DMV Site Project Working Group- Meeting Minutes

February 13, 2025

Members Present:
Dr. Shawn Singleton | Clark Rinehart | Desmond Dunn | Tolulope Omokaiye | Anthony Pope | Helen Tart | Dr. Ajamu Dillahunt-Holloway | Harolynn Coplin

Members Absent: Tara Minter | Felts Lewis | Karen Haynes | Harold Mallette

Staff Present:
Community Engagement: Nadia Moreta | Shakera Vaughan
Planning & Development: Ken Bowers | Jake Levitas
Housing and Neighborhoods: Jess Brandes | Angelina Blackmon
Office of Strategy & Innovation: Macie Rush

i. **Welcome & Warm Up** (6:10 – 6:15 pm)
- PWG members revisited the values the group established to guide their project decisions.
    i. Community connections
        1. Gathering Space
        2. Partnership
    ii. Quality of life
        1. Equity
        2. Affordability
        3. Housing stability
        4. Economic mobility
    iii. Innovation and improvement
        1. Transformational
    iv. Cultural preservation
        1. History
        2. Restorative
    v. Sustainability and environmental responsibility
- PWG members broke into small groups to review and discuss data.
    i. Group 1: Ajamu, Clark, Pastor Singleton | Staff— Nadia
        1. **Affordable Housing**
        2. **Community Spaces/Recreation**
    ii. Group 2: Anthony, Harolynn, Tolulope | Staff— Jake
        1. **Affordable Housing**
        2. **Food/Market**
    iii. Group 3: Helen, Desmond, Harold | Staff— Shakera
        1. **Affordable Housing**
        2. **Shopping/Entertainment**
        3. **Other**
    iv. Group 4: Tara, Felts, Karen | Staff— Tiesha

1. **Affordable Housing**
2. **Education/Training**
3. **Health/Social Services**

ii. **Overview of Data and Context** (6:15 – 6:25 pm)
   o Macie Rush with the Office of Strategy & Innovation (OSI) introduced the meeting's activities for the group.
   o OSI provided PWG members with a brief overview of Human-Centered Design.
      i. Human-centered design is a problem-solving approach that starts with learning from people closest to the problem:
         1. <u>Framing the problem:</u> What is known about this?
         2. <u>Learning from people:</u> What can we learn about this?
         3. <u>Synthesize:</u> What does this data mean?
         4. <u>Generate ideas:</u> What can we do?
         5. <u>Prototype:</u> How would it work?
         6. <u>Test:</u> How well does it work?
      ii. Human-centered design's approach guides us in thinking through four areas:
         1. <u>Desirability:</u> What's desirable from a human, environmental, and organizational perspective?
         2. <u>Feasibility:</u> What's technically possible?
         3. <u>Viability:</u> What can we do that is sustainable now and into the future?
         4. <u>Ethical:</u> Just because we can, should we? Does this truly achieve the outcomes we need to see?
   o OSI provided a high-level overview of the community survey results.
      i. Top three themes: More than 80% of people ranked this as the most important.
         1. Affordable Housing
         2. Food/Market
         3. Community Spaces & Recreation

iii. **Small Group Work: Analyzing Data** (6:25 – 7:15 pm)
   o PWG members reviewed the survey results and comments.
      i. Guiding questions:
         1. What's the ask behind the ask?
         2. What's unspoken? (e.g., when people say they want a library…is the need for access to information, a place you don't have to pay to be, gathering, etc.)
         3. What surprises you?
   o Small group report out
      i. Group 1:
         1. Housing takeaways
            i. The introduction of Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) can be an equalizer, but it must be paired with affordable housing to prevent further displacement.
            ii. Acknowledge rising costs and inflation while ensuring long-term affordability for existing residents.

        iii.   Preserving Neighborhood Character— Prevent gentrification and displacement, ensuring long-term residents can stay and benefit from development.

        iv.   A single property will not solve the city's broader housing and economic issues but should contribute to a sustainable and supportive ecosystem

        v.   Address the need for diverse housing options, including missing middle housing, to prevent large-scale displacement.

  2. Community spaces takeaway

        i.   Encourage businesses and resources that serve the existing community and allow residents to spend their dollars locally.

        ii.   Address systemic issues such as poverty, lack of youth engagement, and crime by investing in community spaces and services.

        iii.   Create gathering places that foster connection, such as senior activity centers, green spaces, and areas for artistic expression.

ii.   Group 2

  1. Housing takeaways

        i.   Housing is #1 issue that comes up

        ii.   People are worn out with the terminology of affordable housing; people prefer mixed-income

           i.   Trying out other metrics for affordability versus AMI?

           ii.   Lots of families / multiple families or generations in one space

           iii.   Maybe multiple housing types on the site

               i.   Inclusion of co-living

                   i.   Potential field trip to Edenton Suites

  2. Food takeaways

        i.   Something local/smaller/complementary to larger store

           i.   Black Farmers Hub

        ii.   More than just standard groceries; specialized fruits/vegetables/etc.; café/food/gathering space

        iii.   Need the space to be welcoming and inclusive

        iv.   Incubator/accelerator for food trucks - rotating between different businesses

iii.   Group 3:

  1. Housing takeaways

        i.   The feedback is pretty on par with what we expected and continuously hear.

        ii.   Having a certain number of units dedicated to families.

        iii.   Having a childcare facility in the same building.

        iv.   Want people working the shops be able to afford to live in the buildings/apartments above.

        v.   People want a place to get to know each other

                i.   Communal spaces to get to know each other. (third spaces)
- vi. Wanting to be/have active neighbors.
- vii. Desire to preserve some of the physical components of the building (chimney).
2. Shopping takeaways
    - i. People want desirable food choices and local entertainment.
    - ii. A place to gather without spending money.
    - iii. Parking as a major consideration when considering any shopping options.

iv. Framing the Problem (7:15 – 7:45 pm)
- o OSI facilitated a discussion around describing the problem/need of the community to help PWG shape the solutions.
    - i. Guiding questions:
        1. Who is affected? (e.g., age, ability, income, race, new/old resident, business/individual)
        2. How does this problem impact other issues?
        3. What are some causes of this?
- o PWG members identified problems statements in their group.
    - i. Group 1:
        1. People of SE Raleigh need to rebuild + sustain their cultural + economic identity, but the current market forces + development trends prioritize profit over community preservation.
        2. Raleigh natives + long-time residents can no longer afford to stay in the city, but rising housing costs, stagnant wages, + a lack of affordable housing continue to push out.
        3. Community needs a way to feel good about the community again, but changing cultural dynamics have other priorities.
        4. The people of se Raleigh need to preserve their legacy, but gentrification + displacement threaten to erase their presence from the very spaces they help build.
        5. Residents of SE Raleigh need better access to mental health support, but affordability, stigma and limited resources prevent many from getting the help they need.
        6. The youth in Southeast Raleigh need a way to productively spend their time outside of school but not much around.
        7. Youth in SE Raleigh need accessible, engaging, + enriching activities outside of school, but there a lack of safe, well-resourced spaces that meet their needs.
        8. Current and former residents need a way to feel a sense of pride + belonging in their community but shifting cultural & economic dynamics create barriers to meaningful engagement.
        9. Neighbors in RLGH need a way to thrive, not just survive, but their basic needs are not being met.

10. The people of SE Raleigh need to culturally rebuild but the structure of the market and development will not allow.
11. Raleigh natives + long-time residents can no longer afford to stay in the city, but rising housing costs, stagnant wages, + a lack of affordable housing continue to push out.
12. Raleigh residents need reliable, efficient transportation options but the city's infrastructure remains car-dependent limiting mobility for those without vehicles.

 ii. Group 2:

1. Legacy families + older citizens who still reside in SE Raleigh need to be able to retain family property, but taxation is making it extremely difficult.
2. Residents need safe affordable housing but need more affordable options outside of private landlords.
3. Residents/visitors of SE Raleigh need a way to develop + prioritize black owned business but BOB needs affordable spaces to rent where they feel welcomed.
4. People who are experiencing housing insecurities need more stable housing, but there are not enough programs designed to address the heart of the issue.
5. New Bern Ave needs a way to build economic development that the residents can participate in, but the economic growth is excluding them from the process.
6. Current residents need to be educated on how to appeal and/or apply tax waivers but the red tape that people have to cut through discourages them and they give up.
7. The residents of Raleigh need easy equitable transportation, but the city isn't set up on a grid that allows for ease of access
8. Families in SER need a way to connect and spend time with other families in a safe, culturally accepting spaces.
9. Residents experiencing Housing Insecurity need resources + affordability, but the housing focus is more centered on Homelessness.
10. The people in SER need affordable spaces to live, but profit is taking priority over addressing the issue.
11. The youth in SER need programs to prevent them from hanging in the street, but the displacement in SER is also impacting business that support youth.
12. legacy Residents of SER want to stay in their homes in naturally occurring affordable neighborhoods, but there aren't enough programs + investments to support them.

 iii. Group 3:

1. Residents of SE Raleigh need access to affordable housing, but gentrification has pushed out many of the natives.

2. The entrepreneurial community need opportunities to stimulate the economy but have been historically passed over for opportunities.
3. Families need safe, comfortable places to live, work, play, and thrive where they feel a sense of belonging, but those places are too expansive.
4. People need a way to get affordable, healthy food, but those places are too far away.

v. **Card Sort & Dimensions of Prioritization** (7:45 – 7:55 pm)
   o OSI facilitated the exercise to identify problem statements they believe the group should focus on for the remainder of the project.
      i. Top problem statements identified:
         1. People of SE Raleigh need to rebuild + sustain their cultural + economic identity, but the current market forces + development trends prioritize profit over community preservation.
         2. Legacy families + older citizens who still reside in SE Raleigh need to be able to retain family property, but taxation is making it extremely difficult.
         3. Residents need safe affordable housing but need more affordable options outside of private landlords.
         4. Families need safe, comfortable places to live, work, play, and thrive where they feel a sense of belonging, but those places are too expansive.

vi. **Next Steps & Closing Remarks** (7:55 – 8:07 pm)
   o Next Meeting: Thursday, March 13th
   o Next Session's Topics
      i. Small group meetings
         1. Assigned staff will follow-up with small groups
      ii. RFP Process & Criteria
         1. Small group report outs