

Community Workshops

What is it?

The community workshop is a neighborhood meeting in which concerned residents provide input regarding the future direction of the community. The community workshop also provides a forum for residents to voice concerns regarding issues already within the community. In these workshops, the residents all have an equal voice. The residents' concerns, issues and visions were documented by the development team for use during the conceptual design phase. This phase of the design process is one of the most important elements in preparing a master plan. This feedback provides the development team with necessary information and history background to successfully input change within the community.

Process

The initial community workshops were conducted during the Summer of 2003. A workshop for Clusters One and Two was conducted on June 28, Clusters Three & Four on June 21, 2003 and a workshop for Cluster Five was conducted on July 19 with over 350 residents and City officials attending. The workshops brought together the neighborhood residents, the City staff, elected officials and the development team into one room to work out a vision for the community. The residents were able to communicate directly with the development team regarding their thoughts on what their neighborhood currently is and what it could become. The residents were encouraged to think of what they would want their neighborhood to look and feel like. On a larger scale, elements included identifying what goods and services were needed within the community, and on a smaller scale where bus stops should be located.

At the beginning of the workshop, the residents were asked to participate in a visual preference survey. This survey showed images of various types of land uses, housing styles, streetscape elements and neighborhood monuments or identifications. The residents were asked to rank images on how much they liked each image and each image's appropriateness in their community. The summary of these findings painted a picture, which guided the development team during the design phase.

In addition to the preference survey, the design team conducted a "table planning" process. Residents, City staff and elected officials were divided into tables representing the five clusters within the East Central City. At these tables the residents were encouraged to describe their community. Items included the positives and negatives within their neighborhoods as well as important issues facing their community. In many cases the City staff, who were also participating in the "table planning" process, were able to address the residents concerns. All these thoughts were written down and videotaped by the development team and were incorporated into workshop summaries. Once these issues were "on the table", the development team assisted the residents in



"A better and more detailed need for community involvement as a whole not in a separate vein, because we all have to live together."



Community Workshops

developing a concept plan for their respective cluster. This conceptual plan will provide the foundation for all future master plans and assisted in identifying the potential catalyst projects for each cluster. At the end of each workshop, each group's plan was presented to all the residents in attendance. This enabled all the resident's citizens to see what everyone else was thinking and too provide additional input. These conceptual master plans as well as the results from the visual preference survey and each resident's responses were collected and published as the **Neighborhood Design Workshop Findings**.

Summary

The following items are representative comments taken from the results from initial workshop findings.

Positives

- ◆ Family Oriented Environment
- ◆ Location
- ◆ History
- ◆ Diversity
- ◆ Parks

Negatives

- ◆ Lack of Code enforcement
- ◆ Vacant Lots
- ◆ Dilapidated Houses
- ◆ Gonzales Gardens
- ◆ Crime

Needs

- ◆ Affordable housing
- ◆ Single-family housing
- ◆ Owner-Occupied housing
- ◆ Parks
- ◆ Renovation of existing structures
- ◆ Street lighting
- ◆ Sidewalk maintenance
- ◆ Basic retail services



"It is very important to keep a safe productive family-oriented community with access for our children and elderly residents to be conducive for learning and productivity."



Community Analysis

On November 22, 2003, the development team presented their findings, and reviewed the proposed conceptual Land-Use Plans and conceptual catalyst programs to the community. After the presentation, residents were encouraged to evaluate the proposals and participate in a second round of table planning sessions. During this time, residents were able to ask the development teams questions and critique the design proposals. The following items were comments collected from the community questionnaire following the conceptual Land-Use and Catalyst presentations:

Land Use Plan

What are your general impressions of the proposed land use plan for your neighborhood cluster?

- ◆ Excellent.
- ◆ Overall it is very good; it will certainly add to the area.
- ◆ The area/neighborhood is prime for uplift and restoration.
- ◆ Very impressed with the proposed land plan.
- ◆ I am impressed by the work that has been done so far, and I am in favor of the proposed land use plan. I especially like the idea of multi-use buildings and creating neighborhoods that people can live in all during their lifetime, even if they move to different housing within the same neighborhood.
- ◆ Put in mix-use (grocery, dry cleaner) and put in sidewalks.
- ◆ Gonzales Gardens (drugs) clean up.
- ◆ Idea looks good, also needs more direction into community planning.
- ◆ Proposals seem to make a positive difference.
- ◆ Take in Midland Shopping center (to include it).
- ◆ How soon & where will the money come from?
- ◆ Good where implemented.
- ◆ Great plans, attention to detail has been great.
- ◆ Most concerned about paving of sidewalks.
- ◆ Impressed with overall plan.
- ◆ The general land use plan in its earliest form looks good. We just certainly need to ensure we as residents remain active and vigilant.
- ◆ Gonzales Gardens and overcome drugs.
- ◆ I think the plan will be great and the improvement to our community.
- ◆ We plan to push our cluster group and our neighborhood meetings.
- ◆ Looks great!
- ◆ Good idea, protective, can only improve the neighborhood.
- ◆ I like the general proposed plans.
- ◆ Much needed.



"The general land use plan in its earliest form looks good. We just certainly need to ensure we as residents remain active and vigilant."



"Hopefully this will be done soon."

- ◆ Sounds good. Is this just talk?
- ◆ Better than nothing – good if implemented soon.
- ◆ It's a great improvement for my area.
- ◆ Good.
- ◆ I am very impressed with the proposed land use plan for the neighborhood.
- ◆ The plan is wonderful, just what our area needs. Great plan.
- ◆ Very good, this is an outstanding opportunity for us to come together and become neighbors with more in common than I've realized before.
- ◆ Great! Great! Great! A great plan!
- ◆ Hopefully this will be done soon.
- ◆ From the meeting I observed very little change from all that has been proposed thus far.
- ◆ Very good.

What elements that are still needed in your neighborhood, have not been reflected in the land use plan?

- ◆ Bike pathways.
- ◆ Sidewalks & lighting – possibly park improvements to make it more family friendly.
- ◆ How much/ or what status would the commercial component play? i.e. food stores, laundrymats, gas stations, etc.
- ◆ Bus transit location – to keep buses from holding up traffic.
- ◆ Educational Destinations – Public library would add to the community.
- ◆ Sidewalks throughout each neighborhood, a new U.S. Post office & Library, a Recreation Center.
- ◆ Sidewalk & Sewer.
- ◆ Need more information – earlier instance of planning areas in which offering people who live there to be on these planning committees.
- ◆ Need a central library.
- ◆ Midland Shopping Center needs to be included in boundaries and study of how property can be used.
- ◆ Parking – solving street parking issues.
- ◆ More multifamily development. Neighborhoods will all need to understand mixed-use.
- ◆ Better street lighting.
- ◆ New use for Midland Shopping Center and Central Carolina Academy should be considered catalyst.
- ◆ Vacant lots and cars cleaning and remove.
- ◆ Vacant lots – sidewalks, etc.
- ◆ Bicycle paths, crime & security measures.



"Midland Shopping Center needs to be included in boundaries and study of how property can be used."



"Is this just talk?"

- ◆ Parks, recreation areas for children.
- ◆ Quality of housing.
- ◆ Library.
- ◆ Walking & Bike trails.
- ◆ Curbs & sidewalks on all side streets. If no place for sidewalks, please put curbs on all side streets.
- ◆ Drainage on Louise & Barhamville.
- ◆ Public Library.
- ◆ Believe you have addressed most of our problems.
- ◆ Improved lighting, walking trails.
- ◆ Along Two-Notch, Cluster Four – Commercial businesses to address venture that cater to the neighborhood residential and student communities as well as, to cater to visitors coming to games and other college and community events.
- ◆ We need a library and park for the children.
- ◆ Has the widening of Two Notch been considered and could the widening be incorporated. Maybe two notch needs to zigzag rather than straight

What issues still needed to be addressed in your neighborhood?

- ◆ Homelessness in relationship to foot traffic and homeowners' security.
- ◆ We have drug problems coupled with absentee landlords.
- ◆ Abandoned houses, rentals, city services.
- ◆ Bicycle path lanes. Something to slow the traffic down on Barhamville Rd and Kuban Substation.
- ◆ Clean neighborhood; stealing and drugs and commercial area.
- ◆ Drug; crime; low income housing; more police patrolling; monitoring in a more control time; response time to assist elderly members of the living area.
- ◆ Security, noise, clean-up and general policing. We as a community organization have complained about loud stereos in cars in the entire neighborhood.
- ◆ Responses to the issues are not taken in account in a timely manner.
- ◆ Note: some response has been w/ Lt. Johnson Stocker.
- ◆ Sidewalks would be an improvement and some properties on Harrison Rd are eyesores.
- ◆ Midland Shopping Center.
- ◆ Re-stripe parking spaces.
- ◆ Issues of street drainage, junk & other refuse on the 2300 block of Richland Street.
- ◆ City needs to be more proactive on cleaning streets and picking up junk.
- ◆ On street parking needs to be available for residents (people are parking in front of my house).



“Along Two-Notch, in Cluster Four – Commercial businesses to address venture that cater to the neighborhood residential and student communities as well as, to cater to visitors coming to games and other college and community events.”



“Responses to the issues are not taken into account in a timely manner.”

- ◆ Abandoned cars prevent street cleaning.
- ◆ Sidewalks need cleaning.
- ◆ More parking.
- ◆ Harrison Rd & Pinehurst Rd – sidewalks.
- ◆ Zoning enforcement.
- ◆ Infrastructure maintenance.
- ◆ Clean-up James Town (Food Lion).
- ◆ The cleaning up of your lots abandoned cars.
- ◆ Traffic is heavy on this street – school children, etc.
- ◆ Pulliam Ford “try outs”.
- ◆ Run down trailer park – (Victory St & Dubard) – excessive drugs & drinking in there.
- ◆ Sources of crime – access from sources.
- ◆ Crime.
- ◆ Water drainage on Santee near MLK Park.
- ◆ Double parking on one street leaving a narrow driving space.
- ◆ I want to see more palmetto trees in the whole area.
- ◆ Recreation for the youth.
- ◆ Curbs & green space.
- ◆ Library.
- ◆ Over growth of trees on my back yard fence, it’s a concrete wall that borders the property, trees are damaging the wall.
- ◆ My neighborhood was not addressed. There is an apartment complex on the corner of Water Street/ Manse Street and several houses on Shaw Street and 5 apartments that all need to be torn down. They are an eyesore to the other neighbors who try to improve their homes. In addition, there is a lot of traffic.
- ◆ Traffic and parking on Oak St.
- ◆ Crime & more lighting, some areas are very dark.
- ◆ A new library & more area parks for our children/ grandchildren.
- ◆ Oak St corridor as an established campus grounds.
- ◆ Remove apartments in community.
- ◆ Apartments are far too many.
- ◆ Streets with curbs and sidewalks (curbs not sloped sides).
- ◆ Include Rochelle Heights, Covenant Rd up Two Notch to Beltline.

Catalyst Plans

What are your impressions of the proposed catalyst for your neighborhood/ cluster?

- ◆ My impressions focus on the area between Harden and



“A new library & more area parks for our children / grandchildren.”



“City needs to be more proactive in cleaning the streets and picking up junk.”

- Two Notch along Elmwood Street.
- ◆ Good if implemented.
- ◆ Very good, to make our area a better place for us to live.
- ◆ Very good.
- ◆ In Cluster Three, three were identified. Okay with them.
- ◆ The plans are great, but I feel the three planners need to present their plans to the neighborhood.
- ◆ The catalyst plans seem good. Focus on cleaning up & beautifying Green Street.
- ◆ Good, productive will improve the neighborhood.
- ◆ Very good, need more information.
- ◆ Excellent, deal with Gonzales Gardens first.
- ◆ Seem to be good – Arbor Hill – Midland Shopping Center, etc.
- ◆ I am looking forward to the change.
- ◆ Very good.
- ◆ Excellent.
- ◆ Great projects, great design.
- ◆ Don't make them so straight, use more curves and various shapes, and allow for parking off street that would also encourage use of the front door.
- ◆ Great.
- ◆ Plans for Schoolhouse Rd are attractive and will be a nice improvement to neighborhood.
- ◆ I like them. We need more single-family housing especially. I agree that the neighborhoods in Cluster 3 need to be connected better by doing something about the railroad track.
- ◆ Didn't get it all.
- ◆ I think this is an excellent plan and it is wonderful to continue with community members input.
- ◆ Yes on Schoolhouse Rd. The logistics of getting this done can be a problem.

Do these projects enhance or improve your neighborhood? If not, why?

- ◆ Yes & No – Benedict College has a master plan, city & neighborhoods need a master plan for remaining community. Put these plans together in action.
- ◆ Yes.
- ◆ Yes, they do.
- ◆ Yes, can this be done in my lifetime?
- ◆ They do improve the neighborhood.
- ◆ Improve yes.
- ◆ Improve & enhance.
- ◆ Could enhance.
- ◆ Will improve when put into action.



"I am looking forward to the change."



- ◆ Any improvement would enhance the neighborhood.
- ◆ There is overall improvement.
- ◆ Improve.
- ◆ This project is a definite improvement to neighborhood.
- ◆ Yes, everything doing fine.
- ◆ Yes, the project enhances.
- ◆ Enhance.
- ◆ Improve neighborhood.
- ◆ Enhance greatly.

Additional Comments

- ◆ Keep up the good work.
- ◆ Check on houses that no one lives in in the neighborhood.
- ◆ I would like to see African-American as vendors, construction contractors, facilitators, and leaders in this planning process.
- ◆ Don't have enough time to finish filling this out. How about sending us a sheet to fill out that we can mail back in or take it to our next neighborhood meeting & give it to the president.
- ◆ Got to pick up the kids – will review thoughts. We (FHNA in conjunction with Lyons) are committed to high quality urban living. A concern comes from translation to implementation: great plan & awarding the planning construction contracts to developers who do not share our commitment to quality – 235 homes built in late 60's to early 70's comes to mind — BR.
- ◆ Keep up the neighborhood meetings. Communication is the key to success.
- ◆ Comments of the people really taken in consideration by the very good East Central City Consortium, Inc.
- ◆ Thank you for working so hard on this project and for getting our input.
- ◆ Residents will need help with financing to help with some home renovations.
- ◆ I like the idea that each neighborhood has an icon or a focal point as park or public space area.



"I like the idea that each neighborhood has an icon or a focal point as park or public space area."



"Yes, can this be done in my lifetime?"