

March 17, 2008

TO: The Chatham County Board of Commissioners

**FROM: William Sommers, 1067 Fearington Post
Pittsboro, NC 27312**

**Subject: Commentary and Recommendations Regarding the Proposed
Extension of Galloway Ridge, Item 15 on your agenda**

- 1. My name is William Sommers and I live in Fearington Village. Since I am not a direct abuttor to Galloway Ridge, I cannot speak at the March 15 hearing. At the same time I regularly attend meetings in Galloway Ridge and also drive nearly everyday along Weathersfield at Galloway Ridge , leaving or entering via the 15/501 intersection. I have also vetted concerns on an earlier plan from Fitch Creations that proposed substantially increased traffic patterns onto Weathersfield Street from Galloway Ridge. Therefore, with your indulgence, I take the opportunity of this written memorandum to convey my concern on certain phases of the proposed Galloway Ridge expansion.**
- 2. It should be first noted that we are all generally in agreement about the proposed expansion of Galloway Ridge in that it will provide more and enchanced care and service to its residents. Moreover, Fearington Village residents and those of Galloway Ridge have shared their various resources; it was, in fact, a deliberate move on the part of the Fearington Homeowners Association, to give residents of Galloway Ridge the opportunity to share in the latter's activities under the rubric of "associate members." And many of us are encouraged by Galloway Ridge's growth in both residents and in the expanded care and activities provided to the residents.**
- 3. While the proposal that is now before the Board of Commissioners is generally a contribution to the welfare of Galloway Ridge and the Fearington Community, one aspect of the proposal gives cause for concern. In the Revised Master Plan of February 15, 2008, currently before to the Board of Commissioners considerable revision is proposed for the area fronting Weathersfield Road from the Galloway Ridge Road to Clynelish Close. The applicant proposes five changes:**
 - a. A new building for community arts**
 - b. A proposed primary care facility**
 - c. An added parking lot with 80 or more additional parking spaces**
 - d. A new private entry drive off Weathersfield**
 - e. An additional entry drive off Weathersfield if necessary**
- 4. If these five proposals are approved as submitted. they will greatly increase the traffic problem on Weathersfield and will exacerbate a perilous condition to the growing pedestrian traffic using the shoulders on both sides of Weathersfield where, unfortunately,**

there are no sidewalks. Many residents from both Galloway Ridge and Ferrington Village walk their dogs or walk for exercise along Weathersfield, especially during good weather. By substantially increasing activities alongside this portion of Weathersfield, including a substantial increase in parking and two proposed entry drives from - and onto - Weathersfield, and considering the expanded residential accommodations, these five items , if approved, will only encourage a potential rise in accidents - which even now are waiting to happen!

5. Many Ferrington and Galloway Ridge residents have complained about the absence of sidewalks on the lower side of Weathersfield between West Madison and Galloway Ridge Road. While much discussion has been spent on this problem, no effective solutions have been proposed. Yet the changes noted above - now under the Board's consideration - raise, in my opinion, the red flag of danger. It is imperative that the Board of Commissioners - and the Planning Board - carefully review the five items noted above with respect to their effect on traffic safety for current and future pedestrians who may be at risk if these proposals go unchallenged.

Moreover, it is surprising that the Application Summary carries little or no reference to the potential difficulties posed by the five proposals noted above to pedestrian traffic. On page 3 of the Application Summary, "parking" is mentioned but only in the context of "how the plan will meet the Appearance Commission standards for parking." It does not mention the traffic implications of the expanded parking lot near Weathersfield nor the two proposed private entry drives off Weathersfield. On page 9 the paragraph under the title "Traffic" concerns itself only with the relationship of Galloway Ridge and US 15-501.

6. Based on what has gone before, I respectfully submit the following recommendations to the Board of Commissioners:

a. That the Board request the Galloway Ridge developer to review these five items with the Planning Board with the aim of a more expanded analysis focusing on the protection of pedestrian traffic;

b. That the Board also request that the Galloway Ridge developer in cooperation with Fitch Creations and the Planning Board devise a plan for the construction of a well protected sidewalk on the lower side of Weathersfield Road, extending from Galloway Ridge Road to West Madison. This would entail meeting with the NC Division of Highways and should also include the Ferrington Home Owners' Committee on Road Safety.