

MINUTES
Parking and Housing Issues Near Colleges and Universities
October 17, 2012

Citizens In Attendance:

Bill Nichols	Martin Zimmerman	Lindsay McAlpine	Steve Helfrich
Tad Reynolds	Keith Wassum	Meredith Edge	Sean Langley
Stefan Pienkny	James Minton	Vanessa Faulk	Ben Collins
Chester Brown	Richard LaLiberte	Rachael Thomley	Mike Chatham
Scott Wilkerson	Chelsey Gilbert	Jamie Huller	Lindsay Ruebens
Morgan Ridenhour	Kimberly Norman	Keith MacVean	Ken Szymanski
Jessica Edwards	Brandi Robertson	Dan Koebel	Nate Doolittle
Eric Hampton	Joe Padilla	Beth Marlin	Kerry Moffat
Jeffrey Baker	Rich Rosenthal	Payton Guion	Anayo Ezeigbo

Staff In Attendance:

Michelle Jones, Planning Department	Barry Mosley, Planning Department	Laura Harmon, Planning Department
Katrina Young, Planning Department	Sandra Montgomery, Planning Department	Shannon Frye, Planning Department
Solomon Fortune, Planning Department	Michael Cataldo, Planning Department	Lisa Arnold, Neighborhood & Business Services
Mark Fowler, Code Enforcement	Jason Lawrence, CDOT	Candace Inge, CDOT
Krista Dodd, Charlotte- Mecklenburg Police Department	Captain F. Lester, Charlotte- Mecklenburg Police Department	Lt. D. Johnson, Charlotte- Mecklenburg Police Department
Officer R. Botzyer, Charlotte- Mecklenburg Police Department		

Planning Commission Members in Attendance:

Stephen Firestone	Greg Phipps
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1. Welcome and Introductions

Barry Mosley welcomed everyone to the meeting, which began at 6:10 p.m. He gave a brief overview of the project and encouraged people to visit the website for this project where future meeting dates, agendas, PowerPoints, minutes and other information will be posted:

<http://charmeck.org/city/charlotte/planning/Rezoning/StakeholderGroups/TextAmendmentStakeholderGroup/Pages/ParkingHousingIssuesNearCollegesUniversities.aspx>

Tonight's meeting is a public kick-off meeting, to provide an overview of the project. For those interested in participating further in the process, Mr. Mosley encouraged people to sign-up to participate at the end of the meeting.

Later in the meeting, he asked everyone to introduce to others present in the room.

2. Background Information

Michelle Jones was introduced. She stated that area colleges and universities are growing at a rapid pace, creating an increased demand for affordable off-campus housing and parking options. Multi-family projects are responding to this demand by offering single room leases, allowing students to be individually placed in a shared unit.

The Charlotte Zoning Ordinance does not define or permit lease by the bedroom or private dormitories, and it has been determined that this use is not allowed. In addition, on- and off-campus parking demands are creating overflow problems on nearby neighborhood streets.

Through a citizen advisory group process including interdepartmental staff, neighborhood leaders, University representatives, and the Police department, regulations will be proposed to minimize the impacts this use is having while still providing for student needs.

Ms. Jones stated that in March 2012, City Council requested a study of the parking issues related to multi-family apartments near universities and colleges, and later, in August 2012, they requested a study of apartment complexes functioning as dormitories. These requests were combined into this project.

Tonight's kick-off meeting is the first-step in the formation of a citizen advisory group (CAG) to study these issues. She noted a number of zoning and land use issues, and public safety issues associated with leasing by the bedroom:

- The Zoning Ordinance does not define or permit "lease by bedroom" or any similar use
- Higher parking demands are generated per unit
- Density and parking are calculated per unit, not per bedroom.
- Traffic impacts
- Overflow parking on adjacent neighborhood streets
- Higher potential for theft and burglary
- Students are being placed with and around non-students
- There is an increase in students being victimized
- As units age, they are being populated with more non-students and become a low-income housing option
- Lack of safety and security features in communities and individual units
- High concentration of drug-related crime.

Ms. Jones provided information about the six colleges and universities included in this study: Johnson C. Smith University, UNC-Charlotte, Johnson and Wales, CPCC, Queens University, and the Art Institute. The statistics she provided includes current enrollments, number of beds, number of parking spaces, and the number of apartments units within one mile of each respective campus. Next, she reviewed the current zoning regulations, as well as the parking standards for various uses and zoning districts.

3. *Roles of the Citizen Advisory Group (CAG)*

Ms. Jones summarized the goals and concerns associated with this Citizen Advisory Group process:

- Define "lease by bedroom" or equivalent in the Zoning Ordinance.
- Should the use be permitted by right or with prescribed conditions?
- Should the use be permitted in specific areas or zoning classifications?
- Should there be development requirements?
- Define the appropriate ratio of parking in relation to multi-family developments near universities and colleges. Is there too much parking or not enough? Examine the existing parking ratios of multi-family housing and identify problems.

The roles of the Planning Department in the CAG process is to:

- Bring public and private entities together to develop solutions
- Facilitate the CAG process
- Draft text amendments to the Zoning Ordinance and other related city ordinances
- Consider other special regulations (i.e. student housing ordinance)

4. *Next Steps and Questions*

Ms. Jones asked those in attendance that would like to participate in the CAG process, to sign-up on the sheet provided at the back of the room.

She reviewed the dates of the future CAG meetings:

- November 15, 2012
- November 27, 2012
- December 13, 2012
- January 10, 2013

Staff anticipates filing a text amendment in January 2013, with adoption in the summer of 2013.

Ms. Jones opened the meeting to questions:

- Can there be different solutions applied to different campuses since there are different conditions associated with each? Can a one-size solution be avoided?
 - Ms. Jones acknowledged that the different conditions will be considered and noted that there is good representation from all the campuses at this meeting.
- Will CATS be involved in this process? This process will have impact on the light rail stations.
 - Yes, CATS will be involved in the process.
- The current Zoning Ordinance does not allow leasing by the bedroom, but there are instances in the Ordinance where the conveyance of leased bedrooms and common living areas is permitted. Can you address this?
 - The Zoning Administrator stated that the ordinance does allow nursing homes, dependent and independent living facilities where the number of parking spaces required is based on the number of beds. However, multi-family developments do not list parking requirements by the bed, but rather by the unit.
- Can existing facilities that rent by the bedroom continue?
 - Ms. Jones stated that yes, existing units can continue to be rented by the bedroom, but no new developments proposing to lease by the bedroom will be approved at this time. No enforcement action will be taken at this time, due to the impacts to the individuals that have current leases by the bedroom.
- What cities will the staff be reviewing for comparable regulations?
 - Ms. Jones noted that there is a long list, but the cities to review have not been chosen. A consultant will assist with selecting the cities and will undertake the research.
- Should the philosophy of some elected officials be incorporated into this process at the beginning?
 - Ms. Jones stated that the input from the CAG group will be forwarded to the City Council. Ultimately, the decision to adopt changes to any ordinance rests with Council.
- What police and safety concerns are occurring? Will these be shared? Are rumors about felons living with co-eds true?
 - Ms. Jones stated that a number of individuals from the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department are serving on the team, and they can discuss the problems the Police Department is encountering during the process.
- Will representation from CDOT be included in this process due to the transportation and parking impacts?
 - Yes, they are included.
- How much research will be done on maximum parking ratios, and what cities will be researched?
 - Ms. Jones noted that the consultant hired to help with the research will be present at the next meeting to share this information. Suggestions of cities to research are welcome.

Mr. Mosley reminded people to sign up to serve on the CAG, if they were interested.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:40 p.m.