



CARRBORO BUSINESS ALLIANCE

Leadership Council

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Chair of the Board

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Taproom
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Nathan Milian

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The ArtsCenter
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Barbara Jessie Black

PTA Thrift Shops

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Scott Conary

Open Eye Café

Betsey Elbogen

Perch Coworking

Debra Markley

Piedmont Health

Rae Mosher

Carrburritos

December 27, 2018

Dear Carrboro Mayor Lavelle and Aldermen,

The Carrboro Business Alliance set five policy goals for 2018-2019, and the number one priority is “**no net loss of parking.**”

The approved design for The 203 Project will take out of service 100 existing spaces on the S. Greensboro Street surface lot and not meet the new parking demand it will create. Our concerns about this substantial net loss in parking is heightened with the understanding that the most recent 203 Project design reduces on-site parking even further.

As you know from our [statement](#) on the 203 Project: “We believe the library and an arts facility would be integral part of the overall mix of business uses necessary for a vibrant downtown and would bring welcome diversity and potentially more visitors and shoppers - provided that the existing parking is replaced and the appropriate amount of new parking is provided for the demand necessitated by those uses.”

To address parking challenges, town staff developed a parking plan that prioritizes shoppers and makes good progress, but all agreed there is more to do.

On October 30, 2018, the [Carrboro Business Alliance and the Town of Carrboro co-convened an important discussion on short- and long-term parking](#) with nearly 30 local business owners and town leaders actively participating. The collaborative meeting took place at the ArtsCenter; included those who have parking, those who manage parking, those who need parking, and those with experience in creative parking solutions; and helped generate feedback and new solutions.

At the start of the meeting, the group agreed that the town should actively and immediately implement recommendations from town staff (especially enforcement and nearby lot leasing options) and the Parking Study (especially the deck feasibility, enforcement, and annual data collection).

The following are additional tactics that can help remedy this situation as well as contribute to a long-term comprehensive approach to parking in downtown Carrboro. These recommendations emerged from the constructive meeting on Oct 30, were reinforced during the follow-up meeting on Nov 13, and endorsed by the Carrboro Business Alliance Leadership Council on December 18, 2018:

- 1) **Surface Lots & Deck** – Secure additional land in close proximity to the 203 Project site to ensure the appropriate amount of parking in/near the design. In addition to, or alternatively, use the lots behind the E. Main Street businesses (from Tyler’s to Armadillo Grill) for a deck along Roberson Street.
- 2) **Policy Changes & Rezoning** – Implement policy changes to clearly allow for private leasing of parking and expedite more parking solutions. Rezone some lots to allow for ease of private, dense, multi-use redevelopment with parking decks.
- 3) **Fees & Enforcement** – Create consistent parking rules and enforce them; begin charging for parking and implement a parking payment app (ie: Park Mobile).
- 4) **Shuttles** – Increase and extend bus transit offerings and implement a shuttle.
- 5) **Staffing & Collaboration** – Ensure appropriate town staff capacity to implement comprehensive short-term and long-term parking solutions and explore cooperative agreements with the Town of Chapel Hill related to a variety of parking elements including enforcement and the leasing of additional spaces.

In summary, the 203 Project design has a significant parking problem. We believe this project should not proceed, nor can it continue to earn our support, without appropriately addressing the loss of existing parking and accommodating for the new demand generated by the project. New comprehensive parking solutions are available and the Carrboro Business Alliance is committed to working with the Town to help uncover and implement them.

I can speak personally and on behalf of many of my peer entrepreneurs in saying that it is more difficult than ever to run a local business. Margins are razor thin, online competition is fierce, and parking challenges unnecessarily compound these complex realities. For the sake of a vibrant local economy that we can all enjoy, please carefully consider our recommendations and implement as many as possible as quickly as possible.

Sincerely,

Bridget Pemberton-Smith

Bridget Pemberton-Smith
Chair, Carrboro Business Alliance
Co-owner, Cameron’s