From:	julie mcclintock
To:	comp plan
Cc:	Sarah McIntee
Subject:	Fwd: Lucy"s beautiful property
Date:	Tuesday, July 02, 2013 10:18:43 PM

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for posting on web page

Thanks

--Julie

Begin forwarded message:

> **From:** "Sarah K. McIntee" <sarhkamc@gmail.com>
> **Subject: Lucy's beautiful property**
> **Date:** June 26, 2013 3:30:02 PM EDT
> **To:** Megan Wooley <mwooley@townofchapelhill.org>
> **Cc:** Lucy Carol Davis <lucycdavis@gmail.com>, Jim Ward2 <wardjl@email.unc.edu>, Ed Harrison Town Council <ed.harrison@mindspring.com>, Julie McClintock <mcclintock.julie@gmail.com>
>
> There was expressed interest in seeing Lucy Davis' property. Personally, I wanted to see what these people meant by "old growth" as I was skeptical of their assessment. This entire area of Chapel Hill was farm and pastureland. Certainly, the creeks were used to water horses and other livestock for many years, the biggest local trees long used for lumber. I was correct. The oldest trees only have enough girth to be, at most, 80 years old. Even then, large trees even of that age are hard to find in Chapel Hill. As a young naturalist, I took a few courses in arboriculture in high school. Okay, I did trespass without Lucy's permission, but it really isn't far from me (Forgive me, Lucy).
>
> Just today I took my camera and GPS and walked over to the Davis property following the creek upstream behind my house at the bottom of the Caswell Rd hill. I had gone on many environmental assessment trips with my mother, who specialized in water resources management, like when she was studying a brook in our home town in Massachusetts.
>
> This stream is not far from my house (we usually go the opposite way, down stream, to Bolin Creek Greenway), so I walked along this stream (still don't know name of it) passes a rock's throw from the bottom end of Cumberland and Caswell. The sewer trail is pretty well used here, on the sewer easement, the trucks this spring went through, leaving lots of mud (can't they put some gravel down first?), but I liked seeing the two healthy paw paw trees on route. This stream eventually goes to Lucy's property. The stream bank here, close to Caswell, shows rapid run-off damage from Caswell and Cumberland Rd. The stream turns away from the sewer easement a couple houses down. It you follow the stream (there is no trail here), you go by some lovely Christmas fern

communities, lichened rocks, fungi bracts on rotting trees, and mature beech (some white oak, tulip poplar, too) trees. There might be an easier way to get to Lucy's property than this as this is coming from the bottom, while it means climbing some hill, but if you wish to see the creek, it is helpful to go from the bottom. If other people wish to see the creek, I could take them this way. Maybe Lucy can show us a less arduous way from the top. It is moderately difficult on the slopes. The ground is wonderfully uncompacted, relatively soft with good leaf mulch, and uneven. On Lucy's land, the hills are about 30-40 degrees down to the stream. Lucy's property is relatively undisturbed and the stream banks are more typical of undisturbed steams, where the run-off is more normal. The stream here is very, very lovely, ***one of the prettiest ones that I have seen locally***-truly an asset to the property that should be protected, if at all possible. There are several mature beech trees, the oldest of which is more like 80 years old, so it is not really an "old growth" forest as some claim it to be. I know what the girth of a 100 year old, or 200 year old, beech tree looks like, ditto for oaks. The one black oak we have in our yard is larger than almost any tree here. These are not that big. However, Lucy's mature trees on the property should be protected as much as possible. Beech trees are long living trees. Most of these are on the slopes, where it isn't a good idea to build, anyway. This presents a bit of dilemma for me. I understand that Lucy wants to develop the top part of this land. It would have to be done extremely carefully perhaps two more tall, less wide buildings or two with very small footprints and no impermeable parking surfaces, is definitely a good idea if the creek is to keep its virginal looking banks. since this would add too much impermeable surface. I know Lucy wants cottages, but cottages are not a good idea for this site.

Now that I have seen it, I really wish that the town could buy this interior property from Lucy. This is not just a piece of develop-able land. It would make a very, very beautiful park. I know that the town doesn't have any money, but does it have any alternative land to trade, maybe a much larger piece of land that can become the next Carol Woods? The well used sewer easement trail nearby eventually goes to the Bolin Creek Greenway. It would be my dream to have the Greenway follow beside these creeks, at least as a gravel trail, if not a paved bikeway. These sewer and utility easements could really be good places for bike and ped Greenways. If we wanted to minimize damage on sensitive slopes, boardwalks are really a great way to provide access, yet also protection from soil compaction. Once foot traffic is on this area, the wild ginger, mosses, fungi, and ferns are likely to not so as well. ***There are no exotic invasives on this site*** where I walked (I didn't walk it all).

Lucy is very fortunate to have procured a beautiful piece of land. I know she wants to get a return on her investment (and we do need senior housing). In order to build that here, though, she will be risking a very rare, gentle sloping, mossy, fern-ey, creek. All the other creeks in Chapel Hill look like gaping, deep cut bleeding wounds. What rapid run-off is doing, like from University Mall, to Bolin Creek, is a crime. I would really hate to see this happen to this "Davis" Creek. Creek banks in the piedmont are not supposed to be so canyon-like.

Sarah McIntee