

Ferrington Place Planning Board Meeting  
July 11, 2006  
Comments Regarding Conditional Use **District**  
Nicolas P. Robinson

1. I am delighted to be here on behalf of Jesse Ferrington and also on behalf of the Board of Trustees for the Mount Pleasant United Methodist Church on Manns Chapel Road. Those of you who were at the public hearing will remember that Jesse Ferrington, a lifelong Chatham County resident with Chatham roots that go back generations is the applicant on this project. He is purchasing a portion of this property from the Church who inherited it from the late Lessie Harris.
2. We have requested a conditional use B-1 district with limited uses and request tonight that you make an affirmative recommendation to the Board Commissioners regarding this excellent project that will benefit Chatham County and its residents and has been carefully designed to fit within the fabric of the commercial area that already exists at the intersection.
3. At the public hearing on this matter and in the material filed with the application we have set out in great detail the reasons why this request for a conditional use B-1 district is sensible and reasonable and also in conformity with the letter and intent of the county land use plan.
4. The intersection is already a business hub as it is home to the Ferrington retail center, the Sawyers pest control building that is zoned for unlimited B-1 uses, as well as the Sprint PCS cell tower and the North Chatham Fire Department.
5. It is the only signalized intersection for a 5 mile span from Northwood High School to Ferrington Village.
6. It is the only signalized four way intersection from Northwood High School all the way to Cole Park Plaza, approximately 7 miles. The significance of that is that some of the traffic related to the project will inherently be diffused because some entry and exits can be made other than on 15-501.
7. The Land Use Plan makes very few references to commercial development but in a few important instances, it makes clear that this location is eligible and appropriate for commercial centers such as this one.
8. **HANDOUT:** The chart is very clear in pointing out that shopping centers are permitted in the Compact Communities Corridor. The draft map (also attached) shows you that this intersection is in the heart of the designated

Compact Communities Corridor. Don't get tripped up by the fact that it is a draft map because the Plan itself defines the corridor as including the land "along 15-501 north of Pittsboro."

9. Planning Staff has said that, in its opinion, this location does not meet the terms of the Land Use Plan as written.
10. If the Land use plan is interpreted in the same way it was interpreted to recommend approval of the Harris Teeter Shopping center, the Williams Corner center and the Briar Chapel commercial area (less than a mile away) it must also be interpreted to mean that commercial uses are appropriate at this location as well. There is no articulable or meaningful policy difference to justify this new interpretation of the Land Use plan. That difference would be very difficult to explain to Jesse Fearington and to the Mount Pleasant United Methodist Church.
11. This area is easily qualified as a Cross-roads Commercial Center or an Economic Development Center. The plan does not specifically identify intersection for such centers but it does refer to "a location in the northern part of the county within the 15-501 corridor." (page 33). It is difficult to assert in the face of the written content of the plan that this location is is not qualified for a commercial use.
12. In many ways, the orientation of this project is the prototypical and sought after "clustered and mixed use development," referred to in the Land Use Plan. It is located in a unique part of the County that combines a variety of nearby residential and commercial uses. For example, the project has Fearington Village nearby which is comprised not only of single family residential but also, multi-family and high density in the senior care center known as Galloway Ridge. Also nearby are the Creekwood estates subdivision and the Kentview South and North subdivisions. Blending this high-quality, non-strip center with the existing mixed use attributes of the surrounding neighborhood is a natural fit.
13. Being located as it is just across from Fearington Village currently approved for 1600 residential units and now seeking to enlarge to over 1800 residential units, it is ideally situated to capture the existing and future retail market, to serve the needs of nearby residents and to cut down on road congestion and pollution cause by vehicles driving all the way to Cole Park or Pittsboro.
14. It is also important to make reference to the various other provisions in the Land Use plan with which this proposal is consistent:

- A. "Site commercial uses along major highways in clusters at specific, designated locations, design these commercial sites to retain a rural cross-roads or village character. . ." *Land Use Plan, p. 10.*
  - B. "Site commercial clusters so that they might be able to be served by transit in the future, especially along U.S. 15-501 north of Pittsboro." *Land Use Plan, p. 10.*
  - C. "Site commercial clusters so that they extend up side roads off main thoroughfares . . ." *Land Use Plan, p.10*
  - D. With respect to economic development centers, the Land Use Plan specifically highlights locations "in the northern part of the County within the U.S. 15-501 corridor." *Land Use Plan, p. 33.*
- 15. There really should be no doubt that this location is appropriate for commercial uses under the Land Use Plan.
  - 16. Therefore, we respectfully request that a motion to recommend approval of the requested Conditional Use District be approved.
  - 17. Thank you.