

Meeting Notes from January 13, 2009 Centers, Corridors and Wedges Advisory Group Meeting

Laura Harmon opened the meeting and Debra Campbell expressed thanks to the Advisory Group for their input.

Laura made a powerpoint presentation that covered the status of the Advisory Group Process, Feedback from Meeting #2 – Vision and Principles, and an overview of Centers and Corridors. She proposed that the group members provide recommended changes to the vision to staff by the next meeting on January 27. The group agreed. Laura also proposed that the staff take the guiding principles statements and provide an explanatory paragraph for each principle. The group also agreed to this approach.

One of the advisory group members requested that meeting notes and other materials be distributed to the group prior to the meeting. Staff committed to providing materials prior to the meeting.

The advisory group then split into two break-out groups. The groups were asked to address the following citizen concerns on Centers and Corridors and to identify any additional concerns for discussion.

Centers:

- Concept of mixed-use needs to be better defines
- Centers can include same items as Corridors – how are they different?
- Center City should provide options for people who have access to all they need, without having to drive
- Disagree that district parks should only be located in Wedges; central district parks in Centers are equally important
- Need to address smaller Centers, Centers within Corridors and historic Centers
- Need to define centers as “place”

Corridors:

- Corridors allow anything to be included in them
- Concern about residential neighborhoods located in Corridors – areas shown as Corridors are too large; will threaten neighborhoods located in Corridors; should provide pedestrian facilities to accommodate today’s needs before proposing more density
- Recognizing importance of public transit and pedestrian activities/urban parks important in achieving responsible growth
- Lacks a Corridor “looping around” Charlotte – to connect spokes

- Dense development in one area of a Corridor may adversely affect traffic in another area planned for pedestrian activity
- No discussion of the transitional use of Corridors for moving vehicular traffic – will there be an attempt to maintain them at existing widths and intensities?

Break-Out Group 1

Centers:

1. Don't think document should say (page 10) that mixed use and multi-use should be the prevalent building type in Center City and Mixed Use Centers
 - This would require a lot of retrofit and may not be achievable
 - It is not accurate to say these are the "prevalent" building type in Center City.
2. Should we address design for accessibility for those with physical disabilities?
3. Why do Centers and Corridors have to be different?
 - Can we overlay something on all the areas to address livability/walkability?
 - Maybe this should be addressed in the vision and/or guiding principles.
4. Center City should be iconic center of Charlotte
 - all centers should provide these options, not just Center City
 - this may have been "nailed" in document already
5. District Park is planner speak
 - Need a district park if we want to achieve "C" above (for Center City to provide option for people to have access to all they need, without having to drive)
 - A park the size of Central Park may not be feasible now, but don't exclude it from being appropriate if it could happen in the future
 - We may even need to state this is what we want to make happen (if this is what we want)
 - Expand definition of "event" park and note its potential for regional draw
 - Add the language from Centers about conservation of water, energy and other natural resources (bottom of page 12) , into the text about Wedges (page 28)
6. Yes, the document needs to address smaller Centers, Centers within Corridors, and historic Centers
7. Centers should have identity, character/feel of a place should not be "cookie cutter"
8. May need more emphasis on redevelopment (perhaps for corridors and wedges too)

Corridors:

1. Yes, corridors seem to allow anything. Maybe we just need to add "where appropriate" when the document lists the uses allowed in corridors

2. The one land use that the document seems to indicate that is not appropriate in the corridors is low density residential
3. The document doesn't seem to provide a good explanation of the difference between growth corridors and other corridors like Wendover and Providence
 - We may need to address these and what the vision is for them
 - Independence Hwy construction is destroying that part of town

Break-Out Group 2

Centers:

1. Add "Mixed Use" to glossary
 - "Mixed Use" – is it the same in Center, Corridor, and Wedge?
 - Clarify Term
 - Differentiate Center City from other centers - group discussed whether there is/should be a difference between CC and other Mixed-Use Centers – consensus was "yes", after discussion
 - Define difference between GDP "Centers" and Centers in this document
 - Name of Mixed Use Centers – is there another term that will make the distinction between Mixed-Use Centers and mixed-use centers more clearly?
2. Do not preclude "mixed use" centers in corridors
 - How will "Center" vs "Corridor" Designation manifest itself?
 - Differentiation between centers and corridors is unclear
3. Add District Park to glossary
 - Define size of District Park and other Parks
4. Centers include many of the characteristics that describe neighborhoods like Elizabeth
5. Discussion about whether CCW should include a special designation for neighborhoods within Route 4, like Plaza Midwood
6. Describe the characteristics that are common to Centers, Corridors and Wedges and also the characteristics that differentiate between each area

Corridors:

Group 2 did not have time to discuss Corridors.

After the break-out group discussions, the advisory group members reconvened and a representative from each group provided highlights of the discussion.

Before adjourning, the group was asked to submit any additional concerns related to Corridors to Linda Keich by January 23.