

Booker Creek Flood Storage Projects - Received Comments (email)

| Date | Comment |
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| 9/2/2021 | I am writing to express my concern about the proposal to build a stormwater basin in Booker Creek Trail. Please preserve the existing trail for all to enjoy. |
| 9/2/2021 | I understand that the project involves the removal of a total of 50 acres of trees at a taxpayer cost of \$22M with only a minimal remediation of the problem. The areas affected contain one of Chapel Hill's last pristine natural environments which is biodiverse and irreplaceable. It is our understanding that the destruction of this natural area would result in minimal remediation of the flooding downstream, at great cost to the town and to the environment. We should be planting trees and restoring vital ecosystems, not removing and destroying them. We hope that the town will consider all the implications of and alternatives to this project before great damage is done to our beautiful town green spaces. |
| 8/31/2021 | I am a senior at UNC and I am from Chapel Hill. I am writing you to encourage you to stop the Booker Creek Watershed project. Not only is it bad for the environment, it takes away a beautiful forest from the residents of Chapel Hill. These beautiful green spaces that our town offers are a large part of the reason I have chosen to stay in the area. If that is taken away, I am much more likely to leave this town after graduation. The nature our town hosts is a huge part of what makes it unique and special. I urge you to protect the Booker Creek forest and trail. |
| 8/30/2021 | A number of local citizens comprising Booker Creek Neighborhoods Preservation Alliance (http://bcneighbors.org/) drew upon the expertise of six highly qualified scientists to prepare a response to the proposal to clear cut 45 acres of old forest land to create storm water drainage basins in the Booker Creek Watershed. They have presented the results of their review of the proposal and ideas for a better approach to managing storm water to the Chapel Hill Stormwater Advisory Board (http://bcneighbors.org/BCNPA_SAB_slides_8-24-2021.pdf) and prepared a report including examples of storm water mitigation in other locales as well as a report from the Residents and Expert Panel (http://bcneighbors.org/BCNPA_experts_panel_report.pdf). I have reviewed both and am fully behind everything they have stated. http://bcneighbors.org/ . |
| 8/30/2021 | I am VERY concerned about the construction of a large retaining pond as proposed. Booker Creek is a large subdivision with MANY children. The Booker Creek apartments house many children. Such a retaining pond will be an extremely dangerous "drawing card" for children. It will also devalue all the property and homes near that pond. If such a pond is the ONLY solution to the water issues, it needs to be in the area where there are NO houses near the creek such as the area along the creek as it flows toward Eastgate Shopping Center. |
| 8/30/2021 | I am writing as a 78 year old homeowner in the Booker Creek and Summerfield Crossing neighborhoods. I am a long-time user of the Booker Creek Trail and adjacent neighborhoods as a source of daily exercise and solace. My son, Rob McDonald, now an environmentalist with The Nature Conservancy, learned to love and respect the environment around him as he grew up here. I am appalled to think of the deforestation of the area to accommodate current flood control plans. Please take a pause, develop alternative plans and support all approved actions with thorough and impartial environmental impact studies |
| 8/24/2021 | <i>I request that the Mayor, Town Council, Town Manager, and Stormwater Advisory Board, cancel all neighborhood stormwater basin projects, and instead partner with our Alliance of neighborhoods and experts to identify and study alternatives that will protect the biodiversity and integrity of our neighborhood watershed, and be economically responsible, while supporting the Town's climate and stormwater mitigation plans</i> |

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| 8/21/2021 | <p>As a resident of Chapel Hill's Old Forest Creek for 30 years, I strongly urge you to find a more effective, less expensive alternative to the current plan to create a 5 acre stormwater basin in the Booker Creek area. Such a plan would destroy 80+ year old hardwood trees, wipe out wildlife habitat relied upon by many beautiful, diverse species of flora and fauna, and destroy beautiful acreage enjoyed by the residents of my neighborhood. Furthermore, the current plan would contribute to the overall negative impact of climate change. I sincerely hope and trust that you can find a better solution, not only cost-saving, but more effective, to reduce flooding potential caused, it would seem, by overbuilding.</p> |
| 8/24/2021 | <p>-The destruction of a beautiful wildlife habitat that provides homes for a multitude of land and water flora and fauna and a tree cover canopy that helps to reduce carbon emissions and cools the surrounding areas.</p> <p>-This project's adherence to Chapel Hill's own Climate Action and Response Plan, which specifies that actions the town proposes to take include enhancing green infrastructure, finding nature-based solutions, strengthening partnerships with local organizations, and protecting water quality, natural, and agricultural resources. I urge the town to work with organizations and experts such as the Booker Creek Neighborhoods Preservation Alliance to find alternatives that will protect the natural gift that is Booker Creek in a way that is economical, practical, and takes care of the environment.</p> <p>-In regards to the Daley Road Project, whether Markham/Tadley or Daley/Booker Creek is used as a construction entrance/exit, the removal of that much topsoil necessitates heavy construction equipment in a residential area with no sidewalks, which has heavy foot and bike traffic. As we live at the corner of Markham/Tadley across from the trail entrance, I see many, many walkers/bikers/baby strollers/kids use those roads all day from sunup to evening every day to access the Lower Booker Creek trail from other neighborhoods. My own kids and others use the trail and surrounding roads to get to Estes and Ephesus elementary schools, Phillips Middle, and East High School every day. I worry about their safety navigating streets with a constant influx of construction vehicles where there are no sidewalks.</p> <p>-My own kids and others use the forest as a playground, and especially as Covid has kept them home from school and away from crowded places to play, it has been a welcome respite of natural play areas, of which there are so few in Chapel Hill. The neighborhood kids use the trails and forest as their playscape - building forts, sailing boats down the creeks, hiking on the trails., using their imagination.... I would hate for this natural play resource to be taken away from them and future children in the area.</p> <p>My opposition to the plan is not a NIMBY issue, but is grounded in my daily observation of the Lower Booker Creek Trail and the surrounding forest are enjoyed by all its users, and we are stewards of the other living creatures who live in the forest and its waters.</p> |
| 8/24/2021 | <p>I was extremely saddened to hear about the proposed clear cut of the Booker Creek forest as well as other important mature green spaces in the area in order to create storage basins to curb downstream flooding.</p> |
| 8/23/2021 | <p>I am a long time resident of Chapel Hill since 1999 and live on Markham Drive near the trail that extends from Booker Creek to Franklin Street. I am alarmed at the prospect of destroying this. I am concerned about the effects on climate change and wildlife as well as the destruction of a trail that for walking and biking that is a way of life for those in our neighborhood. It is certainly felt the severe consequences do not justify the perceived benefits of this plan. Thank you for your consideration of this matter.</p> |
| 6/6/2021 | <p>Having learned of the <i>Lower Booker Creek Subwatershed Study</i> of September 2018 just a few weeks ago, we and many of our neighbors are very concerned about the immediate environmental impacts of the proposed Red Bud Storage Area, which threatens the destruction of many old and large trees on or immediately adjacent to our properties, and which is literally in some of our backyards.</p> |

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| | <p>Because I am a retired economist with a background in public finance, the element of the Study that I find most striking, and to which I can speak with some expertise, is its failure to address basic issues about whether it is worth spending public monies on the identified flood control improvements. The narrow question that the Study addresses is: <i>What publicly financed construction expenditures would best mitigate flooding in the Lower Booker Creek area?</i> While that question is suitable for the purposes of engineers seeking technical solutions to a problem, the Town Council needs to ask the broader question, <i>Are the benefits of the proposed flood control improvements sufficient to justify their costs?</i> In particular, the Study does not consider and/or quantify:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. the up-front costs that the Town would incur to purchase easements or to restore habitats that are damaged by the improvements; 2. the continuing costs that the Town would incur to maintain flood-reduction facilities that are designed to provide services for decades; 3. the costs of improvement-related environmental degradation that is not sufficiently mitigated; 4. the value of the benefits of flood mitigation to businesses and residents, as measured by the extent to which the proposed construction expenditures would reduce the costs of flood damage; nor 5. the actions that can be taken by flood-prone businesses and residents to mitigate the costs of flooding, which might be cheaper than the engineering solutions provided by the Study. <p>In short, the Study does not provide the cost and benefit information that the Town Council needs to determine whether it would be reasonable to spend public funds on the proposed flood improvements. The Study promises that the proposed flood control improvements will reduce the frequency, duration, and severity of flooding; but it does not promise that these improvements will prevent flooding, nor does it demonstrate that these improvements will reduce the costs of flooding by more than the costs of the improvements, nor does it consider alternative actions that may be less costly than the ones proposed.</p> |
| 8/23/2021 | <p>I am a long time resident of Lake Forest and walk along the Booker Creek trails regularly. I am very concerned about the 11 acre storm storage basin being proposed by clearcutting this forested area at an exorbitant cost to taxpayers! (I understand it could be as much as \$3.6 million!).</p> <p>Many volunteers, led by Jeanette Bench, over the past several years have worked hard to improve the area by removing invasive weeds and planting native plants to beautify the area. Clear cutting trees would destroy the natural habitat for our plants and wildlife, not to mention eliminate the wonderful shade for walking! I hope you and Town Council will put a stop to any further plans! Please do not allow this!</p> |
| 6/7/2021 | <p>As your constituent and a Chapel Hill homeowner, I recently became aware of Red Bud Storage Area Project, which is the next priority of the <i>Lower Booker Creek Subwatershed Study</i>. After reading the W. K. Dickson report (September 2018), I have some major concerns about the project.</p> <p>One of the reasons why my husband and I were attracted to Chapel Hill and particularly our neighborhood, is because of the forested areas and the wildlife in our backyard. If the <i>Lower Booker Creek Subwatershed Project</i>, is implemented, we would lose between 40 and 56 acres of tree canopy, and potential wildlife habitat. In my own backyard, which abuts to the Red Bud Storage Area, we have deer, hawks, owls, various birds, and other little critters. Other proposed areas of the <i>Lower Booker Creek Subwatershed Project</i> house wildlife, and they will also have their habitat destroyed. The proposal of cutting down trees and replacing them with larger water storage areas will increase soil erosion. Trees function by retaining water and topsoil, and extract carbon dioxide from the atmosphere – all needed for mitigating climate change.</p> <p>Implementing the above plan will cost over \$22 million, and close to \$1 million for the smaller Red Bud Storage Area Project. The study does not have any plans or budgeted funds for the maintenance of soil erosion or silting of storage facilities, which will inevitably occur. It also excludes the capital costs of easements and habitat restoration.</p> <p>The report states that implementing the <i>Lower Booker Creek Subwatershed Study</i> might reduce peak 25-year flood flows by 14%. The Red Bud Storage Project will cut, by about one-half of one percent, the total peak flows of the Lower Booker Creek drainage area.</p> |

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| | <p>I appreciate that the town is trying to address flooding issues. However, losing more forest and wildlife habitat, creating more soil erosion and potentially more water that isn't retained by the forests, and only potentially reducing peak 25-year flood flows by a small percentage are issues to address when spending a large amount of taxpayer money. I strongly encourage the town to aggressively search for alternatives solutions to flooding that support our core environmental values.</p> <p>In closing, I would like to invite you to tour the Red Bud Storage Area and my neck of the woods so that you have a better understanding of the proposed project. My husband and I would be happy to be your tour guides. Just give me a call or email me.</p> |
| 8/25/2021 | <p>The Booker Creek area offers wonderful opportunities for both carbon-free transportation and to commune with the natural world: to lose these diminishes the quality of life in Chapel Hill. Our community deserves enhanced climate resilience, and am saddened that millions of taxpayer funding could be utilized to clearcut 45 acres of Chapel Hill's natural resources.</p> |
| 8/24/2021 | <p>I am writing to express my dismay about the planned deforestation along the Booker Creek Greenway. The greenway area is a significant resource for the people of the area and the wildlife that it supports. Aside from providing an opportunity for people to escape the cityscape, the greenway provides a break from the heat, the connection of neighborhoods that would otherwise be disconnected, and provides residents access to significantly increased bus opportunities.</p> <p>Further, the notion that there was an appropriate outreach to people who will be impacted is simply untrue. There was no publicity or outreach to any of the neighborhoods. The current plan will have a significant impact on the lives of people in this area. I strongly urge you to reconsider whether there are better alternatives to address the runoff issues.</p> |
| 9/1/2021 | <p>I am Stephen Hodulik and I am a Junior at Chapel Hill High School. I have recently been made aware of the proposed spending of \$19 million to cut 45 acres of Chapel Hill's forest in the Lower Booker Creek Subwatershed without cost/benefit analysis and environmental assessment. The spending of \$19 million without a clear idea of the impacts is an irresponsible act that can be very damaging to the town. To start, mature woods like those proposed to be cut down make our town unique and make it appealing to live here. Naturally Wooded areas are rare in today's society and preserving which ones are left has unparalleled benefits. It provides places for families to take a walk or for a kid to watch the birds with his friends. When involving precious gems like these woods, it's best to know the effects of your actions and to be completely certain of their effects.</p> |
| 8/23/2021 | <p>I've lived in Chapel Hill for 25 years and raised my kids here. The proposed storm control project has several aspect which make it unwarranted. 1) It will destroy animal habitats and much vegetation, 2)These efforts don't stop the flooding risk they just move it elsewhere, 3) It is expensive.</p> |
| 8/22/2021 | <p><u>Recent news sources and neighborhood groups have brought to the attention of the residents of Chapel Hill the Town's intent to decimate the lower Booker Creek Trail with the "Booker Creek Basin project". This project, will remove 70% of the mature bottom land forest along the bucolic lower Booker Creek pathway, create a heat island in an area already poorly shaded, and will create foul looking, smelling and mosquito magnet ponds. In fact, the trees and the roots are ALREADY the BEST flood control that exists. Even the EPA recognizes this: https://www.epa.gov/soakuptherain/soak-rain-trees-help-reduce-runoff</u></p> <p>This project is antithetical to the town's "Climate Action Plan" (specifically—increase the tree canopy—how does removing 50 acres of tree canopy achieve this)? UNC's DataDriven Enviro Lab is just starting a project to map the heat islands in Chapel Hill—are you TRYING to give them new heat island data? The ends don't justify the means.</p> <p>Although I understand the project is currently on hold, I am very disappointed in the direct the town is taking on this project. There needs to be far more neighborhood and environmental studies completed before this massive destruction of natural resources that makes this town a great place to live is approved.</p> |

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| 8/29/2021 | I own property near lower Booker Creek. I am concerned about and oppose the proposed storm water basin project, which would destroy natural and recreational space: part of what makes Chapel Hill special. We need Booker Creek to help maintain local climate - let's not make a heat island. Destroying this green space moves in the wrong direction as the world struggles with climate change. It would also likely have a negative effect on property values in the neighborhood. |
| 8/29/2021 | While I understand the need for preparations for the 25 year storm in this time of climate uncertainty, I believe the proposed project should be reconsidered. Surely there are ways to mitigate flooding, avoid creating higher heat zones in our town, and retain the natural habitats and scenic walkways that create a truly civilized respite from urban crowds and pandemic isolation. |
| 8/23/2021 | <p>I have lived two doors from the Tadley Road access to Booker Creek trail for 24 years. The 11-acre stormwater storage basin proposed for the trail would disrupt a beautiful ecosystem, destroy a rich wildlife habitat, and degrade the appeal of this venerable neighborhood greenway. (I often drive by the first completed basin, at the end of Elliott Road, and am always struck by its barren quality, which noticeably undermines the appeal of the brand-new apartment complex beside it.)</p> <p>Especially given that there has been no consultation with the affected communities, no cost-benefit analysis, no environmental-impact assessment, no maintenance plan proposed, and no ecologically sustainable alternatives explored—does any of this seem reasonable?—I strongly oppose moving forward with all currently planned stormwater basin projects. I would instead ask that the mayor, the town council, the town manager, and the stormwater advisory board join forces with Booker Creek’s alliance of neighborhoods to reconceptualize stormwater mitigation strategies in ways that meaningfully address issues of biodiversity, spending, residential quality of life, and home values.</p> |
| 8/28/2021 | <p>I am writing today to support the cancellation of all the neighborhood stormwater basin projects and instead partner with our Alliance of neighborhoods and experts to identify and study alternatives that will protect the biodiversity and integrity of our neighborhood watershed and be economically responsible while supporting the Town's climate and stormwater mitigation plans.</p> <p>I was born in Chapel Hill and went to UNC. I left, came back, left again, and am back again for the last time at age 62. This is my home and one of the reasons I love it is for its trees and opportunities to view wildlife and birds. There has got to be a better way to preserve these aspects of the place I love.</p> |
| 8/24/2021 | <p>I am writing with some alarm after finding out the current plans for the Booker Trail in and across Chapel Hill. I live within the Booker Trail catchment near the Daley Road site. The Booker trail and surrounding forests provide many neighborhoods a sense of community, which has been critical during COVID. These areas are a site of play for our children, shaded flat areas for older residents to exercise and children to safely learn to bikes. They are also pedestrian walkways between neighborhoods and also to Franklin St shops, that decrease local traffic. The Booker Trail forests also provide a critical buffer against Franklin Street noise. The Booker trail both improved house prices but also the quality of life for surrounding neighborhoods.</p> <p>I fully agree something must be done to minimize flooding Eastgate housing. However, I am concerned that the current proposal will minimize downstream flooding to the detriment of hundreds of homes across the town. Can you please explain to me i) what other options were considered and ii) why they were not considered. Moreover, can you please specific if and how the current plan gives back to the Booker communities?</p> |
| 8/23/2021 | I am a resident of Chapel Hill and live (nearly) on the lake (actually, at the mouth of the lake). I am also a scientist with a PhD in forest ecology. I am writing about the Lower Booker Creek Subwatershed Study. Having recently focused my professional work on community and ecosystem climate resilience, this study was of special interest to me. Our forests provide frontline protection to a changing climate -- both to mitigate it and adapt to it. They also buffer against storm surges. The Lower Booker Creek proposal to excavate six stormwater drainage basins by destroying the forest is short sighted and ill-conceived. It makes neither ecological sense in the short term, nor hydrological and climatological sense in the long term. |

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| | I personally believe that Eastwood Lake or the large field next to Sunrise Dental (across from Starbuck's in Eastgate) would make much more sense for drainage basins and community recreation. |
| 8/24/2021 | It has come to my attention that a plan has been proposed to mitigate flooding of Booker Creek through the creation of storage reservoirs, which will require excavation of extensive amounts of soil and destruction of mature forest in the town. I urge you to pause this action and to consider alternative flood mitigation strategies that do not require destruction of mature ecosystems. Additionally, I hope ongoing action regarding this plan will be widely communicated, as part of this project is literally in my back yard and will have a profound effect on my quality of life and property value. |
| 8/24/2021 | <p>As you projected, the basin would stretch from Booker Creek Rd. to Daley Rd. and across the bridge to Tadley/Markham. The costs would be devastating in terms of plant and wildlife habitat, taxpayer dollars (\$3.6M for this project alone), not to mention the loss of our lovely shaded walking path.</p> <p>We cannot allow some of the only remaining forest in Chapel Hill to be clear cut. Losing forest may cause severe future flooding. Please consider other green options.</p> |
| 8/28/2021 | <p>I'm a recent transplant to Chapel Hill and purchased property on Frances Street. Purchase my property because of the forest and it's quiet and the proximity to trails like Booker Creek. I share these sentiments with my fellow neighbors. I am in love with the forest, the deer that visit our yards and all of the beautiful wildlife. One of my favorite walking areas is Booker Creek.</p> <p>I was recently made aware of plans to create storm water basins at the end of our street and through Booker Creek. I would like to voice my complete opposition to these plans. Our neighbors are now aware about these plans and are also shocked and in opposition to the town's plans.</p> |
| 8/23/2021 | It is with sincere appreciation that I thank you for caring for our beautiful Booker Creek. It is also with fear and dismay that I ask you NOT to take this disastrous course. Once taken, we can never again get back the important health and environment assets that the proposal threatens to destroy. My husband and I depend on these benefits. It is why we chose to live in Chapel Hill. |
| 8/26/2021 | <p>These chosen greenways for the basins are irreplaceable. The life they hold will be forever lost if these stormwater basins are allowed. I do understand the issue of flooding and well remember the 2018 floods that impacted Eastgate. But construction is continually approved that is built in these creeks' (Bolin and Booker) floodplains. The plans for Eastgate included a portion of Booker Creek. That was in the '80s? And back then Chapel Hill was slow growth in its philosophy. And now, protection of suboptimal locales from flooding means that surrounding neighborhoods must sacrifice their surrounding flora and fauna. But these neighborhoods did not approve those projects.</p> <p>I support a collaboration between the Town council and other towns such as Ann Arbor who seem to have more thoughtfully addressed comparable problems with much better solutions. The current proposal is draconian at best and will gut precious habitat after habitat in order to protect property whose purpose is solely commerce. And money doesn't breathe, has no consciousness. It is inanimate unlike these six vibrant life-filled areas.</p> |
| 8/26/2021 | Our family lives on Lakeshore Lane. Our house backs up to the Booker Creek trail. This affords us a wonderful view of the trail, which is almost constantly in action - year around, from dawn to dusk - by a wide range of two and four legged users (on foot, on bike, with the use of wheel chair) from across Chapel Hill. The trail helps bring our wider neighborhood together, making it one of the most successful neighborhoods that is not exclusively single-family homes (a laudable priority for the town). |

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| | <p>It's our understanding that the town is considering clear-cutting the forest that draws many to the trail, replacing it with a large stormwater basin. From what we've learned, it does not appear that either an environmental or community impact assessment has taken place. Our family is writing to ask that the town not move forward with this plan until those two important steps take place and that any eventual project take into account the learnings from those assessments.</p> |
| 8/25/2021 | <p>I want to sign the petition to prevent the project to deteriorate Booker Creek trail and the forest surrounding it, this would be a massacre for all the bio diversity in the area and a deserter for our community. Booker creek is the only pedestrian access to the Eastgate shopping center, you cannot destroy our neighborhood that way. I firmly oppose this project.</p> |
| 8/25/2021 | <p>Please consider alternate solutions to dealing with storm/flood watershed than the currently adopted water basin plan of Booker Creek. There are solutions that PRESEVE natural habitat while providing capacity for periodic, natural flooding. Also, please consider no longer approving development of commercial and residential spaces on known floodplain (ie Eastgate Shopping Plaza).</p> |
| 8/18/2021 | <p>I was extremely dismayed when I found out about the proposed plan for stormwater remediation on Booker Creek. I am a birder and a naturalist and I cannot imagine what devastation this plan would cause to our beautiful greenways along the creek. It's really much bigger than the devastation to the trail. This plan would affect the mature bottomland hardwood forest along the entire Booker Creek watershed. From what I've gleaned from the report, some 50 acres of forest would be culled along with removing and scraping out rich topsoil and a very fragile ecosystem of life. This would eliminate most of the bird life along with the habitat for our native animals - the foxes, deer, river otters, turtles, etc. And for what end? To try to solve a problem that was created when Eastgate was built? With the huge outlay of tax payer monies this project would demand, why not spend it by working with what we have and create a river park through the parking lot of Eastgate so that water flows in a more natural way and people could come and picnic and shop and enjoy nature? I would be heartbroken to lose this jewel in our town and can't help but think that there are better solutions to this problem.</p> <p>I acknowledge the problem. And I see that it must be very hard for all of you to make these hard decisions for the town. But, I think that instead of accepting an engineering solution to the problem, that we as a town work together toward a greener and more environmentally friendly solution that is in line with Chapel Hill's values, it's climate action plan and our place in the world's growing climate emergency.</p> <p>I have joined the group that has organized around this effort to come up with greener solutions. I am no expert, but I do know that to have a healthy and thriving ecosystem, we need our trees and our wildlife and everything that is supported by this natural ecosystem if we have a chance of maintaining the desirable Chapel Hill that we have all come to love. People don't move here for concrete buildings. They move here for the total feel of the area and that includes our trees and green spaces. I have lived here for 22 years and I am very saddened by the recent development and paving over of our town. We are talking about land that the town owns here - not privately owned land. Let's make a choice together to save it.</p> |
| 8/31/2021 | <p>I have recently become aware of the plan to turn a large chunk of the Booker Creek greenway into a retention pond. My understanding is that this will be accomplished by cutting down a large number of trees and surrounding shrubbery. The Booker Creek greenway is the only greenspace left in Booker Creek and surrounding neighborhoods.</p> <p>While a member of the Town Council, I was the founding chair of the Chapel Hill Stormwater management committee in the early 90's. It was very clear to the committee that stormwater and flooding issues were caused by increasing impervious surfaces both upstream and downstream of the greenway. Friends and people I barely know have asked me why this Town Council as well as the previous council have been on a campaign to pave over every parcel of greenspace in town.</p> |

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| | <p>As noted above, impervious surfaces bring on flooding. If the Council is really interested in dealing with stormwater you have to make new projects mitigate existing stormwater problems not just hide behind the attitude that we can't make the new guy pay for existing problems. Learn how play hard ball.</p> <p>Finally, it would be a disgrace to flood the area where hundreds of volunteers spent thousands of hours clearing out invasive plant species so our natural foliage would thrive. I read somewhere that the council is concerned with climate change. Does cutting down trees at the recommendation of a consultant show that commitment? I don't think you want that on you conscience. Or as Joni Mitchell sang: They paved paradise to put up a parking lot.</p> |
| 8/29/2021 | <p>Surely there is a better solution for storm water management than the loss of acres of woodland and habitat in Chapel Hill planned for by sacrificing the Booker Creek greenway. Please please please find a more ecologically sensible solution to this problem which was inadequately addressed over a decade ago. Our beloved town is disappearing in ill-considered decisions and development. I know you love and care about our town - please make decisions for the continuing quality of an overall, balanced, eco-sensitive environment here.</p> |
| 8/29/2021 | <p>The proposals made by WK Dickson for flood water mitigation for the Booker Creek watershed are what one would expect from an engineering company that makes its money from construction projects, e.g. digging storage basins, removing earth, removing trees, enlarging trenches and culverts, installing pipes, etc.</p> <p>Unfortunately the WK Dickson study only considers the direct consequences of stormwater flow. It does not consider what existing ecology does to reduce the amount of stormwater runoff. Thus the value of many acres of fully forested full grown trees is completely ignored in the study findings. Each large tree can syphon up as much as 200 gallons of water every day and thus removing thousands of trees is likely to have a net negative impact on the volume of stormwater runoff compared to the temporary storage of this amount of water in basins dug where the trees were previously.</p> <p>Additionally trees have a major cooling effect on their surroundings which is critically important given our warming climate. Trees also provide a natural habitat for a great deal of local flora and fauna. And, please do not forget that trees produce a great deal of the oxygen we need to live. Please consider these points before irreversibly chopping down another swath of ecologically exceptionally valuable assets of the Town.</p> <p>The Town plan to implement the findings of the WK Dickson "Lower Booker Creek Subwatershed Study of September 2018 are fundamentally flawed and need to be revised based on evaluation of their full climate, ecological and economic impact.</p> |
| 8/29/2021 | <p>I love the Booker Creek watershed bottomland and the ecosystem it provides for our community. This ecosystem provides us with an enlarged sense of freedom as our citizens can escape the asphalt and artificial areas of our urban life. We receive physical and mental health benefits from walking in this rich ecosystem. Finally, by being drawn into its beauty, we leave our houses and meet people we would not meet if the natural beauty of the watershed were not there. Our sense of unity in our community is strengthened.</p> <p>I urge you to find an ecologically sound way to store excess water from Eastgate rather than clear-cutting through important ecological systems to create stormwater drains. I support green solutions that create a better path forward. Let us be leaders in preserving natural harmony while also taking care of the rainwater!</p> <p>Reference: http://bcneighbors.org/bookercreekflyer.pdf</p> |

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| 8/23/2021 | <p>I became aware of the proposed Booker Creek Stormwater Basin Project earlier today. I had not heard of this project before now and certainly not about any of the details regarding the plans or impact. I have now reviewed some of the plans (awaiting the engineering report), but in sum I am writing to say this is a very bad idea - the negative impact on many aspects of the community, specifically related to environmental changes, greatly outweighs any perceived positive results from this project. I have lived in Chapel Hill much of my life, and I have been very disturbed by the negative impact of various projects approved by the town of Chapel Hill in recent years. I am against this project and I hope this does not move forward.</p> |
| 8/24/2021 | <p>I am a resident of Chapel Hill for more than 20 years. It's sad to see we lose so much forest due to development every year. The Lower Booker Creek Subwatershed project is creating another bigger problem trying to solve one problem. I support the following petition and hope you will hear our voice.</p> <p>Please save our town's forests by rejecting the Lower Booker Creek Subwatershed Study's six proposed stormwater drainage basins.</p> <p>We do not support spending \$19 million of taxpayer money to clearcut 45 acres of mature Chapel Hill forest without a clear cost/benefit analysis, environmental/ecological assessment, climate study, and community impact analysis.</p> <p>We realize it is important to build our community's climate resilience capacity, but we should do so by following the best practices from the EPA stormwater administration.</p> <p>WK Dickson's current proposal would result in acres of lost habitat for local wildlife, non-native plantings, holding ponds with increased mosquitoes, and local heat islands that raise our neighborhoods' temperatures by 10-20 degrees.</p> |
| 8/26/2021 | <p>I have lived in Chapel Hill for 39 years; 15+ years at my current address. I am concerned that poorly planned prior development projects have created real problems in terms of our watershed management. I understand that a long-lasting solution will require funding and compromises. In order to have the necessary information for good governance and the ability to plan adequately for the future of our community, it seems reasonable to request further cost/benefit analysis, environmental/ecological assessments, climate study, and community impact analysis before moving forward with proposed plans to spend \$19 Million of taxpayer money to clearcut 45 acres of mature Chapel Hill forest.</p> |
| 8/25/2021 | <p><u>I am writing about the Booker Creek Watershed Project. I was surprised to hear about this project from my neighbors as I have lived here since 2009 and walk regularly on this trail. I never saw any signs about the project nor did I hear about the project from the city via mail, email or websites. The project website (http://bookercreekplan.org/lower-booker-creek/) claims:</u></p> <p>"the WK Dickson team conducted an expansive public outreach process. The public outreach allowed residents and business owners the opportunity to engage with team members, provide feedback on specific drainage issues, and learn about managing stormwater within Booker Creek. The community was able to give feedback through survey questionnaires, public forums, a project website, community events, and direct emails to the project team."</p> <p>I am opposed to this project and the clear cutting of the Booker Creek trail forest. This plan is antithetical to the town's "Climate action plan" to "increase tree canopy".</p> |
| 8/25/2021 | <p>I am a 27-year-tenured property owner in the Booker Creek area of Chapel Hill. I was upset and discouraged to learn recently of Chapel Hill's proposed solutions to storm water management. The proposed solutions seem to ignore a growing body of scientific, climate, and green infrastructure research and municipal experience by proposing to clear cut old growth forest along the Booker Creek trail to manage stormwater and 25-year flood water scenarios. Trees absorb water, CO2, heat, and retain soil. Removing old growth trees to manage flooding seems like a cruel joke. Old-growth public forests should be caretaken and should be central to any storm-water management solution.</p> |

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| | <p>I ask the town of Chapel Hill to rethink some or all of these proposals. I ask the town to review a panoply of "best practices" already implemented in other cities across the US and countries such as the Netherlands. I want to make sure forests are here to benefit our communities and our natural ecosystems. I urge the Town Council to follow best practices for storm water management. The proposals before the town now seem ill-conceived, short-sighted, costly, and they impair the natural ecosystems that Chapel Hill residents consider essential to the character of our town.</p> |
| 8/25/2021 | <p>Please save our town's forests by rejecting the Lower Booker Creek Subwatershed Study's six proposed stormwater drainage basins.</p> <p>We do not support spending \$19 million of taxpayer money to clearcut 45 acres of mature Chapel Hill forest without a clear cost/benefit analysis, environmental/ecological assessment, climate study, and community impact analysis.</p> <p>We realize it is important to build our community's climate resilience capacity, but we should do so by following the best practices from the EPA stormwater administration.</p> <p>WK Dickson's current proposal would result in acres of lost habitat for local wildlife, non-native plantings, holding ponds with increased mosquitoes, and local heat islands that raise our neighborhoods' temperatures by 10-20 degrees, degradation of the neighborhood, loss of property values, loss of tree canopy.</p> |
| 8/26/2021 | <p>Please save our town's forests by rejecting the Lower Booker Creek Subwatershed Study's six proposed stormwater drainage basins.</p> <p>I also do not support spending \$19 million of taxpayer money to clearcut 45 acres of mature Chapel Hill forest without a clear cost/benefit analysis, environmental/ecological assessment, climate study, and community impact analysis.</p> <p>I too realize it is important to build our community's climate resilience capacity, but we should do so by following the best practices from the EPA stormwater administration.</p> <p>WK Dickson's current proposal would result in acres of lost habitat for local wildlife, non-native plantings, holding ponds with increased mosquitoes, and local heat islands that raise our neighborhoods' temperatures by 10-20 degrees.</p> <p>Our community requires a solution that reduces flooding while considering the broader ecological context of Booker Creek and Chapel Hill.</p> <p>This is an area not only enjoyed by the many local residents and their families but home to divers wildlife as well. I purchased my home last year in large part to be close to nature and the beauty of the surroundings. Please don't allow this habitat to be ruined.</p> |
| 8/25/2021 | <p>Please consider other options besides deforesting a poster child for wetland habitats so developers can build more. There is already a big catch basin right there called East Lake. Why not make it deeper? I'm rather appalled at the cost for the various "catch basins" proposed at a cost of over \$20 Million. Not only do I not want my tax dollars used for this, I don't like subsidizing developments I don't approve of, like Glenn Lennox commercial properties, Aura at MLK and Estes, the Rosemary Street development where we're paying millions for a land swap/parking garage so the developer has more area to develop, etc. I'm not against development. I'm just against most of what has been approved over the last 15 years or so. We can do better. We need better planning that is followed. Not past planning that is ignored because it doesn't fit the developer's plans.</p> |
| 8/24/2021 | <p>Please do not destroy this or really any other wild places in Chapel Hill. We need to preserve the environment, make Chapel Hill a place one wants to live. There has been so much development in the last few years; please don't let Chapel Hill become ruined.</p> |
| 8/6/2021 | <p>I am a resident of Priestly Creek and was informed by our association about the proposed Booker Creek Development plan, this will affect my neighbors on the uneven side of my street who have the creek running behind their property.</p> <p>I hope there are alternative plans than cutting down trees , disturb the wildlife that we enjoy and remove the privacy (some have the creek just below their deck on stilts) of our neighbors.</p> |

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| | <p>I understand that after heavy rainfall, the creek has to absorb the rain that runs from Lake Ellen to Eastwood Lake. This area cannot be compared with the adjustments on Elliott Road next to that building of 6-7 floors.</p> <p>Aren't there alternative plans? Can another culvert be added under the Piney Mountain Bridge? I have also noticed that across from our street (Priestly / Piney Mountain) is a canyon of about 25 meters deep. Isn't there a possibility to bypass some of that water to the canyon after it slopes behind the Crow Hollow Private Street? We all hope that there are 2nd and 3rd professional opinions available and offered to our neighborhood. For instance, a normal clean-up of the creek and added rocks, but no major cutting. Is it possible to see monitors at the creek on heavy rainy days for real time observation during a period instead of relying on the data of the USGS station? I think it is only fair that the affected residents are interviewed personally, that they are invited on a walk along the creek with an engineer and be explained what is about to happen. No amount of improvement is going to get them excited since this is a private area and I doubt they would like to see more people walking in their "back yard". Our association meets regularly and we will compare notes of the answers and acknowledges of this letter-writing campaign. Most residents will write and some more than once to stress concerns. Every single house along the creek deserves an assurance. Thank you for your attention to this situation.</p> |
| 9/8/2021 | <p>We, we being me, Cliona McKenna and her sister Shea McKenna, live next to each other and we have recently been informed that the town has plans to destroy Booker Creek. We signed the Booker Creek Watershed Petition already. We live in a cul de sac so we took some chalk and basically started to protest against climate change and keeping Booker Creek. But it started from a corner of the road to the entire road, and soon we even got someone to join us. We just wanted to share the message that Chapel Hill is supposed to be tree-friendly, and we are using that to make people come and live here. But while doing that, our trees are being killed and we are making more apartments and buildings. We wanted to start by saving Booker Creek. I am sure you are doing all you can, and we thank you for that.</p> <p>Recently, we also started an organization, #PlantATree. We held a speech in a park and raised a lot of money. We planted two trees, Gloria and Eileen, which can be found in E.C. Leonard Park of Coker Hills. Enclosed is some of our work. Thank you for your time in reading this. We appreciate it.</p> |
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