



April 21, 2023

To: The Town of Pittsboro Planning Board
Re: Chatham Park North Village Small Area Plan

The Haw River Assembly respectfully asks you to consider the concerns we have about the proposed revisions to the Chatham Park North Village Small Area Plan. There are significant changes proposed and we hope you will take the necessary additional time to review them, and to table your discussion until your June meeting.

1. Impacts to Haw River and Lower Haw River State Natural Area due to new Eubanks Rd. route. The changes to the new route for Eubanks Road brings it very close to the Haw River in Section 1.1 and the protected riparian buffer between Chatham Park land and the Lower Haw River State Natural Area.

A. Chatham Park's Tree Protection Element approved by the Pittsboro Town Board on 6/10/2019 states that 35% of the existing trees within 2000' from the Haw must be preserved. How will this change in Eubanks Rd affect existing tree cover?

B. Much heavier rainfalls are predicted with climate change, and are already occurring. CPI is designing for the 10 year storm event, but the future will bring 100 year and even 500 year floods in our region. Forest and wetlands are key to reducing flooding. What impact will the additional impervious surface of Eubanks Rd. have on increased flooding?

C. We have already seen violations of sediment erosion rules during current development within Chatham Park, and muddying of streams and the Haw River. Chatham County Watershed Protection Dept. staff issued 10 Notices of Violation for sediment and soil erosion problems from January 2019 – Sept. 2021. Not included are many other incidents that required corrective actions after county inspections. Haven Creek has been repeatedly damaged by Chatham Park Investor's insufficient management of sediment erosion during construction. How much new sediment pollution will enter the Haw and tributary streams during construction of Eubanks Rd?

D. Stormwater runoff from paved roads also carry heavy metals and other toxins from vehicles that further damage water quality and wildlife. Building Eubanks Rd. this close to the Haw River decreases the ability of riparian buffers to filter pollution.

E. Chatham Park ‘Additional Elements’ rules do not protect ephemeral streams, which means hillsides may be stripped and bulldozed with small headwaters streams destroyed during construction. Chatham Park has a 350 ft. elevation change over the highest and lowest parts of the land, with steep slopes of 20% and more. What impact would this proposed Eubanks Rd. route have on steep slopes and headwater streams?

F. There are important Natural Heritage Areas within the North Village Small Area Plan. These are terrestrial and aquatic areas that are of special biodiversity significance due to rare species, high-quality natural communities, important animal habitat, or other ecological features. What additional degradation would this road cause to the Haw River Aquatic Habitat and the Haw River Levees and Bluffs Natural Heritage Areas?

G. What would be the impact of increased sediment and other pollution on the federally listed Cape Fear Shiner and habitat? What will be the impact of increased traffic, noise and light pollution on wildlife within the 300 buffer area on the Haw River including nesting bald eagles?

H. Alternative Street Designs

According to the Small Area Plan for North Village, alternate street designs may be considered by the Town for approval including **non-curb and gutter**. Swales and other methods to decrease velocity and water pollution into streams, and the Haw River, should be used for Eubanks Rd.

2. Tree Coverage Planning Areas

It appears that the revised map for North Village further enlarges the areas over which averaging of tree coverage could be done. Counting park areas, riparian buffers and the more protected canopy located in Section 1.1 *means less trees in other parts of North Village*. Increased heat predicted for our Piedmont region due to climate change makes the urgent case for more trees throughout Chatham Park for shade, and mitigation of heat sinks from roofs and pavement. Enlarging these areas should not be approved

3. Parks

The revised North Village SAP eliminates one park (Central Park Neighborhood Park), and adds a new one (Mellot Neighborhood Park). But Mellot Park is largely off-site of Chatham Park land in the far northeast 7.1 section, and not very accessible to most of North Village residents. Central Park is accessible to residential neighborhoods. would increase protected (or at least less developed) area adjacent to the Lower Haw River State Natural Area. Overall, the shifting of more parkland to South Village will decrease the benefits of natural areas and recreation for those in North Village. Reducing parks in North Village will increase pressure on the natural areas, greenways and parks that remain there. Chatham Park be a city of approximately 50,000 people. CPI needs to invest in sufficient park land and greenways now in both North Village and South Village to accommodate that population before all the land is developed.

4. Continuing Concerns about Bynum Beach Road Connection to Chatham Park

It should be made clear in the North Village SAP once and for all that Chatham Park will not connect any streets or roads to Bynum Beach Rd, except for a gated emergency access road if that is deemed necessary. Bynum Beach Rd. is very close to the river and floods frequently.

Thank you for your consideration of these issues.

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