

# Lightbridge Project

1165 Weaver Dairy Road

Concept Plan Application

4 February 2025

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## Developer's Program

### **Proposed Program:**

The project is located on a rectangular 1.8-acre parcel on the south side of Weaver Dairy Road just east of Martin Luther King Jr Blvd. This concept plan proposes a mixed-use space with daycare and residential uses.

The project proposes an 11,000-12,000 sf daycare center on the street frontage, with surface parking behind. The parcel connects to an access easement from the west allowing vehicular access from both Weaver Dairy Road and from the Weaver Crossing parking area. At the south end of the parcel the development proposes a 5-unit cluster of townhomes facing a small green space. The townhomes would have garages or carports but would be able to use the daycare parking spaces for overflow in the evening and on weekends.

### **Natural Features:**

The vacant property was formerly used for a daycare center but the building and site improvements have been removed. There are no streams or wetlands on site.

The majority of the site is flat with man made steep slopes along the eastern edge where the ground falls toward the electric utility easement and the adjacent shopping center.

Though not a natural feature, note that there is an electric easement with poles and overhead lines along the eastern property line. The easement tapers from 28' wide at the north end to 19' wide at the south end of the parcel.

The NC Flood maps indicate no floodplain on site. A floodplain is indicated approximately 800' away to the southeast of the project site.

### **Access, Circulation, and Mitigation of Traffic Impacts:**

The project site has direct access from Weaver Dairy Road at the north end and access to the parking drive aisle at the southwest property line. There is an access easement on that drive that extends to the property line. The project intends to use both locations for vehicular access.

Due to the existing concrete median in Weaver Dairy Road, the main driveway will have right-in/right-out access only.

Parking on site will be located behind the daycare building, and in individual townhome garages or covered parking behind each home.

There is an existing sidewalk along Weaver Dairy Road. Pedestrian improvements to be made as part of this project include interior sidewalks.

The project is within easy walking distance of existing Chapel Hill Transit routes on Weaver Dairy Road. This project is also within short walking distance of a proposed BRT station on MLK Blvd.

### **Arrangement and Orientation of Buildings:**

The arrangement of buildings on site will provide for some separation of uses. The single-story daycare building will front onto Weaver Dairy Road. The 2-story townhomes will be oriented perpendicular to that building and separated by the parking lot. A communal green space for the townhomes is located adjacent to their front yards.

### **Natural Vegetation and Landscaping:**

The property is mostly cleared and the few existing large trees are invasives which will be removed. The landscape buffers will be planted used mostly native plants.

The project will likely meet a 30% tree coverage, and not the required 40%. Tree coverage requirements will be met with new plantings.

### **Impact on Neighboring Properties:**

The surrounding properties are mainly commercial. Timberlyne Plaza is located to the east with the nearest uses being a bank and an animal hospital. There is a medical plaza at the western property line. There is a small vacant lot south of the project area, with a mobile home park just south of that. A daycare use and small amount of housing on this site is not expected to create a nuisance for the neighbors. Daycare is a weekday daytime usage so there will not be any nighttime increase in noise, lighting, or activity. The majority of users will enter and exit the site on the Weaver Dairy frontage, with some additional traffic on Sparrow Street which has a right-in/right out movement onto Martin Luther King Jr Blvd. Five homes will not add significant traffic to the area.

### **Erosion, Sedimentation, and Stormwater Control:**

Erosion and sedimentation control will be applicable only during the construction phase of the development. An erosion control plan will be designed and used to obtain a land disturbance permit through Orange County. Erosion control measures will be installed and maintained as part of the construction process.

Proposed stormwater from new impervious surfaces on site will be collected and treated for quantity and quality to meet State codes. Stormwater mitigation is expected to be an underground facility.

**Affordable Housing Statement:**

The developer will work with the Town's Affordable Housing team during the conditional zoning process.

**CLIMATE ACTION PLAN**

The climate action plan will be developed during the conditional zoning process.

The project will incorporate all electric appliances, use LED lighting throughout the project, and will utilize sealed building design with high insulation values. The project proposes EV-capable parking spaces as well as providing a charging station within the development.

It is expected that the majority of daycare users will drive. For the townhome use, the location of the project lends itself to a more sustainable lifestyle for residents. It is located on a bus line which serves downtown Chapel Hill, is within walking distance of a grocery store and multiple employment opportunities and supports environmental equity through access to greenways on site and community open space.

**Statement of Compliance with Comprehensive Plan**

**Chapel Hill 2020 Comprehensive Plan**

The proposed residential project is being designed to comply with the Chapel Hill Comprehensive Plan. The big ideas most relevant to this project are #1 - Implement a bikeable, walkable, green communities plan, and #4 - increase the ratio of workforce housing. This project will provide townhome and apartment units in a community already on a bus route within walkable distance of retail, service, and employment facilities.

The project responds to the applicable Themes and Goals chapter in the following ways:

1. A Place for Everyone - This project provides a small amount of mid-range housing in the townhomes. The daycare use will satisfy a necessary and growing need for child care services in an area surrounded by family residential uses.
2. Community Prosperity and Engagement - As the community grows this new development will provide a small amount of infill housing with easy access to Chapel Hill's university and health care facilities, other medical facilities, and will also appeal to households whose members work in multiple communities as it is close to public transit, to the future BRT station and route, and to the highway. The daycare use provides a service in high demand in town.

3. Getting Around - This development is located on a major street with Chapel Hill Transit service. It is also supported by a sidewalk system along Weaver Dairy Road and Martin Luther King Jr Blvd. New tenants and owners in this development will take advantage of its proximity to Chapel Hill Transit stops and routes, and to the proposed BRT station and routing on MLK Blvd. It is located within a 5 minute walk of multiple grocery stores, restaurants, services, and retail outlets.
4. Good Places, New Spaces - The project will incorporate pleasant landscaping on the Weaver Dairy frontage, and a small green space in front of the townhomes for use by those 5 residences.
5. Nurturing Our Community - The project will manage stormwater on site.
6. Town and Gown Collaboration - Though not directly associated with the university, it is expected that the location of this development, the daycare, and the middle housing offering will be attractive to people associated with UNC.

## **Complete Communities Strategy**

The complete communities strategy components and how the project complies:

- Diversity of housing types
  - o The proposed project includes a small amount of infill housing.
- Living, working, learning, and playing mixed use
  - o As well as residential offering, the project will include a daycare center.
- Abundant active transportation and transit connections
  - o The project users and residents can take advantage of sidewalks on the main streets, and nearby retail, service, and medical facilities. The project is also located within walking distance of existing Chapel Hill Transit routes on Weaver Dairy Road and a 5-minute walk from the future BRT station on MLK Blvd. There are existing bus stops nearby on Weaver Dairy Road and on Martin Luther King Jr Blvd.
- Diversity of tenures
  - o The project is offering a mid-level product in an area that already has a lot of rental apartments and single-family homes.
- Designed for walking and cycling
  - o The infill project will take advantage of existing sidewalks.
- Parking lots are secondary
  - o Parking will be located behind the daycare building and will not be visible from the street. The townhome units will have garages or carports to keep cars interior to the site. Townhome units will back onto the garage drive and their front doors will face a small greenspace.
- “Eyes on the street” design
  - o The project does not address this element.
- Buildings with multiple uses
  - o The project is not large enough to include this element but will add to the retail, service, and residential uses already established.

## Future Land Use Map

The future land use map updated in December 2020 includes 6 focus areas. This project is located in sub area D of the North MLK Focus Area. The area calls for development primarily with multi-family residential, shops and offices, as well as parks and gathering spaces. Typical height would be 4-6 stories.

The FLUM calls out townhome use in this area as a secondary supported land use. In effort to support the Town's goal of increasing missing middle housing and provide a varied offering within this project, a townhome cluster is proposed at the south end of the site close to other neighboring residential uses.

The daycare use will be a 1-story building, and the townhomes will be 2-story. The narrowness of the parcel (185 LF excluding the electric easement) does not support taller buildings with aerial fire access needs.

## Mapped Transportation Features

The Town's mobility and connectivity plan indicates a bike lane on Weaver Dairy Road and future buffered/protected bike lanes. No new off-site improvements are proposed as part of this project.

