

APPENDIX II

COMMUNITY WORKSHOP COMMENTS

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COMMUNITY WORKSHOP COMMENTS, APRIL 15, 1997

The following is a brief summary of citizen's comments made at the April 15, 1997 downtown neighborhood meeting. We have organized the comments, in no particular order, into the Work Group's four main topic areas.

Economic Vitality

Encourage independent retail businesses instead of chain stores
Need more mixed use/residential downtown
Encourage some large retail/office businesses for economic vitality
Need to locate services downtown that residents could walk to for example: Grocery, retail; pharmacy; government services
Develop ways to encourage residential downtown

Town Character/Land Use

Keep village feel/atmosphere – develop new properties at a human scale
Retain present scale & intimacy of downtown – draws people to downtown
Need to eliminate parking cars in front yards if residential neighborhoods are to retain their "historic" atmosphere
Protect/enhance historic significance of town – some examples cited were:

Creating small, pedestrian plazas downtown
Save African American business areas
Placing historical markers
Tours of historic areas
Protect fragile residential neighborhoods bordering downtown business district
Intensify the Town's Streetscape Improvement Program
Maintain the character of downtown – coordinate appearances/issues
Need better environment downtown for senior citizens
Mercury vapor street lamps are not in keeping with downtown Chapel Hill

character - use old style like the University's
Conversion of single family homes into rooming/student houses destroys the character of the neighborhood
Homeless impacts: begging, safety, litter
Don't allow commercial to expand into residential neighborhoods bordering downtown
There is a high demand for retail chain stores moving in and smaller businesses moving out – Is there a way for Rosemary Street to develop with smaller businesses?
Prohibit clubs with loud music near residential area (Pantana Bob's was mentioned as example)

Transportation

Several in attendance stated on-street loading problems. Problems stated were:
Truck double parking
Loading during heavy congested periods such as lunch hours and at 5:00 p.m.
Trucks blocking parking spaces
Need better pedestrian safety – sidewalks & street crossings
Mass transit downtown important
Need sidewalks along Rosemary Street
Look at utilizing perimeter parking in decks
Eliminate parking on sidewalks – Kinko's on West Franklin Street was mentioned along with wrecker trucks at McFarlings Exxon
Create better traffic patterns downtown to eliminate "cut-through" traffic on residential streets (one resident offered several ideas for Mallette Street – dead end at Cameron; eliminate pedestrian cross walks; eliminate on-street loading spaces)
Remove on-street parking along Cameron Avenue in order to provide better/safer bike lanes (can the alley behind the parking deck be used for a loading zone at the 100 block?)

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Infrastructure/Public Services

Trash/litter collection is poor along Cameron Avenue (and other downtown areas)
Public housing is poorly maintained (Roberson Street)
Locate overheard wires underground
Additional public restrooms are needed downtown
Area around Shelter needs better clean up of litter
Businesses should clean up their areas and keep buildings maintained

COMMUNITY WORKSHOP COMMENTS, JUNE 16TH, 1998

The following is a brief summary of citizen's comments made at the June 16, 1998 downtown neighborhood meeting. Again, we have organized the comments, in no particular order, into the Work Group's four main topic areas.

Economic Vitality

Tax base is a problem for small businesses
Clothing stores, grocery, locally-owned businesses
Escalating rent
Lack of continuous flow of businesses – mix of uses
Some national chains are okay
People is what draws other people
Chapel Hill doesn't have service industries
Incentives for small businesses and incubator

Town Character/Land Use

2-Story, small-scale retail
Relationship of downtown/UNC (Master Plan)
Franklin Street is front door to university
No: Performing Arts over Carolina Coffee Shop
Wants 100 block to be same – keep intact – both for UNC & Town
Downtown reflects community as a whole – devitalization is occurring – less diversity – grocery, books
West Franklin & Rosemary – opportunity for infill/larger buildings
Street art
Return to “feel” of Chapel Hill
Panhandling issues – deal with them
Shelter is a vital part of community
Park & Playground
Possibly use Lot 5 for park

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Lot 5 – fill in the building gap
West Rosemary Street is critical area for infill
Absence of diversity – need mixed use
2-Story is people-oriented and more intensity of uses
Park next to 440 is great (UNC)
Favors diversity
Plaza with a fountain – Methodist Church
Athens, GA – pedestrian entranceway to UNC w/plaza
Rosemary Street have same vitality – make 1st floor of parking decks
How does lower intensity help West Rosemary
Affordable housing downtown and rental
Entertainment/music center

-Shelter facilities
-Longer hours for deck

Transportation

Good pedestrian bridge between West and East Franklin
Bike Lanes
West Franklin “suicide lane” – have landscaped median
Pedestrian connection is improving – East to West Franklin
Need a crosswalk on west Franklin
Light rail Fixed-guideway system in downtown – connecting cities – near a cultural arts facility

Goals:

More the center
Center for children as well (may not be safe enough) (but is more real)
-Security for children
Downgrading Town Center zoning? He wants mixed use for Columbia street
Schedule & Implementation?
Town Center as going north
Implementation – how to achieve?
Incentives – have a category
Can do streetscape now
Could have a 3rd story, stepped back from front
P. 9 – likes the “no” building – do not need to be only nostalgic
Kindness

Infrastructure/Public Services

Town needs to maintain public area better – looks shabby, run-down – 100 block needs major repair – lighting, streetscape – sidewalks, storefronts
Stench in Post Office
Need to revive as a public space
Lack of public restroom facilities