

ALDERMEN  
FROM PAGE 1

“We like the project and we think it would be an asset to the downtown. We didn’t think seven spaces would be too onerous,” he said.

Planning Board chair James Carnahan said there is still a need to make sure there is adequate parking available. He suggested that the developer find off-site parking for employees.

Speaking personally, Carnahan said that while the long-term goal is to reduce reliance on the automobile, the town was not there yet and should require the additional parking.

Jennifer McMillan, owner of Nested and one of several downtown merchants who have raised concerns about the parking, said the Roberson Square project’s impact on parking needs to be considered in context with other major developments downtown that will also have a large impact on the available spaces downtown. Having less parking and fewer people using cars is a “nice idea,” she said, but added: “It’s a nice idea that doesn’t work for businesses.”

The key to downtown Carrboro’s success, she said, was that there was ample, free parking. The town will need to very quickly address the paring crunch since spaces will continue to dwindle as the new developments come on line.

“Parking continues to go away,” she said. “I’m very alarmed that I don’t see anything coming down the road that would address or fix this.”

Last year, the board of aldermen approved The Alberta, a 46,360 square foot residential and retail center that will be built on Roberson Street and Sweet Bay Place on part of an existing lot that provided employee and overflow parking for Carr Mill Mall. One block east, a lot on the corner of Main Street and Roberson Street currently leased by the town will be dedicated to parking for the recently approved first phase of the large 300 East Main Street development.

The hearing was continued until the board of aldermen’s meeting on February 26. Between now and then, board members said they would like to see several points clarified, including how the parking would be divided among residences and businesses.

The board is also scheduled to review the downtown parking issue at its annual planning retreat next week. One item under study is whether developers would be able to provide a payment in lieu to the town instead of the full complement of parking required under the ordinances. The town could then use the funds to provide its own parking facilities. Currently, the town leases much of its downtown parking from private property owners.

CORRECTION

We mixed up the photos on Flora last week. For easy comparison, here are the Sweet Gum and the Winged Elm with the correct captions. Photos by Ken Moore.



Flat corky Winged Elm branch



Irregular corky growth on Sweet Gum branch

TACO TRUCKS  
FROM PAGE 1

“I think the taco trucks are a great local business that a lot of people like and benefit from,” Chilton wrote in an email response to an inquiry by *The Citizen*. “I want to find a way that they can sell their tacos and comply with the town’s ordinances.”

Board of Aldermen member Jacquie Gist said she was unhappy to see the action taken on the basis of an anonymous complaint, saying it makes it hard to understand why the complaint was filed and what its motivation was.

“I am very worried by the real possibility that hard working entrepreneurs who are adding to our community could be put out of business and have their livelihood threatened. It is un-American and certainly un-Carrboro. If Carrboro can not offer a welcoming home to immigrants trying to achieve the American Dream then maybe I don’t know Carrboro as well as I think I do,” she wrote in an email response to *The Citizen*, adding that she had confidence that the town would find a workable solution.

Cliff Collins, owner of Cliff’s Meat Market, said he would likely file an appeal if necessary to keep the trucks in operation.

“I guess I understand both sides,” he said. “I don’t want to hurt anybody’s business. But I

really think these trucks are an asset to our downtown.”

Collins said the trucks operate mainly at night and stay open later than most food establishments, adding to the vitality of the nightlife.

Mac Fitch said he has never had any complaints or known of any trouble with the truck that’s parked at Fitch Lumber for about a year. “I’ve had absolutely no problem,” he said, adding that he doesn’t understand why the town sent him the letter. “I don’t know why they’re dragging me into it.” Fitch said the gentleman who runs the truck dropped by Fitch Lumber Wednesday and was given a copy of the letter. He said he has heard that the taco truck was quite popular and hoped that any dispute with the town is worked out.

The trucks are permitted to sell food by the Orange County Health Department as long as they are working in conjunction with an approved and inspected commissary, according to Tom Konsler, Orange County’s Environmental Health Supervisor.



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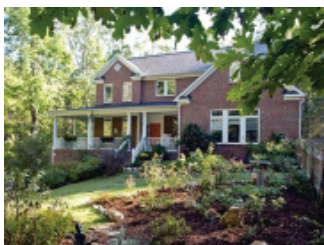
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