

MINUTES
Parking and Housing Issues Near Colleges and Universities
November 15, 2012

Citizens In Attendance:

Mark Norman	Martin Zimmerman	Jamie Huller	Anayo Ezeigbo
Tad Reynolds	Keith Wassum	Keith MacVean	Sean Langley
Stefan Pienkny	James Minton	James Swick	Lindsay Ruebens
Morgan Ridenhour	Joe Padilla	Shane Seagle	Ken Szymanski
Joe Padasso	Peter Franz	Crystal Swick	Bill Waters
Joe Green	Ken Burrows	Rich Austin	Mary Hopper
Meredith Edge	Lisa Mirman		

Staff In Attendance:

Michelle Jones, Planning Department	Barry Mosley, Planning Department	Laura Harmon, Planning Department
Katrina Young, Planning Department	Sandra Montgomery, Planning Department	Rick Grochoske, CDOT
Brent Wilkinson, Planning Department	Michael Cataldo, Planning Department	Lisa Arnold, Neighborhood & Business Services
Spencer Cochran, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department	Jason Lawrence, CDOT	J. Hulsey, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department
Krista Dodd, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department	Captain F. Lester, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department	Lt. D. Johnson, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department
Officer R. Botzenmayer, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department	Joe Carey, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department	Rich Austin, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department

Planning Commission Members in Attendance:

Greg Phipps

1. Welcome and Introductions

Michelle Jones welcomed everyone to the meeting, which began at 6:08 p.m., and introduced herself and Barry Mosley, as the co-managers of this project. Everyone present was asked to introduce themselves to the group.

2. Presentation

Mr. Mosley gave a brief overview of the project, including project initiation by City Council, and background information. The ground rules for the meetings, and the roles and responsibilities of both the citizen advisory group members and Planning staff were reviewed. Mr. Mosley noted that leasing by the bedroom is not a use allowed in the Zoning Ordinance currently. A number of other issues are involved besides zoning: parking and transportation, building code, and public safety. All these issues will be discussed.

At the kick-off meeting held in October, a number of questions were asked about crime statistics. While the group will discuss crime issues at the November 27th meeting, Mr. Mosley introduced Lt. Dave Johnson of the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department's University City Division Response Area 2, who will provide some information related to the public safety issues raised at the October 17th meeting.

Lt. Johnson provided the following statistics about the University City Division Response Area 2 which is bounded by I-85, Old Concord, Harris Boulevard and the County line:

- There are 53 multi-family communities, of which 14 (26%) of those rent by the room in University City Response Area 2.

- 2011 Crime Statistics in Response Area 2:
 - 961 Part 1 crimes (homicide, rape, robbery, aggravated assault, burglary, theft, and arson)
 - 533 (55%) of Part 1 crimes occurred in multi-family communities
 - 230 Part 1 crimes occurred in the 14 communities that rent by the room
 - This accounted for 24% of the Response Area 2 Crime
 - This accounted for 43% of Multi-Family Crime
 - In spite of only being 14% of multi-family communities

- 2012 Year to Date Crime Statistics in Response Area 2:
 - 859 Part 1 crimes (YTD)
 - 447 (36%) of Part 1 crimes occurred within multi-family communities (YTD)
 - 161 (19%) of Part 1 crimes occurred in rent by the bedroom communities (YTD)
 - The 14 rent by the bedroom communities have accounted for 45% of CMPD service time (911 calls and officer generated calls) within multi-family communities (6,448 hrs/14,078 hrs). [This data does not include off-duty police]. (YTD)

Lt. Johnson noted that students generally migrate to newer communities, leaving the older communities. This leads to the following situations:

- Higher potential for theft and burglary.
- Students are being placed with and around non-students.
- An increase of students being victimized.
- As these units age, they are populated with more non-students and become low-income housing option.
- Lack of safety and security features in the communities and in individual units.
- High density of drug related crime.

The contributing factors are:

- Standards area well below that of campus housing.
- Non-students are being housed with students.
- Lack of security measures:
 - Doors
 - Hollow core, inferior hardware (knobs/locks/screws)
 - Video surveillance
 - Nonexistent or inadequate
 - On site security
 - Nonexistent or ineffective
 - Flawed or relaxed screening of applicants
- High concentration of drug related crimes
 - Large customer base
 - Low overhead
 - Breeds violence/robberies

Lt. Johnson presented a map showing the location of the 14 rent by the room communities in Response Area 2 that also showed the location of probationers in 2012 and the location of high, medium and low numbers of Part 1 crimes. The map showed the concentration of Part 1 crime along Old Concord Road, Mallard Creek, N.C. 29, which surround the UNCC campus on University City Boulevard.

Mr. Mosley continued his presentation of additional information:

- Zoning and Land Use Issues:
 - The Zoning Ordinance does not define or permit “lease by the bedroom” or a similar use.
 - Density and parking are currently calculated per dwelling unit, not by bedroom
 - Typically, these types of communities are located close to single family neighborhoods.
- Building Code Issues:
 - There is no local building code; the North Carolina Building Code is the standard that is used for congregate living facilities, dormitories and multi-family units in Charlotte.
- Transportation Issues:
 - Issues include parking demands, parking ratios, parking overflow, traffic generation, public transportation, and traffic impacts.

He noted that staff is reviewing Zoning Ordinances from both national and regional cities, including Austin, Charlottesville, Houston, Philadelphia, Portland, San Diego, St. Paul, Chicago, Chapel Hill, Durham, Greenville, Raleigh, Charleston, Clemson, and Columbia to determine if they have student housing regulations. Some cities have categories for commercial dormitories, limit the number of related people that can be in a unit, or limit the number of people in a unit, and/or have student housing codes.

Mr. Mosley asked for questions:

- A question was asked about this process moving toward a text amendment. Staff responded that the end result may be a text amendment.
- Will the Department of Insurance and Building Code experts speak at these meetings? Staff responded that either experts would speak, or that the information would be conveyed by staff to CAG members.
- An observation was made to be careful about the Fair Housing Act. It may not be possible to restrict who you can rent to. Staff responded that yes, this was important to take this into consideration, and it will be closely reviewed.

There were no further questions.

3. ***Break-Out Sessions***

Mr. Mosley asked CAG members to break into four groups, Blue, Red, Yellow and Green, and move into designated rooms to address four questions and then report the group responses back to the larger group in 30 minutes. Each group was instructed to select a scribe to record the notes and a spokesperson to report the groups findings back to the entire CAG.

4. ***Report Back***

The break-out group responses are summarized below:

Blue Group:

1. What are the Issues?
 - Parking
 - Crime
 - Rent by the room
 - Student identification
 - Fair Housing Act
2. Should the Use be Permitted? Why, why not?
 - Everyone agreed that the use should be permitted. It has been a use near the university for years. Not all university markets would be good for this use, but the market will determine where it is feasible.

3. Should the Use be Limited to Students?
 - Yes, this use is usually located within 2-3 miles of a university/college that supports it. True students want to live near the university to enjoy the amenities and activities associated with the school.
4. What works in other Cities?
 - Good management practices
 - Using Facebook to allow students to meet potential student roommates
 - Hosting social events to help students find roommates.
 - Requiring high credit scores that require co-signers by parent of students
 - Providing parking at 1.1 spaces to 1.2 spaces per room is needed. Every student has a car to get from parent's home to school. The student doesn't need to use the car if public transit is nearby or if there is a shuttle provided. This ratio also allows for guest parking.

Red Group:

1. What are the Issues?
 - Safety of residents and students
 - Influx of college students in homes and condos in area, too.
 - Students park in nearby neighborhoods to avoid fees on campus. Too expensive to park on campus.
 - Number of acceptable renters per unit.
 - Crime, probationers
 - Relationship between universities and developers
2. Should the Use be Permitted? Why, why not?
 - Yes, but with regulations/standards. Safety for students is important and needed. Don't want probationers.
3. Should the Use be Limited to Students?
 - Yes, this use is usually located within 2-3 miles of a university/college that supports it. True students want to live near the university to enjoy the amenities and activities associated with the school.
4. What works in other Cities?
 - Look at Wake Forest, Alabama
 - Proper lighting
 - Low shrubbery

Green Group:

1. What are the Issues?
 - Crime
 - Units converted to lower rents
 - Provide needed housing
 - Include single family housing in rent by room
 - Fair Housing Act
2. Should the Use be Permitted? Why, why not?
 - Yes, but with restrictions.
3. Should the Use be Limited to Students?
 - Yes, for now. Could be expanded at a later time to include others.
4. What works in other Cities?
 - Roommate matching
 - Safety required
 - Better locks, doors
 - Call boxes

Yellow Group:

1. What are the Issues?
 - Don't know your roommate(s)
 - Long-term guests crashing on sofas that students don't know.
 - Parking for guests.
2. Should the Use be Permitted? Why, why not?
 - Yes. One person was 50% yes/50% no. Housing should be left to the professionals in student housing.
3. Should the Use be Limited to Students?
 - Yes, could be used as a dorm. No, not necessarily.
4. What works in other Cities?
 - Cooperation between Police and management.
 - Communication
 - Police live free or at reduced rates in complex
 - Provide site maps to the Police Department

Mr. Mosley thanked everyone for their participation.

5. *Next Steps*

The next meeting will be held on November 27th at 6:00 pm in Room 267 of the Government Center.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:43 p.m.