

Comments by Joe Glasson, county resident, to Chatham County Planning Board
November 2, 2015

Until approximately 7 months ago I didn't know what a Family Care Home was nor the difference between a Family Care Home and an Adult Care Facility. I know now that one is designed to allow for limited patient services of 6 beds or less which can be placed in a residential environment where its patients can benefit from a residential atmosphere within residential zoning.

And an Adult Care Facility, housing 7 or more patient beds must gain a different level of licensing as well as being considered a commercial operation therefore adhering to commercial zoning requirements. I also found out that most Adult Care Facilities serve patients well beyond the 7 patient minimum, with most, due to savings in larger facility and consolidating operating costs, having patient beds averaging around 50 patients per.

When an FCH operator attempts to expand their footprint within a residential neighborhood by attempting to purchase residences within throwing distance of the original 6 bed facility, they are simply trying to gain more beds at lower cost while also attempting to circumvent NC Statute 168-22. That's where the local municipalities have stepped in. The provision of NC 168-22 allows for such local control, by stating, and I quote from the statute... "provided, however, that a political subdivision may prohibit a family care home from being located within a half mile radius of an existing family care home".

If you live in the towns of Apex, Cary, Chapel Hill, Sanford and, right here, Pittsboro, you and your neighbors are protected by having a buffer which prevents these operators from infringing on a neighborhood's character by their attempting to concentrate and consolidate services which are the domain of an Adult Care Facility and which are licensed and audited in a much different manner. If you live in nearby counties such as Wake, Harnett, Lee, Moore, Orange you are protected from this obvious intent to exploit the intent of the law. Those counties saw the threat and amended the text of their ordinances.

And Durham County's Planning Commission, in 2014, voted 13-0 to implement a buffer, with the County's Board of Commissioners voting unanimously thereafter in support. And quoting from Durham's Planning Director ... "upon analysis of other jurisdictions and court rulings, the JCCC determined that a separation requirement of 1,125 feet between family care homes, and the same separation requirement for group homes from other group or family care homes, would be reasonable and withstand court scrutiny if challenged. This separation standard represents an appropriate balance between not concentrating such facilities in neighborhoods and providing reasonable accommodation."

We welcome the current operator to our neighborhood. Limiting their expansion is simply good governance for our neighborhoods.

Thank You,
Joe Glasson