

BOARD OF ALDERMEN

ITEM NO.: B(3)

AGENDA ITEM ABSTRACT

MEETING DATE: MARCH 9, 2004

TITLE: LIGHTING WORK SESSION AS PRESENTED BY THE NORTHERN TRANSITION AREA ADVISORY COMMITTEE

DEPARTMENT: PLANNING DEPARTMENT	PUBLIC HEARING: YES ___ No <u>X</u>
ATTACHMENTS: A. RESOLUTION B. MEMORANDUM TO THE BOARD. C. INTRODUCTION TO LIGHT POLLUTION D. ECONOMIC EFFECTS OF POOR LIGHTING E. LIGHTING AND CRIME F. SECTIONS 15-242 & 243 G. PUBLIC WORKS LIGHTING POLICY H. ORANGE COUNTY DRAFT LIGHTING ORDINANCE AMENDMENT I. DRAFT ORDINANCE SAMPLE	FOR INFORMATION CONTACT: JEFF KLEAVELAND, 918-7332

PURPOSE STATEMENT

The Northern Transition Area Advisory Committee (NTAAC) appreciates the opportunity to discuss with the Board, light pollution and other lighting issues as they pertain to the existing provisions of the Land Use Ordinance (LUO) governing outdoor lighting.

INFORMATION

The NTAAC began discussions in September 2002 regarding light pollution in Carrboro. This inquiry was prompted by the presence of unshielded acorn-style street lights in both the NTA and downtown areas. The committee finds that these fixtures are out of character with the NTA, cause significant light pollution and, can create a glare dangerous to nighttime driving in certain situations. Further research into the subject has led the committee to conclude that the Town of Carrboro would benefit from a more comprehensive lighting ordinance as detailed in the attached memorandum (**Attachment B**).

The NTAAC has provided the attached educational materials as a starting point toward a revised lighting ordinance. The introductory materials expand upon the nature of the light pollution (**Attachment C**), discuss the economics of lighting (**Attachment D**) and, address the security and crime issues pertaining to lighting design (**Attachment E**).

The Town's existing lighting policies consist of two components: 1) Sections in the LUO, administered by Zoning Division (**Attachment F**), and: 2) A "Street Lighting Policy", administered by the Public Works Department (**Attachment G**). The LUO Sections set requirements for new developments designed to ensure public safety and to restrict excessive illumination. This existing ordinance addresses light pollution by restricting fixture height to 15', limiting light trespass to .2 footcandles at the property line, and requiring fixtures that direct the light downward. The "Street Lighting Policy" does not

specifically address “adverse impacts” but instead requires public street lighting to meet or exceed national standards.

The NTAAC finds that the language of these policies adequate but not optimal. The Public Works policy does not address light pollution while the LUO ordinance does not provide situation-specific design guidelines. Neither of the existing policies includes provisions for amortizing non-compliant fixtures.

Note that Orange County is currently considering adopting a new lighting ordinance (**Attachment H**). The NTAAC has prepared a sample draft ordinance loosely based on the Orange County ordinance with slight modifications that deal with energy efficiency, lighting design and, amortization of non-compliant fixtures (**Attachment I**). The committee’s draft ordinance has not been sufficiently reviewed to be considered for amendment at this time.

ADMINISTRATION’S RECOMMENDATION

The administration recommends that the Board of Aldermen accept the attached lighting report from the Northern Transition Area Advisory Committee subject to the following conditions:

- 1) That the planning staff is directed to create a draft ordinance amendment using the lighting report as a reference.
- 2) That any draft ordinance remove any reference to amortizing existing lighting fixtures, and;
- 3) That any proposed ordinance applies to residential as well as non-residential areas.
- 4) That provisions relating to street lighting not be included in the Land Use Ordinance but be included in modifications to the existing Public Works “Street Lighting Policy”.