

New Hope Creek Corridor Advisory Committee

Minutes of Meeting of October 24, 2024

(Present: Anderson, Flinn, Fowler, Healy, Myatt, Pugh, Welch, Bo Howes, Rich Grusin, Ed Harrison)

- (1) Mt. Moriah Rd. development. Hearing before Planning Commission not yet set, but Planning Dept. site says review will be expedited because project contains affordable housing. Pugh said that intermittent streams have been found on the property, which would lead to regulation in Chapel Hill but not in Durham (Planning Dept. says it is not part of the UDO). A downstream neighbor has registered a complaint. Planning now considering this. Pugh said that he thought the traffic analysis for the project was flawed in its assumptions about how much traffic would use Erwin Road. He said he was told by Planning that they rarely change a traffic analysis. Bradley said that the county has asked for permanent protection as open space of the tract along the east side of Mt. Moriah.

Myatt said that DOST would consider comments on the Mt. Moriah development at its Dec. 6 meeting at City Hall. Pugh said that the development plan does not map open space that had been required by Chapel Hill. He said that the NHCCAC could comment as part of the UDO process.

- (2) Morningside Law will hold a second “Neighborhood Meeting” via Zoom on October 29. They are asking people to register in advance and will send out a link. Registration link:
[https://urldefense.com/v3/_http://mornningstarlaw.group/10292024_!!OToaGQ!q6YR2ZluRmk86E_lpjIhnlUDfzcu48T15gY6JSS6HoGKnrAKA6k6ojwYtfNDLIPDRmal-bITtKg9xW-DtquEkBg2dmZTTA\\$](https://urldefense.com/v3/_http://mornningstarlaw.group/10292024_!!OToaGQ!q6YR2ZluRmk86E_lpjIhnlUDfzcu48T15gY6JSS6HoGKnrAKA6k6ojwYtfNDLIPDRmal-bITtKg9xW-DtquEkBg2dmZTTA$)

We noted that the parcels including the creek and the trail (both unbuildable) had been put back in the rezoning—this might be the reason for the second meeting. Several people expressed concern about runoff from the dense development. Healy said developer would have to install a retention basin, but size of basin depends on historical rainfall, which might not be relevant in time of climate change (as we have seen during recent hurricane in Western NC. Myatt raised issues of impact on water quality from mass grading during construction. Healy said there would likely be a problem with informal trails into the park, since residents of the development would not want to walk around the creek to the paved trail. Anderson said he takes monthly trips to Sandy Creek with New Hope Bird Alliance and members could write letters to Council about the development.

Former Nicholas School dean Bill Schlesinger, a distinguished ecologist, birds often in Sandy Creek and told Healy he would be willing to testify. There is a disability trail in the park, which is quite rare, and disability advocacy organizations might oppose any aspect of the development that would interfere with wildlife in the park. Welch asked if Durham Academy would oppose dense development on the site. Healy said he had heard that DA has expansion plans of its own.

- (3) Dave Bradley said county had received a land and water grant to buy 15 acres around the GoDog site along Garrett Rd. (tributary of Sandy Creek). He said there recently was a “Moth Night” at Hollow Rock and 50 people showed up. Earlier this summer an additional 7.4 acres were acquired at Hollow Rock. Improvements to the old store are being planned. Harrison said the Chapel Hill open space bond issue on the November ballot may be relevant to our concerns. He said that NCDOT is increasing the size of a culvert near his house in a way that might bring more water into the New Hope.
- (4) Anderson asked if the NHCCAC had commented on the Durham UDO (we have not). He said that the Chapel Hill Bird Alliance had done so.

Just for your convenience in finding materials:

On Fri, Oct 25, 2024 at 7:13 AM Rick Gutlon via Pickett Road Zoning <pickett-road-zoning@gaggle.email> wrote:

Here's a couple of links to all the documents on file ...

1) Durham Rezoning Explorer - once you are past the first screen (you have to agree to terms) give this [link](#) a moment to load and it will pull up all the info on left of screen.

2) If for some reason the link above does not work, here's a direct [link](#) to the Box folder containing all the Project Documents, Applications and Staff Comments, etc.