



Established under special enabling legislation in 1947, the City-County Planning Board (CCPB) is the longest standing joint planning operation between a city and county in North Carolina. This annual report is required under its established procedures, and covers the time period of the last fiscal year, July 1, 2008-June 30, 2009.

The Board is comprised of nine citizens appointed jointly by the Forsyth County Board of Commissioners and the Winston-Salem City Council. This year the Board welcomed a new member, Darryl Little, who replaced Board Member Jerry Clark. Wesley Curtis and Paul Mullican were also reappointed.

The Board generally meets twice each month and more often, as the need arises. Board members continued their practice of allowing for extra meeting time in order to better understand various proposed draft text amendments and other work program initiatives. These extra efforts helped to add value to the

recommendations the Planning Board made to the elected bodies on several of the issues that were considered. In June 2008, the Planning Board adopted the 2008-09 work program, which is used to guide future Planning staff activities. A major component of the Board's planning work program is defined by the adopted comprehensive plan for the city and county, *Legacy*. The Planning Board and staff also perform other planning duties as requested by the City of Winston-Salem, Forsyth County, and the smaller municipalities of Forsyth County. Almost all of the itemized projects in the work program were completed, and many additional work items not anticipated but were requested by the elected bodies, managers or other agencies were completed as well.

The Planning Board's work this past year was supported by a 28-person professional Planning staff. As a result of the economic turndown, this is one (1) less than previous year's staffing level of 29 staff members. In addition to the

permanently lost planner position, the Department also endured two (2) frozen project planner vacancies. These spanned the entire fiscal year. One position is on the Development and Design Review Team, the other on the Planning Information and Graphic Services Team. It is hoped that one of the two frozen positions will be filled during FY 09/10; however, the other project planner position remains frozen indefinitely. There were no other staff changes to the department.

The following narrative describes the work of the Planning Board and its staff during the 2008-09 fiscal year and can be summarized as falling under several general categories: *Legacy*-related work items; downtown/central city work items; historic preservation; appearance and open space; special topics planning issues; small town planning; development review/regulation; and administrative matters.

LEGACY-RELATED PLANNING

The *Legacy* Citizens Oversight Committee met this past fall for its seventh annual assessment of progress in implementing *Legacy* and found that, in general, the implementation of *Legacy* has been proceeding steadily since its adoption over seven years ago. However, the Committee also recognized that it has been a few years since its adoption in 2001. Based on this and that Forsyth County has also experienced measurable economic and development growth since 2001, the Committee agreed that it is appropriate to start focusing on an update of *Legacy*. Based upon this, the Planning Board included a *Legacy* update as part



of their adopted FY 09/10 work program. Staff is anticipating that it will take about two (2) years to complete. The Citizens Oversight Committee also agreed that this year's evaluation would be their last in order to allow the focus to be on the update. Staff will, however, continue making an annual report on progress in implementing the current *Legacy* plan until it is replaced with the update.

During this past year, the Planning Board continued their work in codifying some of the recommendations in *Legacy* concerning development regulations. The largest of these efforts by far was the consideration of the proposed tree ordinance. The Board spent numerous hours in public hearings and work sessions considering and discussing the initial proposal that was based on the Tree Committee's report, and decided that the proposal needed to be modified before the Board could make a positive recommendation on it. The proposal has since been considered and further modified by the City Council. Other *Legacy*-related text amendments developed and recommended by the Planning Board for elected body action during the past year were residential infill development regulations, and across-the-board parking requirement reductions for most nonresidential uses with additional reductions for proximity of a site to

public transit. These and previously adopted amendments represent the majority of action items in *Legacy*'s original implementation list, therefore creating another reason why an update to *Legacy* is appropriate.

Area Plans

Planning staff and the Planning Board devoted attention to five different area plans over the last fiscal year. The *East/Northeast Plan* was adopted by



the City Council and the *Southwest Suburban Area Plan* was

adopted by both the City Council and the Board of County Commissioners.

This year Planning staff also started the *Southwest Winston-Salem Area Plan* and the *Southeast Suburban Area Plan*. The *Southwest Area Plan* which covers the Ardmore, Hanestown, and Biltmore neighborhood areas, was finalized and recently adopted by the Planning Board and is scheduled for hearing soon at the City Council. The *Southeast Suburban Area Plan* has been completed and will soon be heard by the Planning Board. Additionally, Planning staff provided technical assistance with an update to the *Clemmons Area Development Guide* being led by Clemmons staff and a consultant. The Area Plan Implementation Status Report also received its annual update. This report contains all area plan recommendations, their status, and suggested timing, along with budget and capital improvement project implications, and will be used by various departments as they develop their work programs and budgets.

Growth Management Efforts

The Planning Board is responsible for promoting the growth management

policies as outlined in *Legacy*. Over the past year, relevant actions or initiatives took place related to these policies:

- Continuing construction of multiple downtown commercial and residential projects, including the 5,500-seat baseball stadium with an attached 6-story office building;
- Consideration of the main elements that should go into a commercial infill standards text amendment for the Urban Neighborhoods Growth Management Area, which would complement the adopted residential infill standards;
- Continued development of the previously undeveloped Peters Creek Metro Activity Center;
- Preparation of what could become a Central City Development Strategy outlining how significant future growth could be accommodated within the central area of the community through the development of a modern people-mover system. Such a system could link the downtown to other central city activity areas and maximize the positive impacts of the 3.3 million residents, employees, students, and annual visitors to that area;
- Continued design and area plan assistance to the Revitalizing Urban Commercial Areas (RUCAs), enabling further refinement of the instructive "how-to" manual for those wishing to apply for future RUCA funds;
- Implementation of various elements of the *Southeast Gateway Plan*;
- Planning Board endorsement of *Winston-Salem Urban Area 2035 Transportation Plan*;
- Identification of existing and potential industrial sites across Forsyth County in order to assist Winston-Salem Business Inc.'s economic development efforts;
- Establish and coordinate educational and outreach efforts countywide in support of Census 2010;
- Development of a transportation and land use concept for the Kernersville Road interchange with the proposed Northern Beltway; and
- Continued success in outreach initiatives with developers and property owners regarding the future PART

commuter rail corridor which runs east-west through Winston-Salem and parallel to the Stratford Road area.

Text Amendments

Since 2005, 53 *Unified Development Ordinances* (UDO) text amendments have been adopted by the elected bodies. In addition to implementing *Legacy*, many over the past year have decreased the amount of regulation and/or increased the flexibility experienced by the development and business communities. Examples of this are the reductions to commercial parking standards and the elimination of the application submission requirement of a certified surrounding property owners list. The General Business (GB) zoning district was also amended to allow greater flexibility for pedestrian-oriented setbacks and on-street parking. The Agricultural Tourism use classification, adopted by the County Commissioners in 2008, was also implemented in this past year. These zoning provisions allow for agriculturally-based businesses to have related accessory uses such as a restaurant with a winery.

In addition to these adopted amendments, Planning Staff also dealt with a number of unexpected text amendments that were initiated by either the Planning Board or the elected bodies. Adoption of the updated county-wide FEMA maps, including amendments to the floodplain regulations; revisions to the buildable areas for flag lots; and, accessory car sales in industrial zones, are just a few examples of additions to the originally approved work program for FY 08/09.

Public Education

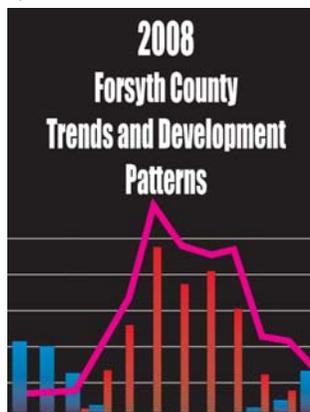
In keeping with the *Legacy* Citizens Oversight Committee recommendations, the Planning staff, in cooperation with WSTV 13, The Government Channel, has continued to host a bimonthly 30- minute educational show concerning *Legacy* issues. During the past year, episodes featured Downtown Development, Agricultural Tourism and Voluntary Agriculture Districts, and

Winton-Salem's Pedestrian and Bikeways Plan. In addition, TV 13 continues to run the Department's "commercials" or Public Service Announcements (PSAs) that highlight a principle of community growth or improvement that is emphasized in *Legacy*.

Planning staff also benefited from the City's participation in Facebook and Twitter. As the use of technology becomes more and more mainstream, it becomes an increasingly important medium used to learn more about the community and to disseminate information. The goal of reaching out to the public has continued onto the Department's web site. There is more information now available, and people can also sign up for automated e-mail notification for a variety of planning-related topics, such as UDO text amendments, historic preservation and/or Planning Board meetings. Finally, the Department's bimonthly newsletter continues to inform a wide variety of stakeholders in the community of the planning activities which are being conducted, and how they can get more information or participate in the initiatives.

Economic Development

This past year, the Planning staff also updated the *Forsyth County Trends and Profiles Report*. Known as the "Trends Report," it provides various statistics about building permits, rezonings and subdivisions, and demographic and economic data that, in many cases, have been broken into blocks representing the 22 geographic "planning areas" that encompass Forsyth County. It is intended to be an easy to read and informative economic tool for development within the community.



2008 DOWNTOWN WINSTON-SALEM/ CENTRAL CITY PLANNING

Even with the economic downturn, continued and steady progress and momentum continues for downtown redevelopment. Several residential projects are about to be occupied, including the renovated historic Winston Factory Lofts, formerly the Brown Rogers Dixon industrial warehouse, and the Gallery apartments in the Goler area of downtown. During the past year, One Park Vista was also completed and occupied. Other projects are either underway or are in the final stages of completion, thus creating at least 295 new residential units. Within a two-mile radius of downtown there are now 38,364 residents and over 35,000 employees, figures that are steadily growing.

Planning staff is also an active participant in the Infrastructure and Development Committees of the Downtown Winston Salem Partnership (DWSP). Ideas included in the Downtown Plan Update and that are now actively being promoted, involve concentrating pedestrian-oriented retail uses in an "L-Shaped" corridor heading eastward from the Stevens Center on Fourth Street, and turning northward along Trade Street to Seventh Street. This "L" connects the "performing arts" anchor to the west, with the "visual arts" anchors to the north, interspersed with "Restaurant Row" along Fourth Street, and other supplementary retail uses.

The Downtown Partnership has also continued their efforts to propose and advocate for a form-based design code for the business district in the core of downtown. As a result, the Planning Board has now included it in their adopted fiscal year 2010-11 work program, and Planning staff is expected to start work on it this fall.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLANNING

Planning staff is also the staff to the Forsyth County Historic Resources Commission (HRC). In May, the community celebrated Historic Preservation Month, which was planned and carried out through the efforts of the staff and the HRC. As part of this, they released their 6th poster and coordinated a multitude of celebratory events such as “lunch and learns,” lectures, and the unveiling of the Happy Hill historic marker. The Happy Hill neighborhood, in southeast Winston-Salem, has played an

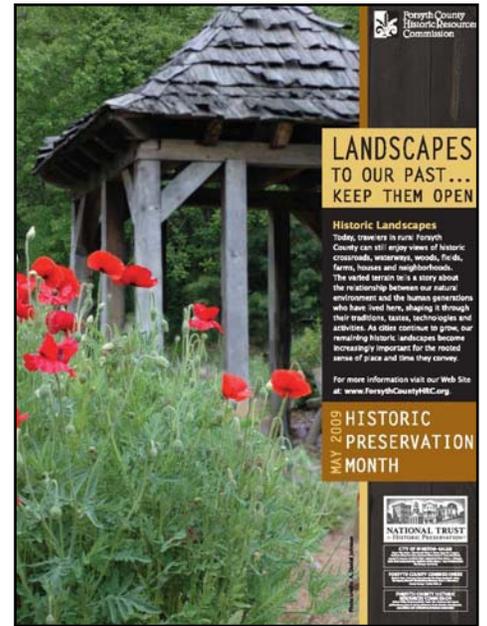
invaluable role in the African-American community since the early 19th century. One of the most exciting parts of this year’s celebration involved using the theme of “This Place Matters” to initiate a photo sharing initiative on the City’s Facebook page. It asked people to post pictures of themselves holding a ‘This Place Matters’ sign in front of places that matter to them. Sharing photos is an easy way to spread the word about preservation and to get more people involved in the historic preservation movement. By the month’s end, over a 60 photos had been posted, and over 3500 fans of the City of Winston-Salem had registered on Facebook.

The HRC, in conjunction with the Planning staff and the North Carolina State Historic Preservation Office, also continued to update the 1980 survey of historic architectural resources in Winston-Salem and Forsyth County. Phase III, the last phase, should be completed by summer of 2010 and involves 8,367 sites and structures so far. The consultant-produced survey provides photographic, architectural and historical data associated with each historic building and site throughout

Forsyth County. The results are creating a database that is assisting the City and County to better direct and manage growth and development, while also protecting and promoting our historic resources. The National Register nominations for the Sunnyside/Central Terrace and Centerville Historic Districts in Winston-Salem were



completed, and Reynoldstown, a residential neighborhood in Winston-Salem, received approval as a National Register Historic District. Finally, the Hope Area National Register Study has been outlined and funded.



COMMUNITY APPEARANCE

Planning staff also supports the City-County Community Appearance Commission (CAC). In April, the CAC co-sponsored the 16th Annual Community Roots Day with Keep Winston-Salem Beautiful and the Division of Vegetation Management. Four hundred trees were planted in the Maple Street Neighborhood, near Blum Park. The Technical Advisory and Project Review (TAPR) subcommittee, which reviews publicly funded projects in both Winston-Salem and Forsyth County, reviewed the Downtown Baseball Park and the new Moore Elementary School building, among

other projects. The CAC and Planning staff have also commenced work on the upcoming CAC awards ceremony scheduled for October 19, 2009. Held biennially, these ceremonies have been taking place since 1991.



OTHER SPECIALIZED PLANNING EFFORTS

Transportation Planning

According to an arrangement that has been in place for several years, Planning staff provides assistance and support to the transportation planning efforts of the Winston-Salem Department of Transportation (WSDOT). Together, they provide the primary staffing for the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). Planning staff provided significant administrative support to the work of the Technical Coordinating and Transportation Advisory Committees of the MPO, as well as substantive support to planning efforts. Part of these efforts included the Planning Board's review and endorsement of the *2035 Transportation Plan* for the city and county. Work continues on various plans and studies that include the *Safe Routes to School*, the *Comprehensive Transportation Plan*, and the *Long Range Transportation Plan* update.

Regional Planning

During the past year, the Director of Planning and other staff continued to work with their colleagues from Kernersville, High Point, Greensboro, and Guilford County on the planning effort known as "Heart of the Triad." This effort focuses on an area straddling the Forsyth-Guilford County line and involves a coordinated process to prepare land use and infrastructure plans. This unified effort will accommodate new regionally supportive economic growth, along with the residential and service uses necessary to make that economic growth manageable. This year also brought the initiation of another regionally-based effort called Aerotropolis. It was initiated through the Piedmont Triad Partnership and focuses on maximizing the future regional economic development opportunities associated with air transportation (both at PTI Airport and Smith-Reynolds), rail, and truck transportation. Virtually no other place in the nation has all the advantages of the Triad area, which is located at the convergence of five inter-

state highways and has outstanding materials storage and transport systems already in place from the area's textile and furniture histories. All of these advantages ensure that this area will continue to develop, as demonstrated by the recently opened FedEx East Coast hub. Coordinated planning efforts, initiated amongst the region's many stakeholders, are critical in order for our area to grow successfully. The Board heard a presentation on the Aerotropolis concept this past year.

Another cooperative regional planning effort is the completion of the next phase of the regional commuter rail study being conducted by PART. Completing the study qualifies the region to receive federal and state funds for a system. Planners from all jurisdictions have been involved in planning transit-supportive development in the areas adjacent to each of the possible stations. The first phase is planned to be the east-west route, linking eastern Greensboro to the Hanes Mall area.

Rural Preservation

In February of 2008, Voluntary Agricultural Districts became available. At the same time, the Agricultural Tourism zoning provisions were added to the UDO, thus providing an additional tool for encouraging rural and farm preservation. These zoning provisions allow a range of uses not normally allowed in rural areas if and when they are associated with a principal agricultural use that has first been designated as a Voluntary Agricultural District. Following up on this, in the fall of 2008, a representative of the Soil and Water Conservation Board was the guest on an episode of Today's Tomorrow shown on TV 13 in order to



SMALL TOWN

PLANNING ASSISTANCE

The City-County Planning Board handles zoning requests and general planning support for the towns of Rural Hall, Tobaccoville, and Bethania since those communities remain in the zoning and planning jurisdiction of Forsyth County. Additionally, the City-County Planning staff also functions as the planning staff to the Town of Walkertown, which has its own planning/zoning jurisdiction and planning board. City-County Planning staff continued to work with the Village of Clemmons as they finalized their update of the *Clemmons Area Development Guide*. The Town of Lewisville and the Town of Kernersville have their own planning jurisdiction, planning board and planning staff.

help promote and educate the public on where the districts are currently being used in Forsyth County and why they are so important to our history and our future.

Planning Information

The next fly-over for an orthophotography and mapping project had been scheduled for 2010, however, due to the economic downturn, it has now been postponed. Hopefully, as the economic situation improves, the funding can be made available to have the orthophotography updated without too much delay. Having the availability of orthophotos that are reasonably up-to-date and calibrated with Census data, helps immeasurably in future planning for development and public facilities. The 2005 orthophotos are available for viewing at the Planning Office's zoning counter at map scales of 1" to 200' (1:2400) for the whole project area and at 1" to 100' (1:1200) for the greater downtown area. Digital images are also available for download in Seamless Image Data (SID) format from the City's GIS web page,

(Planning Information continues on page 6)

<http://www.GIS.cityofws.org> . These maps were used to update the County Tax Office’s GeoData Explorer application at <http://www.forsyth.cc/tax/geodata.aspx> . Additionally, planimetric and topographic data is available as hard-copy maps at the zoning counter and is also downloadable in CADD (DWG) format from the City’s GIS web site.

There is also much work going on to prepare for the 2010 Census.



It is critically important to have as full and accurate an account of the population in the county because federal and state monies are often allocated based upon population. To this end, Planning staff has

been working with the U.S. Census Bureau to compare databases and do field checking so that the list of addresses where people live is complete and the proper 2010 Census forms can get to everyone to fill out and return. Also, Planning is coordinating the efforts of a countywide Complete Count Committee, made up of 60-70 individuals, who are working in several subcommittees, to come up with a multpronged outreach and educational campaign about the importance of the Census. This message also emphasizes that there will be no personal negative consequences as a result of being counted due to the Census Bureau’s legal mandates to maintain privacy of individual Census responses.

recognized expert, to assist them in assessing the customer service provided by the Planning Department and Board through its various processes. Since then, Planning staff and the Planning Board have continued to work diligently towards completing the suggested action items related to improved efficiency and customer service. These efforts also are complementary to the City’s participation in the UNC Institute of Government’s Development Review Benchmarking Study of nine North Carolina communities. Three national model communities known for high development customer service were also incorporated into the study. Specific to Winston-Salem and Forsyth County, the completed document identified opportunities for all development review departments to have a better coordinated plan and permitting review process. The City Council has reviewed and endorsed the findings of this study, which ultimately call for a one-stop-shop development review department. As funding and staffing allows, the City Council continues to work diligently towards this goal.

DEVELOPMENT REVIEW ACTIVITIES

The following table summarizes development review activities processed and coordinated by the Planning Board staff for the 2008-09 fiscal year.

Preliminary subdivision plans approved	3
Final plats approved	95
Site plans approved through Planning Board Review	26
Minor subdivisions approved	107
Zoning Caseload	
General Use rezoning requests	16
Special Use Limited	5
Special Use rezoning requests	37
Special Use Permits	10
Jurisdictional transfers of zoning (County to City)	5
Site Plan Amendments	4
Total Zoning Cases	77
Staff site plan changes to approved special use district site plans	12
UDO Text amendments processed	28

A special note should be made concerning UDO text amendments. Text amendments are initiated in several different ways: 1) by an outside party, usually a development interest, which submits a request for an amendment; 2) by Planning or Inspections staff, through either a review of practical problems or issues in interpreting or administering the ordinance, or through a implementation of a planning initiative specified in the Planning Board’s

adopted annual work program; or 3) by special request of the Planning Board or the City or County elected bodies. As UDO text amendments are adopted, the UDO is updated on the MuniCode web site bi-monthly.

The Planning Board places a high value on good customer service, both for the development community, as well as all of our citizens. In 2007, the Planning Board hired Paul Zucker, a nationally

ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

Budget and Staffing

In June 2008, the City and County approved their overall budgets that allocated \$3,002,810 to the City-County Planning operation. However, shortly following the adoption of the budget, the downturn in economy necessitated several mandatory cuts to the discretionary operating budget line items. These reductions included the freezing of three (3) vacant positions. Since then, several more cuts to the discretionary operating line items were required; one (1) planner position has been eliminated and the two (2) project planner positions frozen indefinitely. As a result of these vacancies, the department is currently at 1/3 of its pre-recession GIS staffing levels. This has greatly and negatively affected the department’s GIS mapping capabilities.

Addressing, a countywide function added to the Planning Department a

couple of years ago, continues to be a much larger undertaking than originally anticipated. As a result a temporary staff person continues to assist the Address Coordinator.

LOOKING AHEAD TO 2009-10

The Planning Board in May 2009 adopted a new work program to guide the work of staff in the new fiscal year. Estimated FTEs (full time employees) are included in order to gauge the number of employees it takes to complete each item. However it is also based upon the department being fully staffed with 28-staff members, which does not reflect the existing two (2) vacancies, or the eliminated position. Due to this, the Planning Board added a qualifying statement to the work program that acknowledges completion of an item or items will depend upon

staffing levels. Prior to its adoption, the proposed work program was also given to the City and County Managers and distributed via the electronic distribution list (currently 100 stakeholders) for comment. This is the same list that is used to distribute all pending text amendments that the Planning Board reviews.

In addition to implementing *Legacy* through ordinance amendments and preparing for an update of *Legacy*, an important aspect of the plan is the emphasis on smaller area planning to fill in the details of how specific land uses fit within specific areas of the City and County. With the adoption of the two area plans currently underway, Southeast Suburban and the Southwest Winston-Salem Area Plans, there are five area plans remaining. The completion of those will likely take another

two years. When they are complete, the Planning Board will then have countywide coverage to help guide short and long range planning decisions. These will be invaluable as their completion will also coincide with the *Legacy* update.

The Planning Board and staff look forward to the challenges and opportunities during 2009-10 in providing what its mission statement calls for: “visionary leadership in comprehensive, creative planning for our urban and rural community, and responsible stewardship of the natural environment.” Through its many hours of work and careful deliberation on the various issues before it, the Board continues to demonstrate that it “values a beautiful, livable, harmonious, and economically successful community.”

August 2009 City-County Planning Board

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*The City-County Planning Board and staff are funded jointly
by the City of Winston-Salem and Forsyth County.*

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The mission of the City-County Planning Board of Winston-Salem and Forsyth County is to assert visionary leadership in comprehensive, creative planning for our urban and rural community, and responsible stewardship of the natural environment. We value a beautiful, livable, harmonious, and economically successful community.

City-County
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