



Community Workshop Meeting

March 25, 2010

Meeting Highlights

Citizen Advisory Group Members Present: Madeline Campos, Walter Fields, Jeff Harper, Karla Hammer-Knotts, Virginia Keogh, Patrick Pierce, Orlanzo Ross, Shelley Schiff, Ann Voortmans, Frank Voortmans, David Wiggins, and Don Woodruff

Planning Commission Members Present: Claire Green Fallon, Eric J. Locher and Andrew Zoutewelle

Planning Department Staff Present: Alberto Gonzalez, Crissy Huffstickler, Michelle Jones, Melony McCullough, and Brent Wilkinson

Charlotte Department of Transportation Staff Present: Andy Grzymski

Welcome and Introductions

Ms. Melony McCullough, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Planning Department, welcomed everyone and asked them to introduce themselves. Ms. McCullough then introduced Planning Commissioners present and reviewed the meeting materials.

Meeting Presentation

Ms. McCullough started the presentation by explaining that the purpose of tonight's meeting is to provide an update of the Steele Creek area plan development process and receive public input. She described the planning process to date and explained that since the public kickoff meetings in June of 2009 there have been a series of Citizen Advisory Group meetings. Those meetings have involved discussions on a variety of issues such as land use, community design, transportation, and the environment.

Ms. McCullough explained what an area plan is as well as what is the policy context and framework for the plan. The *Centers, Corridors and Wedges Growth Framework* provides the "starting point" for developing the plan recommendations. The Steele Creek area consists of mostly Wedge areas (*wedges are areas between Growth Corridors where residential neighborhoods have developed and continue to grow. Wedges consist mainly of low density housing as well as a limited amount of moderate density housing and supporting facilities and services*), a large Industrial Center – Westinghouse Boulevard Industrial Center and a small portion the Shopton Road Industrial Center (*Industrial centers are areas that includes primarily warehouse, distribution and manufacturing facilities that serve as major economic generators for the region*), and two Mixed-Use Activity Centers – Whitehall and Rivergate (*Mixed Use Centers are focal points of community activity that include a mix of uses with retail, housing, office and civic components with a cohesive, identifiable pedestrian oriented core linked to the remainder of the center by an integrated pedestrian and street network*).

Some of the opportunities identified during the public kickoff meetings and Citizen Advisory Group meetings were highlighted. They included access and location, rural character of the area, parks and greenways and mixed use centers. Issues identified included traffic congestion, insufficient public infrastructure, unsafe streets for bicycles and pedestrians, and not enough trails/parks in the area.

The community's vision statement developed during the citizen advisory group meetings was presented. Key components of the vision statement include: protection of natural features, mixture of uses in close proximity, efficient transportation network, sustainable community design, and accessibility to green amenities.

The goals and guiding principles for each issue area were presented:

The **natural environment** goal is to encourage environmentally sensitive land development practices.

Public facilities goal is to provide public facilities to maintain and improve service levels to area residents.

Land use goal is to establish a land use pattern that offers a variety of land uses and the opportunity to live, work and recreate in close proximity.

Community design goal is to encourage sustainable development that promotes accessibility for pedestrians and cyclists while integrating green amenities and environmentally sensitive features.

Transportation goal is to strengthen the relationship between land use and **transportation**.

The plan development process included community input as well as a review of adopted policies, a market analysis, and considerations for the environment, land use, design, transportation, and infrastructure. A concept plan was developed which establishes the groundwork for the more detailed land use recommendations. The character of the Wedge Residential areas are categorized in the Concept Plan as being low to moderate density residential with single family homes, townhomes and limited retail in strategic locations. The Mixed Use Activity Centers and Community Centers, Whitehall and Rivergate, will include building types that consist mainly of higher density residential, office, and retail land uses. The Westinghouse Boulevard Industrial Center and a portion of the Airport Industrial Center will contain building types suitable for manufacturing, warehouse/distribution, flex, retail and office land uses.

Questions from the public focused on the impact of the market analysis on the land use policies and identifying locations for retail, moderate density residential and mixed-use development. Ms. McCullough explained that the land use policies that will be developed later in the process will include identify locations and densities for the various land uses. The market analysis is a tool that will be referenced when developing the land use policies.

Wrap-up and Next Steps

Ms. McCullough advised the group that they will be contacted in the coming weeks about the next Citizen Advisory Group meeting date and location. It will likely be held later this spring or early summer. The focus will be refinement of the Land Use, Design and Transportation policies. This will be followed by a community meeting in the Summer/Fall 2010 with plan review and adoption expected in the Fall 2010.