



## MEMO

Date: July 27, 2020  
To: Matt Dellinger, Planning Board Chair  
From: Lindsay Laird, Project Manager  
Re: Lake Forest Davidson Conditional Master Plan – Planning Board Report (DPO 14.5.6)

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### PLANNING BOARD REPORT

#### *Discussion Summary*

After an overview synopsis of the project and timeline by Planner Lindsay Laird, board members discussed the following topics:

- Religious Institution Separation Requirement: DPO Section 3.2.31 states that religious institutions may not locate within 1,320 feet (1/4 mile) of another religious institution campus. The purpose of this rule is to limit the number of tax-exempt parcels in close proximity to one another.
- Confusion over Potential Disparate Treatment of Similar Conditional Zoning Requests: In addition to the quarter-mile separation, the current underlying planning area of the parcel where the proposed church will be built does not allow churches. Members expressed concern with the lack of consistency and predictability from the Board of Commissioners in the face of no apparent compelling reason for this conditional request to get approved when a similar conditional request by another church (CFA Church) to upfit an existing building and generate commercial uses 6.5 days out of 7 days per week was previously summarily denied.
- PIL of Town Taxes and Construction Phasing: In an attempt to mitigate the loss in tax revenue of the church parcel proposed as part of this project, the project team has agreed to a voluntary payment-in-lieu (PIL) of town taxes. The PIL amount could decrease over time, once the commercial building is constructed on site, which reduction amount was not yet confirmed but expected to derive from the church parcel land value. Staff and the applicant noted negotiations were ongoing, referenced the potential impact of COVID-19 on the commercial market, and discussed the concerns of members with the scenario where the commercial building does not get constructed after approving the church project.
- Sidewalks, Pedestrian Improvements, and TIA Recommendations: Members expressed interests in maximizing pedestrian improvements (i.e. sidewalk along project frontage and cross walk with RRFBs across NC-115) to facilitate safe means of access as the project had expressed walkability as a key factor, questioning the transition from a 5'-wide sidewalk to a 12'-wide sidewalk then back to 5'-wide sidewalk. Reference was also made to the NCDOT roundabout project and the need for a wider pedestrian facility to connect to its 10' multi-use path; staff clarified that pedestrian facility coming from the roundabout would be on the other side of NC-115, so not applicable to this project. There was also discussion of the southbound turn lane at access 1 or PIL for the turn lane.

*Items to Consider*

- General: Address the concerns noted above. Identify overarching reasons why this conditional project should be approved or denied, as compared to a substantially similar request denied by BOC.
- Parking: Members expressed unease with the current scope/design of the parking lot and expressed interest in considering a smaller parking lot and/or creative parking design (i.e. additional vegetation or pervious pavers) to guard against an unsightly surface lot that consumes much of the parcels. An example mentioned was the College's design of the parking area behind its admissions buildings along Jackson Street.
- TIA Recommendations: Consider including a wider sidewalk along the project frontage on NC-115, as this is a major connection to downtown.



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Signature/Date

Matt Dellinger, Planning Board Chair