



Northlake Area Plan

Advisory Group Meeting Summary Notes for June 28, 2007

Assurance United Methodist Church

6:00-8:00 pm

Advisory Group Attendees: Delores Childress, Juanita Merritt, John Corrigan, Phil Morosco, Gail Bigelow, Walter Fields, Bronnie Barfiield, Chris Westmoreland, Gail Gale, Andrea Lima, Jody Kerns and William Springs

Staff: Alysia Osborne, Melony McCullough, Jim Kimbler, Eric Gorman, Megan Makoid, Brian Nadonly, John Howard, Garet Johnson, Johnathan Wells, and Marci Sigmon

1. Welcome and Introductions

Ms. Alysia Osborne (Charlotte-Mecklenburg Planning Department) welcomed participants and reviewed the agenda. She explained that the purpose of the meeting would be to share the draft recommendations for the plan. Staff members from various departments were available to present draft recommendations and introduced themselves to the advisory group.

2. Plan Development Process and Overview

The Powerpoint began with an overview of what should be expected from an area plan. An Area Plan is a framework for future growth, a policy guide for elected officials, and a shared vision for a community. Ms. Osborne also mentioned that an area plan can possibly recommend rezonings as part of the implementation strategy for land use recommendations in the plan.

Ms. Osborne briefly shared the planning activities that have taken place to date and stressed that the workshop activities, market analysis, and feedback from our stakeholders have helped to build the foundation for the area plan and to develop a vision for the area. Highlights from the Northlake Vision Statement were shared with the group as well.

3. Context for Developing the Recommendations

Ms. Osborne explained how the City of Charlotte's Centers, Corridors and Wedges Growth Framework has been the guiding policy for developing the recommendations for the plan. She also noted that this policy is designed to concentrate higher intensity development and redevelopment in areas where existing infrastructure can support it. She then explained how this policy affects the Northlake Area, how it helped shape the recommendations, and the role our market analysis played in developing the recommendations.

4. Draft Plan Recommendations

The majority of the meeting was spent sharing and responding to questions about the draft recommendations for land use, design, transportation, transit (bus and proposed commuter rail), environment and public facilities. A summary of the recommendations presented for each area is listed below.

Draft Land Use Recommendations (presented by Alysia Osborne, Planning)

Recommendations for the study area are divided into three distinct geographies defined by the Centers, Corridors, and Wedges Growth Framework. Certain locations of the study area were also targeted for more specific land use guidance and were listed in a matrix and provided to the Advisory Group.

Summary Wedge Area Recommendations:

- Preserve existing residential
- Identify strategic locations for neighborhood services
- Align institutional uses within the study area
- Highlight importance of Long Creek Greenway

Summary Center Area Recommendations:

- Encourage pedestrian oriented development
- Emphasize future Dixon Branch Greenway
- Identify strategic locations for a mixture of residential/office/retail

Summary Corridor Area Recommendations:

- Preserve existing industrial /warehouse distribution
- Integrate more office in the area
- Identify strategic locations for retail/office/residential
- Recognize Croft Historic Properties

After the conclusion of the draft land use recommendations, Bailey Patrick and Tom Digiampaolo shared their interest in building a residential development located off David Coxe Road near Old Statesville Road. The land is currently zoned for industrial uses. This discussion was a result of a meeting with Planning staff to determine what the appropriate land use should be at that location. Planning staff recommended that Patrick and Digiampaolo receive feedback from the Northlake Advisory Group. Conclusively, Planning Staff and the Advisory group feel that an industrial use is appropriate with a conditional site plan; however, the plan will acknowledge the property owners opinion about the appropriateness of residential development at that location. Moreover, the advisory group expressed concerns about the timing of the rezoning and staff's recommendation, lack of connectivity and potential traffic generation of a residential development on David Coxe, the input from Davis Lake residents, and the issues associated with the sustainability and marketability of residential development in a heavy industrial area.

Draft Design Recommendations (presented by John Howard, Planning)

- Create Pedestrian friendly streetscapes and shopping areas
- Well designed mixed and multi-use developments
- Integrate open spaces and provide connections to greenways
- Encourage quality housing design

Draft Transportation Recommendations (presented by Jim Kimbler, CDOT)

- Reduce travel time, delays, and traffic hazards.
- Create a grid system of streets that improves connectivity to and through the area.
- Provide multiple vehicular entry points to residential developments to shorten trip distances improve connectivity and disperse traffic.
- Provide connectivity by including direct vehicular, pedestrian, and bicycle connections between abutting or adjacent developments and neighborhood-serving land uses.
- Increase bicycle and pedestrian accommodations on all new or reconstructed roadways. Encourage land use patterns that promote safe and convenient walking, cycling, transit access, and reduced trip lengths.
- Support new development requirements to contribute to pedestrian, bicycle, and transit amenities.

- Connect new development to existing stub streets that extend to the development site and provide stub streets to adjacent properties that are undeveloped.
- Maximize bicycle and pedestrian access to roadways and transit facilities.
- Develop a well-connected sidewalk system, which links residents to existing neighborhoods and to neighborhood-serving land uses within the community.
- Design streets considering pedestrian and bicycle safety and comfort.

In addition to these recommendations, Kimbler identified several pedestrian, bicycle and roadway projects that are recommended to be expedited as part of implementation of this plan.

Other items discussed in further detail were:

- Location of the Hucks Road Extension
- Definition/details of an intersection improvement
- Recommendations should consider likelihood of implementation and timeframe

Draft Transit Recommendations (presented by Megan Makoid, CATS and Jonathan Wells, Planning)

Bus Service Recommendations

- Maintain existing bus coverage
- Create future transit opportunities by incorporating infrastructure as development occurs
- Evaluate suitability for future CATS facility investments
- Provide safe and convenient access to future rapid transit stations

Proposed Eastfield Commuter Rail Station Recommendations

The station area has been sub-divided into two areas. Summary land use recommendations for each area are as follows:

Sub-area “A”: Transit-supportive development (mixed) –
Mixture of commercial/retail/employment uses with limited residential component

Sub-area “B”: Transit-supportive development (residential) –
Primarily residential uses with limited commercial/retail component

Uses to conform to Transit Station Area Principles:

- Complementary transit-supportive land uses developed at appropriate intensity
- Enhanced transportation network emphasizing mobility and encouraging ped/bike/transit over automobile
- Attractive, convenient, safe design emphasizing community identity

Jonathan Wells also shared recommendations for transportation and greenway connections.

Other items discussed were:

- CATS policy on bus stop, shelter and sidewalk locations
- Improving integration of land use and transportation, particularly transit, planning

Draft Recommendations for Environment and Public Facilities (presented by *Melony McCullough, Planning*)

Environment

- Advocate floodplain preservation along Long Creek and Dixon Branch and use floodplains to connect park and recreation opportunities and resources with environmentally sensitive areas.
- Minimize the amount of impervious lot coverage with new development and redevelopment throughout the study area.
- Provide greenway connections to surrounding land uses as development occurs.

Parks and Open Space

- Provide pedestrian and bicycle access to recreational amenities as development occurs.
- Link the Dixon Branch and Long Creek greenways to the Mallard and Clarks Creek greenway system to provide regional trail connectivity.
- Provide greenway connections to surrounding land uses as development occurs.

Schools

- Consider the Centers, Corridors and Wedges Growth Framework as well as the land use guidance and growth projections from this plan when evaluating the need for future school sites in the Northlake area.
- Coordinate school site selection and construction with plans for other infrastructure – i.e. transportation, including sidewalks so children can walk to school.)
- Encourage CMS, the City, and area residents to work with developers to reserve land for schools

Police and Fire

- Encourage the development of public service facilities such as police substations and fire stations, as needed to serve the growing population.
- Promote joint use of facilities to reduce cost and make the most efficient use of resources.

4. Implementation (presented by *Melony McCullough, Planning*)

Ms. McCullough briefly discussed the role of rezonings in the plan implementation process. She stressed that any recommended rezonings in the Northlake Area Plan will be part of a separate process and will possibly begin in a year after adoption. At any rate, all property owners will be notified when that process occurs. Then, a list of recommended rezonings was shared with the group.

5. Wrap Up and Next Steps

Ms. Osborne shared that staff is targeting a final public meeting for late summer. It is staff's goal to complete the draft document late summer/early fall in hopes of taking it to review and adoption in mid fall, 2007.