entrance and a critical node in Carrboro's transportation network.

Having lived in Carrboro for more than a decade and served on the town's Transportation Advisory Board for 6 of those years, I have consistently witnessed how iterative, developer-determined planning has not properly served Carrboro, its physical environment, or its people. We can and must introduce greater transparency into the development process for developers. We might begin by exploring planning and development innovations such as form-based coding. Regardless, let's consider taking a step back, exploring the development of a small area plan for the Lloyd property before engaging developers. Alternatively, let's think about incorporating the Lloyd property into Carrboro's impending comprehensive planning process as a focal point for community transformation. I beseech you, esteemed members of the Board of Alderpersons, to consider the long-term impact of this proposed development, vote no to the requested rezoning, and instead integrate this property into a more environmental sensitive, socially vibrant planning process for our town and its people.