



New Bern Redevelopment Commission Community Listening June 26, 2019

AGENDA

- Welcome/Call to Order- Chairman, Tharesa Lee (3 minutes)
- Purpose - Jeff Ruggieri, Director of Development Services (4 minutes)
- Introductions - Chairman Lee (10 minutes)
- Introduce the Session Facilitator (2 minutes)
 - Michelle Eley, PhD, Community and Economic Development Specialist, Cooperative Extension at N.C. A&T
- Discussion Outline
 - Establish guidelines for community meeting
 - Assess needs & assets in the community (20 minutes)
 - Prioritizing issues (30 minutes)
 - How does existing neighborhood plans mirror this current conversation (15 minutes)
- Closing/Remarks, etc.

Guidelines

- Seek first to understand, then to be understood
- Share “air time”
- Speak your truth in ways that respect other people’s truth
- We share responsibility for making the conversation productive
- One person speaks at a time
- Assume good intentions
- It’s okay to disagree, but don’t personalize it; stick to the issue
- It is not okay to blame, shame or attack – self or others
- Expect/accept discomfort and unfinished business

STEP 1:

ASSESS ASSETS & NEEDS IN THE COMMUNITY

- Share your thoughts concerning the following questions:
 1. What do you value most living in New Bern?
 2. What aspects of this community you feel needs to be retained and preserved?
 3. What concerns do you have about your community?

STEP 2:

PRIORITIZING ISSUES

- We will:
 - In your individual table, you will take a moment to fill out the handout. Together, you will discuss the pros and cons of each idea and try to narrow the list
 - Report back to the larger group
 - Sort ideas by category.
 - Grouping similar ideas together and removing any duplicates
 - You will have a chance to vote for their top ideas

STEP 2: PRIORITIZING ISSUES

(A Summary of Listening Session Comments)

- Preserve Stanley White Rec. Center & other community symbols
- Make proper infrastructure investments (e.g., drainage)
- Address the downside of gentrification
 - Protect/insulate residents from possible displacement
 - Rising rents/higher property taxes/foreclosures
 - Fading of one's cultural/historical connection to a place
- Affordable, decent, and safe housing
 - Battling poor housing and home conditions (mold, asbestos, etc.)
 - How can potential homeowners obtain housing lots owned by the city
 - Additional housing for mixed income household and single parent households
 - High housing costs
- Disaster/mitigation planning
 - Dealing with home buyouts
 - Infrastructure support to show
 - Understanding insurance requirements
 - Equitable distribution of resources for impacted families/households
- Capturing & preserving cultural/historical heritage of Five Points area
 - How do we document that history (oral & written)
 - Erect cultural markers (identifying places in community that document a cultural or history significance)
- Services for seniors (housing, transportation, and other amenities)
- Economic Development in Five Points Area (in support of Small Business/Entrepreneurs)
 - Instituting vocational and trade school programs (if they are not already available)
- Sustained commitment by local government
- Address food scarcity issues
- Satellite campus/site for medical and/or community gov't services in Five Points area
- Public transportation
 - Improving access to services
 - How do we make provisions for people with special needs (e.g., disability, obese, pregnant, etc.)
- Safety (community/neighborhood)
- Generational empowerment through education
- Youth services (literacy, recreational activities, leadership training)
 - Incorporating 'scared-straight' invention for at risk youth (as an alternative to traditional methods)
 - Allocating space to host youth activities
 - Need more activities that are at low or no cost

STEP 3:

HOW DOES EXISTING NEIGHBORHOOD PLANS MIRROR THIS CURRENT CONVERSATION

Choice Neighborhoods Transformation Plan

- Addressing poor existing housing conditions in the neighborhood
- Making the community safer
- Improving the transportation network
- Improving the retail options and commercial corridors in the neighborhood
- Increasing recreational programs and activities for youths and seniors
- Improving educational outcomes for all ages
- Increasing opportunities for employment and earning a living wage
- Providing better access to health care

STEP 3:

HOW DOES EXISTING NEIGHBORHOOD PLANS MIRROR THIS CURRENT CONVERSATION

New Bern Gateway Renaissance Plan

- Support Residential Street Improvement
- Land Use
 - Extend the Riverfront Promenade
 - Improve/Expand Pedestrian and Bicycle
- Public Transportation
- Flooding Issues
- Housing

A CROSS-COMPARISON OF ISSUES

Tonight's Session

- Preserve Stanley White Rec. Center & other community symbols
- Make proper infrastructure investments (e.g., drainage)
- Address the downside of gentrification
- Affordable, decent, safe housing
- Disaster/mitigation planning
- Capturing & preserving cultural/historical heritage of Five Points area
- Services for seniors (housing, transportation, and amenities)
- Targeted Economic Development in the Five Point Area
- Sustained commitment by local government
- Food scarcity issues
- Satellite campus/site for medical and/or or community gov't services in the Five Points area
- Public transportation concerns
- Safety (community/neighborhood)
- Generational empowerment through education
- Youth services (literacy, recreational activities, leadership training)

New Bern Gateway Renaissance Plan

- Support Residential Street Improvement
- Land Use
 - ☐ Extend the Riverfront Promenade
 - ☐ Improve/Expand Pedestrian and Bicycle Infrastructure
- Public Transportation
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Choice Neighborhoods Transformation Plan

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Closing Remarks & Questions

What do you value most living in New Bern?

- Being a homeowner
- Safe place to live
- The People! ☺
- Shared History/Heritage
- Sense of Belonging
- Future Investments of Generations
- Keeping Crime Down to Minimum
- Natural Resources (rivers, land, etc)
- Accessibility of school officials-school network
- Quality Education
- Parks and Rec
- Affordable transportation
- Diversity of creative arts
- Access to emergency services

What aspects of this community you feel needs to be retained and preserved?

- Preservation of Five Points Area
- Preserve Historic Housing- Five Points- Shotgun Houses
- Documenting Early History (Written/Oral)
- Preserve, Protect, Retain Stanley White Rec Center- keep it where it is
- Pembroke- preserve unique aspects of community
- Family homes, prevent tear-down
- Stop gentrification
- Keep/Restore historical black schools
- Restore/Investigate- Senior Living

What concerns do you have about your community?

- Stanley White Rec Center
 - **Raise it and leave it where it is.**
 - **Urgent issue**
 - Our entire community is being affected by this. This also affects generations to come.
 - Youth in the black community need a place to go for their leisure
 - Stanley White is desperately needed in our community.
 - Stanley White is one of the only positive resources for our kids
 - We don't know of any community resources.
 - Consequences: more opportunities for kids to get into the wrong things: teen pregnancies, drug abuse, academic failure, etc
- More affordable, mixed-income housing
 - Lack of quality, safe affordable housing
 - Leadership is absent on this issue. The entire population is being affected.
 - Housing is constantly being torn down.
 - Issue has been here "since forever"
 - Those who can't afford rising costs are being affected
 - This is a **very serious issue**
 - Rent assistance could be a solution to help cover costs

- Current Community Resources: New Bern Housing Authority, Habitat for Humanity, Twin Rivers Section 8
- Future Consequences: Loss of diversity, Loss of Community, Neighborhood will be destitute, “We will be written out of the City’s story.”
- Places for young people to go when they’re not in school
 - My grandchildren can’t afford summer vacations
 - The children are becoming bored and want to do what they feel is important
 - Our children need fun activities
 - The youth are our future. Without them, there will be no economic or social growth
 - Recommendation: Build recreational places for all ages, mentors, transportation, trade schools
- Flooding and storm water runoff/drainage
 - Duffyfield needs a better plan for prevention
 - **Urgent Issue**
 - Homes in Duffyfield need to be elevated.
 - Hurricanes come every year.
 - Everyone is affected by this- displacements cost
 - Consequences: loss of tax base and future services, gentrification
- Access to satellite healthcare service/community government services
- Issues with how insurance claims were handled during storm, support might be needed for homeowners
- ADS not having an economic base

- Equal opportunity-sharing knowledge
 - More education opportunities
 - Satellite offices that provide education, advocacy, etc
- Local government support
 - Misappropriation of funds
 - Equal representation amongst decision makers
 - Lower income areas, Duffyfield, Woodrow, Pembroke-- need representation
 - Recommendation: Allocation of funds to carry out redevelopment- local tax revenue, bond issues, etc
 - Recommendation: City and Habitat can be build better homes.
 - Consequences: Neighborhoods will continue to suffer from disinvestment and deterioration, a devalued society, an increased wealth gap
- More equitable distribution of resources- black/white communities
- Proper maintenance of cemeteries
- Rental properties- Homes, Apartments
 - Landlords are refusing to fix homes after the hurricane
 - Tenants are being threatened for eviction when the landlord is not fixing the property.
 - Community Resource: Legal Aid, but they are not always helpful because some tenants do not know how to advocate their need for help.
 - Consequences: Tenants are being forced to live in unfavorable conditions

- Literacy of dealing with economic wealth, understanding systems
- Comprehensive disaster mitigation
 - Every 2-3 years, we have a hurricane.
 - **Very Urgent**
 - Raise elevation in neighborhoods to prevent flooding
- Poor housing conditions (mold, asbestos)
 - Extremely bad for the elderly
 - We need better housing because it is leading to health issues
- Affordable recreation
- Food desert
 - No access to healthy food
 - All people are affected- everyone can eat healthier
 - Recommendations: Food trucks, markets, culinary classes
- Young people are leaving
 - They graduate and don't have much offered to them.
 - **Very urgent**
 - Recommendations: Have more places and things they like to do.
- Information sharing and accountability among community service agencies- local, state, and national
- Public and emergency transportation, attention to special needs
- Neighborhood Clean-Up
 - Ditches need to be cleaned
 - Dilapidated homes need improvement

- If ditches were better maintained, water could flow through
 - Recommendation: Form a crew to maintain ditches around the city
- Community Center for Youth
 - Youth are our biggest concern
- City light bills
 - The elderly and families who are on fixed income are affected by this.
 - **Very serious issue**
- Disaster Recovery
 - Lack of equitable resources in disasters
 - We need more resources for disaster recovery
 - We need more financial resources to restore and rebuild.
 - Consequences: Continued displacement
- Gentrification
 - Five Points areas, Avenues, Duffyfield
 - May not be a major problem now, but the writing is on the wall
 - Consequences: Long term effect would be longtime residents having to leave their neighborhoods