

To: Chatham County Commissioners

From: Kimberly D. Lane,
Homeowner in the Willowbend Subdivision
262 Willowbend Dr. Chapel Hill, NC 27517
Phone #: 919-960-5054 or 919-883-6082

Ref: Proposed Re-zoning of land adjoining Willowbend Subdivision

Date: 9/15/2006

Please consider denying the request to rezone the property at the corner of Farrington Point Rd. and McGhee Rd. This matter is set for Public Hearing September 18th. As I understand it, George Farrell wishes to turn 17 acres of residential land into commercial property. This land touches only the corner of my 11 acre tract of land in the Willowbend Subdivision, but backs up directly to two other lots in my neighborhood. I strongly oppose any rezoning for several reasons. Namely, that I specifically relocated from Durham to Chatham County to get away from commercial development. I recognize that growth and development are quite often an unavoidable reality, but I cannot see the absolute necessity to have that particular piece of property as part of that growth. The person benefiting the most is the Developer, not the citizens of Chatham County. His proposal does not meet some great unfulfilled need for the community. It is not creating jobs for the citizens of Chatham County; it is not providing crucial services needed to sustain the people living in the immediate area. The road that this property is on is primarily residential with the exception of the businesses that the Developer already has on that road. I fear that his efforts to rezone will continue further on down that road as he obtains more property. The bottom line is that I do not want to see businesses spreading even closer to my back yard. I just finished building and moved in to my new home less than a year ago. Up until now, I have proudly referred to it as my dream home. A great deal of time, money and effort has been poured into that home and that piece of land. I never would have built there knowing that businesses and commercial storage would be popping up next door.

When I recently received word of this proposed rezoning, I immediately felt it was a bad idea. Having been in law enforcement for over 10 years, experience has shown that homes near businesses become easier targets for would-be thieves. Increased flow of people in and around neighborhoods, while they blend in as consumers, plus easy vehicle access make it easier for people to break and enter homes adjoining commercial properties. Although there will be some trees to serve as a buffer, people can easily park and gain access to the neighborhood on foot, while not attracting attention to their parked vehicle. Safety of property, however, is not my only concern with this proposed development. I currently have a 4600 square foot home that would be more difficult to sell with a business next door. People looking for homes of that size, on that much land, spending greater amounts of money, don't want to be near a business. The purpose of building in a secluded, rural neighborhood will now be defeated if you allow this proposal to pass. Just a few weeks ago, I stood in the middle of my field, at night, and told a friend how wonderful it was to finally be able to see every inch of the sky. There

were no buildings to obstruct my view, and no lights to disrupt the sparkling of the stars. Clearly this ideal setting is threatened. I now fear that commercial lighting will produce an unwelcome glow through the trees and project upward into the night sky. It may sound petty to some, but it means a lot to me. Yes, I am bothered that commercial development will interfere with the aesthetics of my property.

To put it simply, I am heart broken that everything I have worked for and dreamed of for so long, may be tainted by commercial property. I have met with Mr. Farrell and reviewed his proposed layout. My fear is that once the property is rezoned he can apply for building permits not reflected on that plan or make landscaping changes at any time. For now he proposes to keep a certain number of trees beyond the 20 feet requirement. This is probably a good selling feature for some, but there is nothing to stop him from changing his mind and reducing the buffer created by trees that are currently in the unregulated area. In addition, there is nothing to stop him from cutting a path for vehicle traffic down toward the end that meets the corner of my property. Although he may argue that his site plan is to my benefit, no one can guarantee that changes to that site plan won't occur once the property is rezoned. I would hate for everyone to get so caught up in his nicely laid out building and landscaping proposal, that they allow that to be the determining factor in rezoning. He has acknowledged to me that he is still debating on whether or not he will use the lower portion of the 17 acres for sewer. Currently that is what the site plan lays out, showing most of the trees remaining on that acreage. Yes, this is great for me, but he acknowledges the possibility of that changing. He does not actually have to put his sewer there because he has access across the street. He has said that he may utilize that piece of acreage for something else later on. In that case, I will be directly impacted because of the proximity to my land. In addition, I fear that this is just the beginning of more commercial development attempts by Mr. Farrell. He has indicated prior attempts to obtain several acres of land behind my lot, but has not yet been successful in brokering a deal. If his rezoning attempt is successful, I fear that I will be writing another letter to the Board in just a few years, begging you to stop the spread of commercial growth directly behind me. I am compelled to make a plea to you now, to stop this before it starts. Please don't put the needs of one business man above the needs of several homeowners. If you feel that his businesses will serve the greater good of the community I will have no choice but to accept your decision and move on. But please consider that this is actually one man's business goal at the expense of other people's happiness. Ask yourself if it is really that important to have several businesses/offices in that very spot. Ask yourself if you would be ok with this happening in your back yard after you went to such great lengths to build a new life and home in a new County. Before you vote, put yourself in my shoes. In fact, come out and see how beautiful my land is and then glance to the corner of the property, and imagine the changes that will disrupt that nice landscape.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Kimberly Dawn Lane