



## Listening Sessions

Oct. 17 • 20 • 21 • 24 • 27 • 29

# Meeting Summary

### Meeting Dates and Locations

Date	Time	Location	Language
October 17	11:30am – 12:30pm	Eliza Poole Park	English and Spanish
October 20	6:00pm – 7:00pm	Virtual (Zoom and Facebook Live)	Spanish
October 21	12:00pm – 1:00pm	Virtual (Zoom and Facebook Live)	English
October 23	11:30am – 12:30pm	Gateway Park Apartments	English
October 24	11:30am – 12:30pm	Virtual (Zoom and Facebook Live)	English
October 27	6:30pm – 7:30pm	Virtual (Zoom and Facebook Live)	English
October 29	12:00pm – 1:00pm	Virtual (Zoom and Facebook Live)	English

### Overview

The City of Raleigh hosted seven (7) listening sessions to speak with residents within the Dix Edge Study Area. These sessions provided an overview of the Dix Edge Area Study. They also gave residents an opportunity to discuss their community and ask questions about the project. Two sessions were conducted in person: one at Eliza Poole Park on October 17th and one at Gateway Park Apartments on October 23rd. These sessions were socially-distanced and outdoors, following recommended COVID-19 guidelines. The other five sessions were conducted virtually through Zoom. The City also live-streamed the virtual sessions on Facebook Live. 46 participants in total participated in one of these seven sessions. The session held on October 20, 2020 was held in Spanish. However, no participants attended this session.

The City asked participants questions about their neighborhood and community as a whole. These questions focused on where participants are in the study area, what they think of their community, how future outreach could better involve them and their neighbors, and more. Participants were also able to ask questions about the project and upcoming changes.

### Meeting Notifications

Residents were notified of the meeting through the following communication methods:

- The City mailed postcards to addresses within the study area.
- The City distributed flyers to all businesses within the study area.
- The City shared meeting notification posts on their social media pages (Facebook, Twitter, NextDoor, and Instagram).
- The City posted 10 signs at different locations around the neighborhood.
- The City emailed all the registered neighborhood groups.
- The City worked with Washington Elementary and the Washington Boys and Girls Club to have notices distributed to families.
- The City sent out emails to everyone signed up for project updates.

## Session Results

Participants were asked a variety of questions to gather feedback about the area. Some of these questions focused on their relationship with the community. Other questions focused on participant's preferences for future outreach. This included preferences for meeting times, dates, and notifications. All participant responses can be found in the Appendix.

### **Participants were asked what area they lived or worked in, and how they referred to their neighborhood.**

When asked what area they live in, some participants named specific streets they live on. These streets included Sierra Drive, Gateway Park Drive, or South of 40 on Lake Wheeler. Others gave the neighborhood name, such as Carolina Pines, Wheeler Park, Fuller Heights/Wheeler Crossing, Gateway Park, Boylan Heights, and Caraleigh. One participant did not live in the neighborhood, but is a commissioner for the Raleigh Housing Authority which includes Heritage Park. Another participant noted that their office is near Caraleigh Mills. One of the participants that lives in Carolina Pines also mentioned that they work at NC State nearby the area.

When asked how they refer to their neighborhood, some mentioned the neighborhood name. For instance, the participants on Sierra Drive or South of 40 on Lake Wheeler noted that they refer to the area as Carolina Pines. One participant said that some know Sierra Drive as Wheeler Park, but it is unofficially a part of Carolina Pines. One participant noted that Wheeler Crossing is referred to as Fuller Heights. A participant at Gateway Park Drive noted that they call the neighborhood Fuller Heights, Gateway Park, or Downtown Raleigh. One participant that lives in Caraleigh said they usually refer to a Caraleigh destination when discussing their neighborhood.

Other participants answered more broadly when asked how they refer to their neighborhood. One participant said that they refer to their neighborhood as a family. Another noted they refer to their neighborhood as a "natural gem."

### **Participants were asked to share the defining characteristics of their neighborhood.**

When asked what stands out about their neighborhood, participants mentioned walkability, historic charm, affordability, diversity, and the views. One participant also mentioned the plenty of trees/shade in the neighborhood and the inclusion of a dog park. One participant also mentioned the "weirdness" of Southwest Raleigh, noting that they want "to keep southwest Raleigh weird."

### **Participants were then asked if there are any groups or organizations that are very involved or active in their neighborhood.**

Participants were asked if they knew of any active groups or organizations in their neighborhood. One participant mentioned the Caraleigh Neighborhood Association. They said this organization could get in touch with the project team. Another participant mentioned that Read and Feed is an active community center in the study area. Another participant mentioned the Passive House Institute U.S. This organization works to produce affordable housing with zero or almost zero utilities.

Two participants mentioned NextDoor being very popular in their neighborhood for communicating with one another and staying up-to-date.

### **Participants were asked what the best way would be to let their neighbors know about the project and upcoming outreach activities and events.**

The project team asked participants about the best way to reach their neighbors that were not in attendance. Participants mentioned various communication options, such as: email alerts, mailings, street signs (including bilingual ones), door hangers, and NextDoor. Participants suggested Lake Wheeler Road (and major intersections along it), Carolina Pines Park, and other busy streets as possible locations for street signs. One participant suggested delivering extra postcards to Community Leaders. They could then distribute them to those that did not receive them initially.

One participant mentioned an idea of "Community Champions" to advocate for the project and serve as a bridge between the Planning Department and the community. This is currently in progress through the Community Leader and Neighborhood Ambassadors initiatives.

Another participant mentioned having periodic meetings addressing neighborhood concerns at Carolina Pines Park. This used to be a location for CAC meetings.

One participant mentioned Steve, the owner of the Grocery Boy Jr. on Lake Wheeler Road. He was able to gather 1,500 signatures on a roundabout issue just by asking those that went into the store. This could be a way to disseminate information if it could be posted in the store and/or shared with customers.

### **Participants were then asked about their preference for project notifications.**

After discussing how to best reach their neighbors, participants shared their notification preferences. Participants listed mailings (postcards or newsletters), emails, texts, virtual meetings themselves, walking tours, and social media (specifically Facebook and NextDoor) as preferred communication options. Two participants mentioned the importance of sharing what will happen in the project and how it will impact them when disseminating information.

### **Participants were asked what days and times worked best for them to attend meetings.**

After covering notification preferences, participants were asked what days and/or times worked best for them to attend meetings, whether virtual or in person. One participant mentioned that they are retired, so anytime worked for them. However, they noted that other events in their community are usually held in the evenings. Three other participants mentioned evenings as working well for them. One participant specified that before dinnertime would be ideal while another said after 5:00 or 6:00 p.m.

Some participants have a preference for meetings during the day on weekdays. Three participants mentioned weekdays at lunchtime. One participant noted that if the meeting was recorded to watch whenever, weekdays would be fine. But, if the meeting is live, they prefer after work hours. One participant mentioned that Saturdays worked well, as long as not too early.

Two participants mentioned a preference for variable dates and times so all can participate when it works best for them.

**Finally, participants were asked if there is anything else the project team should know about their neighborhood. They were also asked if they had any other comments or concerns to be addressed.**

Participants had an opportunity to share any other information about their community. This was also the chance for participants to ask any questions about the project or bring up any further comments or concerns.

Participants mentioned concerns of gentrification and displacement in the Dix Edge area. One participant discussed millennials buying homes in Carolina Pines and renovating them, which shows signs of gentrification. Participants are also worried about displacement due to development in the area. This development is coming from Dix Park and increasing student housing on Lake Wheeler. Participants mentioned concerns about the impact of this development, especially on those with less resources. They were also concerned about how this would impact affordable housing in the area. Some mentioned that it would be nice to require developers to build affordable housing. However, City staff responded that per NC law, they can only incentivize developers to build affordable housing units, not require them.

Other participants mentioned pedestrian safety as a concern. One participant noted the need for better pedestrian access to Downtown Raleigh. They noted how difficult it is to walk from Caraleigh to the Farmer's Market due to lack of sidewalks along Maywood Avenue and Lake Wheeler Road. Another participant mentioned difficulty crossing southern Fayetteville Street to the northern side of Western Boulevard and Martin Luther King Boulevard. When discussing walkability, two participants mentioned that a walkable grocery store sounded nice.

Participants also mentioned concerns of traffic safety. Specifically, they noted the need for a safe intersection at Carolina Pines and Lake Wheeler Road. One participant noted that they prefer a roundabout to a traffic light at this intersection. However, they said that the type is less important than the safety of the intersection.

Multiple participants mentioned the Downtown South project. Participants asked about the impacts to the area in regards to rezoning and housing. This project will include the development of a soccer stadium. Participants questioned how the stadium would affect the community. Participants also wanted to know how the Dix Edge study would influence the Downtown South project. Project staff noted that the Dix Edge Area Study would not be able to impact the Downtown South project because this plan is currently in progress, and has not yet become adopted policy that can be applied to a rezoning request. However, the Dix Edge project could provide community improvements to mitigate any impacts from it.

One participant brought up concerns of energy efficiency with development. They asked about offering offer incentives for EUIs (Energy Use Intensity) below 20. While in the meeting, City staff noted that they were not very familiar with energy use standards. The City looked into the question after the conclusion of the meeting. The City may have the authority to regulate energy efficiency of development. However, this would require significant changes to the current development review process. It is more likely that other City projects, such as the communitywide Climate Action Plan, could consider this incentive idea more in depth.

Largely, the concerns participants mentioned centered around development (and with that, affordable housing and displacement) and walkability/safety of the area.

## Eliza Poole Park Listening Session Notes and Comments (Oct. 17, 2020)

- Keep SW Raleigh weird
- Homes purchased by millennials in the western part of Carolina Pines are signs of gentrification (they're being renovated)
- Prefer a roundabout to a traffic light at the intersection of Carolina Pines and Lake Wheeler Road
  - The type of intersection is not what's important, but that it operates safely
- Lots of discussion about the stadium and changes to the neighborhood
- Questions about how this plan will influence the stadium development
- Questions about how this study will help preserve affordable housing and how it fits in with the 2030 Comprehensive Plan
  - Is the carrot and stick policy tools for affordable housing being used with the Earps rezoning?
- The world is changing which means the city will continue to change

## Virtual Meeting Notes (Oct. 21, 24, 27, 29, 2020)

### What area do you live or work in? How do you refer to your neighborhood?

- Sierra Drive (intersects with Lake Wheeler just south of I-40 near Carolina Pines Park) - call the neighborhood Carolina Pines
- Gateway Park Drive (intersects Jamaica Drive and South Saunder St) - Fuller Heights/ Gateway Park/ Downtown Raleigh - usually say Downtown Raleigh - Boylan Heights
- In Caraleigh
- Own property in Caraleigh
- As family
- Use Caraleigh designation when talking about it
- A natural gem in the neighborhood
- Wheeler Park
- Office/campus near Caraleigh Mills
- Ride bike regularly on greenways around neighborhood; very interested in hearing about connections to City from people in neighborhood
- Carolina Pines
- Wheeler Crossing, referred to as Fuller Heights
- Carolina Pines; work at NC State; bikes to work when everyone was going in to work
- South of 40 on Lake Wheeler; pastor of Bridge Fellowship Church - Carolina Pines
- Wheeler Park - Sierra Dr; unofficially a part of Carolina Pines
- Don't live in the neighborhood, but on the board of commissioners for RHA; Heritage Park - in process of considering how to redevelop that
- Don't live there anymore, but lived in Fuller Heights

## What are the defining characteristics of your neighborhood?

- Semi-walkable, neighborhood feel, quiet, single-family detached. Centrally located.
- Great views
- Historic homes ca 1920's a lot of greenway
- Has a lot of historic charm
- Affordable when bought, also really like the neighborhood because of walkability (Farmer's Market, supermarket), diversity... Fuller Heights house listed at \$1,100 a month, getting into changes that are going to come with Dix development. Convenient neighborhood to 40.
- How diverse this part of town is; different ages, races, incomes; not just one of the neighborhoods that was built all at once – has a lot of natural, slow growth.
- Carolina Pines Community Center, dog park, lots of trees/shade
- So much traffic on Lake Wheeler Road currently, interested in how the project will impact that
- Neighborhood is affordable for those just starting out in Raleigh, which creates diversity in the neighborhood

## Are there any groups/organizations that are active in your neighborhood?

- Read and Feed - very active community center in the area
- The Passive House Institute U.S. This organization helps produce affordable housing with zero or near zero utilities.
- In Fuller Heights, wasn't aware of any groups, but NextDoor forum was used for people to communicate
- Caraleigh Neighborhood Association – can get in touch with us
- In Wheeler Park, ring of people get organized via text message and NextDoor and share info with one another

## What are the best ways to make residents/your neighbors aware of this project and upcoming outreach activities?

- People get together at Carolina Pines Park; used to be CAC meetings; Periodic meetings about neighborhood concerns at Carolina Pines Park
- I think the combo of email alerts, mailings, and signs in the area have been helpful.
- I heard via the mailer. Also posting neighborhood signs
- I like that the area signs are bilingual too.
- Steve, owner of Grocery Boy Jr, got 1,500 signatures about a roundabout issue just by asking people when they went into the store. If there is a way to get that info up there and share with customers, that would help.
- Door hangers to let people know about meetings and events, whether virtual or in-person. Fuller Heights could be done relatively quickly, but Carolina Pines is a little more spread out.
- Extra postcards to those in the Community Leadership group to hand out and share with other people
- NextDoor is used a lot; can be divided up by general area or subdivision. Constantly getting updates from NextDoor app.
- NextDoor
- Signage near Lake Wheeler Rd (major intersection: Sierra and Lake Wheeler), signage near Carolina Pines Park, signage near street
- Provide information on how this project will be impacted by other projects (ex: Downtown South).
- Community Champions – build a bridge between the planning department and the community [Note: this is being done through the Neighborhood Ambassadors and Community Leaders initiatives].

## How would you prefer to receive information about the project going forward?

- Were reached by postcard in the mail - good way to reach them (watching and wondering what will happen with the Dix Park development)
- Via email or with some written materials that we could share with our neighbors. I think people here know that the Dix Park development will impact us but nothing about how.
- Mailing list or newsletter
- Social media (Facebook) or a text message
- Meetings themselves: like Zoom or Teams where people can share a lot of information; prefer virtual over in-person
- Email/text
- Letters to property owners and renters
- Walking tours
- Facebook and NextDoor

## What days/times work best for you to attend Dix Edge Study meetings?

- We're retired, so any time. Anything else in this community we do evenings because people are working.
- Noon
- Variable dates and times
- Evenings work well, but open to most times
- During workday if it is recorded, if it is a one-time thing, after work hours
- Weekdays before dinnertime
- Evenings can be tough with kids, so work lunches or Saturdays work well as long as not too early
- After 5 p.m., ideally after 6 p.m.
- Weekdays at lunchtime
- Like a variety of times and days to give options and allow many people to join in
- During the day

## Is there anything else we should know about your neighborhood?

- People are concerned in the area about development of Dix Park. People who have less resources than we do, we're really concerned about what that will look like for them.
- Other side of Lake Wheeler - more and more student housing and don't know what the impact will be on them.
- A walkable grocery store sounds fabulous!
- Echo the grocery store. Another idea would be thinking about how we can get better pedestrian access to downtown (Western and Saunders have portions with no sidewalk). Or it's hard to walk from Caraleigh to the Farmer's Market of Dix because the sidewalks go away along Maywood (and aren't along Lake Wheeler yet either).
- It's also dangerous to cross from southern Fayetteville St to the norther side of Western/ Martin Luther King - this discourages going to downtown from Caraleigh.
- In our neighborhood, two landlords own a lot of the property
  - City response: we have made it a priority to reach out to large property owners as they may have significant influence on what happens in the future
- Should have a map that provides clarity on surrounding properties, especially those that were purchased
  - City response: will have Community Snapshot available soon
- Will this project consider current residents, especially in relation to pedestrian and cyclist safety and concerns (i.e. S. Saunders St)? Want to make sure that people that already live in these communities are not left behind as all of the cars show up to these places.
- Sidewalks should be a major point - want to retain walkability as area gets more developed

# Additional Questions and Comments

**Question: How do you see the Dix Park changes working alongside other developments (like Downtown South)?**

**Answer:** The request for rezoning is currently underway. City Council reviews those using the Comprehensive Plan. Since the study is just starting, the policies are not yet a part of the Comprehensive Plan to impact the Downtown South project. We meet regularly with the Downtown South so we know what's going on. There is also an active project to expand the sidewalks along Maywood Avenue.

**Question: You mentioned in the video that you see the edge area as primed for redevelopment. Are there certain portions of the study area of most concern?**

**Answer:** We have started to see some areas being bought up by the same buyer, which indicates that they might press forward with wanting to combine properties and redevelop, which is part of the reason we're doing this study so we can put measures in place that the community agrees with for the future.

**Question: Why are people building housing? Why are they going to make more houses?**

**Answer:** So, let me make sure I'm getting your question correct: why are we doing this study and making this plan if things are already changing? There are still policy tools that can preserve the affordability in the area. We need community feedback to see if that's what you want. We have tools that we can explore to help keep certain standards.

The City doesn't build things, we set the rules. What we can do is set rules with buffers on them; such as, if you want to make changes, you can if you include affordable housing...

**Question: Do you have the ability to REQUIRE a high level of energy performance or at least incentivize multi-residential to meeting stringent Passive House Certification standards? Or REQUIRE a certain percentage to include affordable (3 bedroom +) units in any development?**

**Answer:** Cannot speak to the energy part, but if I can get your email and provide a more detailed answer via email and in the public meeting notes for today.

That's tricky in North Carolina Law; we can't require that those units be available. We can offer a density bonus, which says you can maybe build two extra stories but a certain percentage has to be affordable. What does "affordable" mean? We're working to develop what that means with community feedback in this project.

**Question: A higher F.A.R. for affordable units should be on a sliding scale. More Affordable units, the Higher FAR. Floor Area Ratio**

**Answer:** That sounds about right for the policy tools we can use.

**Question: How about incentives for EUI's below 20? Energy Use Intensity**

**Answer:** Not familiar with energy use intensity as much. Not sure of energy use directly as refers to North Carolina law, but I'll send you an email and make sure that the written comments for this meeting include those details.

**Question: Can you propose a Pilot Program?**

**Answer:** I'm glad to bring this to the team and see what we're able to do.

**Response:** I am happy to provide a presentation on Passive House if you desire to learn more.



**Question: Is there consideration of intersection of Downtown South rezoning with this project? Going to put a tremendous upward pressure on housing here.**

**Answer:** When someone requests to rezone property – we look at what sort of adopted policies are in the Comprehensive Plan. Look to see if the request is consistent with that. Since the Downtown South rezoning request is already in, the Dix Edge Area Study will not have any influence on it as it is not adopted policy. Only area studies that have been approved and adopted by the City Council can have policy influence over rezoning requests. The Dix Edge study is an opportunity to change the Comprehensive Plan for the future; could include sidewalks, stormwater, parks, etc. This study is an opportunity to focus City resources on those types of needs. We rely on the community to let us know what things work or don't work in the community.

There is other rezoning and development pressure in the area as well. As new amenities come to the area, people are going to want to live in the area. This is what is leading us to have these community conversations.

**Community member:** Desperately need affordable housing. Our concern is 30% and below AMI. The people in the lowest income levels have to have a place to live in this City. They're being squeezed out. But it's not just affordable housing, the people in the lowest end have to have a place to live and hope people will keep that in mind.

**Question: Wants to get more knowledgeable about the Dix Edge Project. Construction going on across the street – people are going to be pushed out of their homes.**

**Answer:** A great question. We hired a team to look at real estate, and we will look at policies that get applied in rezoning. Potentially we'd consider an overlay district where every piece of property has an added layer of zoning. Overlay zoning can have a density bonus, which can allow the developer to have a couple extra stories if they provide affordable housing. More to come on that.

**Comment:** There's also discussion about the history of the Dix property, enslavement there, and reparations as a part of the Dix Park plan. I assume that's beyond your scope, but there will be pressure about that.

Thanks for your comment. I do want to say that earlier you had asked about coordination with Downtown South. I just wanted to also say that we coordinate very closely with the Dix Park Planning team. We meet every two weeks to make sure our efforts are aligned. It's not a disjointed effort; we meet regularly to make sure we know what the other is doing and that our work complements each other. So thanks for mentioning that, and I'll make a note to discuss that directly with them.

**Comment:** Thanks for letting us offer our opinions and for the work you are doing. This part of town needs special care.

**Question: What is the timeline of the study?**

**Answer:** Planned to be completed in 2022, but recommendations will be made to Council on a rolling basis

**Question: I'm familiar with Dorothea Dix Park – that's a very large manfield. Enough space to build a park without pushing people out of the neighborhood. Don't need to take area from Boylan Park. Always having festivals that people have to walk over there.**

**My main concern is affordable housing. Is it going to be affordable housing for everyone or just people who can use Section 8. But there are people who can't get Section 8. If you're making \$50,000, that's nothing. If I want to buy, I'll be forced out of the neighborhood. Good to have Dorothea Dix Park so people have things to do, especially youth. But is it going to increase the cost of living, especially Downtown?**

**Mayflower Ave is \$600k across the way. They're going to want to put high-end housing near the park and they're going to force the low to middle class out.**

**Answer:** Thank you for sharing so openly with us. And I hear you. I hear you about the cost of living and all the changes happening at such a high level that when it gets down to here - what are you left to do? That's a huge reason we're doing this study.

There are a few things that are likely to make that area more expensive - the park is one and Raleigh's population growing is another. If there's a limited amount of land and if there's a bunch of people who are all competing for the same amount of land, the land's going to get more expensive because there's only so much of it to go around.

So we have the park, we have the land, and we see there's increased development like with Downtown South, and then we also know that area is an opportunity zone. Opportunity zones are an area where, on a Federal level, they offer tax breaks for businesses to relocate. The purpose of them is to try to help with economic development. So there's a handful of factors going on in that area. I think all of those together have the potential to continue to make the area more expensive. That's why we're doing the study: we see it on the horizon. We see that it's been happening, and that if we do nothing it's likely to continue to get more expensive. We see that the affordability that's been in the area for quite some time now - maybe since around the time the Mill was built - might be lost.

We're going to look at tools to fix that. I know that's not the most satisfying answer to ask you to stick around throughout the study and we'll get there, but these are the tools the Planning Department has at our disposal and one of those is to conduct a study. And that study is just going to take some time. We're going to work through answers, and we're going to work through policies and different tools. We do need folks like you all to stay with us and continue telling us what you want, what you're observing, and what you're afraid of so we can work on solutions that fit those needs. But it's going to take a little bit of time. Unfortunately, we don't have the answer on how we can fix the affordable housing problem today, but we're going to keep working on it. And we're not going anywhere - I guess if I can end on a point, I'll say that.