

# BOARD OF ALDERMEN

ITEM NO. D(5)

## AGENDA ITEM ABSTRACT MEETING DATE: January 15, 2008

**TITLE: Retreat Follow-Up Report Part II on Selected Recommendations made by Regional Technology Strategies, Inc related to “Creating Carrboro’s Economic Future”**

<b>DEPARTMENT: PLANNING</b>	<b>PUBLIC HEARING: YES ___ NO <u>X</u></b>
<b>ATTACHMENT:</b> A. Resolution B. Help in using the Land Use Ordinance	<b>FOR INFORMATION CONTACT:</b> Roy Williford, 918-7325

### PURPOSE:

The purpose of this item is to provide the Board of Aldermen with the second follow-up report on the final three of seven selected recommendations made by RTS Inc. in their September-2006 report entitled “Creating Carrboro’s Economic Future”. The remaining three recommendations include:

- 1) Pamphlet, handout, or web link summarizing how to use the LUO to find permissible uses, allowable density and FAR, and required process for different projects at different sites
- 2) Summary and/or separate sheet showing permissible uses by zone, and
- 3). Consider creating a similar, but parallel, parking table that outlines parking requirements by use rather than by 4-digit number. This would simplify the procedure for determining parking requirements

### INFORMATION:

According to the 9-06 RTS report “the town hired Regional Technology Strategies, Inc., a Carrboro-based organization, to assist the Town in creating a new economic roadmap. In approaching the project, RTS used the guidelines developed for the town to create a plan that will not only respect Carrboro’s unique character but use a Triple-Bottom Line approach to economic development. This approach ensures that economic development promotes environmental sustainability, allows for private sector growth, and promotes better jobs and services for the town’s residents.”

#### *Identify Current Development Obstacles*

The Town asked RTS to identify current development obstacles within the Land Use Ordinance (LUO) and within the land development approval process that may hinder the ability to achieve economic development goals. RTS reveals LUO and development approval obstacles in Section 6 (pages 36-38) of their report summarized as follows: LUO obstacles include complexity of the ordinance organized by regulation rather than by zone; organization of permissible use table; parking requirements referenced by use category rather than by use; and densities seem to be regulated by dwelling type or lot size. Development approval process obstacles include the appearance that the completeness, timeliness, and consistency of feedback and comments from staff

and the engineer are inconsistent; necessity of requiring fairly detailed engineering drawings early in the process; and strict LUO interpretation and compliance discourages more creative ideas because such an approach can be more time consuming, costly, risky and unpredictable.

#### LUO And Development Review Process Findings

Based in part upon this subjective analysis, RTS provides two out of 13 findings under Section 8 (pages 43-46) finding 12 and 13 related to the LUO and development review process:

12) *Commercial growth is impeded because the town is often perceived by developers as a costly and time consuming place to develop new projects.* To a certain degree Carrboro does not want to be an “easy” place for developers because it wants to ensure well-conceived projects that fit with the community and limit environmental impact. However, land use ordinances and a cumbersome review process not only discourage new development necessary to increase the commercial tax base, but also stifle “creative” new projects, such as green building or innovative design concepts, that could benefit the town. Unlike most communities, Carrboro’s Land Use Ordinances (LUOs) are organized by regulations, not by zone, making it cumbersome to find exactly what one can and cannot do on a parcel of land. Parking requirements are also difficult to find and interpret. Further, Carrboro’s development process entails many steps, and the completeness, timeliness, and substance of feedback from staff and the town’s outside engineer is inconsistent. In addition, the town requires fairly detailed and costly engineering drawings early in the process. Most jurisdictions require these details later in the process once a development “concept” appears to have support. Because of the strict interpretation of zoning and permissible uses—and the requirement for detailed engineering drawings early in the process—it is “risky” for developers to suggest anything creative.

13) *Positive steps have been taken to improve the development process in Carrboro.* In recent years Carrboro has taken measures to improve the development approval process. For example, it has created a Carrboro Development Guide and made planning staff available for development reviews prior to proposal submissions.

#### LUO And Development Review Process Recommendations

These as well as other findings, according to the RTS report, form the foundation for the LUO and development review process recommendations presented in section 10 (pages 48 and 49). The Board of Aldermen after reviewing these recommendations during their 2007 retreat referred the following seven items to the Planning Department for a follow up report:

1. Adding recommended sustainability guidelines pages 64-67 of the RTS report to development review process;
2. Impact of LUO requirements on home occupations;
3. Consider ways to evaluate town engineer’s performance under future contracts and establish specific steps for development process, incl. exactly what must be submitted and what expectations for review are.
4. Consider designating a planner/zoning development specialist position as an E.D. specialist.
5. Pamphlet, handout, or web link summarizing how to use LUO to find perm. Uses, allowable density and FAR, and required process for diff. projects at diff. sites
6. Summary and/or sep. sheet showing permissible uses by zone, and
7. Consider creating a similar, but parallel, parking table that outlines parking requirements by use rather than by 4-digit number. This would simplify the procedure for determining parking requirements.

The Board of Aldermen received a Part I report from the Planning Department on the first four recommendations during their June 12, 2007 Worksession and this Part II report presents a follow-up on the final three RTS recommendations 5 through 7.

## Follow-up Report on Recommendations 5 through 7

Recommendation 5:

Pamphlet, handout, or web link summarizing how to use LUO; to find permissible uses; allowable density and FAR, and required process for diff. projects at diff. sites.

The RTS Report stated that most developers are immediately interested in the particulars of a piece of property, such as the permitted uses, the permitted density, flexibility that may or may not exist (such as rezoning, or a Planned Unit Development (PUD); and the approval process. Although this is outlined in Carrboro's Development Guide, it might be helpful to have a small pamphlet, handout, or web link that summarizes (in a few pages) how to find this information in the LUO. This may be especially helpful for a developer, investor, or potential business interested in moving to Carrboro and in addressing economic development goals to determine if their project/property is viable. RTS recommended that the most important information should be informative as to:

- How to determine permissible uses;
- How to determine Density and Floor Area Ratio (FAR);
- How to determine the required process (although, depends on development intention)

A hand out entitled "Help in Using the LUO" with web links is provided in Attachment B to assist developers and other users find basic "how to get started" land use/zoning information on the Town's Web Page.

Recommendation 6



Summary and/or sep. sheet showing permissible uses by zone:

- a) Consider listing the permissible uses within each zoning category or create a separate but parallel table that lists uses by zone. A separate list may be needed for each zone. Although it seems redundant, it can help clarify misconceptions and simplify the procedure for determining the permitted uses within a particular zone and/or for a particular piece of property.

Users have two ways to obtain zoning district information from the Town's web site

[www.townofcarrboro.org](http://www.townofcarrboro.org):

One way is by simply clicking on the zoning map found on the web page's left hand menu under Departments, then Planning, then Zoning Division and then Zoning Map shown in the page block.

<http://townofcarrboro.org/pzi/zoningquery.htm>. Once the map is open then the user can search and find a particular lot or simply enlarge an area on the map using the  plus magnifying glass tool. The user can then using the red  tool click on the desired parcel which will display the information shown below the map and then click on the Zoning acronyms in the middle box entitled "Carrboro Zoning" which will list information about the zone including permissible uses.

Secondly, users can access the list of uses permitted in each zoning district by accessing the Town's web site at the following address:

<http://gis02.ci.carrboro.nc.us/Website/ZoningQuery/pickzone.asp>

This option provides a list of all zoning districts. The user should select a zone from the drop down box and click the "Get Zoning Information" button.

Carrboro Zoning and Development - Windows Internet Explorer

http://gis02.ci.carrboro.nc.us/website/zone/viewer.htm?ActiveLayer=14&Query=ZONING%20%3D%20%27WM3%27&QueryZoom=Yes

Google

Town of Carrboro, NC :: 919... Carrboro Zoning and Dev...

### Carrboro Zoning and Development

Layers

Visible Active

- Current Development
- Streets
- Carrboro City Limit
- Planning Jurisdiction Boundary
- Central Business District
- Apartments and Subdivisions
- Parks and Schools
- Properties
- Streams
- Water Bodies
- Zip Codes
- Carrboro Zoning
- Boundaries

Refresh Map

Use the lightning bolt tool (⚡) or the identify tool (📍) to find out about developments or zoning.

Zoom In

Done

Internet 100%

Rec	PIN	TMBL	Owner Address	Owner Name	Owner City	2nd Owner	Owner State	Site Address	Site Zip Code	In Carrboro?	Recorded Size	Tax Value	Owner Zip	GIS Estimated Acreage
1	9769219629	7.112B.A.2	105 DAVID MILLER CT	SAFFELLE MILTON F JR	CHAPEL HILL	& JEAN	NC	620 HWY 54 W	27516	OUT	A1.36	149016	27517-8841	1.36019643

**Water Bodies**

No Features found.

**Carrboro Zoning**

Rec	ZONING
1	<a href="#">WM3</a>

**Boundaries**

Rec	ID	Description
1	ETJ	Carrboro Extra-Territorial Jurisdiction

## WM3 Zoning District

[Get the Zoning Map](#)

### Section 15-137(b)

There is also established a watershed light industrial (WM-3) zoning district. The purpose of this district is to allow areas within the University Lake Watershed that have been zoned M-1 prior to the effective date of this subdivision to continue to be used and developed for light industrial and related purposes, subject to certain restrictions designed to protect the watershed. Consistent with the purpose of this zone, this district shall be confined to that area zoned M-1 on the effective date of this subsection; this area shall not be expanded and no new WM-3 areas shall be designated.

(AMENDED 12/7/83)

### Requirements for the WM3 Zoning District

Feature	Requirement
Boundary Setback	45
Centerline Setback	15
Cluster Min Sq Ft	
Maximum Height	35
Min Lot Size	40000
Min Lot Width	100
Min Sq Ft / Unit	0
R/W Setback	0

### Uses Allowed in the WM3 Zoning District

Category	Land Use	Required Permit
2.13	Wholesale Sales\ No Outside Storage	CUP
4.1	Manufacturing within fully enclosed bldg.	CUP
6.14	Community Ctr.(public/ non-profit)	Z
6.222	Outdoor Recreation on Public Lands operated by a public entity & not the Town	CUP
13.1	Police Stations	Z
13.2	Fire Stations	Z
13.3	Rescue, or Ambulance Service	CUP
13.4	Civil Defense Operation	CUP
15.8	Town-Owned Facilities and Services	Z
18.2	Towers & Antennas > 50 ft. tall & Satellite Dish	CUP
18.3	Antennas >50 ft.on structures other than towers [Not accessory15-150(c)5]	SUP
23.1	Temporary Construction. Structures/ parking on site	CUP
26.1	Major Subdivisions 5-12 Lots	CUP
26.1001	Major Subdivisions 13+ Lots	CUP
26.2	Minor Subdivisions 2-4 Lots	CUP
27	Combination Uses	Z, SUP, or CUP (15-154)

Recommendation 7

Create a similar, but parallel, parking table that outlines parking requirements by use rather than by 4-digit number:

Consider creating a similar, but parallel, parking table that outlines parking requirements by use rather than by 4-digit number. This would simplify the procedure for determining parking requirements.

The following link provides information about all uses permitted in the planning jurisdiction including the presumptive parking requirement for each use. The user should scroll down the list of uses and pick the one that they are interested in then click on the “get land use information” button at the bottom of the page. Following is an example of the type of information that is provided for “Wholesale Sales”:

<http://gis02.ci.carrboro.nc.us/Website/ZoningQuery/pickuse.asp>

**Land Use: Wholesale Sales\ No Outside Storage**

Use Category: 2.13

**WHOLESALE SALES**

On-premises sales of goods primarily to customers engaged in the business of reselling the goods.

**Presumptive Parking Requirements**

1 space per 400 square feet of gross floor area. Within the B1C, B1G, and B2 zoning districts, 1 space per 300 square feet of gross floor area. (AMENDED 2/4/97;1/11/00;5/18/04).

**Zones in Which Use is Permitted**

<b>Zone</b>	<b>Permit Required</b>
B1G	Z, C(>1 Acre)
B3T	Z, C(>2 Acre)
B4	Z, C(>2 Acre)
M1	Z, C(>2 Acre)
M2	Z, C(>2 Acre)
CT	CUP
B5	CUP
WM3	CUP
OA	Z, C(>2 Acre)

**RECOMMENDATION:**

The staff recommends that the Board of Aldermen Board consider adoption of the attached resolution (*Attachment A*) accepting this follow-up report on the final three of seven RTS recommendations.