

**Public Information Meeting 5:30 – 6:30 pm
Monday, September 20, 2021**

Rosemary Street Parking Garage / North Street

The purpose of this meeting is to share information about changing the exit design to no-right turns in response to the neighborhood's concerns about future traffic patterns and to discuss a plan to monitor and address actual conditions in the area.

Agenda:

- 1. Design of Deck** – Mary Jane Nirdlinger, Deputy Town Manager
The primary entrance and exit from the deck is on Rosemary Street. The secondary entrance and exit onto North Street will be changed to prohibit right-turns from the deck onto North Street.
- 2. Upcoming on-street parking changes** – Michael Carew, Parking Services Manager, Town of Chapel Hill
 - a. Removal of North Street on-street parking
 - b. Shift on-street parking options
- 3. Monitoring and addressing future conditions** – Mary Jane Nirdlinger
 - a. Collecting data
 - i. Traffic Counts
 1. February 2020 traffic counts (baseline) already taken
 2. Fall 2022 (before deck opens, after on-street parking changes)
 3. Post-occupancy counts 6 months after deck opens
 - b. On-site monitoring immediately after deck opens
 - c. Traffic calming or design adjustments in response to actual conditions

Resources:

October 2020 - Final TIA

[Executive Summary](#)

[Complete TIA Report](#)

Emails related to the meeting topic

[August 23, 2021 – From Mary Jane Nirdlinger](#)

Dear Joe and Iris,

Thank you for meeting recently on North Street. I've compiled information from our staff addressing several of your questions. I will also share this with the email addresses we have available for the neighborhood. We appreciate you sharing your concerns and hope to maintain an open line of communication during the project and after the deck opens.

We are also planning to hold a larger neighborhood information meeting to discuss the design for the North Street/MLK intersection and the neighborhood's interest in traffic calming and future monitoring of the streets after the deck opens.

Sincerely,
Mary Jane Nirdlinger

North Street Deck Entrance/Exit Design: We reviewed Mr. Patterson's proposed left-turns-only design from the deck onto North Street (see Image 1). Our current design does not prohibit right turns (see Image 2). The Town worked with our traffic engineers and designers and determined that the exit on North Street should allow both right and left turns. The traffic study showed that a small percent of outbound traffic may turn right onto North Street when exiting the deck, although it's not the fastest or most direct route to points east or south of the site. The TIA estimates showed 1 AM peak hour car turning right, 9 during the noon peak hour, and 16 during the PM peak hour. (The October 2020 TIA is posted [here](#) and the number of cars is shown in Figure 10B, on the 57th page of the PDF file)

In addition to the low-expected volume of right turns, maintaining full access to and along North Street provides additional public safety access for the deck and the neighborhood. The study recommended looking at the traffic after build-out and evaluating whether any mitigation or improvements would be needed based on actual conditions. The study also recommended looking at the wayfinding signage inside the deck to make sure we clearly direct cars to the preferred exits, which we will also do.

We realize this is not your preferred design, but as we have considered the larger picture and our ongoing commitment to monitoring the situation after construction, we believe this is the best option for the Town as a whole at the moment. We look forward to discussing existing conditions and potential traffic calming measures at a neighborhood information meeting.

Image 1 (Patterson):

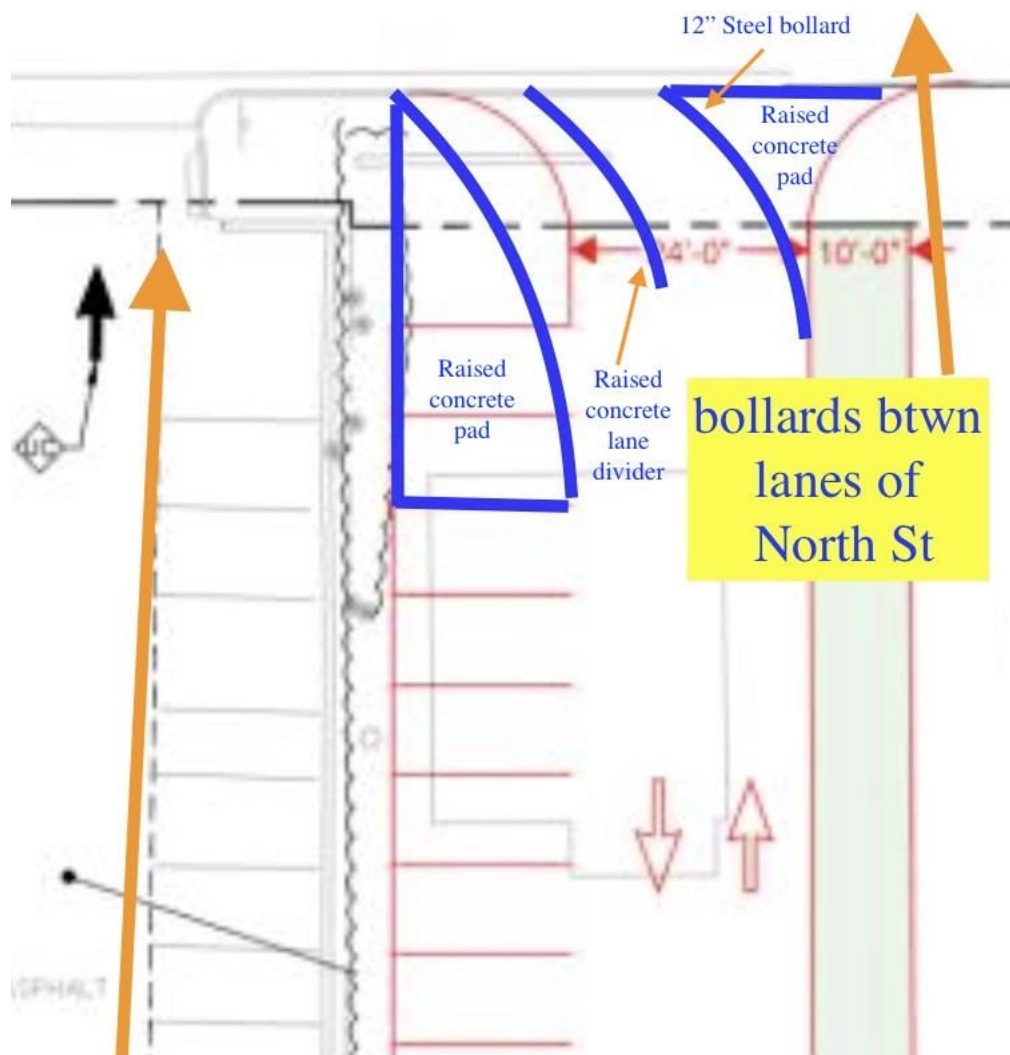
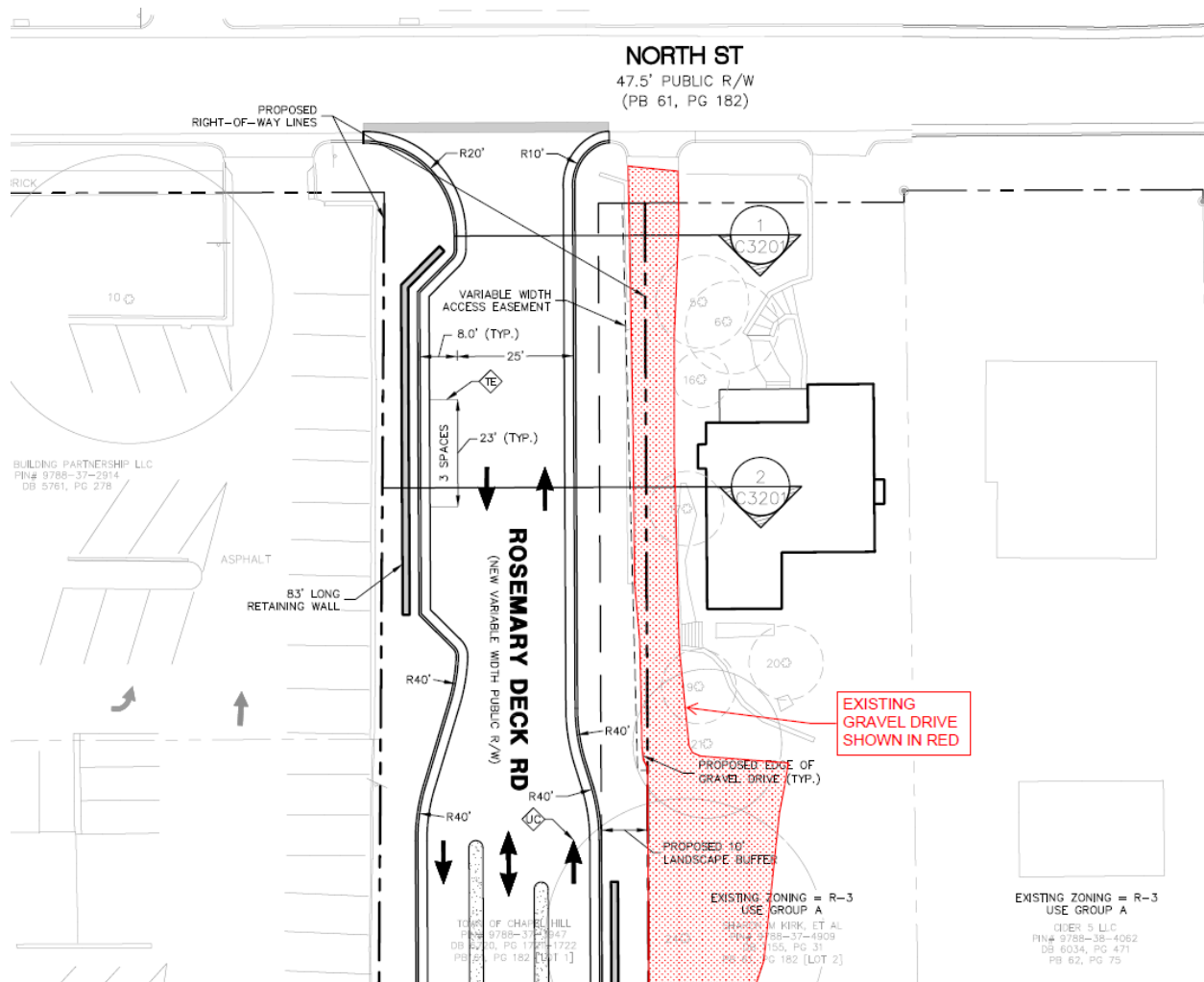


Image 2: Current Design



On-street parking on North Street:

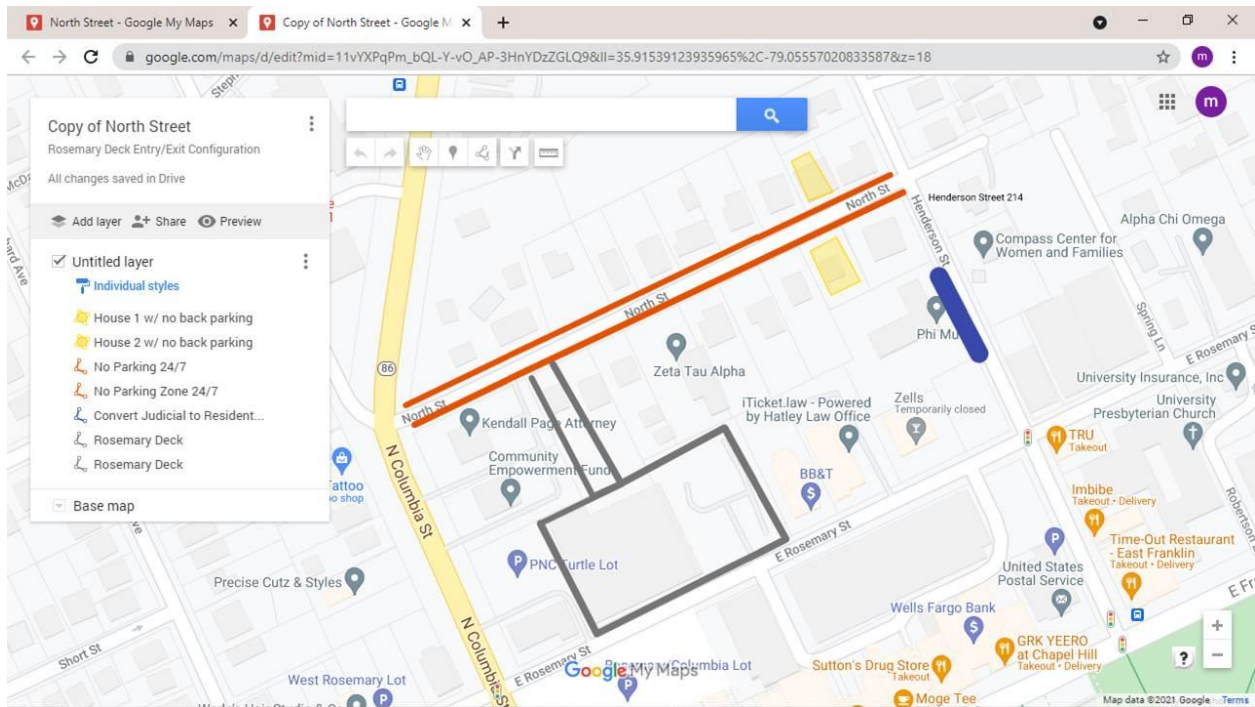
Below you will find a map illustrating the area. Currently the north side of North Street is a no parking zone, while the south side allows for six spaces. Fourteen of the sixteen houses on North Street have additional parking located on the back of the properties, as well as dedicated driveway parking. The two houses that do not have extra parking on their properties are closer to Henderson Street- they are marked in yellow. We are evaluating the option of eliminating the six spaces on the south side and making the 100-200 block of North Street a no-parking zone on both sides as well as converting the six judicial spaces on Henderson Street to dedicated residential parking; this will allow North Street residents access to additional parking when needed. The parking staff believes that making the 100-200 block of North Street a no-parking zone would also increase safety and visibility, per your interests. These changes would most likely be made in the summer of 2022, prior to the deck opening, not immediately.

Staff will also investigate the suggestions about auditing the passes that have been issued in the area to make sure they're being properly used and possibly "zoning" the residential areas.

Maintaining visibility at intersection of Henderson/North Street –The hedges at the intersection of Henderson / North St. are a responsibility of the Town when overgrown and affecting the visibility of the signage. Parks and Recreation’s Park and Landscape Maintenance division would address this when necessary. The best way to report issues related to it is to use [SeeClickFix - Chapel Hill Connect](#). Parks and Recreation staff has also been made aware of this concern.

Trash bins on the street –We can work with the residents to remind them to place their containers behind the curb. Plus, we will work with our collectors to ensure the containers are placed behind the curb after they service them. Our Solid Waste division will also put this location on our list of areas to check the day after collection.

Image 3: Residential Parking



1. From Joe Patterson III August 25, 2021

Thank you for your response and for taking the time to meet with Iris and me. I would like to address only the North St exit design at this point, as it is the only time critical issue and needs to be addressed before construction starts on the deck. Before pursuing this with other parties, I wanted to be sure I understood on what bases and how the decision was made for your original design to better understand your reasoning on why our proposed design is unacceptable. The relevant section of your 8/23/21

response is quoted verbatim below and my questions refer to excerpts therefrom. For the record, I was unable to locate any page 57 or Figure 10B using the link to the TIA below.

I also note for the record we are painfully aware that the traffic engineers and its designers are simply guessing about what drivers may or may not do when leaving or entering the North St entrance. What, if any, knowledge or experience they have with actual traffic behavior in CH over any period of time, or if they have even been in the town, is unknown. We residents, on the other hand, have been watching and dealing with the way folks navigate this area for many years. The last time (some years ago) we were presented with an analysis of future traffic patterns, where traffic was likely to go, and proposals on how to modify streets in our neighborhood to deal with these future patterns, the Town staff and it's designers proposed extending Henderson through Cobb Terrace across an RCD and 60' deep gulley to join MLK beside the University Apt entrance AND creating a road through the homes of the existing historic district to connect the two sections of North Street. This proposal was so absurd and ungrounded in reality, and caused such a public uproar, that the Town Manager quickly made it disappear. We are therefor skeptical, with good justification we believe, of the accuracy of the projections as to how many exiting cars are likely to turn right on North St.

Response to Staff Q&A of

I would be grateful if you would address the following questions,

1- You say that you worked with your traffic engineers and designers and "**determined** that the exit on North Street should allow both right and left turns."

a- did you and your advisors consider alternative designs at the time?

b- was there a cost benefit analysis done at the time on the benefits of being able to make a right turn vs. the costs to the neighborhood

c- have you discussed our proposal with them since we met with you with our proposal?

d- if not, why not?

e- if they rejected our proposal, what were their reasons? (copies of their comments would be nice to see)

2- You state that, "The traffic study **showed** that a small percent of outbound traffic may turn right onto North Street when exiting the deck."

a- How is it possible to predict which way folks exiting the deck might turn when there is no existing data from which to extrapolate?

3- You state that, "it's not the fastest or most direct route to points east or south of the site."

a- It seems to us that this assertion demonstrates a clear failure to accept and incorporate the implications of what already is happening. While it may not be the most direct, it is clearly the most efficient. The North St/Henderson St connection is already recognized and utilized by hundreds of drivers a day as the most efficient way to avoid the 100 block of Rosemary when heading east from MLK or west from Henderson St. The assertion that folks leaving the deck would behave differently is simply not believable based on the facts. Do you agree?

4- You state that, "maintaining full access to and along North Street provides additional public safety access for the deck and the neighborhood."

a- What "additional public safety access" are you referring to, and how would the ability to turn right affect that?

b- How would our proposed configuration diminish that "access."

c- Wouldn't our proposed configuration make it easier for fire equipment and or CHPD cars, both of which would be coming from MLK, to enter the deck?

5- There are two possible realities after construction of the North St. exit is irrevocably completed. There will be few folks who wish to turn right (your belief) or a great number of them (our belief).

a- if you install the "no right turn design" we are proposing two things can happen. If you are right, it will inconvenience a few folks. If we are right, it will prevent a devastating negative impact on our neighborhood

b-If you install the "two way turn design" you are proposing two things can happen. If you are right, it will benefit a few folks. If we are right, a large number of additional folks will pile onto North St/Henderson St. with a devastating negative impact on our neighborhood.

c- since the choice is essentially irreversible, on what basis can you choose b over a?

6- If you install the exit configuration we are proposing, there would be NO increase in traffic in either direction, therefor no need to remove parking spaces on North St or install sidewalks, and NO negative impacts on the quality of life in the neighborhood.

a- have you done a complete cost benefit analysis of those savings and benefits vs the inconvenience of a few folks being able to turn right?

2. From Joe Patterson III – September 2, 2021 re: TIA

1- The **sole reason** cited by the TIA for the necessity of the North St exit is "To reduce site-related traffic volumes at the critical E. Rosemary Street intersection with NC 86." This proposed exit "should remove most parking deck related traffic flow **to/from the NC 86 corridor north of the site.**" (TIA p32, D.3) It cites no other intended uses, benefits, or purposes for the exit.

2 - The TIA also cites potential traffic to and from the east on North St as something that is a negative factor, a reduction of which requires mitigation to protect the neighborhood. It states that, "A full access connection may add some site-related traffic that may cut- through the North Street neighborhood and potentially additional traffic calming **measures may be needed to reduce as much cut-through traffic as possible.**" (TIA p32, D.3)

3 - The TIA does not show that an entrance and exit design that permits only "traffic flow to/from the NC 86 corridor north of the site" was considered and rejected, or even proposed or considered, as part of their deliberations.

4-Nothing in the TIA supports the staff's assertion that "**maintaining full access to and along North Street provides additional public safety access for the deck and the neighborhood,**" nor does it cite that as a consideration or desirable component in design of the exit.

5 - The TIA makes no **realistic** attempt to **accurately** estimate the volume of eastbound traffic from the proposed exit using the NorthSt/Henderson St short cut ("the short cut") or as a

preferred alternative entrance for westbound traffic choosing a route at the Henderson St/Rosemary St intersection.

a - According to the TIA existing traffic analysis (Figs 5 and 5a), **at peak hours, 197 westbound drivers use the short cut from the east to MLK.** It also shows that during the same period **between 91 and 154 eastbound drivers from MLK use the short cut** (Figs 5 and 5a). This shows clearly that intelligent and knowledgeable local drivers will use a route that has no traffic light, limited traffic, and no enforced speed limit instead of driving through the high density traffic of the 100 block of East Rosemary.

b - The TIA projection assumes that **absolutely all (100%) of the 185 drivers** estimated to enter the deck from the east (Fig 12B) **will patiently join the queue of the 674 additional drivers** also trying to pass westbound through the 100 block of East Rosemary at the same time, **rather than diverting to the North St entrance. In other words, absolutely none (zero) of these intelligent and knowledgeable local drivers will opt to use the short cut instead.** The TIA makes **the same assumption for 2023** as well (Fig 13A). In our view, this is not just improbable, it is preposterous.

c - The TIA projection also assumes that of the **of the 155 eastbound drivers** exiting the deck at peak hours, **only 26 will elect to use the unobstructed short cut, and will, instead, opt to join the 864 other cars heading east at the Rosemary St exit during the same periods.** (Fig 12B). Like the previous assumption we find this unrealistic and unbelievable.

6 - The TIA apparently assumes that the drivers in their projections do not constantly adapt, finding faster and easier ways of moving about, as is demonstrated in the point above. There are unlikely to be a new set of peak hour drivers each day needing and following signage for routes to exit the parking deck. They are likely to be year round residents and daily commuters who will adapt to traffic delays and begin to use faster and easier routes, regardless of what deck signage suggests. You need only consider driver's noncompliance with speed limits to appreciate this point. We are therefor dubious that the use of signage as suggested in the TIA will have any meaningful impact on which exits drivers choose.

Our conclusions from the analysis above are;

A. that the TIA assumptions dramatically understate the probable the amount of east west traffic on North St and Henderson St from the new entrance/exit, if drivers are allowed to enter from, or exit to, the east on North St.,

B. that a new entrance/exit designed to restrict access to "traffic flow to/from the NC 86 corridor north of the site" is feasible and satisfies all of the objectives of the TIA, and

C. that a new entrance/exit designed to restrict access to "traffic flow to/from the NC 86 corridor north of the site" would prevent ANY parking deck related increase in the amount of east west

traffic on North St and Henderson St now or in the future, providing permanent protection for our neighborhood.

D. bad assumptions generate faulty projections. Making decisions based on faulty projections leads to bad decisions. Not installing on North St. an entrance and exit design that permits only “traffic flow to/from the NC 86 corridor north of the site” would be a bad decision.

3. From Joe Patterson August 28, 2021 re: Downtown Connectivity

Attached please find excerpts from the 2010 Downtown Development Framework that we mentioned earlier. It is relevant to the decision on the design of the North St exit of the parking deck because it was developed by Mr. Bassett and his traffic engineering associates, the same people making this decision that should balance the rights of the neighborhood residents against the needs of the downtown businesses.

The stated goal of the 2010 plan was to relieve congestion on primary roads in the town center by diverting traffic into the surrounding neighborhoods in order to benefit downtown businesses. As you can see from the 3 pages below, they proposed that the Town create NEW 58ft wide streets (the size of the 100 block of Franklin St) through existing residential neighborhoods, widen existing residential lanes in Northside and the Historic District to 58ft, and build a 58ft wide connector from Henderson St to MLKB through Cobb Terrace across an RCD, a perpetual stream and a 60ft deep gorge. The plan simply, and incredibly, ignored any cost benefit analysis of the effect on the residents who would be affected by the proposed changes. It simply concluded that its proposals would be good for the downtown businesses, therefore it would be good for the Town as a whole. It was this lack of perspective that led to its near immediate rejection by the Town government and its citizens.

We are not suggesting in any way that Mr. Bassett and his associates are currently doing anything other than once again focusing exclusively on the best interests of the businesses downtown and commuters. It is his/their job. What we are saying is that the 2010 Plan authored by them is unequivocal evidence of a lack of understanding of and concern for the effects of their proposals on the neighborhoods surrounding the downtown businesses. Based on the foregoing we submit that Mr. Bassett and those associated with the design of the deck access plans are unlikely, and perhaps incapable, of making a balanced decision on our proposal and deciding "**the best option for the Town as a whole.**"

We have accepted the Mayor’s statement that an entrance and exit on North Street are absolute necessities. To address our concerns about increased traffic in our neighborhood, we have devised a simple modification to the design for that intersection. It would not increase costs in any material way, and, according to your own statements, it would not affect a material number of your parking

customers. It would, however, prevent drivers from using our neighborhood roads to access or exit the deck. Mr. Bassett and company have provided no persuasive or concrete reasons in support of their refusal to implement it.

We believe that there need to be VERY substantial reasons for the Town to take that position, and that decision needs to balance the interests of the neighborhood residents as well as the convenience of the handful of commuters each day that you mention. We also believe that individuals in the Town government (staff, Town Council, Advisory Boards are all possibilities) who have a broader perspective than Mr. Bassett and company need to be involved in making the final decision on this issue.

New Connections

Create a series of new connections to break up the grid and link north to south and east to west

Corners create value that can be captured to fund improvements

New connections designed to treat all modes equally – adequate space for cars, bikes, peds and buses

Window of opportunity will close as new projects develop



North South Connections

Four new north south links

Mitchell St. to south
Mallette St. to north
Pittsboro St. to north
Henderson St to north

Takes traffic pressure
off Columbia St.

Each connects to a new
public space

Creates three new
intersections on
Franklin – block sizes
shrink to +/- 500 ft.



 STRATEGY 5 KLING STUBBINS

East West Connections

Creates three new east
west links

Designing the smallest
street possible with a
58' ROW including
dedicate bike lanes

Not alleys meant for
service, but complete
streets

Roads serve new
parking facilities

Creates three new
intersections on
Columbia/MLK brings
block size down to +/-
350'



 STRATEGY 5 KLING STUBBINS

4. Email from John Wilson – September 13, 2021

Joe and Iris,

Unfortunately we cannot attend the meeting.

Billy and I sincerely appreciate your efforts on behalf of our neighborhood, and truthfully the entire Town, to prevent the significant negative impact a two way exit onto narrow residential North Street from the proposed parking deck will have. The Town's proposal is as poorly conceived as the earlier suggestion of connecting Cobb Terrace to MLK or connecting the two parts of North Street. You have presented simple, apparent, and logical reasoning. Some of their assumptions are utterly ridiculous. Of course folks will try to short circuit using Henderson and North Streets to avoid the increased traffic on Rosemary, and North Street will lose all of its residential parking in short order.

Our Mayor seems hellbent to increase density, and increase tax base with the immediate result of destroying the very reasons so many of us choose to live in this extraordinary town in North Carolina. We happily paid high property taxes for decades to preserve and protect the southern part of heaven. They are irreversibly destroying the very reasons folks from across our State and the Nation love Chapel Hill.

Unwillingness to even respond to your sound reasoning with sound answers seems like their intent, for-telling our destiny. To tear down one of the finest, most attractive, human scaled parking garages anywhere, only to build a bigger, taller, out of scale one a block away is the exact opposite of the notion of sustainability this Town Board likes to brag about. Wet labs in a prime retail block of a beloved historic town with vacant university land all around is equally incomprehensible.

How can a Town with such a large Planning Department, adjacent to a major university with a planning school, consistently do such a poor job of planning? Is it possible in progressive Chapel Hill that profit motives of developers have become more powerful than the health, safety, welfare and wishes of the majority of the citizens? Sadly we may soon begin to see our friends and neighbors cashing out to move along to another place where preserving the past and maintaining the quality of life for future generations is recognized as a honorable goal, far more important than money.

We need elected representatives that understand it is possible to "Preserve and Prosper."

John Wilson

On Sep 9, 2021, at 11:24 AM, Joseph Patterson III <joepatterson@me.com> wrote:

Hello neighbors,

You should have received from Mary Jane Nirdlinger (Asst Town Mgr), an invitation to join a meeting on 9/20/21 relating to the East Rosemary Parking Deck project, with a specific focus on the proposed North Street entrance/exit. This meeting has been organized in response to an effort by Iris and me to have that entrance/exit configured and constructed such that drivers can only enter from and exit to MLKB. This would prevent drivers using the Henderson St/North St route in order to avoid having to use the Rosemary St entrance/exit to the new deck.

The decision reached on this issue is likely to have a substantial effect on traffic through and the character of our neighborhood. This is one of the few things that we can and must do now, or suffer the consequences for years to come. We hope that you will take the time to join the meeting and speak in support of our proposal or by writing a message of support that either Iris or I can read at that meeting.

To give you more background on the issue, I will forward to all of you three separate emails to Mary Jane from Iris and me. They are;

- 1- The staffs response to the request Iris and I made to Mary Jane at a meeting on 8/9/21 and our our subsequent questions relating to the points raised by the staff (dated 8/25/21).
- 2- An email dated 8/28/21 (cc the Mayor and Town Manager) outlining our concerns about the narrow perspective of the staff evaluating our request and asking for fair treatment.
- 3- An email dated 9/2/21 with the results of our analysis of the Traffic Impact Analysis (TIA) cited by the staff as the basis for their decisions.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Joe Patterson

5. Statement forwarded by Joe Patterson on September 14, 2021

Mary Jane,

In anticipation of our virtual meeting at 5:30 on Monday 9/20/21, we wish to submit the following statement from virtually all of the permanent residents of Cobb Terrace and the 100 block of North St concerning the configuration of the North St exit from the deck and our desire to protect our quiet neighborhood. We hope that the Mayor and Town Council members will express their support for the position expressed herein.

Thanks,

Cobb Terrace and North Street Permanent Residents

#####

Date: September 14, 2021

To: Mary Jane Nirdlinger

cc: The Mayor, Town Council, and Town Manager

Re: Design of the North Street exit of the new East Rosemary Street Parking Deck

The undersigned, who comprise virtually ALL of the permanent residents of Cobb Terrace and the 100 block of North Street, hereby wish to state our strong support for a North Street deck entrance/exit design that limits ingress and egress to “traffic flow to/from the NC 86 corridor north of the site,” the goal expressed by the consultants in the TIA. Such a North Street entrance/exit design should prohibit westbound drivers from turning left off North Street to enter the deck, and eastbound drivers exiting the deck from turning right onto North Street, thereby preventing drivers from using our crowded neighborhood streets (North Street and Henderson Street) as a short cut. This design would disadvantage no one and would provide long term protection for our quiet neighborhood.

The signatories below are permanent residents of Cobb Terrace and the 100 block of North Street.

John Wilson

Katherine Polk

Jane Little

12 Cobb Terrace

13 Cobb Terrace

8 Cobb Terrace

Billy Parker

Iris Schwintzer

Tom Hostetter

12 Cobb Terrace

19 Cobb Terrace

8 Cobb Terrace

Joe Patterson

Chris Belcher

John Norwood

7 Cobb Terrace

5 Cobb Terrace

14 Cobb Terrace

Wade Dansby

127 North Street

Surada Dansby

127 North Street

Regina Wheeler

1 Cobb Terrace