

Please refer to the larger issues with the shelter subcommittee recommendations documented in the presentation by representatives of neighbors in the Homestead Road Area (ABetterSite.org). These larger issues need to be addressed first and foremost.

Below, we have marked up the draft document from the planning board to illustrate other issues with the document. Note that there are changes made with track changes turned on as well as comments in the sidebar.

Recommendations As Approved By Planning Board, November 16, 2010

Direction given to the Planning Board at the June 21, 2010 Council Meeting:

"Develop a shelter policy with guidelines that the Council would consider and include as stipulations in Special Use Permit, as related to the particular aspects of each shelter application, as noted in the response to question 2 in the Discussion Section.. . " ,

Draft list of Possible Guidelines/Policies for Recommendation to Council

A. CONCENTRATION

Recommendation: Identify social service uses within one mile of proposed use and consider how existing net benefit or net burden of those services might be impacted by the potential net benefit or net burden of the proposed facility.

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Comment [abs1]: This does nothing to protect existing residents of an area from overconcentration. What does this sentence mean?

Considerations:

1. Net benefit or net burden is not necessarily correlated with either the number or the type of social services

2. Net benefit or net burden would be perceived benefits (critical service, unmet need, increased property values, etc.) minus the potential negative impacts (traffic, noise/light pollution, safety, decreased property values, etc.) of any social service facility

Comment [abs2]: Perceived Benefits TO WHOM???

The problem here is that this "formula" is biased against neighbors who already have many at risk facilities. The formula works against fair share because it does not balance the needs of the community with the needs of a neighborhood. This says that you can keep putting at risk facilities at Homestead and declare each facility a "community need". This can be implemented in a very biased manner as we are already seeing.

A map with other existing at-risk facilities of similar risk and police incident frequency, should be placed on a map. Any maps containing facilities which do not serve at-risk populations should not be placed on this map. Facilities operated solely during the day should not be included except soup kitchens. Group homes serving 6 or less clients should not be included. Examples of facilities to put on this map are homeless shelters, homeless transitional facilities, drug detox facilities, drug halfway houses with more than 6 residents, soup kitchens, any type of criminal detention facilities.

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Comment [abs3]: These would be a great starting point for publicly vetted criteria for the public search process that should have been done for all publicly funded projects. This obviously should have been done long before an SUP to select a site.

B. LOCATION CONSIDERATIONS

Recommendations:

1. Weigh desirable and undesirable qualities of locations to assess overall desirability of site for proposed use using a distance of one mile, as being proximal.

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2. Ideal location should have more desirable than undesirable qualities.

3. Staff should consider creating a matrix which could be used to "prioritize" locations much as we currently do to prioritize construction of facilities (streets, sidewalks, bike, etc) in Town.

Qualities of desirable at-risk facility locations:

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a. Proximity to public transportation

b. Proximity to professional services, such as doctor's office, barber shops, and legal offices (only a net benefit for services which are not provided on-site and if proposed development has inadequate public transportation)

c. Proximity to grocery stores (only a net benefit if food not provided in proposed development)

d. Proximity to job development centers (only a net benefit if proposed development has inadequate public transportation)

e. Proximity to providers of services often utilized by the homeless (only a net benefit if proposed development has inadequate public transportation)

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medical clinics (only a net benefit when medical clinics are not to be provided on-site)

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food banks (only a net benefit when at-risk facility does not provide food to residents)

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library

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Qualities of undesirable shelter locations:

x. Other at-risk facilities within 1 mile

x. All at-risk facilities in one small area or on one side of town. If facilities are clearly clustered in the town, then the guidelines are not working.

a. Proximity to residential areas (especially "wet" shelters)

x. Proximity to parks with youth athletics and playgrounds

x. Impact on routes that children may take to park, particularly in light of other existing at-risk facilities and their proximity routes

x. Proximity to schools

x. Locations distant from potential jobs

b. In industrial areas

c. Proximity to adult entertainment facilities

Comment [abs4]: Note that Gilroy, CA, which the shelter subcommittee chose as a basis for this section, does not permit wet shelters AT ALL.

Comment [abs5]: Proximity to schools is undesirable for several reasons. First, it leaves sex offenders out in the cold without services (particularly an issue if public funding is provided). Second, the percentage of clients with criminal backgrounds and mental health challenges are much higher than the general population.

Comment [abs6]: On what basis did the committee justify this? Industrial areas have jobs. They can still be close to necessary services.

Is there a study, academic paper, or HUD finding to support this conclusion?

Comment [abs7]: Do we have these in Chapel Hill? Where is the evidence to support that these pose a problem with siting? Is there a study, academic paper, or HUD finding to support this conclusion?

d. Proximity to areas with a high concentration of bars and/or liquor stores

(list cited from Gilroy, California, homeless shelter guidelines)

Note: NC law currently prohibits housing sex offenders within 1000 feet of daycare facilities and schools.

Comment [abs8]: Where is the evidence that these pose a problem?

Is there a study, academic paper, or HUD finding to support this conclusion?

Comment [abs9]: Note that Gilroy, CA does not allow drunk and high clients in its homeless shelters.

Gilroy, CA also has specific distance requirements which were ignored by the committee.

Comment [abs10]: See previous comment.

C. GOOD NEIGHBOR PLANS (plans & strategies for mitigating possible impacts)

Recommendations:

1. Stipulate that proposed facility demonstrate that it has a mechanism/plan in place at time of application for neighborhood involvement. Include homeless residents as participant.

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a. for at-risk facilities in residential areas, include description of security plan, including procedures for transporting those turned away or asked to leave

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Comment [abs11]: And to what destination did the planning board have in mind for this answer?

b. include mechanism for regular neighbor feedback, including process for mitigation.

Comment [abs12]: What does this mean? Where are the details about actions that can be taken for ongoing negative impacts or acute serious impacts? How does a facility get shut down?

c. include description of security plan, including method of dealing with those turned away or asked to leave.

These are feel-good words with no consequences.

2. Provide for periodic (e.g., annual) site assessment report card

[AND THEN WHAT? WHERE ARE THE TEETH FOR ONGOING NEGATIVE IMPACTS OR SEVERE ACUTE IMPACTS?]

Comment [abs13]: Such an assessment must appear on the town council consent agenda every year.

D. DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS/PERFORMANCE STANDARDS (e.g., hours of operation, design requirements for basic amenities such as restrooms, drinking water, exterior lighting, and seating areas)

Recommendations:

1. Submitted plans include description of recreational facilities/program

2. Require police/fire department statement of anticipated and possible negative impacts for this type of service facility at time of application, particularly in light of incident reports and police service call frequency when facilities are being relocated.

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E. IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS:

1. Implement documentation process to collect before/after data as a way of building objective and accurate information base for citizens and Council regarding these types of services.

2. Include longitudinal data on similar uses elsewhere if possible.

3. Suggested types of data: property values, crime/police report statistics

Comment [abs14]: The committee has chosen to ignore crime statistics of the existing burden in the Homestead/MLK area as well as in their consideration of a recent SUP proposal on Jan 4, 2011.

4. Explore alternative solutions specifically for homeless shelters in recognition of the IFC's preference for concentrating on transitional support services.

Comment [abs15]: What does this mean? There are no alternative solutions for clustering. Clustering was abandoned for public housing a couple of decades ago. Have we not learned anything from that?