



Preserving and Conserving the Nature of the Neighborhood

P.O. Box 17702 / Raleigh, NC 27619

## **Public Statement, November 1, 2008**

Subject: Z-40-08/SSP-3-08 Oberlin Road and Clark Avenue  
SP-125-07 Stanhope Center

Members of Community SCALE of Raleigh are disappointed in the City Council's recent votes to approve rezoning of property at the northeast corner of Oberlin Road and Clark Avenue and to approve the Stanhope Center site plan.

The Council's vote to approve the Oberlin Road and Clark Avenue rezoning and Streetscape and Parking Plan occurred without a comprehensive evaluation of the future impacts of redevelopment on infrastructure and the surrounding neighborhoods. The rush to approve the project dismisses concerns about longer-term impacts on the neighborhoods and the City. If conditions have changed such that the Wade/Oberlin Small Area Plan needs updating, then that process should have taken place before approving this project.

The Council's vote to approve the Stanhope Site Plan rejects the small area plans jointly developed and approved several years ago by the area property owners and the City. The approved development is in conflict with these previously approved plans; thus the Council's vote appears to place greater value on current development economic interests than on the City's investment in planning processes and the established interests of the Stanhope neighborhood.

Raleigh citizens and City staff and elected officials invested considerable resources to develop and codify small area plans for Oberlin/Clark and Stanhope. Invoking fiduciary interests to justify approval of zoning cases suggests that immediate financial considerations trump officially approved plans as well as the interests of affected citizens. With so much time and effort involved in obtaining citizens' input, for the City to now dismiss those plans sets a bad precedent.

Planning Commission recommendations on these two projects highlight the need for a highly qualified and well-balanced commission that can work with Council and staff as the unbiased policy-making body that citizens of Raleigh expect and deserve. As the City revises its comprehensive plan for future development, it is essential for Raleigh to have a Planning Commission whose members understand how the zoning code affects the cases coming before the Commission, and it is important to respect the planning processes and comply with adopted plans. Otherwise, the City creates more unpredictability for all parties and erodes respect and trust in city government.

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**Community SCALE's mission is to preserve the character and integrity  
of Raleigh's diverse neighborhoods.**