Subject: Fatal Deficiencies in "Good Neighbor Plan" Process
From: "find@abettersite.org" <find@abettersite.org>
Date: 7/10/2011 9:59 PM
To: mayorandcouncil@townofchapelhill.org

Town Council Members,

When Council approved the permit for the new men's homeless shelter it asked the developer to create a good neighbor plan for the Homestead Park area. At that time we were concerned about getting a "seat at the table" to help shape this plan and we were disturbed that the council would allow a private developer to create the plan that would be used to govern itself.

We finally received the information about the date of first scheduled meeting, committee membership, and proposed process late Friday afternoon, **one business day before the first scheduled meeting** on Monday afternoon, despite our having requested this information several weeks ago.

We have reviewed the developers process for creating a good neighbor plan and it has many fatal deficiencies

- **The subcommittee members do not hold diverse points of view because the developer filled the committee with its closest friends.** Almost all of the members that the developer appointed are staunch supporters of the new shelter, including most of the members listed from neighborhoods. Most committee members do not actually live near or own property near the new facility. Families who raise children and own property in the area - residents who have the most at stake - are not represented. The most impacted retail businesses in The Station at Homestead who are closest to the new facility are not represented at all and the largest development Parkside is not represented.

- **The meetings will not be held in a neutral location.** United Church of Chapel Hill, the intended meeting place for this process, has repeatedly voiced it's support for the new facility. At last year's annual meeting, Tom Whisnant, a project manager for the developer, wrongly characterized many area residents while speaking at UCC. See link.

- **The developer will not abide by open meeting law.** The July 11th meeting is a closed, unannounced meeting. We assumed a process that is required by a town resolution would follow open meeting rules and would expect a developer who is given so much public funding from taxpayers would provide transparency. We requested that the developer abide by the same laws that would apply if the neighbor plan was being created by a town committee, but the developer refused to follow **any** of the open meeting rules.

According to Resolution C the primary Goal of the GNP is **establishing mutual understanding and respect**. Despite the extensive research that the members of A Better Site have done during the SUP process and despite the many families who share our views, our group was allotted only one slot on

the GNP subcommittee.

We would like to participate in the development of the neighbor plan, but we cannot do so due to the deficiencies stated above. A process which does not represent the neighbors who have clearly documented the facts and issues will have no legitimacy for Homestead Park area residents and does nothing to establish mutual understanding and respect.

Allowing the developer to manipulate and control this process will result in **no good plan** for Homestead Park area residents.

Sincerely,
ABetterSite Steering Committee