Task Force on Preservation of Neighborhoods and Housing

Report to City Council

December 13, 2004

Task Force on Preservation of Neighborhoods and Housing

Mary Lou Antieau
Vince Bellis
Tom Best
Mary Claire Biles
Brian Billups
Richard Crisp
Bob Dietrich
Reggie Elliot
Brenda Ernst
D.D. Garrett
Brandon Hedrick
Max Joyner
Jarvis Miles
Lillian Outterbridge
George Saad
Annie Suggs
Donna Whitley

Staff

Harry Hamilton
Planning & Community Development

Neil Holthouser
Planning & Community Development

Carl Rees
Neighborhood Services

Sylvia Horne
Neighborhood Services

Preface

We are fortunate to live in a growing, thriving community. While many neighboring communities in Eastern North Carolina are losing population and experiencing economic decline, Greenville has more than tripled its population over the last 50 years. Today, the population of Greenville exceeds 65,000, and is on track to top 100,000 over the next 15 years. Because of our strong economy and high quality of life, Greenville continues to attract new residents who bring with them a rich diversity of skills, interests and backgrounds.

Along with this growth, however, comes tremendous pressure on our community to provide adequate housing and maintain strong neighborhoods. As Greenville continues to grow outward, many of our older, established, inner-city neighborhoods are struggling to attract and retain homeowners, while a significant increase in the demand for rental housing has led to the conversion of many older homes for rental use.

Recognizing these trends, Greenville's City Council agreed in February 2004 to create a citizen Task Force on Preservation of Neighborhoods and Housing. The Task Force was charged with examining the conditions that exist in older, established neighborhoods, determining the impacts of rental properties on these neighborhoods, and recommending actions that would strengthen and enhance neighborhood livability.

The 15-member Council-appointed Task Force – comprised of homeowners, neighborhood leaders, renters, and landlords – began meeting in March 2004. Over the course of nine months, the Task force held over a dozen meetings to identify issues and brainstorm solutions. The Task Force studied successful approaches adopted by other communities across the state and nation, and offered opportunities for Greenville citizens to comment and provide meaningful input.

From the outset, the Task Force affirmed its commitment to look at issues from all angles and to work toward consensus in recommending solutions. The issues that confront our neighborhoods are complex, and reaching agreement was not always easy. In the end, the Task Force unanimously voted to recommend ten Neighborhood Improvement Strategies to City Council. It is our shared and unanimous belief that these ten strategies must be adopted and implemented, and that by doing so, Greenville can continue to grow in a manner that supports, maintains, and enhances healthy neighborhoods.

A.T. Best, Chair
Task Force on Preservation of
Neighborhoods and Housing

Issues

In February 2004, Greenville City Council established the Task Force on Preservation of Neighborhoods and Housing to explore the link between rental housing and neighborhood livability. The Task Force was given the following charge:

1. *Examine conditions that exist in neighborhoods of detached, single family and duplex housing areas*
2. *Determine the impact of rental properties on those neighborhoods*
3. *Propose actions that would strengthen and enhance the viability and livability of those neighborhoods*

Given their charge, the Task Force set out to identify, and to subsequently explore, issues related to rental housing and neighborhood livability. The issue identification process included group exercises, staff presentations, community input and most importantly, genial, spirited and thoughtful discussion among the membership. During the course of several early meetings, Task Force members identified the following issues:

Percentage of owner-occupied versus rental housing. The Task Force agreed that, in neighborhoods of detached, single-family and duplex housing, there is a direct relationship between neighborhood livability and the ratio of rental-to-owner-occupied housing. In general, an increase in the number of rental units creates a negative climate for homeowner investment.

Inconsistent levels of housing maintenance and appearance. The Task Force agreed that home-ownership is the most influential factor in ensuring adequate property maintenance. While not universally true, rental properties are generally more likely to suffer from deferred maintenance and neglect.

Limited resources to enforce City codes. After reviewing existing city codes related to occupancy, property maintenance, and nuisance issues, the Task Force concluded that the city lacks the resources to enforce existing codes in an aggressive, pro-active manner.

Crime, vandalism, and negative stereotyping related to crime. The Task Force agreed that crime represents a real threat to many established neighborhoods. Perceptions about crime based on reputation or stereotype create a significant barrier in attracting new homebuyers.

Unpredictability of land use decisions. The Task Force agreed that predictability is an important factor in home purchasing. Zoning patterns that allow the encroachment of duplex and multi-family development create uncertainty and risk for potential homebuyers.

Recurring nuisances, anti-social behavior, and lack of neighborhood pride. The Task Force agreed that recurring nuisances intrude upon the rights of neighbors, create a negative image, and discourage potential homebuyers. In general, renters are more transient than homeowners and are less likely to have a long-term stake in neighborhood livability.

Coordination between City departments. The Task Force agreed that nuisance and maintenance problems are often traced to a limited number of rental properties that are the subject of multiple and repeat violations. However, the city departments responsible for enforcing various codes are often unaware of each other's efforts.

Litter, trash and the appearance of neglect. The Task Force agreed that the appearance of trash, litter, and obvious signs of deferred maintenance creates a negative neighborhood image and discourages re-investment.

Traffic and Parking. The Task Force agreed that front-yard parking, lack of off-street parking, parking by non-residents, and excessive traffic hinders access by neighborhood residents, creates a visual blight, and degrades livability.

Declining property values. The Task Force agreed that neighborhood decline is largely an economic phenomenon driven by housing value. Conditions that result in risk, uncertainty, or actual decline in property value drive out homeowners and discourage new investment. Declining property values have a negative impact on the city's tax base, thereby reducing the resources needed to reverse the decline.

Symptom and Disease

The Task Force sought not merely to identify issues, but to explain the underlying factors that cause neighborhood decline. The Task Force conceived of a two-part, cause-and-effect model to group issues into "symptoms" and "diseases." Issues related to broad market forces and long-term housing trends were loosely identified as the "disease." Short-term or recurring problems that tended to result from broader causal forces were identified as "symptoms."

The Task Force agreed that the broader "disease" of neighborhood decline is the result of economic forces related to housing choice and housing value. Homeowners view their homes as investments, and seek out neighborhoods with qualities that protect and enhance their investments. When conditions arise that create risk, uncertainty or discomfort, homeowners may choose to relocate to neighborhoods that will better protect their investments.

In some ways, this "disease" of housing shift is an unfortunate by-product of Greenville's rapid growth. As the city continues to grow in an outward fashion, a significant number of homeowners have shifted away from established neighborhoods on the interior to take advantage of newer housing on the periphery. This perpetual outward development pattern is accompanied by a shift in resources – in terms of public infrastructure and private investment – away from older, established neighborhoods. Apathy toward the detrimental effects of this outward development pattern has led to the unchecked continuation of the cycle.

Although its original charge was limited to neighborhoods of detached single-family and duplex housing, the Task Force agreed that the phenomenon of housing shift affects all types of residential development, including duplex and multi-family development outside of traditional neighborhoods. Data suggests that the supply of rental housing is greater than the demand, resulting in a city-wide vacancy rate of more than 10 percent. As is the case with owner-occupied housing, renters are increasingly leaving older, established areas in favor of newer housing (in the form of large new apartment complexes) in suburban areas. Heightened competition within the rental market has depressed rents and forced many landlords to scramble for tenants to fill their units. For some landlords, the low rents do not justify costly improvements to their properties, which only furthers the cycle of neighborhood decline. The Task Force agreed that the fundamental problem of housing shift exists on a community-wide scale, and cannot be fully and successfully addressed with strategies limited to single-family neighborhoods alone.

As to "symptoms" of the larger disease, the Task Force pointed to four principle concerns. The first of these, unacceptable levels of nuisance and housing code violations, was attributed to a lack of institutional capacity to enforce City regulations. The Task Force determined that this lack of capacity was attributable to two primary components. First, inadequate enforcement tools in the form of City Codes to address housing and neighborhood nuisance issues, and second, insufficient enforcement personnel to enforce existing or newly proposed codes.

A second "symptom" identified by the Task Force related to the failure of some rental property owners to maintain their properties to established community standards. The Task Force concluded that there were no inherent incentives for property owners to maintain their property, nor were there any significant disincentives to dissuade owners from allowing rental property to deteriorate.

The third "symptom" identified by the group was dissatisfaction expressed by some citizens related to the level of coordinated response to neighborhood concerns. Specifically, the Task Force cited the inability of citizens to track the City's response to neighborhood problems and the lack of substantial support for neighborhood empowerment and planning initiatives.

Finally, the Task Force identified the declining rate of owner occupied housing in many established, center-city neighborhoods as the leading "symptom" to the broader disease. The Task Force concluded that without significant intervention, the existing outward development pattern and housing shift would continue, leading to ever increasing rental rates in established, center city neighborhoods.

Recommendations

"The efforts of the Task Force will culminate in recommendations to City Council of measures which may be undertaken relating to conditions caused or resulting from single family or duplex dwelling rental property being located in residential neighborhoods so that the viability and livability of the neighborhoods may be enhanced."

- City Council charge, February 2004

After identifying issues related to rental housing and neighborhood livability, the Task Force set out to develop policies and strategies to strengthen and improve established single-family and duplex neighborhoods. The Task Force began by analyzing existing city codes related to zoning, housing, property maintenance, and public nuisances. The Task Force determined that many of the "symptoms" of neighborhood decline – such as noise, parking, and deferred maintenance – could be addressed by modifying, strengthening and enforcing existing city codes. The Task Force further agreed that the City currently lacks the resources to aggressively enforce codes.

The Task Force recognized, however, that regulatory approaches alone do not address the underlying causes of neighborhood decline – namely, the economic phenomenon of risk and the resulting shift of homeowners away from established neighborhoods. The Task Force concluded that, in addition to regulation, a successful strategy must address the economic forces that lead to neighborhood decline. The Task Force focused on measures to strengthen neighborhood organizational capacity, promote public-private partnerships to encourage home ownership, and create economic incentives for neighborhood re-investment.

A key strategy developed by the Task Force – the creation of a Rental Property Registration & Certification Program – was the subject of intense internal debate. Variations of the registration concept have been successfully implemented in other communities with housing issues similar to those in Greenville. The system creates a regulatory framework for identifying, monitoring, and enforcing actions against properties that routinely violate city codes. The approach is also economic, in that it escalates the penalties for code violations – with the ultimate threat of revocation – in an effort to increase the financial costs of non-compliant behavior.

The Task Force debated whether such a system should apply city-wide, or only within neighborhoods of predominantly detached, single-family housing. Task Force members agreed that enforcement should be focused on disruptive properties, while not burdening those that comply with the law. The Task Force ultimately supported a violation-based system that applies city-wide, and requires registration upon violation of zoning, housing, property maintenance or public nuisance codes.

All told, the Task Force developed a series of ten Neighborhood Improvement Strategies designed to address both the symptoms and disease of neighborhood decline. These ten strategies represent the unanimous and shared views of all Task Force members. What follows is a summary of the ten Neighborhood Improvement Strategies recommended by the Task Force, followed by a more detailed discussion of the purpose, mechanics, and anticipated outcome of each strategy.

Neighborhood Improvement Strategies

1. Create a violation-based Rental Property Registration & Certification Program, whereby registration is required upon violation of zoning, housing, property maintenance, or public nuisance codes.

2. Create a Code Enforcement Tracking System and Rental Property Database to monitor violations and enforcement activity and to distribute information to neighbors.

3. Revise the City's Code Enforcement and Appeals Process to promote consistency, capture the true cost of enforcement, and ensure that enforcement actions are directed at the source of the nuisance.

4. Revise City ordinances related to Parking on Unimproved Surfaces to allow for "on-the-spot" ticketing and establish routine patrols of neighborhoods.

5. Revise City ordinances related to Noise to apply to all manner and type of disruptive noise, including non-amplified human voices, and to allow for "on-the-spot" ticketing.

6. Identify neighborhoods that are predominantly single-family in character, but are zoned in a manner that would permit intrusion of duplex or multi-family uses. Rezone such neighborhoods to prohibit further intrusion.

7. Create economic incentives to encourage reinvestment in established single-family neighborhoods.

8. Adopt strategies to develop and empower Neighborhood Associations, including technical and financial assistance to train neighborhood leaders and build organizational capacity.

9. Develop and adopt Neighborhood Plans to guide public policy and investment decisions in older, established areas of Greenville.

10. Adopt land use policies that recognize the link between suburban residential development and the health of established neighborhoods. Plan new neighborhoods in ways that ensure their continued value, desirability, livability, and economic vitality.

1

Violation-based Rental Property Registration & Certification Program

Issue:

The Task Force has determined that the quality, condition, and number of rental properties in predominantly single-family neighborhoods have a direct impact on the desirability, livability, and value of the neighborhood. In general, renters are more transient than homeowners, and are therefore less likely to have a long-term stake in neighborhood livability. Similarly, landlords who do not reside in the neighborhood are not directly exposed to the impacts their properties may have on neighborhood livability.

The Task Force acknowledges that the availability of affordable, well-maintained rental housing is essential to the health and sustainability of the housing market. However, it must be recognized that poorly-maintained rental units, rental units that fail to meet minimum housing standards, and rental units that are repeatedly the subject of city ordinance violations adversely affect the rights of nearby neighbors, and therefore constitute a public nuisance. Similarly, poor maintenance and anti-social behavior within large multi-family rental complexes degrades the quality of life for neighboring tenants, and eventually results in the decline of the complex as a whole.

Background:

Greenville has historically had a relatively high demand for rental housing, due in large part to its status as a college town. According to the 2000 Census, approximately 56% of all dwelling units in Greenville are renter-occupied; 33% are owner-occupied, while approximately 11% are vacant. The rental housing market is the fastest-growing segment of Greenville's overall housing market. From 1990 to 2000, the number of renter-occupied dwelling units increased by 55%, while the number of owner-occupied dwelling units increased only 38%.

Several factors explain the increase in demand for rental housing:

- Increased student enrollment at East Carolina University
- Growth of the Medical Center and health care industry
- In-migration from surrounding rural counties
- Transition from an agricultural-based economy to a service-oriented economy

The rental housing market covers a wide range of housing types: multi-family apartment buildings; attached or duplex housing units; and single-family homes that have been converted for rental use. Most of the large multi-family housing complexes are located along major thoroughfares, near large institutional or employment areas, or in peripheral areas away from predominantly single-family neighborhoods. However, many of the attached duplex units, and most of the converted single-family units, are located in or very near established single-family neighborhoods. There are several reasons why duplex and single-family conversion rental units tend to be located in or near established single-family neighborhoods.

- Like many cities, Greenville experienced a residential migration in the later half of the 20th Century from older, establish urban neighborhoods to suburban areas.
- The suburban migration has continued (if not increased) in recent years due to a strong economy, low interest rates, shifting housing preferences, and a significant increase in the number of new single-family housing starts in suburban areas.
- The rate of new housing starts exceeds the rate of in-migration; therefore, a portion of the new housing market must be explained by a redistribution, or shift, of existing residents from established neighborhoods to new suburban communities.
- There is insufficient demand for owner-occupied housing (i.e. too few homeowners) to fill both the new suburban homes and the older housing stock. As a result, many older homes take longer to sell, sell at lower prices, or simply remain vacant.

- Property values in many older, established neighborhoods are relatively low, which makes rental conversion economically attractive (i.e. the rental income generated more than offsets the debt for the investment property owner.)
- The older housing stock tends to be centrally located near the University, the downtown, areas of service-sector employment, and other areas that generate demand for rental housing.

The data bears out what many residents in established neighborhoods have intuitively perceived: As homeowners move out, renters increasingly replace them. Most residents agree that the presence of rental property, per se, is not necessarily detrimental to their neighborhoods. However, there seems to be a relationship, and therefore a precarious balance, between the number, quality, and condition of rental units in any given neighborhood, and the health, desirability, and value of the neighborhood as a whole. In particular, residents object to nuisances that tend to occur with higher frequency among rental units, such as poor exterior maintenance, over-occupancy, front-yard parking, litter, noise, and other behavioral problems.

Recommended Action:

Create a city-wide Violation-based Rental Property Registration and Certification System to register, monitor, and enforce standards for rental properties. A Rental Registration Certificate would be required for each rental unit that accrued violation points up to or beyond a predetermined level during a twelve-month period. Such a certificate would serve as a one-year privilege to rent a given dwelling unit and would require renewal if the dwelling accrued additional violations, or, if the owner failed to settle any outstanding fines during the term of the certificate. Repeated and unresolved violations might result in the revocation of a rental certificate, thus preventing the owner from utilizing the dwelling unit for rental purposes.

The Certificate would also provide for certification by the property owner as to their understanding of the frequent code violations outlined below as well as certification that the property owner had provided certain information to their tenants. The City would establish a database to track violations as well as those rental units where certification was required. Various point values could be assigned to a predetermined group of violations based on the severity of negative neighborhood impact for each type of violation.

Violations likely to be tracked would include:

- Minimum Housing Code violations
- Over-occupancy violations
- Front Yard parking violations
- Weed / Vegetation violations
- Noise / Nuisance violations

To encourage better compliance in the future, the system could allow for the reduction or mitigation of points through the adoption of “best practices” for rental property management. For example, property owners who provide additional education for their tenants, who adopt more stringent lease requirements, make parking improvements or attend a “landlord” workshop may “work off” points that have been assessed against their property.

Anticipated Outcome:

The establishment of such a registration and certification system would provide for the protection of property owners who occupy their homes in neighborhoods throughout the City from unwanted nuisances caused by some rental units. The system would provide incentives for owners to maintain their properties to established standards, yet would not create an undue hardship on rental owners who maintain their properties to established community standards.

2

Code Enforcement Tracking System & Rental Property Database

Issue:

Citizens are often discouraged from reporting violations due to the perception that nothing will be done to correct the problem, or that the City will be unwilling to follow through with enforcement. Citizens have expressed dissatisfaction over their current inability to readily access information regarding the status of their complaints. Similarly, landlords may not be aware of violations committed by their tenants.

Background:

At present, City departments track code enforcement information in a variety of ways ranging from large-scale, main-frame database applications, to in house tracking on programs such as Microsoft Excel and even to hard copy indexes in spiral type notebooks. While citizens are free to call the City to request follow up information on any code enforcement case, some citizens report that the process can be confusing as they may not recall the appropriate City department to contact or other information specific to the case. Furthermore, there is no response system to verify that a complaint has been received, or, acted upon when the concern is received by means other than staff to citizen direct conversation.

The majority of neighborhood related code enforcement issues fall within the purview of two City departments: Planning and Community Development and the Greenville Police Department. Both departments track code enforcement information through use of the methods listed above, however neither department currently has access to the information stored by the other. Case types tracked by the Department of Planning and Community Development with potential interest to citizens include occupancy by more than three unrelated persons of a single family dwelling, parking on unimproved surfaces, infractions related to historic districts, and the unauthorized conversion of single family homes to duplex dwellings. Citizens in single family neighborhoods might also be interested in code violations tracked by the Police Department including, violations of the noise ordinance, Minimum Housing Code violations, and a variety of public nuisances such as weeded lots and junk or abandoned vehicles.

Recommended Actions:

The City of Greenville should study the feasibility of implementing a joint enforcement database that tracks a variety of code violations that are common to single family residential neighborhoods. Such a database should be made accessible to citizens and property owners alike by means of web-based technology so that they can more easily track code violations at a given property. The web-based site should also provide the means for a citizen to report potential code violations or other concerns. Consideration should be given to equipping such a system with an automated response function that provides the citizen with a reply indicating that their concern has been received as well as typical time frames for the enforcement process.

The City should study the feasibility of establishing a violation-based rental property database capable of web-based access. Such a system would allow City staff, property owners and other citizens to determine if a given property is registered.

Anticipated Outcome:

In an era where the use of personal microcomputers and access to web based technologies are ever expanding, governments must ensure that service levels keep pace with technology. As such, the development of web based information tools should prove to be an effective method for two-way communication with citizens and represent an important upgrade in the level of service provided by the City of Greenville to its citizens.

3

Revise the City's Code Enforcement and Appeals Process

Issue:

At present, the City's code enforcement posture relies on a complaint-based system that emphasizes compliance, rather than punishment. However, the Task Force believes that a more aggressive enforcement strategy – one that seeks to deter violations by making the consequences more predictable and severe – is needed.

Citizens are often discouraged from reporting violations due to the perception that nothing will be done to correct the problem, or that the City will be unwilling to follow through with enforcement. Violations should be resolved in a timely manner. Enforcement must be consistent. Enforcement actions should be directed to the source of the nuisance or offense; tenants should be held accountable for their behavior, while landlords should he held accountable for the condition of their units.

Background:

Most code violations cited as having a negative impact on established single-family neighborhoods fall under the regulatory authority of either the City's Police Department or Planning and Community Development Department. Frequent violations enforced by the Police Department include Noise Ordinance, Minimum Housing Code, Public Nuisance Code, and Junk Vehicle Regulations.

Frequent violations enforced by the Planning and Community Development Department include Occupancy Regulations and Residential Unimproved Surface Parking Regulations.

At present, City staff from each respective department enforce these regulations primarily based on citizen complaints. Once complaints are received, they are investigated and if the allegations are verified, an enforcement letter is issued to the property owner. For violations of the Zoning Ordinance that take place within what is defined as a "Zero Tolerance" area in proximity to the ECU campus, a citation is sent to the property owner once the violation is verified. Minimum Housing, Public Nuisance and Junk Vehicle Code violations all require by North Carolina law that a warning letter be sent prior to the issuance of a civil citation. Typically, the first letter provides a description of the violation, a reference to the pertinent section from the City Code, and a request for compliance within a specified time period.

If a violation is not corrected following the initial written request for compliance, a second letter may be issued. However, in most cases under the current enforcement system, failure to comply with the initial letter would result in the issuance of a civil citation. Civil citations for all of the violations noted above with the exception of the noise ordinance are similarly structured. A first citation would carry a penalty of $50.00 followed by a second citation of $100 for a second offense within a twelve-month period and a $250 citation for a third and any subsequent offense within a twelve-month period.

Violations of the Noise Ordinance are enforced by sworn police officers that have the ability to write a $50 civil citation to the person causing the noise when they verify that a violation has occurred. If the noise takes place on private property, the officer also has the ability to issue civil citations to the property owner following a third violation within one calendar year.

Collection procedures for all civil citations issued by both the Police Department and Planning and Community Development Department follow a similar process. Following issuance of a civil citation, the City allows 30 days for payment. If payment has not been received within that time, a collection notice is mailed to the party that received the initial citation. Should the party fail to respond to the collection notice within 90 days, the account is transferred to an outside agency for collection and credit reporting.

A significant weakness of the current code enforcement and penalty system is the absence of a binding, impartial appeal and citation waiver process. At present, violations of the City's

Zoning Ordinance may be appealed to the Board of Adjustment, a standing quasi-judicial citizen board. However, such appeals are extremely infrequent. A far more frequent occurrence both for zoning violations and other code violations is an informal request for citation waiver made to an elected official, City Manager, or City Department Head. Actions to grant or deny such appeals are generally made on an arbitrary basis with little if any documentation available to support the decision.

Recommended Action:

The Neighborhood Task Force recommends that an appeal and citation waiver process be instituted so that appeals are heard in a more formal and objective manner. Under such a system, a formal appeal application would be completed by the appellant and reviewed by the Greenville City Manager or his/her designee. There would be no charge associated with such an appeal. Should the appellant be unsatisfied with the results of the administrative appeal, the appellant would reserve the right to file an appeal with an appellate board.

The City should also consider the adoption of new fees aimed at capturing the true cost of enforcement for code violations that typically diminish the quality of life in Greenville neighborhoods. State law would require careful study of the issue, but in principal, the City could charge property owners the actual cost to the City for enforcement visits to the property in violation. By way of example, in a typical public nuisance case where a property owner has failed to cut the grass, the City would inspect and note the violation, then send the required notice letter to the property owner. If upon re-inspection the property owner had failed to comply with the terms of the letter, the City would then charge the owner for the true cost of that inspection visit and any subsequent inspection visits.

An independent accountant working on behalf of the City of Raleigh has determined such costs to be $200 in that city. Similarly, the City of Greenville could determine the actual enforcement costs and charge fees for other common violations in neighborhoods. Such a fee system would likely serve as a deterrent for some property owners, but would also help defray the cost for a more pro-active enforcement posture by City staff. A similar type of fee structure can be applied to the proposed rental registration system should such a system be adopted.

In addition to other recommended changes to the Noise Ordinance, the City of Greenville should consider changes to the both the fine amount as well as to the collection process. It is recommended that the current citation amount of $50 for a violation of the noise ordinance be increased to $85 per violation. Furthermore, the City should amend the Noise Ordinance to include language requiring that citations be paid within a set period of time. Failure to pay the civil citations within that time period should result in the revocation of the civil citation and issuance of a criminal citation in its place.

Anticipated Outcome:

Implementation of the changes outlined above will make it substantially more expensive to violate neighborhood related provisions of the Greenville City Code. For rental property owners who run non-compliant businesses, the changes will mean that they will pay for the required enforcement on their properties. For tenants and other citizens that violate codes such as the noise ordinance and front yard parking regulations, there will be more expensive consequences associated with their actions. It is hoped that these changes will ultimately alter the behavior of non-compliant tenants and rental property owners alike, making Greenville's single family neighborhoods safer, more attractive and even more desirable places to live.

4

Revise City Ordinances Related to Parking on Unimproved Surfaces

Issue:

Front-yard parking on unimproved surfaces is commonplace in many neighborhoods throughout the City. Such parking practices are in violation of city ordinances and constitute a visual blight, which in turn adversely affects the rights of nearby neighbors.

Current enforcement strategies rely on complaints to trigger enforcement, and direct the citation to the owner of the property, rather than to the owner of the vehicle.

Background:

Regulations pertaining to this issue are currently housed within Title 9 of the Greenville City Code in Chapter 4, dedicated to zoning. In summary form, the requirements stipulate that vehicular parking for single family and two-family attached, (duplex), dwellings must take place in marked, hard surfaced spaces, constructed of an all weather material such as asphalt, concrete, compacted gravel or brick. For single family dwellings, parking areas are limited to no more than 30% of the front yard area while duplex dwellings may dedicate up to 40% of the front yard area for parking.

At the present time, authority to enforce the regulations is granted to the Zoning Enforcement Officer, defined in the City Code as "the person, officer or official or his authorized representative whom the City Council has designated as his agent for the enforcement of the Zoning Ordinance". Workload and staffing constraints within the Planning and Community Development Department often dictate that enforcement of these provisions be on a complaint basis. Existing regulations and internal procedures allow the Zoning Enforcement Officer to issue civil citations by U.S. mail to both the vehicle owner and the property owner in amounts ranging from $50.00 for a first violation within a one year period up to $250.00 for a third and any subsequent violations within a one year period. Under the current enforcement system it is common for City staff to receive calls from rental property owners who are concerned that parking violations are the result of actions by tenants and friends of tenants and that such actions are not controllable by the property owner. Property owners have expressed a belief that it is more appropriate to hold the vehicle owner responsible for parking violations rather than the property owner.

Recommended Action:

The responsibility for enforcing the single family and duplex parking regulations should be transferred to the Neighborhood Services Unit within the Greenville Police Department. Code enforcement officers assigned to this unit routinely patrol the areas around the ECU campus and already enforce other City Codes on a pro-active basis. The City should alter the fine schedule for this violation such that it is consistent with other common parking violations. Civil citations for these parking violations should be issued to the owner of the vehicle by means of placing a ticket on the windshield of the vehicle similar to the current enforcement process for other parking violations.

Anticipated Outcome:

The enforcement posture for single family and duplex parking violations will change from a complaint to a pro-active basis. This simplified, pro-active enforcement system along with the nuisance nature of the fine system will cause a significant reduction in the instances of residential parking violations.

5

Revise City Ordinances Related to Noise

Issue:

The Task Force believes that the quiet enjoyment of residential areas is a prime consideration in housing choice and a paramount objective in the preservation of neighborhoods. Unreasonably excessive noise from any source is a detriment to public health, safety, and welfare and constitutes a public nuisance.

The City's current noise ordinance applies only to amplified noise (vehicles, stereos, instruments) and relies on measurable decibel levels for enforcement. The Task Force has studied noise ordinance models from other communities, and has determined that a successful approach must include excessively loud human voices, and need not be based on the measurement of sound levels to be enforceable.

Background:

The current Noise Control regulations were adopted in October 1996. The regulations include maximum permitted amplified sound levels by use occupancy, permit requirements and procedures for temporarily exceeding established maximum decibel levels by occupancy, as well as penalties for violations. The regulations also include noise standards for motor vehicles, off-road vehicles, mufflers and animals. The regulations do not specifically address unnecessarily loud human voice noises, such as yelling or shouting, which routinely are known by the residences and police to disturb the peace and quiet in neighborhoods, thereby directly affecting livability. Enforcement of the Noise Control regulations is the responsibility of the Greenville Police Department.

Recommended Action:

After a review of the Noise Control ordinance of the City of Greenville, and in consideration of noise control measures common to other cities within the state, the Task Force recommends that the Noise Control regulations, as setout in Title 12, Chapter 5 of the City Code, be amended to include specific standards for all excessive, disruptive and annoying sounds which are plainly audible within any residential area. The Housing Task Force recommends that the Police Department conduct a study of the available literature and model noise control ordinances for the purpose of developing appropriate amendments. The Housing Task Force further specifically recommends that, (i) the current regulations should be expanded to include all manner and type of noise disturbances, including non-amplified human voices, especially during evening and early morning hours; (ii) that civil citation applicability be extended to individuals who are the source of the disturbance, both on private property and within the public right-of-way; and (iii) that provisions be made for "on-the-spot" issuance of citations at the source of the noise complaint.

Anticipated Outcome:

The amendments to the City Code outlined above will provide enforcement officers in the field with an effective tool to dampen noise pollution caused by individuals, and more typically large groups, gathered for social events in the midst of single-family residential neighborhoods.

6

Rezoning of neighborhoods that consist primarily of single-family, detached dwellings

Issue:

Due to historical circumstances, a number of purpose-built, single-family neighborhoods are zoned to allow a variety of housing densities (including duplex and multi-family dwellings) that are likely to encourage rental uses. Where such zoning exists, neighborhoods suffer from uncertainty and the potential for rental encroachment. The Task Force believes that this uncertainty discourages potential homebuyers from locating in otherwise healthy neighborhoods.

Background:

The original Greenville Zoning Regulations were adopted in 1947. A new zoning code created three (3) districts – Residential, Business and Industrial, along with their associated standards and use tables. This new zoning code, comprehensive for the time, replaced reliance on the time-honored combination of land availability and market place economics in the determination of land use patterns, with a limited system of traditional as-of-right or self-executing zoning. Without this new tool, ad hoc development was becoming commonplace and unpredictable. As the city became more urban and congested, the close proximity of then perceived incompatible uses were recognized as a threat to the overall health, safety, character, livability and general welfare of the city's residents. The new regulations included an ordinance text and zoning map applicable to the use of land and structures within the "city limits". At that time, the city's new system of land regulation was enforceable only within the city limits and did not apply in any extended extraterritorial jurisdiction (ETJ), as subsequently adopted by mapped description in 1972.

The new 1947 "residential district" included all residential options, including single-family, duplex and multi-family ("multiple") dwellings, in addition to boarding/lodging houses, hotels, schools, churches, hospitals, museums, libraries, parks, clubs (e.g. Rotary Club) and farming. This category was reflective of the variety of uses existing within the residential neighborhoods surrounding the central business area at the time. The zoning patterns established in 1947 were primarily created to insure physical separation among the three (3) use categories, and little emphasis was placed on the spatial relationship of uses within the individual districts. Examples of the residential development pattern resulting from the 1947 ordinance are the Tar River and West Greenville Neighborhoods bordering the downtown. This three (3)-district system remained in place until the zoning ordinance update in 1969, at which time the City's second-generation zoning regulations were adopted.

In 1969, in response to the need to further refine the distinction between newly perceived incompatible uses such as "modern high density" multi-family complexes and single-family homes, the city elected to expand the number of residential districts. At that time, the first multi-district zoning regulations were adopted and the original "residential" district was expanded to include five (5) separate zones including R6, R9, R15, R20 and RA20. These new zones narrowed the range of residential dwellings in each category by excluding dwelling types and specifying minimum lot sizes and dimensional standards particular to each use and district. As a result of the expanded district categories, earlier developed neighborhoods previously zoned "residential" were subsequently rezoned to one of the newly created (1969) districts.

In many cases, the application of the new zoning classifications were, in large part, based on historical patterns of existing development in an attempt to minimize nonconforming situations. Older, predominantly single-family, neighborhoods were typically zoned R6 or R9 residential or CDF (downtown [mixed use] commercial fringe). While minimizing the creation of nonconforming uses, the new designations allowed for, and even encouraged,

infill of new multi-family units. The new districts also facilitated, as a matter of right, the conversion of single-family dwellings to higher occupancy use through the inclusion of multiple housing options. An example of "new R6" zoning was the Tar River Neighborhood.

In an attempt to minimize non-single-family intrusion into a select three hundred-ninety (390)-lot area at the core of the Tar River Neighborhood, the city created the R6N (neighborhood revitalization) district in the early 1980's. The new district limited the total number of duplex and multi-family lots (uses) to not more than fourteen (14%) percent of the total number of lots in the district. Although proven to be problematic over time, this new district served to stem the tide of multi-unit conversion. While the total number of non-single-family uses has remained constant, at or near the maximum, the location of multi-occupancy dwellings has been allowed to shift within the district. As historically built single-family dwellings, previously converted to duplex use, have been rehabilitated and returned to single occupancy, the percentage rule has allowed reverse conversion of other dwellings to occur.

From 1969, other established, as well as newer residential areas, were zoned R9, which in comparison to the R6 district, represented a more restrictive residential category. These areas were the newer suburban subdivisions of the day, and R9 designation eliminated the possibility of multi-family intrusion. Single-family dwellings were often the intended dwelling choice of the original developers, and many subdivisions of this era have relied on privately enforceable restrictive covenants as the sole means to additionally exclude duplex development.

Since the adoption of the 1969 code, the city has greatly expanded the number of available residential districts to include single-family specific zones, wherein both duplex and multi-family occupancy are prohibited. These newer districts include R6S, R9S, R15S and MRS and are commonly referred to as "S districts", signifying single-family only neighborhoods.

In the past 15 years, select neighborhoods have been rezoned from an R6 or R9 zone to an "S district" by City Council, at the request of a neighborhood. The "S district" conversion has been applied to both fully developed neighborhoods such as Westhaven, Belvedere and Club Pines, and to unbuilt portions of subdivisions such as Stratford. In either case, the re-designation of zoning from R9 and R6 respectively, to R9S and R6S, effectively eliminated both duplex conversion and new multi-family development in these historically planned single-family neighborhoods.

Recommended Action:

The Housing Task Force recommends that the Planning and Zoning Commission undertake a study to identify predominantly single-family neighborhoods that are zoned in a manner which would permit intrusion of duplex and multi-family uses, and recommend compatible substitute single-family zoning where practical.

Anticipated Outcome:

The goals of such "S district" re-zonings are to provide an added measure of neighborhood stability, and to demonstrate the city's commitment to single-family neighborhood preservation, as part of a comprehensive housing revitalization strategy.

7

Encourage Reinvestment in Established Single-Family Neighborhoods

Issue:

The Task Force has determined, from an analysis of local housing and population trends, that older, established neighborhoods suffer a distinct competitive disadvantage in attracting homeowner investment. There are many factors that influence home-buying decisions, including location, schools, proximity to work, proximity to shopping, and attractiveness of the neighborhood, among others.

Underlying these factors is an inherent sense of value – both in terms of initial purchase cost, and in terms of long-term resale value. Most homebuyers view their homes as investments, and therefore seek out neighborhoods with qualities that will protect and enhance their investments. Older, established neighborhoods have many positive qualities that should, in theory, translate into long-term value. The Task Force believes that the positive attributes of these neighborhoods have been overshadowed by negative perceptions and a failure to fully exploit their strategic geographical advantages.

Background:

The city has experienced a significant increase in the total housing stock over the last twenty (20) years. Most new residential development has occurred in suburban locations through the development of single-family and duplex subdivisions, and medium to large-scale multi-family complexes. Between January 1990 and June 2004 there were 3,479 single-family dwellings, 1,678 duplex units, and 10,850 multi-family units constructed within Greenville's planning and zoning jurisdiction. During that time period, the population of the city increased from 46,213 as recorded in the 1990 Census, to over 65,000 today.

This population increase, on its face, would seem to suggest a continuing strong demand for new single-family dwellings. However assessment by the Housing Task Force has yielded some interesting observations. An examination of the population trends between 1990 and 2000 using Age Cohort Survival analysis tends to demonstrate that a prime first time home buying group, ages 30-39, has declined over the period (1990-2000), indicating actual out-migration within age cohort for that population. Although only one of several possible indicators, this trend tends not to support the perceived demand for new single-family construction that has occurred over the study period.

The Task Force believes a logical assumption for this continued single-family expansion is the intra-city migration of existing homeowners from older established neighborhoods to the newer suburban locations. This migration is based in-part on the publics' desire for modern energy efficient dwelling options; school district preferences; perception of a safer, neighborhood friendly environment; current affordable loan rates for new homes; and easy access to employment, retail and service establishments. The availability of city water and sanitary sewer services within the city's jurisdiction, the availability of rural water corporation water services in all other contiguous locations, and the established suburban zoning patterns and policies of both the city and county have facilitated this expansion.

A recognized negative result of this trend is the shift of homeowner investment from older established neighborhoods to the latest subdivisions of the day, which has contributed to depressed inner-city home values, as measured by the rate of value increase, in all but a few select areas. In addition to disinvestments by homeowners who remain in their homes as a result of choice or necessity, this trend has created conditions favorable to the encroachment of a disproportionate number of rental occupancy dwellings in established neighborhoods throughout the city. These circumstances have also resulted in the generally accepted public philosophy, as demonstrated by local housing decisions, that older dwellings are, in most instances, regarded as a disposable commodity of limited design functionality and life. In almost unanimous case,

individuals have been inclined to "move-up" to new suburban subdivisions rather than invest in or significantly upgrade existing homes.

Therefore, the combined conditions of depressed, or even the perception of depressed, home values in older neighborhoods, negative conditions effecting livability and community character, and the steady supply of new, affordable replacement homes in proximity to Greenville has resulted in an unfavorable long term housing scenario. The Housing Task Force is of the opinion, that without intervention, this scenario will continually be repeated, and the new subdivisions of today will be destined to joining the ranks of many older out-of-favor neighborhoods in the near future.

Recommended Actions:

The Task Force is of the opinion the city should investigate, and where feasible institute policies that encourage homeowner investment in established areas including the following:

- In cooperation with local lenders, develop a low-interest revolving loan program for owner-occupied purchase of homes in designated neighborhoods
- In cooperation with East Carolina University, develop a "forgivable" loan program for City employees and ECU faculty and staff; to provide down-payment and closing cost assistance for owner-occupied purchase of homes in designated neighborhoods
- Develop a low-interest loan or grant program to encourage residential façade improvements and structural/mechanical modernization
- Encourage and facilitate local and National Register historic district designation for qualifying neighborhoods; create opportunities for tax credits for rehabilitation of older homes
- Invest in streetscape and infrastructure improvements in older, established neighborhoods to include gateway/entrance signage and landscaping, enhanced street and sidewalk design, enhanced or thematic lighting, and greenway connections

Anticipated Outcome:

It is hoped that through a combination of efforts and programs such as those outlined above, development patterns in the City of Greenville may gradually shift away from the periphery and refocus on the urban core of the City. Such a shift in development will serve to increase the value of properties in the center city and cause a market shift toward reinvestment in established areas of the City.

8

Develop and Empower Neighborhood Associations

Issue:

Neighborhoods are only as strong as the commitment of their neighbors. There is a wide disparity among neighborhoods and neighborhood associations related to the level of organizational capacity and the ability to gather, receive and communicate information. While the City encourages the formation of neighborhood associations, there are few established mechanisms available to support neighborhood groups.

Background:

Neighborhood associations are typically the first organizational layer beyond individual homeownership and as such are an integral part of a larger community. At their best, active and well-organized neighborhood associations can serve as a conduit, channeling important information about the health of neighborhoods to the unit of local government as well as by receiving and distributing information from the unit of government back to the individual property owners.

In recognition of the importance of neighborhoods, the City of Greenville established the Neighborhood Services Unit in 1997. This unit was charged with improving neighborhoods throughout the City through a combination of neighborhood planning, organization and code enforcement. The City also moved to strengthen neighborhoods when in 1999, the City Council approved funds to develop a neighborhood micro grant program. This program continues to be funded and provides limited funds to neighborhood associations to accomplish neighborhood oriented physical improvement projects. Most recently, in an effort to get even closer to neighborhood problems related to crime, the Neighborhood Services Unit was reorganized in 2003 and attached to the Greenville Police Department where code enforcement officers now work along side police officers to solve neighborhood problems through community policing efforts.

Recommended Actions:

In an effort to increase the number of neighborhood associations as well as to strengthen those already in existence the City should take the following steps:

- Create a database and sign up system of City owned meeting facilities for after-hour use by neighborhood associations.
- Provide technical and financial assistance to neighborhood associations for the development and printing of neighborhood newsletters.
- The City should develop and sponsor a “Neighborhood College” to educate and train neighborhood leaders. Topics may include an introduction to City codes, services and budget, neighborhood improvement strategies and information on how to organize and maintain an effective neighborhood association.
- The Neighborhood Grant Program should be expanded. The current maximum funding level of $500 per grant does not allow for any but the most basic projects to move forward. As the City’s neighborhood planning process moves forward, grant funding can be made contingent upon requests being harmonious with the goals of these plans.
- Establish on-line (internet) access to city board/commission meeting agendas and city code requirements

Anticipated Outcome:

Active, knowledgeable members of neighborhood associations are an asset to the City. They serve as the eyes and ears for the City, providing insight on neighborhood issues that can help City leaders to shape policy. By increasing the number and quality of neighborhood associations, policy makers and city staff alike will gain better insight into the needs of Greenville’s citizens and will develop an efficient means of communicating vital information to those citizens.

9

Develop and Adopt Neighborhood Plans

Issue:

The Task Force has determined, from an analysis of local housing and population trends, that older, established neighborhoods suffer a distinct competitive disadvantage in attracting homeowner investment. The Task Force believes that the positive attributes of these neighborhoods have been overshadowed by negative perceptions and a failure to fully exploit their strategic geographical advantages.

Background:

Like many other communities, Greenville experienced a significant population migration in the later half of the 20th Century away from older established neighborhoods toward newer suburban areas. This outward expansion toward previously undeveloped areas was necessary, in part, to accommodate Greenville's growing population. However, a careful examination of population and housing trends shows that the suburban boom cannot be explained by population growth alone. Rather, it has also been fed by a redistribution of existing residents choosing to relocate to what may be perceived as "better" areas.

Greenville's suburban growth is dependent not only upon private-sector supply and demand, but also on the City's ability and willingness to provide public services such as roads, schools, water, sewer, and other amenities. Such public investment requires planning. For many years, Greenville's planning emphasis has revolved around accommodating suburban growth. In recent years, however, the City has adopted a renewed commitment to inner-city revitalization and redevelopment.

Recommended Action:

Establish a program of small-area Neighborhood Plans and Corridor Plans to facilitate reinvestment in older established areas of Greenville.

The Horizons Comprehensive Plan recognizes nine distinct "planning areas" within Greenville's planning jurisdiction. The Neighborhood and Corridor planning process would further subdivide these nine planning areas and provide a finer level of detail and specificity in land use planning and public infrastructure investment.

Implementation of Neighborhood and Corridor Plans should be tied to the city's Capital Improvement Program.

Anticipated Outcome:

The expected outcomes of the Neighborhood and Corridor plans would be to establish a preferred zoning pattern, recommend changes (if needed) to the existing zoning and subdivision ordinances, create (if needed) new zoning districts, amend (if necessary) the Horizons Land Use Plan Map, recommend streetscape improvements and other beautification projects, and provide locational criteria for new public facilities.

Through active citizen involvement in the neighborhood planning process, it is expected that neighborhood plans will increase awareness of neighborhood issues, create broad support for improvement strategies, mobilize the efforts of neighbors, and create an on-going organizational structure for neighborhood involvement.

10

Recognize the Link Between Suburban Residential Development and the Health of Established Neighborhoods

Issue:

The Task Force has determined, from an analysis of local housing and population trends, that older, established neighborhoods suffer a distinct competitive disadvantage in attracting homeowner investment when compared to newer residential subdivisions. However, the Task Force is concerned that, as these newer subdivisions age, they will fall prey to the same forces that have resulted in the decline of older neighborhoods (i.e. disinvestment, out-migration, and rental encroachment.)

The Task Force believes that neighborhood decline is largely an economic phenomenon driven by perceptions of present and long-term value. Most homebuyers view their homes as investments, and therefore seek out neighborhoods with qualities that will protect and enhance their investments.

The Task Force believes that, in order to prevent the cycle of decline that comes with age, it is necessary to plan new neighborhoods in ways that endow them with long-term value.

Background:

Only half a century ago, Greenville was a small college town of fewer than 17,000 people. Most residents lived in established neighborhoods within close proximity to the downtown and East Carolina University. What is today a bustling commercial area along Greenville Boulevard was once rural farmland.

As Greenville grew outward, however, many residents relocated from older neighborhoods to newer subdivisions built on the periphery of town. This trend continues today, at an accelerated rate.

Many of Greenville's original neighborhoods have experienced significant decline in the wake of mass out-migration of homeowners. But the phenomenon of decline is not relegated to the oldest neighborhoods alone. Some "newer" neighborhoods – the early suburbs of Greenville built in the 1960s and 1970s – are today experiencing the same pains of homeowner loss and rental encroachment. As housing preferences and trends change, residents who once saw these suburban neighborhoods as desirable are now themselves leaving for greener pastures. Many of the newer neighborhoods being built today lack the critical amenities – such as parks, neighborhood schools, and walkability – that play an essential role in promoting long-term value.

Recommended Action:

The Task Force believes that the city must plan new neighborhoods in ways that ensure their continued value, desirability, livability, and economic vitality. Land use planning strategies include:

- Develop a Density Bonus System (DBS) or Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) system to allow for additional density in new residential development in exchange for reducing density in established single-family neighborhoods (i.e. conversion of duplex units to single-family units; removal of multi-family from single-family neighborhoods).
- Develop residential zoning and subdivision standards to encourage innovative site design, clustering of homes, preservation of open space, and inter-connectivity of streets, trails and greenways.
- Plan for neighborhood parks and require dedication of land for parks, open space and recreational uses.

Anticipated Outcome:

With proper planning, the city can ensure that future residential development occurs in manner that endows new neighborhoods with inherent long-term value that prevents out-migration and decline.

Appendix

City Council charge establishing
Task Force on Preservation of Neighborhoods & Housing

Minutes from Task Force meetings

Survey of Neighborhood Improvement Strategies
Adopted by Other Communities

Housing and Population Trends for
Greenville and Pitt County, North Carolina

CITY OF GREENVILLE

TASK FORCE ON PRESERVATION OF NEIGHBORHOODS AND HOUSING

Establishment: A Task Force on Preservation of Neighborhoods And Housing is established.

Purpose: The Task Force will examine the conditions that exist in neighborhoods of detached single-family and duplex housing areas in the City, determine the impacts of rental property on these neighborhoods, and propose actions that strengthen and enhance the viability and livability of these neighborhoods to address the conditions caused or resulting from single family or duplex dwelling rental property being located within the neighborhood.

The efforts of the Task Force will culminate in recommendations to City Council of measures which may be undertaken relating to conditions caused or resulting from single family or duplex dwelling rental property being located in residential neighborhoods so that the viability and livability of the neighborhoods may be enhanced. In order to develop its recommendations, the Task Force should:

- Collect information from other jurisdictions to determine the current, proposed, and innovative practices being implemented.
- Receive information from City staff as to the current practices being used by the City and the existing ordinances of the City.
- Receive information from persons who live in neighborhoods as to the types of livability enhancements which can be made.
- Receive information from rental investors as to the types of livability enhancements which can be made.

Membership: The Task Force will consist of fifteen (15) members chosen to reflect the total spectrum of the community which has an interest in residential neighborhoods or the rental of single-family or duplex dwellings. Groups represented should include neighborhood associations, homeowners, educational institutions, and landlords or rental managers. Appointment to the Task Force shall be made by City Council as follows:

- Five (5) persons who are involved with neighborhood associations from nominations made by Council Members, one (1) nomination by each Council Member elected from a district of a person residing within the Council Member's district from a recommendation submitted to the Council Member by the Coalition of Neighborhood Associations.

- Five (5) persons who are resident homeowners, one from each City voting district, from nominations made by Council Members, one (1) nomination by each Council Member elected from a district of a person residing within the Council Member's district.

- Two (2) persons who are affiliated with either East Carolina University or Pitt Community College, one (1) staff person and one (1) student who is a renter, from nominations made by the Council Member elected at-large.

- Three (3) persons who are either landlords or rental managers of single family or duplex dwellings within the City from nominations made by the Mayor.

If the City Council does not appoint a nominated person, then the person having the responsibility for making the nomination shall make other nominations until City Council makes the required appointment.

If the Council Member decides to not nominate a person recommended by the Coalition of Neighborhood Associations, then the Coalition of Neighborhood Associations shall make other recommendations to the Council Member until the Council Member decides to make the required nomination.

Chairman and Vice-Chairman: The Task Force shall elect a Chairman and Vice-Chairman from the members of the Task Force. The Chairman and Vice Chairman shall have the right to vote on any issue. The Chairman shall preside over the meetings of the Task Force and the Vice-Chairman shall preside in the absence of the Chairman.

Quorum and Voting: A quorum shall consist of at least six (6) members of the Task Force. The affirmative vote of the majority of the members present and voting shall be necessary to approve any motion.

Meetings: The Task Force will meet at least once a month commencing in March, 2004. City staff will schedule the initial meeting of the Task Force. Thereafter, the time and location of the meetings of the Task Force shall be determined by the Task Force. The Task Force will make a progress report to City Council in June, 2004, and shall complete its work by reporting to City Council its recommendations no later than September, 2004, unless the Task Force requests and the City Council approves an extension of this date.

Staffing: Primary staff assistance will be provided to the Task Force by Carl Rees, Neighborhood Services Coordinator, Harry Hamilton, Chief Planner, and Neil Holthouser, Senior Planner. Assistance from other departments and divisions will be provided, as necessary.

DRAFT MINUTES FOR TASK FORCE ON PRESERVATION OF NEIGHBORHOODS AND HOUSING

March 30, 2004
Greenville, NC

The Task Force on Preservation of Neighborhoods and Housing held a meeting on the above date at 7:00 p.m. in conference room "A" of the Sheppard Memorial Library located at 530 South Evans Street.

Roll Call – Call to Order 5:35 p.m.

TASK FORCE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mary Lou Antieau	Vince Bellis	Tom Best
Mary Claire Biles	Richard Crisp	Bob Dietrich
Brandon Hedrick	Max Joyner, Jr.	Lillian Outterbridge
George Saad, Jr.		

TASK FORCE COMMISSION MEMBERS ABSENT:

Reggie Elliott Jarvis Miles

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:

Carl Rees, Neighborhood Services Coordinator, Neil Holthouser Senior Planner Long Range Planning, Harry Hamilton Chief Planner.

OTHERS PRESENT:

Kacm Sebti (Representing Task Force member Donna Whitley)

INTRODUCTIONS:

Carl Rees, Neighborhood Services Coordinator introduced himself as working with the City of Greenville Neighborhood Services Unit within City of Greenville Police Department. All Task Force members present introduced themselves and provided introductory comments followed by Mr. Hamilton and Mr. Holthouser of the City Planning Department staff.

REVIEW OF COUNCIL CHARGE AND BYLAWS:

Mr. Rees indicated that the Task Force approach was recommended by two City Counsel members in response to concerns they were receiving from citizens in their districts with regard to the impact of rental housing in Greenville neighborhoods. The Task Force approach gained support from the entire City Council who in turn appointed the members.

Mr. Rees went on to describe similar processes that had taken place in Raleigh, NC and Blacksburg, Virginia while indicating that the Greenville process would be similar to the Raleigh model in that the process would be citizen driven as opposed to the staff driven process used in Blacksburg.

Mr. Rees provided the members with guidelines adopted by the City Council charging members to examine the conditions in single family and duplex housing neighborhoods, and propose actions and recommendation back to the City Council related to issues in those neighborhoods.

A request was made by Mr. Crisp to provide the members with a copy of the Raleigh Task Force Report. Mr. Rees agreed to provide the report in the next agenda packet.

ELECTION OF CHAIR:

Motion: Vince Bellis
Second: Max Joyner Jr.

Mr. Rees described the general duties of the Chair and Vice Chair and asked if there were any volunteers for the positions. A motion was made by Mr. Bellis and seconded by Mr. Joyner to elect Ms. Biles as Chair of the Task Force. Ms. Biles accepted the nomination. The committee unanimously approved the motion.

ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR:

Motion: Dick Crisp
Second: Max Joyner Jr.

Mr. Rees asked the committee for nominations for the position of Vice Chair. A motion was made by Mr. Crisp and second made by Mr. Joyner to elect Vince Bellis as Vice Chair for the Task Force. Mr. Bellis accepted the nomination. The committee unanimously approved the motion.

DISCUSSION OF APRIL MEETING:

Mr. Rees stated that staff was charged by counsel to set the date, place and time of the first meeting but that the Task Force would set all future meetings. He also stated that staff ran into difficulties with providing secretarial assistance for minutes and transcription for Tuesday nights. Members held a discussion as to various times that would best suit staff and members for future meetings. The Chair and Vice-Chair suggested dates with the approval by a show of hands. It was decided to schedule only the next two meetings with future meetings set one or two months in advance. The next scheduled meeting was set for April 21, 2004 at 7:00 p.m. at Sheppard Memorial Library. The May meeting was set for May 19, 2004 at 7:00 p.m. also at Sheppard Memorial Library.

On behalf of the staff, Mr. Rees proposed a process for the next meeting by which the members could explore issues of concern within various neighborhoods. Mr. Rees indicated that staff would likely request that the members break-out in to two or three separate study groups each of which would be provided with maps, a listing of focus points and other materials which would enable them to study neighborhood issues. The groups would then reconvene as the Task Force and discuss the results of their study. After brief discussion, the members agreed that such an exercise would be beneficial.

Task Force members requested additional data related to ratios of rental housing in various neighborhoods. Mr. Hamilton indicated that staff was in the process of developing a spatial data coverage that would depict the various types of residential uses throughout the City. Mr. Hamilton indicated that it would be several months before the information was available.

COMMENTS:

There is no information to be reported.

ADJOURNMENT:

Meeting adjourned at 6:25 p.m.

DRAFT MINUTES FOR TASK FORCE ON PRESERVATION OF NEIGHBORHOODS AND HOUSING

April 21, 2004
Greenville, NC

The Task Force on Preservation of Neighborhoods and Housing held a meeting on the above date at 7:00 p.m. in conference room "A" of the Sheppard Memorial Library located at 530 South Evans Street.

CALL TO ORDER: 7:05 p.m. by Chairperson Biles

INTRODUCTION OF NEW MEMBERS: Each member individually introduced him or herself and described their interest in the Task Force. Mr. D. D. Garrett was introduced as a new member.

TASK FORCE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mary Lou Antieau	Vince Bellis	Tom Best
Mary Claire Biles	Richard Crisp	Bob Dietrich
Reggie Elliott	D. D. Garrett	Max Joyner, Jr.
Lillian Outterbridge	George Saad, Jr.	Donna Whitley

TASK FORCE COMMISSION MEMBERS ABSENT:

Brandon Hedrick	Jarvis Miles	Annie Suggs

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:

Carl Rees - Neighborhood Services Coordinator, Neil Holthouser Senior Planner - Long Range Planning, Harry Hamilton - Chief Planner, Sylvia Horne - Secretary.

OTHERS PRESENT:

Bill Richardson, Deputy City Manager
Merrill Flood, Interim Director Planning & Community Development

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: MARCH 30, 2004:

Motion: Mary Lou Antieau
Second: Tom Best

Chairperson Biles asked for approval of the March 30, 2004 minutes. Ms. Antieau made a motion for approval and received a second from Mr. Best. The Chair asked for any discussion.There being no further discussion, the minutes were approved unanimously.

Chairperson Biles made the Task Force aware of a request that was made to share the updated membership roster with other committee members. The list was then passed around for updates and corrections. All those present agreed that the list should be shared among the committee members. Mr. Rees stated that the updated list would be passed out during the next meeting.

ISSUE IDENTIFICATION EXERCISE:

Mr. Holthouser opened his presentation by making the statement that some committee members may be wondering what the purpose of the Task Force is and why the members were appointed to serve. Mr. Holthouser then asked the members to refer to the "Council Charge" in their notebooks, which would help the members to see why Council members appointed each member to the Task Force.

Mr. Holthouser then stated that what the members needed to get to in short order, was to identify what types of issues Greenville neighborhoods are facing. Mr. Holthouser suggested that by breaking the Task Force up into several study groups, the members could work separately to identify major issues then come back together to share information. Mr. Holthouser indicated that completion of the exercise would allow the Task Force members to see where they need to focus their time over the next few months.

Mr. Holthouser then shared some background statistical information that he indicated was not offered as hard and fast conclusions but rather as data that would be useful to the group as they started to think about issues that confront Greenville neighborhoods. Mr. Holthouser proceeded to guide the Task Force through several sheets of information, (attached). In closing, Mr. Holthouser indicated that staff was in place to assist the Task Force with any information requests and that he hoped that the statistical information provided would serve as a good starting point for the issue identification exercise.

INTRODUCTION:

Mr. Holthouser indicated that staff had mounted maps of Greenville around the walls and that the members would be provided with markers, post-it notes, paper pads and color stickers to use during the exercise. Mr. Holthouser reviewed a four-part handout with the Task Force that included the following focus topics:

1. What attributes would the ideal single-family neighborhood possess?

2. What factors place stress on single-family neighborhoods?

3. Which Greenville neighborhoods or general areas appear to be under stress from these factors?

4. What information would be helpful to know as I/we continue to study these neighborhoods?

Mr. Holthouser asked that each group select one person to record their findings as well as a person to report back to the entire Task Force. Mr. Holthouser wished the groups well and asked for questions. There being none, Mr. Rees divided the Task Force into two groups as follows:

Group 1	Group 2
Mary Claire Biles	Vince Bellis
Bob Dietrich	Tom Best
Reggie Elliott	Dick Crisp
Lillian Outterbridge	D.D. Garrett
George Saad	Max Joyner
Donna Whitley	***Mary Lou Antieau was part of group but left early

Mr. Holthouser made the announcement that the groups would wrap up their sessions at about 8:00 p.m.

RECONVENE:

Donna Whitley reported the issues for group 1. Responses to question one included high owner occupancy rate with diverse residents; protection from the encroachment of multi family development; proximity of churches, schools and parks. Responses to question two included unpredictable zoning changes, bad landlords and tenants, crime and outside developers building multi family housing units within existing neighborhoods. Responses to question three included West Greenville, Tobacco Road, University area and neighborhoods north of the Tar River. Group one indicated a need for further information on crime statistics by neighborhood and a list of condemned properties.

Vince Bellis and Max Joyner, Jr. reported the issues for group 2. Responses to question one included parks, trees, greenways, law and order and pride and belonging. Responses to question two included speeding, noise, lack of consistent enforcement and bad renters. Responses to question three included Fire Tower Road area, Elmhurst neighborhood area and the University area. Group two indicated an

interest in receiving additional information about staffing levels devoted to code enforcement, a map indicating concentrations of crime by type and a listing of ordinances that have an impact on neighborhoods.

DISCUSSION:

The reports from each group were combined into the following issues/topics:

1. Unpredictability of zoning decisions
2. Inconsistent levels of maintenance upkeep/appearance
3. Crime/vandalism/perceptions of crime
4. Fair/adequate enforcement of codes
5. Manpower to enforce codes/police presence
6. Coordination among city departments
7. Percentage of rental verses percentage of owner occupied
8. Negative behavior/non-conforming behavior
9. Declining property value (changing character)
10. Litter/Trash
11. Traffic/Parking/Speeding

Geographic Areas:

1. West Greenville
2. Tobacco Road
3. Englewood/Elmhurst
4. South of Greenville Boulevard (lack of parks and greenway)
5. University Area
6. North of Tar River
7. Fire Tower Road

Mr. Holthouser then instructed the members to use their color-coded dots, numbered 1 for least important through 4 for most important, beside the issues that they believed were most important. The geographic area was not included in the exercise. The dots were tabulated as follows:

Rank	**Issue**	**Score**	**"4"**	**"3"**	**"2"**	**"1"**
1.	% rental vs. % owner-occupied	33	6	3	0	0
2.	Manpower to enforce codes; policing; police presence	18	2	2	1	2
3.	Crime; vandalism; perceptions about crime	11	1	1	1	2
4.	Unpredictability of zoning decisions	10	1	1	1	1
5.	Fair, adequate enforcement of codes	9	0	1	3	0
6.	Inconsistent levels of maintenance, appearance	9	0	0	4	1
7.	Negative or "non-conforming" behavior; lack of pride	7	1	1	0	0
8.	Coordination among City departments	5	0	1	1	0
9.	Litter; trash	4	0	0	0	4
10.	Traffic; parking	3	0	1	0	0
11.	Declining property values; changing character	0	0	0	0	0

DISCUSSION OF MAY MEETING:

Mr. Rees indicated that the Task Force had previously set the date for their next meeting as May 19, 2004. Mr. Rees went on to state that staff recommended that as a second step in the issue identification

process, the Task Force should consider holding and open public meeting. The purpose of such a meeting would be to allow citizens to address the Task Force and provide input on neighborhood issues they wished the Task Force to consider. Mr. Rees indicated that such a public meeting could be held on May 19 in the City Council Chambers at City Hall and should be video taped. A general consensus was reached by the Task Force to hold a public forum on May 19th. Mr. Rees indicated that staff would set up and advertise the meeting.

Mr. Rees also stated that the City Council had charged the Task Force with providing an update at the June City Council meeting. By consensus, the Task Force agreed that the Chair and Vice-Chair should present the update and that as many Task Force members as possible should attend the City Council meeting to show support.

Meeting Schedule

May 19, 2004 at 7:00 p.m. City Council Chambers – Issue Identification

June 3, 2004 at 7:00 p.m. Sheppard Library – Build Consensus

June 7, 2004 at 7:00 p.m. City Council Chambers – Council Update

ADJOURNMENT:

Meeting adjourned at 8:55 p.m.

DRAFT MINUTES FOR TASK FORCE ON PRESERVATION OF NEIGHBORHOODS AND HOUSING

May 19, 2004
Greenville, NC

The Task Force on Preservation of Neighborhoods and Housing held a meeting on the above date at 7:00 p.m. in City Council Chambers located at 201 Martin Luther King Jr. Drive.

CALL TO ORDER: 7:05 p.m. by Chairperson Mary Claire Biles

TASK FORCE COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mary Lou Antieau	Vince Bellis	Tom Best
Mary Claire Biles	Richard Crisp	Reggie Elliott
Brandon Hedrick	Max Joyner, Jr.	Jarvis Mills
Lillian Outterbridge	George Saad, Jr.	Donna Whitley

TASK FORCE COMMISSION MEMBERS ABSENT:

Bob Dietrich	D.D. Garrett	Annie Suggs

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:

Carl Rees - Neighborhood Services Coordinator, Harry Hamilton - Chief Planner, Sylvia Horne - Secretary.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: APRIL 21, 2004

Motion: Mary Lou Antieau
Second: Richard Crisp

Chairperson Biles asked for approval of the April 21, 2004 minutes. Ms. Antieau made a motion for approval and received a second from Mr. Crisp. The Chair asked for any discussion. There being no further discussion, the minutes were approved unanimously.

PUBLIC FORUM – NEIGHBORHOOD ISSUES:

Introduction and Ground Rules: Chairperson Biles

Ms. Biles introduced herself and provided a summary of the work of the Task Force to date. Following her introductory statements, Ms. Biles outlined a set of ground rules including a three-minute per person time limit, a request for generalized comments on neighborhood issues and a disclosure that the meeting was being video recorded.

Public Comments: Chairperson Biles opened the meeting to the public for comments.

1. Peg Gemperline - Tar River University Neighborhood: Wanted to see more code enforcement, positive interaction with property owners, noise control, enforcement of alcohol related laws, enforcement of front yard parking regulations.

2. Bob Dough – Representing Greenville Neighborhood Coalition President Shelton Downes: Provided handout of concerns (attached).

3. Murray Merner – College Court Coghill Neighborhood: Expressed concerns with regard to parking on the lawn, traffic flow, problems with renters, maintenance of rental dwellings and declining property values in neighborhoods with many rental properties.

4. Wally Bear - Brook Valley Neighborhood: Encouraged City of Greenville leaders to follow the Comprehensive Plan, recommended an infill development ordinance and pushed for a nonprofit umbrella neighborhood organization.

5. Will Corbett, Tar River University Neighborhood: Requested increased enforcement of front yard parking regulations and expressed a desire to see an incentive program developed that would encourage enforcement officers to do their job.

6. Theresa Hewett – Elmhurst Englewood Neighborhood: Expressed her concerns on building mother-in-law additions to single family homes that eventually change over to rentals, enforcement of basketball goals in the streets, requested increased inspections on rental properties to encourage better maintenance by owners.

7. Freddie Outterbridge - Red Oak Neighborhood: Expressed his concerns with regard to the safety of children playing in the streets and with the placement of group homes in residential neighborhoods.

8. Bob Dough - Stratford Neighborhood: Expressed concern with regard to loud music from passing vehicles and being disturbed by loud music from other sources including ECU athletic events. Also suggested distribution of ordinances and enforcement procedures to neighborhoods.

9. Maury York – Tar River University Neighborhood: Expressed his concerns regarding lack of enforcement of conditions for special use permits imposed by the Board of Adjustment, expressed his appreciation for the City's efforts to distribute informational door hangers in the "Zero Tolerance" areas around the University, and also wanted to see property owners maintain curbs and edging.

10. Chris Mansfield – Tar River University Neighborhood: Indicated that the rental housing business was having a negative impact on neighborhoods and that the Task Force should find ways to encourage rental businesses to maintain their properties to higher standards including the possibility of establishing a business license with the proceeds used to fund code enforcement. Also expressed concerns with regard to the overbuilding of large apartment complexes causing high rental vacancy rates and unoccupied houses. Also concerned that the strict guidelines of the Historic Preservation Commission were serving as a deterrent to people who might want to purchase property in his neighborhood.

11. Wally Bear – Brook Valley Neighborhood: Pointed to a deterioration in some neighborhoods due to a shift in residential patterns caused by the large scale development of new apartments and condominiums around the City.

Closing Comments
There being no additional speakers, Ms. Biles closed the public comment period and thanked all who spoke and those in attendance. Ms. Biles indicated that the Task Force would study the issues brought forward by those in attendance.

Break

DISCUSSION OF JUNE MEETING:

Mr. Rees indicated that the next two Task Force Meetings would take place on:

June 3rd at 7:00 PM at Sheppard Memorial Library

June 7 at 6:00 PM at the City Council Chambers

After a brief discussion, the Task Force agreed to hold their next meeting on June 16th at Sheppard Memorial Library to begin the "solutions" phase of the process.

ADJOURNMENT:

Meeting adjourned at 8:20 p.m.

DRAFT MINUTES FOR TASK FORCE ON PRESERVATION OF NEIGHBORHOODS AND HOUSING

June 3, 2004
Greenville, NC

The Task Force on Preservation of Neighborhoods and Housing held a meeting on the above date at 7:00 p.m. in conference room "A" of the Sheppard Memorial Library located at 530 South Evans Street.

CALL TO ORDER: 7:06 p.m. by Chairperson Biles

TASK FORCE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mary Lou Antieau	Vince Bellis	Tom Best
Mary Claire Biles	Richard Crisp	Bob Dietrich
Reggie Elliott	Brandon Hedrick	Max Joyner, Jr.
Jarvis Mills	Lillian Outterbridge	

TASK FORCE COMMISSION MEMBERS ABSENT:

D.D. Garrett	George Saad Jr.	Annie Suggs
Donna Whitley		

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:

Carl Rees - Neighborhood Services Coordinator, Neil Holthouser Senior Planner - Long Range Planning, Harry Hamilton - Chief Planner, Sylvia Horne - Secretary.

OTHERS PRESENT:

Bill Richardson, Deputy City Manager
Michelle Lieberman, Student Neighborhood Relations Facilitator

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: MAY 19, 2004:

Motion: Tom Best
Second: Max Joyner

Chairperson Biles asked for approval of the May 19, 2004 minutes. Ms. Antieau had a question regarding the dates of the next two scheduled meetings for June. Mr. Rees stated that on June 7th the Chair and Vice Chair would meet with City Council and the 16th would be the next regularly scheduled meeting. Mr. Best made a motion for approval and received a second from Mr. Joyner. The Chair asked for any discussion.There being no further discussion, the minutes were approved unanimously.

PURCHASER RISK ANALYSIS EXERCISE:

Mr. Holthouser opened his presentation by summarizing the work of the Task Force to date, then indicated that the Task Force was still involved in the issue identification phase of the process. In an attempt to further define the issues, Mr. Holthouser introduced the Purchaser Risk Analysis Exercise by describing it as a game that would help guide the committee through some of the economics of the housing market in Greenville.

Through the use of a Power-Point slide presentation, Mr. Holthouser guided the Task Force through a series of home purchase scenarios each of which required the participating Task Force members to make a choice as to the home they preferred to purchase. The participants made their choices known by

migrating from one side of the meeting room to the other depending on their selection of either housing choice “A” or choice “B”.

SEE ATTACHED SLIDE PRESENTATION

Participating Task Force members made housing choices based on each scenario as follows:

Scenario:	**Select House A:**	**Select House B**:
1.	0	11
2.	4	7
3.	10	1
4.	4	7
5.	5	6
6.	5	6
7.	5	6
8.	6	5
9.	7	4
10.	7	4

Task Force members and attending staff were encouraged to comment on their choices throughout the exercise. Comments included the following:

Reggie Elliott: Expressed a belief that natural amenities such as location of homes on waterfront property as well as physical improvements such as decks and patios influence housing decisions.

Carl Rees: Added to Mr. Elliot’s comments regarding natural amenities by stating that natural and man-made physical attributes such as greenways, parks, sidewalks, golf courses, streams and other water features can all have an impact on the perception of liveability and desirability of a home or neighborhood.

Neil Holthouser: Stated that there are approximately twenty-five thousand households in Greenville with the potential for the same number of housing decisions to be made over time. Mr. Holthouser also indicated that there are approximately twenty-eight thousand dwelling units in Greenville. According to Holthouser, the numbers point to a surplus of dwelling units and thus a potential for significant vacancies in the market.

Ms. Antieau: Indicated that she did not fully agree with one of the assumptions provided in the exercise. Specifically, she disagreed with the assumption that the shifts in housing choices were attributable to instinct on the part of purchasers to move every so often. Rather, Ms. Antieau subscribed to the idea that low interest rates have produced a high volume of new construction. New dwellings are heavily advertised and developers are providing people with great deals to fill the cornerstones and to fill the sub-divisions and to try to lure people out of their existing neighborhoods and homes.

Mr. Holthouser: Stated he took Ms. Antieau’s point precisely and that he agreed whole heartily with Ms. Antieau. Mr. Holthouser didn’t think that the people were falling out of love with their homes or their neighborhood, but that people were being enticed.

Mr. Bellis: Indicated that he wanted to carry the conversation one step further. Bellis pointed to the hidden cost to the public of allowing these trends to continue. According to Mr. Bellis, new construction was essentially being subsidized by the taxpayers while existing homes and neighborhoods were already paid for.

Mr. Richardson: Suggested asking Glenn Cutrell of the Pitt County Tax Assessors Office to present data to the Task Force on housing sales trends. Mr. Richardson also indicated that the housing trends were more complicated than had been discussed to date.

CITY CODE OVERVIEW:

Mr. Hamilton provided the Task Force with an overview of the maps, data tracking and regulations used by the City's Planning Department to guide and monitor development. Included in the presentation were the following maps:

City Limits Map
Transportation Corridor Map
Residential Density Map
Flood Plain Map
Re-Development Area Map
Approval Streets
Mulit-Family & Duplex Map
R6N District Development Map
Land Use Plan Map (Current Land)
Focus Area Map
Official Zoning Map
Map of 45 Block Revitalization Area Map
Residential Development Map
Proposed Roads Map

Mr. Hamilton elaborated on each map and also informed the committee that all these maps were available in the Planning Department. Mr. Hamilton then briefly reviewed select sections from the City's development regulations.

SELECT PUBLICE NUISANCE CODES:

By consensus this portion of the agenda was tabled until the Meeting on June 16, 2004.

ISSUE DEFINITION:

Mr. Rees suggested that the heart of the meeting would be to examine the issues and put those in a format that the Chair and Vice Chair could present during an update to the City Council. Mr. Rees indicated to the members that everything didn't have to be set in stone at this point but that it would be good to give the Council members some idea of the issues that the Task Force Members intended to explorer over the coming months.

As a possible approach to organizing the issues, Mr. Rees suggested that the issues could be divided into two categories. These included short-term symptoms that had a negative impact on neighborhoods and longer term neighborhood "diseases". Mr. Rees provided the Task Force members with a listing of the issues they had previously identified as well as the issues identified by members of the public during the open forum held the previous month.

Based on conversation among the Task Force members Mr. Rees began to divide the issues as follows:

The Symptoms

1. Lack of sufficient enforcement of City Ordinances
2. Lack of incentives
3. Lack of coordinated response to concerns expressed by citizens
4. Lack of owner occupancy housing

Diseases

1. Transition/movement of homeowners out of older neighborhoods to newer neighborhoods
2. Long term deterioration of neighborhood quality of life
3. Apathy

GROUP DISCUSSION:

The discussion was cut short as the library was closing for the night. The Task Force members agreed by consensus to pick up the conversation during their next meeting.

CONSENSUS ON ISSUES:

Not reached due to end of meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 9:05 p.m.

DRAFT MINUTES FOR TASK FORCE ON PRESERVATION OF NEIGHBORHOODS AND HOUSING

June 16, 2004
Greenville, NC

The Task Force on Preservation of Neighborhoods and Housing held a meeting on the above date at 7:00 p.m. in the first floor conference room of City Hall located at 201 Martin Luther King Jr. Drive.

CALL TO ORDER: 7:07 p.m. by Chairperson Biles

TASK FORCE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Vince Bellis	Tom Best	Mary Claire Biles
Richard Crisp	D. D. Garrett	Brandon Hedrick
Max Joyner, Jr.	Lillian Outterbridge	Donna Whitley

TASK FORCE COMMISSION MEMBERS ABSENT:

Mary Lou Antieau	Bob Dietrich	Reggie Elliott
Jarvis Mills	George Saad Jr.	Annie Suggs

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:

Carl Rees - Neighborhood Services Coordinator, Neil Holthouser Senior Planner - Long Range Planning, Harry Hamilton - Chief Planner.

OTHERS PRESENT:

Pat Dunn, City Council Member at Large
Michelle Lieberman, Student Neighborhood Relations Facilitator

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: JUNE 10, 2004:

Chairperson Biles asked for approval of the June 10, 2004 minutes. A motion was made and seconded that the minutes be approved. There being no further discussion, the minutes were approved unanimously.

CONTINUATION OF CITY CODE OVERVIEW

Select Zoning Code Follow-Up:

Mr. Hamilton provided the Task Force with an overview of the maps, data tracking and regulations used by the City's Planning Department to guide and monitor development.

Mr. Hamilton reviewed the City's zoning map, pointing out the various types of zones, densities and other features. Mr. Hamilton next reviewed a map depicting approved preliminary plats throughout the City. He indicated that such a map could be a useful tool in identifying future growth trends. Mr. Hamilton pointed to growth in the southwest area of the City identifying tracts of land included in a sewer test area.

A discussion followed among the Task Force members with regard to the cost of development and whether new development was paying the cost for infrastructure such as sewer line extensions.

Mr. Bellis made the statement that people were telling him that "the City" has got to grow… we have got to have more sub-divisions so that the city can increase their tax base. Then, we keep raising our taxes

because the tax base is not covering the cost of new development. Mr. Bellis asked if that was a correct statement?

Mr. Hamilton stated that the tax recovery from residential single family doesn't pay for anything but a very small portion of total city budget.

Mr. Bellis replied that the existing residents were supplementing the additional costs of growth.

Mr. Hamilton stated that the City was supplementing some of the growth and that some people could argue that growth" stimulates other growth that is taxable.

Mr. Bellis asked the question: Why do we raise the tax rates?

Mr. Holthouser commented: If you think back to some of the earlier meetings, you have to ask if it's new growth meaning new people or new growth meaning re-distributed people. That is, people who were already here but have moved elsewhere within the City so that we pay the cost to maintain the old development where they resided as well as the cost for the new development to which they moved.

Mr. Bellis commented that Mr. Holthouser made an excellent point.

Ms. Biles questioned Mr. Holthouser with regard to the issue of rental housing paying taxes just the same as owner occupied housing.

Mr. Holthouser stated that Ms. Biles question was correct and the way that Mr. Holthouser looked at the question was: What would the natural rate of appreciation be if the rental houses in established neighborhoods were healthy, thriving owner occupied units? Mr. Holthouser then referred back to the purchaser risk exercise reminding the members of the 3% verses the 5% appreciation rate for the same type of home. Mr. Holthouser asked again if Task Force members thought that a rental home would necessarily appreciate at the same rate as an owner occupied home.

A discussion followed among various members of the Task Force with regard to options available to entice the conversion of rental units to owner occupied units in single-family neighborhoods.

Select Public Nuisance Codes:

Mr. Rees began his presentation by pointing out that everything that the City does is regulated by the state, or in other words, a city is a creature of the state and as such has only those powers delegated by the State. Mr. Rees asked the members to look at the top of page 78 of their handout, pointing out the reference from the North Carolina General Statutes.

Mr. Rees provided the Task Force with an overview of the City's Minimum Housing Codes. Included in the review were the definitions section, housing standards as well as enforcement procedures and staff dedicated to enforcement.

Ms. Whitley asked if anybody ever thought of having the sanitation workers in the Public Works Department or members of the Police Department assist with enforcement of the codes.

Mr. Rees indicated that such scenarios may have been explored in the past and that Neighborhood Services was recently attached to the Police Department so as to be able to collaborate with police officers more closely.

Ms. Outterbridge asked if this was a long process?

Mr. Rees stated that usually from the time that the call comes in, it takes from 12 to 24 hours before an inspector takes a look at the violation. Once the inspector confirms the violation, they return back to the office to send out a certified letter to the property owner. The property owner then has 10 days from the

date of the letter to take corrective action prior to a scheduled hearing. Following the hearing, the owner is given a period of time that may range from 10 days to three months to make repairs to their property.

Mr. Crisp made the comment that in his neighborhood they had a house with an issue that took 9 months to resolve. Mr. Crisp stated that the City Attorney asked him to make a presentation to city council to take further action. The owner finally did comply after taking 9 months or more.

Mr. Rees stated that was certainly a rare case. Then Mr. Rees asked if there were any more questions on housing.

Mr. Rees next summarized the language and procedures relative to the enforcement of the City's Public Nuisance Codes.

Ms. Biles asked about how complaints are tracked.

Mr. Rees explained that the complaints are tracked through the use of a computer software program.

Mr. Crisp asked a series of questions related to the privacy of property owners being investigated.

Mr. Rees stated that everything Neighborhood Services does is public record. Information such as on property ownership comes from the public tax records and enforcement actions that are recorded in the existing database are also public records. Mr. Rees stated that any one could go during normal business hours to the Office of the Tax Assessor and look up ownership information.

Mr. Rees concluded his presentation by stating that the bulk of the meeting was fully intended for the Task Force to continue to discuss and sharpen the focus on key issues.

ISSUE DEFINITION

Group Discussion:

Mr. Best suggested that the Task Force members should travel throughout the community and take note of various violations that could be reported to the appropriate City enforcement officials. Mr. Best stated that you don't have to live in a neighborhood to take a pro-active role to help the city and help the staff to achieve a goal.

Mr. Rees stated that the more organized a neighborhood is, the more efficient it is and that the better the neighborhood knows the regulations, the better the City's enforcement system works. Mr. Rees gave the example of Mr. Crisp being the President of his neighborhood association and how citizens in his neighborhood know to call him if there is a problem and that Mr. Crisp knows how to filter out the unfounded complaints. By being so organized, Mr. Rees indicated that neighborhoods could help themselves and save the City both time and resources.

Ms. Outterbridge questioned how you educate the citizens of Greenville regarding the codes because you cannot expect people to do things when they don't know if they are doing something wrong?

Mr. Crisp commented that he thought the best enforcement, or the person in the best position to look at a violation, was someone who was familiar with the neighborhood. Mr. Crisp mentioned that he was a frequent caller to Neighborhood Services and that he had worked with Carl Rees to put code related information into a newsletter that was distributed to all households in the neighborhood.

Ms. Biles questioned the education process for property owners stating that they should know the City's regulations in advance and not go through a long period of warnings and fines.

Mr. Crisp added that he believed that the education process related to City codes should extend to the tenants as well.

Mr. Joyner initiated a discussion related to the potential for requiring additional landscaping and other aesthetic type improvements that would improve the outward appearance of rental properties. The discussion also included the potential for establishing a program to recognize these sort of improvements throughout the community, possibly through neighborhood association newsletters.

Mr. Hedrick alluded to his recent experience on the rental market when rental owners attempted to bypass City codes related to single-family occupancy. It was his belief that the owners were aware of the regulations but chose to ignore them.

Ms. Whitley discussed her belief that the area between the Tar River and the ECU campus had suffered through a steady decline since she could remember. She suggested a concentrated program of education and enforcement paired with neighborhood organization and coordination among City departments.

Mr. Best agreed but strongly advocated more stringent fines for violations after the educational process.

Ms. Outterbridge then asked how do you educate the neighborhoods that don't have neighborhood associations formed?

Mr. Crisp answered by saying that the formation of neighborhood associations should be a primary mission for the City and that he believed that some members of the City Council such as Pat Dunn held a similar view.

Mr. Garrett asked what was expected of the committee in carrying back information to their communities. He also asked the question of what role the committee was to play, and what the committee was suppose to do with the information gathered.

Mr. Rees answered Mr. Garrett's question by saying that the committee's role is to tap into the collective knowledge of the committee through whatever different roles they have played and through whatever different neighborhoods the committee members have come from and to wrestle with these issues in order to reach some conclusions and recommendations that could be presented to the City Council.

CONSENSUS ON ISSUES:

The Task Force members agreed that staff should return at a future meeting with a menu of options that address both the short term "symptoms" that are having a negative impact on neighborhoods as well as some longer term options intended to address the larger "disease" related to a lack of re-investment and market interest in some established neighborhoods.

DISCUSSION OF FUTURE MEETING SCHEDULE

The Task Force agreed by consensus that the next meeting will be Wednesday, August 11th at 5:30 p.m. at City Hall followed by a meeting on August 25th, 2004 also at the City Hall.

The Task Force Members also agreed by consensus that a vote will be held at the August 11th meeting to replace outgoing Chairperson Biles.

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 9:03 p.m.

DRAFT MINUTES FOR TASK FORCE ON PRESERVATION OF NEIGHBORHOODS AND HOUSING

August 11, 2004
Greenville, NC

The Task Force on Preservation of Neighborhoods and Housing held a meeting on the above date at 5:30 p.m. in the first floor conference room of City Hall located at 201 Martin Luther King Jr. Drive.

CALL TO ORDER: 5:40 p.m. by Chairperson Biles

TASK FORCE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mary Lou Antieau
Mary Claire Biles
Reggie Elliott
Jarvis Mills
Donna Whitley
Vince Bellis
Richard Crisp
D. D. Garrett
Lillian Outterbridge
Tom Best
Max Joyner, Jr.
George Saad Jr.

TASK FORCE COMMISSION MEMBERS ABSENT:

Brandon Hedrick
Annie Suggs
Bob Dietrich

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:

Carl Rees - Neighborhood Services Coordinator, Neil Holthouser Senior Planner - Long Range Planning, Harry Hamilton - Chief Planner, Sylvia Horne - Secretary.

OTHERS PRESENT:

Pat Dunn, City Council Member at Large
Michelle Lieberman, Student Neighborhood Relations Facilitator
Merrill Flood, Director of Planning & Community Development
Bill Richardson, Deputy City Manager

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: JUNE 16, 2004:

Chairperson Biles asked for approval of the June 16, 2004 minutes. A motion was made by Mr. Joyner and seconded by Mr. Crisp that the minutes be approved. There being no further discussion, the minutes were approved unanimously.

REVIEW OF DRAFT TASK FORCE SCHEDULE

The Task Force on Preservation of Neighborhoods and Housing considered the following schedule for the remainder of their term.

August 11, 2004	Task Force Meeting 5:30 PM Staff Presentation – Solution Strategies
August 25, 2004	Task Force Meeting 7:00 PM Solution Strategy Discussion
September 15, 2004	Task Force Meeting 7:00 PM Staff Presentation – Draft Final Report
September 29, 2004	Public Open House TBD

	Task Force Meeting – Report Revisions TBD
October 13, 2004	Task Force Meeting 7:00 PM Review Report Revisions – Report Adoption
October 27, 2004	Reserved – TBD Report Adoption
November 8, 2004	City Council – 6:00 PM Final Report Presentation

Chairperson Biles asked for approval of the 2004 Fall Schedule. A motion was made by Mr. Garrett and seconded by Mr. Joyner that the schedule be adopted as presented. There being no further discussion, the schedule was unanimously adopted.

REVIEW OF NEIGHBORHOOD IMPROVEMENT STRATEGIES

Rental Property Registration and Certification System:

Mr. Holthouser provided the Task Force with a summary of a model registration and certification system for rental dwelling units located within single-family residential zoning districts. The fee neutral system would be structured so as to monitor the conformance of registry members to a number of key City Codes. Property owners would be required to certify their understanding of those codes at the time of registration. Violation points would be assessed to a given property for documented failure to conform to the established codes. When a given property was due for renewal, the property owner would be required to pay a fee linked to the number of points accumulated throughout the year.

Mr. Joyner asked what other cities were using a certification system, Raleigh in particular.

Mr. Holthouser stated that Raleigh was trying to get their system off the ground. Mr. Holthouser added that there had actually been some challenge to the proposed system, and that as a result of the challenge, there was consideration being given to implementing an even stricter system than what was initially proposed. A second model that was studied by City staff was Gainesville, Florida, which is more of a college town.

Mr. Joyner asked the question: Aren't the properties that are out of compliance paying fines throughout the year?

Mr. Joyner stated that maybe the City needed to increase their fines.

Mr. Holthouser replied by stating that staff had given consideration to the idea of increasing the fine structure. In the end, staff determined that such a model would likely not be successful as large fines were typically contested and often overturned. Mr. Holthouser equated the proposed system to the automobile insurance model where violations must be contested up front. If the violation is not overturned, then points are assessed.

Mr. Joyner said that the theory sounded good to him, but he was worried that the proposed no fee registration system could eventually have a fee added. Mr. Joyner also stated that consideration should be given to having all properties registered as opposed to only rental properties.

Mr. Joyner asked how an apartment complex with 200 units would be treated under the proposed system.

Mr. Holthouser replied that all the units would need to be registered but that the points would only accrue against units in violation.

Ms. Biles asked the question: If a parent buys a home for their student, it that considered rental property?

Mr. Hamilton indicated that such a living arrangement would not be considered as a rental situation.

Mr. Bellis asked the question: Other than the perception of equality, what would be the rational of requiring all property owners to participate in the registration system.

Mr. Joyner stated that the rational would be to require that all properties conform to the standards of the housing and nuisance codes.

Mr. Garrett stated that all homeowners should participate in the certification registration system

Single Family Re-Zonings

Mr. Hamilton provided the Task Force with an overview of a proposed strategy to rezone a number of predominantly single-family neighborhoods where the present zoning could support the conversion of single-family homes to duplexes.

Mr. Rees stated that the proposed rezoning strategy could dove tail with the registration and certification system described previously in that neighborhoods who wished the protection afforded by the registration system could request to be rezoned to a single family designation.

Ms. Biles asked what would be the process to change the zoning?

Mr. Hamilton stated that City staff would have to undertake a study to identify the specific areas where a rezoning would be appropriate. Property owners would need to be notified and the process would work its way through the Planning and Zoning Commission as well as through the City Council.

Mr. Saad asked the question: If you re-zone, what happens to a multi-family or duplex property already in existence.

Mr. Hamilton answered by saying that such a use would be allowed to continue. The use would be allowed to continue unless a catastrophic incident such as a fire took place. In that case, the use could continue as long as a building permit was secured within six months.

Web Based Property and Complaint Tracking System

Mr. Rees briefly described a proposed system whereby citizens could remotely access records related to City Code violations tracked by the City. The system could also provide a forum for citizens to refer potential code violations and could also track rental properties should a registration system be implemented. Mr. Rees indicated that the technology was in place to implement such a system but that there would be a substantial commitment of staff time to bring the system on-line.

Unimproved Surface Parking Changes

Mr. Rees summarized proposed changes to the City Code that would address a proliferation of vehicular parking in front yard areas in a number of single-family neighborhoods. The changes would allow the City's Neighborhood Services Unit to enforce the code in a manner similar to the way other "street parking" violations were being enforced. Under the proposed system, violators would receive a ticket on their windshield and would have a brief appeal period before the ticket must be paid.

Ms. Antieau made the comment that it was exciting news and that she supported the idea of putting the responsibility on the person parking on the lawn.

Ms. Biles expressed concern that property owners might not be providing adequate parking to their tenants.

Mr. Rees stated that Ms. Biles made a good point and referred everyone to their document relating to registration and certification system. Mr. Rees indicated that while there is no City Code provision requiring that property owners retrofit their properties to provide adequate parking, property owners would be required to certify that they were aware of the City's parking provisions and that they would be held accountable for front yard parking violations through the point system.

Noise Ordinance Changes

Mr. Hamilton provided the Task Force members with a summary of proposed changes to the City Code that would allow Police Officers to charge individuals with code violations for nuisance human noise as opposed to the current provisions that only allow for violations related to amplified sound.

Mr. Miles asked if the city had equipment for measuring the decibel level of noise.

Mr. Hamilton indicated that the City did have such equipment and that it was intended for measuring amplified sound.

Ms. Antieau wanted to know who would be responsible for cars with loud music cruising through the neighborhood?

Mr. Hamilton indicated that there were codes currently in place to address that concern and that the Police Department was charged with enforcement.

Mr. Joyner commented that you wouldn't get any points unless there is a citation issued.

Neighborhood Reinvestment Strategies

Mr. Hamilton summarized a series of strategies intended to stabilize, and in some cases revitalize existing single-family neighborhoods. Key strategies included, down payment and low interest loan pools for purchase, improvement and conversion of rental homes to owner occupied in single family neighborhoods, public funding dedicated to infrastructure and amenity improvements, exploration of a transfer of development rights program and consideration of stricter standards for variance from existing land use plans.

Ms. Antieau and Ms. Biles both asked Mr. Hamilton what was a density bonus?

Ms. Biles wanted confirmation that what Mr. Hamilton was saying was that there were already areas that were zoned for multi-family use and that the end result was that density was being transferred from a less appropriate area.

Mr. Hamilton then gave an example: There is a house over in the Tar-River Neighborhood that has been converted over to a duplex years ago. Someone could go in there and could rehab that and turn it back into a single-family dwelling. They would then qualify for a development right that could be applied to another location for a density bonus at a remote location. Such a development right could be viewed as a commodity that could be sold to a developer in need of additional density for a proposed project.

Ms. Antieau expressed concern as to the proposed transfer of development rights strategy citing specific concern with regard to the receiving areas that might be subject to higher density development.

Mr. Hamilton responded by stating that careful study would be given beforehand to identify areas that were appropriate for higher density.

Mr. Joyner stated that such a system could be a big advantage to a developer.

Neighborhood Association Development Strategies

Mr. Rees reviewed several proposals intended to strengthen and increase neighborhood associations across the City. Included in the proposals were efforts to assist neighborhood associations with newsletters, provision of meeting space for association meetings, development of a neighborhood college, and increased funds for neighborhood grants.

Ms. Biles wanted to know if the City would mail out the newsletters under the proposal.

Mr. Rees answered by saying that some City's provide the printed newsletters back to the association for distribution while other mail them out.

Ms Biles made the comment that some neighborhoods place them on email and send them that way.

Ms. Antieau suggested that one important aspect of a neighborhood college would be to train citizens on the correct way to report city code violations.

Neighborhood /Corridor/Area Plan Strategies

Mr. Holthouser provided a brief summary of efforts slated to begin in the very near future to develop detailed land use plans for areas smaller than the Vision Areas described in the City's Comprehensive Plan. Mr. Holthouser indicated that such advance planning would serve to alleviate concerns expressed to the Task Force with regard to the perceived unpredictability of zoning changes.

ECU Neighborhood Outreach Efforts

Michelle Lieberman of East Carolina University provided the Task Force with a brief update of efforts by the university to improve relations with surrounding neighborhoods.

ELECTION OF CHAIR

Chairperson Biles indicated that this would be her last meeting and called for nominations for a new Chair to replace her. Chairperson Biles asked if there were any nominations.

Ms. Whitley nominated Tom Best.

Mr. Antieau provided a second to the motion by Ms. Whitley.

Ms. Biles then asked Mr. Best if he would he mind serving?

Mr. Best stated that he would be glad to serve.

There being no further discussion, the nomination to appoint Mr. Best as Chair was approved unanimously.

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 8:03 p.m.

DRAFT MINUTES FOR TASK FORCE ON PRESERVATION OF NEIGHBORHOODS AND HOUSING

August 25, 2004
Greenville, NC

The Task Force on Preservation of Neighborhoods and Housing held a meeting on the above date at 7:00 p.m. in the first floor conference room of City Hall located at 201 Martin Luther King Jr. Drive.

CALL TO ORDER: 7:10 p.m. by Chairman Best

TASK FORCE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mary Lou Antieau	Vince Bellis	Tom Best
Mary Claire Biles	Richard Crisp	Bob Dietrich
D. D. Garrett	Max Joyner, Jr.	Lillian Outterbridge
George Saad Jr.	Donna Whitley	

TASK FORCE COMMISSION MEMBERS ABSENT:

Reggie Elliott	Brandon Hedrick	Jarvis Mills
Annie Suggs		

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:

Carl Rees - Neighborhood Services Coordinator, Neil Holthouser Senior Planner - Long Range Planning, Sylvia Horne - Secretary.

OTHERS PRESENT:

Michelle Lieberman, Student Neighborhood Relations Facilitator
Bill Richardson, Deputy City Manager

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: AUGUST 11, 2004:

Chairman Best asked for approval of the August 11, 2004 minutes. Chairman Best did acknowledge several requested revisions to the August 11th minutes. Staff with the consent of the Task Force members recorded the changes. A motion to approve the minutes was made by Ms. Antieau and seconded by Mr. Crisp. There being no further discussion, the minutes were approved unanimously.

REVIEW OF NEIGHBORHOOD IMPROVEMENT STRATEGIES

Chairman Best made the statement that the Task Force needed to provide staff with some direction on their proposals so that the Task Force Members could have something to present to City Council.

Rental Property Registration and Certification System:

Mr. Saad indicated that he felt that it was important for apartment complexes to be registered in addition to rental dwellings in single-family neighborhoods. Mr. Saad also indicated that apartments were being over-built throughout the city and that the City might need to look at the possibility of controlling the rate of growth through smart development practices.

Mr. Joyner stated that by requiring all dwellings units in the city to register, it would be easy to know what units were rental and which were owner occupied.

Ms. Antieau asked if the members could have the staff go back and do a little bit more work on the ideas that the members had just discussed, because she felt that the members had moved the discussion slightly into a different direction and she wasn't comfortable saying either "thumbs up or thumbs now" at this time.

Dr. Dietrich stated: " I would like to say, in the last meeting I made a comment that code enforcement isn't going to improve the quality of life for property value and that maybe the group should look at incentives, tangible incentives for landlords and investors to bring property and street appearances up to a specified standard and in exchange there would be some concessions to that investor or landlord. In order to get something from code to what you really want is a big lead. Dr. Dietrich wanted the minutes to reflect that in the whole process of trying to preserve neighborhood improve street value or street appearance and improve property value incentives for the landlord and investors are probably going to hold a lot more long term benefits than coming after them with a big stick.

Mr. Bellis questioned the practicality of trying to apply the registration system to all properties and asked if such a plan was in conformance with the mandate given to the Task Force by the City Council.

Mr. Crisp stated that one thing that he would like to see from staff is what other cities have done when they carried registration programs beyond just the renters.

Mr. Rees stated that there is no place that he is aware of, and he had investigated somewhere between 12 and 20 places, that registered all homeowners. Mr. Rees indicated that he would provide the Task Force with information on the subject at their next meeting.

Ms. Biles made the comment that all properties are already subject to existing City Ordinances.

Ms. Whitley expressed an interest in determining the cost of increasing enforcement staff so that the City could enforce existing codes more aggressively.

Mr. Rees explained to the Task Force that City budgets had been extremely tight over the last decade. As such, very few personnel requests were approved. He stated that by way of example, it had taken seven years to secure one new Neighborhood Services Officer.

Mr. Richardson concurred with Mr. Rees and indicated that in the last budget, City departments requested a total of 65 new positions, with only a fraction of those being funded in the final version of the budget.

Ms. Whitley stated that the information Mr. Richardson shared is an important component for the Task Force to know so that the members can talk to their neighbors and also to their representatives about the issue.

Mr. Rees indicated that staff would continue to analyze the registration and enforcement issues and would provide the Task Force with additional information at their next meeting.

Single Family Re-Zonings

Mr. Holthouser provided the Task Force with an overview of a proposed strategy to rezone a number of predominantly single-family neighborhoods where the present zoning could support the conversion of single-family homes to duplexes. Mr. Holthouser indicated that the proposed strategy called for studies of these neighborhoods that could lead to rezoning action where appropriate.

Chairman Best asked if the Task Force could reach consensus on the item by a show of hands. There being consensus, the item was recommended for inclusion in the presentation at the public forum.

Rental Dwelling Unit Code Violation Tracking System

Mr. Holthouser provided the Task Force with an overview of the proposed on-line violation tracking system. Mr. Holthouser mentioned that such a system would likely come with a significant price tag, but that staff had not fully investigated the cost.

Chairman Best asked that the members reach consensus by a show of hands.

Mr. Crisp asked if the proposed system was contingent upon adoption of the registration system.

Mr. Rees replied by stating that the two could work in unison but were not absolutely tied together.

Based on a show of hands, the Task Force approved the recommendations by consensus.

Unimproved Surface Parking Changes

Mr. Holthouser summarized proposed changes to the City Code that would allow enforcement actions to be taken against the vehicle owner as opposed to the property owner.

Mr. Dietrich said he was under the impression that there were certain zoning criteria for front yard parking for R-6-N.

Mr. Holthouser responded by stating that the single family parking surface regulations were part of the Zoning Ordinance and that they did not only apply to a single district.

Mr. Rees commented that should the proposed changes be adopted by City Council, the regulations would stay on the books as part of the Zoning Ordinance. However, the enforcement officials would change, the fee schedule would change, and the method of service delivery for violation letters notices would change such that citations would be placed on the windshield of vehicles by the enforcement officials.

Mr. Garrett expressed concern that some older dwellings did not have large enough driveways to park vehicles and that there were even some dwellings that had no driveways.

Mr. Rees stated that there is a provision within the zoning ordinance that the City Engineer has discretion in certain circumstance to provide a waiver of sort. Mr. Rees indicated that there was certain areas where parking had historically taken place on unimproved surfaces. In those cases, the City Engineer could determine that the parking was in line with the code.

Based on a show of hands, the Task Force approved the recommendations by consensus.

Noise Ordinance Changes

Mr. Holthouser summarized the proposed code changes by stating that a police officer would be given the discretion to write a ticket for nuisance noise as opposed to the current code where citations can only be issued for excessive amplified sound.

Chairman Best asked if there were any comments?

Ms. Antieau asked Ms. Lieberman if as a former police officer she thought that the changes would cause an officer not to want to write citations as they would be given to much discretion.

Ms. Lieberman stated that she actually talked to some officers and friends about issues like this and that they thought it was great, because it would give them an additional tool to use to break up noisy parties.

Mr. Holthouser stated that there was an article in the Boulder, Colorado Newspaper, where students were just returning to the University of Colorado campus, but the campus had just implemented the noise ordinance system, and within 15 minutes of students moving onto campus, officers had written 3 tickets.

The news traveled fast and the issue made the newspaper. So the issuing of ticketing situation is working at Boulder.

Following a request from Chairman Best, the Task Force indicated consensus on the item by a show of hands.

Strategy To Encourage Reinvestment in Established Neighborhoods

Mr. Holthouser summarized a series of strategies intended to stabilize, and in some cases revitalize existing single-family neighborhoods. Key strategies included, down payment and low interest loan pools for purchase, improvement and conversion of rental homes to owner occupied in single family neighborhoods, public funding dedicated to infrastructure and amenity improvements, exploration of a transfer of development rights program and consideration of stricter standards for variance from existing land use plans.

After a brief discussion among the members, staff agreed to provide additional detail on how incentive programs that led to conversion of rental units to owner occupied units might work. Staff agreed to investigate similar programs being implemented in Durham, NC as well as a program sponsored by Yale University in Connecticut.

Neighborhood Association Development and Empowerment Strategies

Mr. Holthouser provided the Task Force with a summary of methods by which the City could assist and empower neighborhood associations.

Ms. Antieau commented that there was a delicate balance between the City assisting the associations on the one hand, and the associations over-relying on the City on the other.

Mr. Holthouser made the statement that he worked in a situation like this before, and what tends to happen, is that the city will provide basic, but limited capabilities to the associations. As neighborhoods mature and want to go beyond the basic assistance provided by the City, they are free to do so.

Ms. Antieau asked the question: How many neighborhoods don't have neighborhood associations?

Mr. Rees stated that he could tell her the other way, but he couldn't tell her how many did not have formal associations. Mr. Rees states that there were somewhere around 20 to 25 formal neighborhood associations of which about one half were active. Mr. Rees also made the Task Force aware of efforts to organize additional neighborhood associations, particularly in areas of west Greenville where neighborhood lines were not clear.

Mr. Joyner made the statement that he thought it would be good to have the heads of Neighborhood Associations meet maybe once or twice a year.

Mr. Garrett stated that in his opinion most neighborhood associations are made up of homeowners. Mr. Garrett expressed an interest in having staff work with tenants to form tenant associations.

Chairman Best inquired as to the ability of tenants to participate in neighborhood associations.

Mr. Rees stated that most neighborhood associations; or actually all that Mr. Rees knew of are open to tenants. However, tenants may not be able to participate as voting members depending on the bylaws of the particular neighborhood association.

Mr. Garrett stated that the tenant might feel intimidated to meet with the homeowners.

Mr. Saad suggested that maybe instead of having the property owners at the meeting there should be meetings organized just for tenants.

Neighborhood /Corridor/Area Plan Strategies

Mr. Holthouser provided a brief summary of efforts slated to begin in the very near future to develop detailed land use plans for areas smaller than the Vision Areas described in the City's Comprehensive Plan. Mr. Holthouser indicated that such advance planning would serve to alleviate concerns expressed to the Task Force with regard to the perceived unpredictability of zoning changes.

Ms. Whitley inquired as to where funding would come from to complete neighborhood projects developed during the planning process.

Mr. Bellis stated that the money would have to come from the city's budget.

Mr. Richardson went further to explain that the city has a five-year capital improvement program from which projects are funded on an annual basis.

Mr. Bellis commented on how important it would be to attend the meetings, and how it would be an opportunity for citizens to decide on how and where some of their tax money would be spent.

Mr. Holthouser stated that it would be un-truthful to say that the entire capital improvement budget goes to one neighborhood, because there are going to be capital needs for the city all the time.

Mr. Rees stated that the neighborhood planning process had a prioritization function as well in that it allowed neighborhoods to determine what they perceived to be the most important projects.

Mr. Richardson stated to the members that they should not think that just because an item is in the (CIP), that it's going to be automatically funded. He used the example of some $157 million in CIP requests from the previous CIP process, of which only a small portion would be able to be funded each program year.

Mr. Joyner expressed concern over the possibility of the planning process leading to zoning changes.

Mr. Holthouser responded by stating that zoning studies would be part of the neighborhood planning process and that zoning in some areas likely would change. Mr. Holthouser indicated that such changes would only occur after ample opportunities for citizen input had been provided.

Mr. Bellis commented that the council would still make the final decision on such changes.

Mr. Holthouser concurred, stating that when a development proposal was presented that deviated from an existing neighborhood plan, City Council could still approve the development, but they would need to amend the plan first.

Mr. Joyner made the comment that if he had some land that was zoned one way, and it was valued at $ 100,000 an acre and it got changed to a zoning where it was devalued to $50,000 an acre, he would be upset. Mr. Joyner indicated that the idea had some merit but needed further discussion in his opinion.

Ms. Biles stated that the Task Force needed to recommend a few lightening rods to City Council because such items would lead to discussion among citizens and the development of possible alternatives.

Following additional discussion on the topic of Neighborhood Plans, Mr. Holthouser stated that final decisions did not have to be made at the meeting. Instead, the Task Force was simply deciding what items to present to the public and could then incorporate citizen comments into their report to the City Council.

Chairman Best suggested that the Task Force move on to the next agenda item.

DISCUSSION OF PUBLIC FORUM

Mr. Rees stated that it was up to the members as to how they received public comments on the various strategies. Staff could arrange for a formal presentation with on-record comments similar to the first public forum, or it was possible to arrange a less formal “open-house” type setting where comments could be received informally.

Mr. Bellis commented that a staff person and a committee member should book an appearance on the “Talk of the Town” radio show to promote the open house. Mr. Bellis also indicated that he did not personally care for the open house type format, as it was sometimes difficult to provide comments.

After further discussion among staff and members, it was decided that the public forum on September 29th would include an initial presentation on neighborhood improvement strategies by staff followed by a formal comment period for citizens in attendance. Following the formal portion of the meeting, staff and Task Force members would make themselves available informal discussion on the strategies.

NEXT MEETING

Chairperson Best announced the next schedule meeting is September 15, 2004 at 7:00 p.m. at the 1st floor conference room of city hall.

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 8:46 p.m.

DRAFT MINUTES FOR TASK FORCE ON PRESERVATION OF NEIGHBORHOODS AND HOUSING

September 15, 2004
Greenville, NC

The Task Force on Preservation of Neighborhoods and Housing held a meeting on the above date at 7:00 p.m. in the first floor conference room of City Hall located at 201 Martin Luther King Jr. Drive.

CALL TO ORDER: 7:00 p.m. by Chairman Best; Mr. Garrett lead the committee in a short prayer.

TASK FORCE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mary Lou Antieau	Vince Bellis	Tom Best
Richard Crisp	Bob Dietrich	
Reggie Elliott	D. D. Garrett	Lillian Outterbridge
George Saad Jr.		

TASK FORCE MEMBERS ABSENT:

Brandon Hedrick	Max Joyner, Jr.	Jarvis Mills
Annie Suggs	Donna Whitley	Mary Claire Biles

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:

Carl Rees - Neighborhood Services Coordinator, Neil Holthouser Senior Planner - Long Range Planning, Harry Hamilton – Chief Planner, Sylvia Horne - Secretary.

OTHERS PRESENT:

Michelle Lieberman, Student Neighborhood Relations Facilitator
Bill Richardson, Deputy City Manager

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: AUGUST 11, 2004:

Chairman Best asked for approval of the August 25, 2004 minutes. Chairman Best did acknowledge a few requested revisions to the August 25th minutes. Staff with the consent of the Task Force members recorded the changes. A motion to approve the minutes was made by Mr. Crisp and seconded by Mr. Saad. There being no further discussion, the minutes were approved unanimously.

VIDEO PRESENTATION ON BOND REFERENDUM

Chairperson Best then introduced Mr. Richardson to provide a summary on the upcoming Bond Referendum. Mr. Richardson then showed a brief video that summarized the Bond Referendum scheduled for November 2, 2004. Mr. Richardson also left VHS and DVD's of the Bond Referendum for the committee members to take home with them.

DISCUSSION OF RENTAL REGISTRATION & ENFORCEMENT STRATEGIES

Mr. Rees introduced this topic by passing out some additional handouts on topics such as: Code Compliance Citation Structure and Appeal Strategies, City of Raleigh Probationary Rental Occupancy Permit, and, a Rental Registration Survey to all the committee members.Mr. Rees reminded the committee that in the past they had discussed rental registration and he thought it was fair to say that the committee had not reached a consensus on that issue. With that in mind, the staff went back to the drawing board and came up with a few additional items that could be used to beef up the City's code enforcement efforts. Mr. Rees noted the issues that the committee members and citizens talked about

and identified when they came to the initial public forum. Mr. Rees stated those sorts of items are enforced by different units in the Police Department and the Department of Planning and Community Development. The items Mr. Rees summarized were: Noise Ordinance, Minimum Housing Code, Public Nuisance Code, such as weeded lots and trash & debris, Junk Vehicles, Occupancy Regulation (3 or more un-related people living in a dwelling) and parking in the front yard, which is residential parking on an unimproved surface. Mr. Rees indicated that the City does have existing enforcement policies for all the items he outlined, but described a historically passive posture toward enforcement. Mr. Rees indicated that City staff spent a great deal of time on citizen education on City Codes as opposed to intensive and aggressive code enforcement. Mr. Rees went on to say that the City does have some areas in town around the university area defined as "Zero Tolerance" areas, and they would be the neighborhoods immediately adjacent to the University. In those areas code violations are enforced on a more pro-active basis with fines issued immediately for violations of the Zoning Ordinance. Mr. Rees stated as far as other violations such as Minimum Housing and the Public Nuisance Codes, the City was required by state law to send a violation notice to the property owner prior to issuing a civil citation or paying a contractor to abate the nuisance. Mr. Rees indicated that one of the things that staff had picked up on during the review of the City's enforcement process, was that there was not a formal appeal mechanism in place for review of many types of code violations. With this being the case, individuals who had received fines for code violations, have typically made informal appeals to elected officials, City department heads or the City Manager, to waive any fines they may have accrued. Mr. Rees stated that such an informal system served as a disincentive for property owners to comply with City Codes. Mr. Rees stated that what staff is proposing is to formalize the appeal process. The State of North Carolina stipulates that the Board of Adjustment serve as the ultimate appeal for violations related to the Zoning Ordinance. Mr. Rees indicated that the staff proposal calls for appeals of all code violations that typically impact single-family neighborhoods be heard by the Board of Adjustment. Should the volume of appeals prove to be overwhelming to the Board of Adjustment, Mr. Rees indicated that the City could appoint a new board with the duty of hearing such cases. Mr. Rees then summarized a set of cost recovery measure that staff had become aware of through the efforts of the City of Raleigh Neighborhood Task Force. Mr. Rees stated that under these measures, the City could charge each property owner the actual cost of enforcement when there were code violations on their property.

Mr. Holthouser commented that this process was universal; it applied to everybody, homeowners, renters, business, etc.

Ms. Antieau questioned if the cost recovery and appeal measures were proposed in place of previous strategies or were in addition to those strategies?

Mr. Rees replied by stating that the items he just presented were not necessarily intended to replace previous items, but that they could stand alone or work in conjunction with other items.

Ms. Antieau stated that Mr. Rees had not addressed how the cost recovery measure would impact the licensing system.

Mr. Rees stated that because there did not seem to be consensus at the last Task Force meeting on rental registration, staff had tried to come up with some additional approaches that would serve to recover the cost for code violations that had a negative impact in neighborhoods.

Ms. Antieau commented that she felt that the Task Force had not finished wrestling with the issue of registration and that she did not think that a final decision had been made.

Mr. Rees continued with his presentation, describing proposed changes to the noise ordinance. The changes included an increase in the civil citation amount from $50 to $85 and the potential criminalization of noise ordinance violations. Mr. Rees then provided the Task Force with a copy of the latest version of a rental registration system being considered by the City of Raleigh Neighborhood Task Force and gave a brief summary of that system.

Mr. Garrett asked the question: Will this be applied to multi-family dwellings as well as single-family in Raleigh?

Mr. Rees replied by stating that the multi family issue was being debated by the Raleigh Task Force and that a final decision had not yet been reached.

Mr. Garrett asked how rental management agencies were impacted under the Raleigh registration system.

Mr. Rees stated that he wasn't that familiar yet with the Raleigh document to direct Mr. Garrett to a certain page, but that he thought that there was a requirement for property owners to register an agent who could respond to problems within 24 hours.

Mr. Saad commented and gave an example of a property manager managing a property owner's property, questioning if that manager would be the subject of enforcement action or if it would be the property owner

Mr. Rees responded by stating that enforcement actions and registration impacted the property owner. Mr. Rees stated that the next item in the handouts was a formal rental registration survey that had been requested by Task Force member Richard Crisp. Mr. Rees went on to highlight several areas of the survey document.

Mr. Garrett commented that he saw among other things that registration systems would increase rent as cost to owners would be passed on to tenants.

Mr. Rees reminded the Task Force that the initial registration proposal provided by staff did not call for any fees associated with registration.

Mr. Crisp asked if City staff had any information related to the cost of rent in Greenville versus other cities.

Mr. Saad stated that the rent per square foot in Greenville was low compared to equal cities of the same size.

Mr. Saad also stated that many issues related to rental housing were related to the quality of tenants occupying the house. He stated that you could enforce the minimum standards all you wanted but unless you did something about the quality of people living in the homes you would not make any change.

Vice Chair Bellis suggested that the renters sign an agreement before moving into the property stating that the house has passed minimum standards. Under such a system, the property owner would have an advantage down the road if the tenant damaged the property.

Mr. Saad stated that their rental agency used a checklist before their tenants move into their apartments to indicate what is fixed and what is not fixed .

Ms. Antieau commented that Mr. Saad made a statement earlier about tenants tearing up the rental property. She asked if it wouldn't be good for the property owner to have a statement from the tenant indicating that the home was ok before they moved in.

Mr. Rees responded by stating that individual property owners would have to take up the issue with their tenants at the leasing stage.

Ms. Antieau then asked Mr. Saad about how many of his tenants actually cost him money from damage to the home.

Mr. Saad stated 7% to 10%.

Ms. Antieau described that figure as a small percentage. She then questioned other rental property owners about the same thing.

Mr. Garrett stated that what you run into is the economic condition of tenants and that when dealing with low-income people, an owner's cost goes up.

Ms. Antieau asked Mr. Garrett if 30% was accurate for low-income properties.

Mr. Garrett said that it was and reiterated that it was more expensive to deal with low-income people. Mr. Garrett then used the Moyewood Housing Project as an example of the government attempting to upgrade the housing conditions of people without upgrading their cultural or economic habits.

Vice-Chairman Bellis asked the question to Mr. Garrett : Is it possible to up-grade people culturally and economically so they can adapt to new housing better? Is that possible, and if so how?

Mr. Garrett stated that we have a racial situation that perpetuates this kind of thing and because we are in this racial situation, we think that it's all right and we see nothing wrong with it. Mr. Garrett provided the example of a group of low-income people that has to decide on whether or not to pay their rent or whether or not to buy food.

Vice-Chairman Bellis asked the question: Does that mean that we as the public have to supplement them?

Mr. Garrett stated: "We do".

Vice Chairman Bellis asked if that was the solution. Should the City provide rent supplements, because this group has the power to make recommendations.

Mr. Garrett stated that he wasn't sure that supplementation was the answer because the more that is given, the more that is expected.

Vice Chairman Bellis asked if people should accept the fact that there is a class of people that we are just not going to be able to deal with.

Mr. Garrett stated that we should not accept that fact.

Mr. Garrett stated that what the committee needed to do was to brainstorm. Mr. Garrett described the way that social norms had changed since his youth and how it seemed that any sort of behavior was acceptable now.

Ms. Outterbridge commented that she lived in West Greenville, when she was younger and later moved away to attend college. Ms. Outterbridge stated that when she lived in West Greenville there had been a greater sense of pride in the community and that people worked harder to keep up their homes and maintain the beauty of the neighborhoods. Ms. Outterbridge stated that the key in her opinion was education but acknowledged that it was a difficult task.

Mr. Garrett stated that by turning our backs on certain behaviors, we were allowing society to degenerate.

Vice-Chairman Bellis commented that the problems that Mr. Garrett identified were far beyond the committee, but that he was trying to take Mr. Garrett's comments and apply them to the work of the Task Force.

Mr. Garrett stated that the city had enough laws in the books, and that our problem was enforcing them. Mr. Garrett stated that he lived in an area where he saw all kinds of problems including drugs, but that he was not going to move.

Vice-Chairman Bellis stated that he did not want the discussion to discourage the Task Force from addressing the issues.

Mr. Holthouser stated that the issues that Mr. Garrett had describe were often referred to as “White Flight” and that it was fairly well documented that a similar process had occurred in every community within the country . Mr. Holthouser stated that one of the questions related to the issue was whether it was a continuing phenomenon, or more of a one-time event in our history. Mr. Holthouser stated that he preferred to think of the issue as more of a one-time event and that it should not prevent the Task Force from continuing with their work.

Mr. Rees stated much of the Task Force discussion has focused on extremes at either end of the spectrum. He suggested that the Task Force might want to focus on the majority of neighborhoods where the negative behavior associated with a minority of rental houses was lowering the quality of life.

Ms. Outterbridge concurred and gave an example of her neighborhood (Red Oak) where when people moved out, they rented their homes. She stated that those rental homes were where the problems were and that they were impacting the value of people’s homes.

Ms. Antieau commented that by making sure that rental properties were properly maintained, the Task Force would be ensuring that those rental properties did not devalue the neighborhood.

Dr Dietrich stated that it is a complex issue, but mentioned that there were several owner-occupied properties near his homes that were devaluing the neighborhood.

Ms. Antieau asked if anyone on the Task Force had heard of “Liveability Court” in Durham. She provided the Task Force staff with her notes on the issue and asked if they could find out more information.

Ms. Antieau stated that the Habitat for Humanity program served as a good model on how to teach people skills they needed to keep up their homes. She stated that the City should focus on ways to provide education to renters on how to maintain their homes.

Mr. Rees added that one of the great successes the city had over the decade of the 90’s was with the affordable housing ownership programs. Mr. Rees pointed to one of the major components of that program which was a home-ownership education program. Mr. Rees stated that a person was not allowed to purchase a home built by the City of Greenville unless they attended that training.

Mr. Elliott stated that he felt that property owners preferred for tenants not to try to make repairs for themselves.

Chairperson Best then stated that the Task Force needed to reach some conclusion on the issue of rental registration but acknowledged that the group had received a great deal of information.

Mr. Holthouser stated that one strategy that had been considered by staff was to ask the Task Force if they wanted to provide the City Council with a list of recommended strategies representing those that had received consensus, with the remainder of strategies included in the report appendix as other strategies considered but not recommended.

Mr. Rees asked if it would be helpful to provide a brief overview of the proposed rental registration and certification system to refresh the memories of the Task Force members. By consensus, the members asked Mr. Rees to proceed.

Following the summary by Mr. Rees, Vice-Chairman Bellis asked if staff had developed the cost for such a registration program.

Mr. Holthouser, stated that staff had given some consideration to the program, but that no final figures were available.

Dr. Dietrich commented that if there is no fee and if it's not pro-active, then there was really no change from the existing system other than the creation of a large bureaucracy. Dr. Dietrich stated that the City would be better off to more strictly enforce the existing codes.

Dr. Dietrich then asked if the committee could get a copy of the Gainesville, Florida registration system, suggesting that the new City Manager might have an interest in that system since he was coming to Greenville from Gainesville.

Ms. Antieau stated that she felt that the committee was not ready to make recommendations to the City Council and Mr. Saad agreed.

Dr. Dietrich asked if in addition to the information on the Gainesville registration system, the Task Force could get information related to cases in that City where rental licenses were under threat to be revoked.

Mr. Rees indicated that he would attempt to find out.

Ms. Antieau stated to the Task Force that the question at hand was if the Task Force has the will to support good neighborhoods and in turn, if the City of Greenville had the will to support good neighborhoods.

Chairperson Best commented that we will find out on November 8, 2004.

At the suggestion of the Chair, and by consensus, the Task Force tabled all other items on the agenda citing a need to continue discussion on several outstanding issues. The Task Force directed staff to change the schedule to reflect that the Public Forum scheduled for September 29th be postponed to a later date and that a regular meeting of the Task Force be scheduled in its place.

DISCUSSION OF OWNER-OCCUPANT CONVERSION INCENTIVE PROGRAMS

Item tabled by consensus

UPDATE ON PUBLIC FORUM

Item tabled by consensus

DISCUSSION OF FINAL REPORT FORMAT

Item tabled by consensus

NEXT MEETING

Chairperson Best announced the next schedule meeting is September 29, 2004 at 7:00 p.m. at the 1st floor conference room of City Hall.

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 8:55 p.m.

DRAFT MINUTES FOR TASK FORCE ON PRESERVATION OF NEIGHBORHOODS AND HOUSING

September 29, 2004
Greenville, NC

The Task Force on Preservation of Neighborhoods and Housing held a meeting on the above date at 7:00 p.m. in the first floor conference room of City Hall located at 201 Martin Luther King Jr. Drive.

CALL TO ORDER: 7:00 p.m. by Chairman Best

TASK FORCE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mary Lou Antieau	Vince Bellis	Tom Best
Richard Crisp	Bob Dietrich	D. D. Garrett
Max Joyner	Lillian Outterbridge	George Saad Jr.
Annie Suggs	Donna Whitley	

TASK FORCE MEMBERS ABSENT:

Reggie Elliott	Brandon Hedrick	Jarvis Mills

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:

Neil Holthouser Senior Planner - Long Range Planning, Harry Hamilton – Chief Planner, Sylvia Horne - Secretary.

OTHERS PRESENT:

Michelle Lieberman, Student Neighborhood Relations Facilitator
Bill Richardson, Deputy City Manager

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: SEPTEMBER 15, 2004:

Chairman Best asked for approval of the September 15, 2004 minutes. A motion to approve the minutes was made by Mr. Garrett and seconded by Ms. Antieau. There being no further discussion, the minutes were approved unanimously.

DISCUSSION /CONSENSUS ON NEIGHBORHOOD IMPROVEMENT STRATEGIES

Chairperson Best stated that to reach a consensus, the committee needed to formally vote on each item unless there were any other motions.

Chairperson Best stated that if there was to be any discussion, he would like to go around the table clockwise and then counter clock wise each time for fairness and ask each member to limit their statement to roughly a minute or less.

Chairperson Best then asked if there were any questions?

Chairperson Best then introduced the first topic **"Rezoning of Predominantly Single-Family Neigborhoods".**

Chairperson Best then asked if there was a motion to adopt the item.

Ms. Outterbridge made a motion to approve the item.

Then Chairman Best asked for second. The motion received a second from Mr. Crisp.

Then Chairperson Best if there was any discussion.

There being no further discussion, the motion carried unanimously.

Chairperson Best then introduced the second topic **"Create a Rental Property Database and Code Enforcement Tracking System".**

Chairperson Best then asked if there was a motion to adopt the item.

Mr. Bellis made a motion to approve the item.

Then Chairman Best asked for second. The motion received a second from Ms. Antieau.

Then Chairperson Best ask if there was any discussion.

There being no further discussion, the motion carried unanimously.

Chairperson Best then introduced the third topic **"Revise City Ordinances Related to Parking on Unimproved Surfaces".**

Chairperson Best then asked if there was a motion to adopt the item.

Mr. Garrett made a motion to approve the item.

Then Chairman Best asked for second. The motion received a second from Mr. Bellis.

Then Chairperson Best if there was any discussion.

Ms. Outterbridge asked the question: The part that reads establish routine patrols of neighborhoods in close proximity to East Carolina University. Ms. Outterbridge wanted to know if that was just the area of East Carolina University or all areas?

Chairman Best stated that it does say in close proximity of East Carolina University, however, it is a citywide ordinance already.

Mr. Saad stated that he thought the initial enforcement strategy was to target the university area, because of the parking.

Mr. Crisp stated that he had spoken with Mr. Rees on this matter and was told that the city was going to start around the university area, but that the City could expand its enforcement efforts to new areas as needed.

Ms. Outterbridge stated she wanted parking enforced in all neighborhoods and wanted the issue to read: "Establish routine patrol of neighborhoods", instead of reading: "Establish routine patrols of neighborhoods in close proximity to East Carolina University".

There being no further discussion, the item was approved unanimously as amended.

Chairperson Best then introduced the fourth topic **"Revise City Ordinances Related to Noise".**

Chairperson Best then asked if there was a motion to adopt the item.

Mr. Garrett made a motion to approve the item.

Then Chairman Best asked for a second. The motion received a second from Mr. Crisp.

Then Chairperson Best if there was any discussion.

There being no further discussion, the motion carried unanimously.

Chairperson Best then introduced the fifth topic **"Develop and Empower Neighborhood Associations".**

Chairperson Best then asked if there was a motion to adopt the item.

Ms. Antieau made a motion to approve the item.

Then Chairman Best asked for second. The motion received a second from Mr. Crisp.

Then Chairperson Best asked if there was any discussion.

There being no further discussion, the motion carried unanimously.

Chairperson Best then introduced the sixth topic **"Encourage Reinvestment in Established Single-Family Neighborhoods".**

Chairperson Best then asked if there was a motion to adopt the item.

Mr. Dietrich made a motion to approve the item.

Then Chairman Best asked for second. The motion received a second from Mr. Crisp.

Then Chairperson Best asked if there was any discussion.

Ms. Outterbridge had a question regarding the statement in the first paragraph relating to owner occupied purchase of homes in designated neighborhoods. Ms. Outterbridge asked: Does the committee know what the designated neighborhoods are?

Mr. Bellis stated that he didn't think that there were any neighborhoods designated at this time. Mr. Bellis indicated that there had been some neighborhoods mentioned previously but that a study would need to be done.

There being no further discussion, the motion carried unanimously.

Chairperson Best then introduced the seventh topic **"Develop and Adopt Neighborhood Plans".**

Chairperson Best then asked if there was a motion to adopt the item.

Ms. Antieau made a motion to approve the item.

Then Chairman Best asked for a second. The motion received a second from Mr. Crisp.

Then Chairperson Best asked if there was any discussion.

Mr. Joyner asked: What is "Develop and Adopt Neighborhood Plans"?

Mr. Saad explained: It's how we break the city up into smaller sections and plan for each of them.

There being no further discussion, the motion carried unanimously.

Chairperson Best then introduced the eighth topic **"Adopt Policies that Recognize the Link Between Suburban Residential Development and the Health of Established Neighborhoods".**

Chairperson Best then asked if there was a motion to adopt the item.

Mr. Crisp made a motion to approve the item.

Then Chairman Best asked for second. The motion received a second from Mr. Garrett.

Then Chairperson Best asked if there was any discussion.

Mr. Joyner commented that at one time the city was talking about zoning everything outside of the city. Then Mr. Joyner asked the question: Is that what this topic is talking about?

Mr. Hamilton said "no".

There being no further discussion, the motion carried unanimously.

Chairperson Best then introduced the ninth topic **"Revise the City's Code Enforcment and Appeals Process".**

Chairperson Best then asked if there was a motion to adopt the item.

Mr. Garrett made a motion to approve the item.

Then Chairman Best asked for a second. The motion received a second from Mr. Crisp.

Then Chairperson Best asked if there was any discussion.

Ms. Outterbridge had a question, but stated it may be linked to number ten. She stated that she had read something somewhere about accountability such as: tenants and landlords must know what they are being held accountable for. Then Ms. Outterbridge stated that maybe she needed to ask the city official that question. And the question asked to staff was: Will there be written codes that will be given to the tenants so that the tenants will know what their rights are?

Chairman Best answered: "yes"

There being no further discussion, the motion carried unanimously.

Chairperson Best then introduced the tenth topic **"Create a Rental Property Registration & Certification Program".**

Chairperson Best then asked if there was a motion to adopt the item.

Ms. Antieau made a motion to approve the item.

Then Chairman Best asked for second. The motion received a second from Mr. Crisp.

Then Chairperson Best if there was any discussion.

Mr. Joyner commented that unless the program was registering all properties Mr. Joyner, stated that he could not support it as he felt that it involved selective enforcement and could be viewed as discriminatory.

Mr. Bellis asked Mr. Joyner to define what he meant by registering all properties?

Mr. Joyner stated that all properties needed to be registered; whether it's his house or others.

Mr. Dietrich stated that registration offers no improvement over existing policies. Mr. Dietrich stated that no one is talking about developing new bureaucracy to manage existing laws, everybody is talking about increasing enforcement of the penalties for infractions. Mr. Dietrich stated that tracking may be useful for the city to determine the balance between owner occupied and rental housing, but in fact it's going to cost money. Mr. Dietrich then stated that renters and landlords are all not bad. Mr. Dietrich stated that the city needed to create a program that registered problem properties and those problem properties frequently includes owner-occupied properties.

Mr. Bellis asked the question: How would you identify those properties that were consistent problems, and would such a system be legal?

Mr. Dietrich stated that the Task Force had already approved an item that called for the City to track problem properties. Mr. Dietrich stated that he didn't see any value in registering a group of people that had very different management styles, some people who improved properties and some who did not.

Mr. Crisp commented that it was his understanding that this is calling for registration of businesses that are operating in predominantly single-family, owner occupied neighborhoods.

Mr. Garrett stated a concern that the statement reading "requires registration of all rental dwelling units within single family zoning district" seemed to be discriminatory and that all housing units should be registered.

Mr. Dietrich pointed out that the Task Force on the Preservation of Neighborhoods and Housing is not a Task Force to license businesses.

Ms. Antieau stated that the problem that had been identified throughout this process has been the location of rental units in single-family neighborhoods and that this issue was similar to problems around the country. The challenge was to try to find a way to identify those rental units and then have a method that the city could go through to warn people who are good landlords and to have a method to address landlords who are not keeping their property up.

Ms. Outterbridge commented that she thought that the statement in the first paragraph seemed discriminatory as well. Ms. Outterbridge stated that some of the prevalent problems with renting have nothing to do with single-family neighborhoods, so if the city is going to include single-family then the city needs to include all other neighborhoods.

Mr. Joyner stated that "There is a system, but the codes have to be enforced".

Chairman Best, then asked Mr. Holthouser to explain to the committee why staff believed that the issue had merit.

Mr. Holthouser stated that the staff wanted to start with a presumption of innocence in that every rental property is contributing to the neighborhood, but also to recognize that there are properties that are poorly maintained, failed to meet minimum standards and were repeatedly the subject of nuisance violations. Such properties not only adversely impact the value of owner occupied properties, but of other rental properties as well.

The way that the staff envisioned the system was that it would not place any burden on those properties that were in compliance with City codes, other than the registration requirement. For other properties that fail to comply with codes, all the system does is bracket a period of time in which the property is monitored. If at the end of that period the property owner has failed to pay fines or to take other specified measures to bring his property in to compliance, then the owner would not be allowed to re-register the property. An additional feature of the system would be the ability of the City to identify ownership of property and make contact with owners when necessary.

Chairman Best asked Mr. Holthouser asked if he know where such properties ere now?

Mr. Holthouser replied that the City did not have that information at this time and that at best, the City could make a guess as to the status of property based on the tax roles.

Chairman Best then asked if the City sent out letters to property owners when their property was in violation of City codes?

Mr. Holthouser answered yes.

Chairman Best asked Mr. Holthouser how would it help the staff to know where the rental properties were?

Mr. Holthouser stated that while there are probably other methods of generating the information, registration was by far the least labor intensive. Mr. Holthouser stated that the information would be used to track long-term trends related to rental versus owner occupied as well as to contact owners when there was a problem with their property.

Mr. Joyner described a situation next to one of his rental houses where an owner occupied property was in worse condition than any other property in the neighborhood. Mr. Joyner again stated that all properties should be registered.

Mr. Bellis responded by reminding the committee of their charge from the City Council that was to consider the problems related to rental properties in single-family neighborhoods and that the committee was restricted to considering solutions related to that problem.

Mr. Holthouser added that the staff was concerned with the concept that had been discussed of including all properties in the system because it was not possible to eject an owner from the property he occupied if he was not in compliance with the system.

Mr. Joyner stated that he thinks that it should be strict enforcement, zero tolerance, and the entire City should have the same rules and fees.

Chairman Best stated that the committee had to start from someplace and that's what the committee had the opportunity to do and also to make a recommendation to enforce the existing ordinance.

Mr. Crisp stated that there were positive aspects to the system that were being overlooked such as the educational components.

Mr. Joyner stated he felt that the Task Force should create a registration certification program so it will be for both the homeowner and renter and that the city needs be more pro-active in code enforcement and stiffen the fines, and not concentrate on the registration system

Ms. Antieau asked what best practices could be applied to the owner; where as the owner can get their points reduced, or what educational items could help reduce the points.

Mr. Joyner indicated that this was not the issue and that the system as proposed was not fair to all owners.

Mr. Saad stated his biggest concern was that anytime the City or other government agency comes up with a new rule the cost is going to be escalate and this will eventually be a cost to property managers. And as a property manager himself, and as tough as the business is now, it was hard for him to vote for an extra financial burden on a business that is already tough. Mr. Saad stated that he was all for stricter code enforcement, he just did not know if it would be good to go around and registrar the rental properties or how much a difference the system would make. Mr. Saad stated that he felt that homeownership was

the way to go, and that anything the city could do to promote homeownership or increase the value in any neighborhood was a good thing.

Mr. Holthouser stated that with all due respect to Mr. Saad, the point was to increase the cost of doing business for rental owners who did not meet codes. An increase in the cost of doing business might cause a potential investment purchaser to reconsider a purchase in a single-family neighborhood if they did not plan on maintaining the dwelling to standards.

Ms. Antieau stated that members of her office staff are dealing regularly with landlords who are hidden and that you can't identify them because they use holding companies. As such, you can't easily reach their management agency and finally when her staff goes back door to get to them they say: you are not suppose to be calling me, you're suppose to be calling my agency because they have no idea about the conditions of their property and they don't care. Ms. Antieau stated that we can do all the code enforcement we want, but we can't do the other piece of that because the tenants don't know their rights.

Mr. Dietrich asked Mr. Holthouser to explain how enforcement is going to be one bit better if you know who the landlords are. Mr. Dietrich stated that if the City would enforce the regulations such as front yard parking, there would be little need for other programs.

Mr. Holthouser stated that the idea behind the registration system was to add an additional mechanizem to the enforcement tools already in existence. For properties that comply with codes or resolve their infractions during the year there would be no additional enforcement. However, for properties that had failed to comply through the use of exiting enforcement tools, the registration system would provide a final way to bring them in to compliance.

Mr. Joyner stated that cars are not only parked on un-improved surfaces in the university area, but they are parked illegally in Lynndale also, so it is not just one section of the city it's all over.

Mr. Flood stated that the codes were enforced throughout the City, however they were enforced proactively in some areas as opposed to others.

Mr. Dietrich suggested that the city start with a data base and collect the violators and expand the data base to collect the people that are multiple violators. This information could then be used to determine if registration were needed.

Chairman Best asked Mr. Dietrich to make a motion out of what he had just said.

Mr. Dietrich stated that a study should be conducted over one year to observe how, strict enforcement, heavy fines and enforcement of existing codes would impact the problem. After that period, the Task Force could reconvene to discuss the outcome.

Mr. Bellis stated there was another component of Mr. Dietrich's recommendation as Mr. Bellis understood, and Mr. Bellis thought it should be a part of the motion. As Mr. Bellis understood it, Mr. Dietrich recommended that a database be created to track the violations.

Chairman Best stated that the registration begins not with the existing landlord, but with the violators.

Mr. Holthouser stated that the registration system was created to do a host of things; and that Mr. Bellis was correct regarding getting to one end of the system that way.

Mr. Bellis commented that when the committee had their public hearing, and in talking to other individuals, what he heard was that people felt that their complaints were falling on deaf ears.

Mr. Dietrich stated that as far as he knew there is nothing in the American legal system that requires a citizen to certify that he knows all the regulations. Mr. Dietrich stated that there are many ways to

disseminate information and that he rejected certification because there was no correlation to other standards in society.

Mr. Garrett asked what happened to the motion?

Chairman Best stated to Mr. Dietrich that he is amending the motion that is on the table, and that he may do that.

Mr. Dietrich then stated that he would like to amended the motion “as stated in a two part statement” starting with the data base, collect data on every violation and take into consideration that previous part that we have on the recording. The second part is that we designate a one-year period of observation of strict enforcement of all the measures in here and determine if there is an on going problem that requires registration. You may find that all of our concerns about preservation of neighborhoods and houses are resolved by strict enforcement of current codes and heavy fines for violations.

Chairperson Best asked for a second to the motion.

Mr. Joyner then asked Mr. Dietrich if he was talking about having item four and five included but not one, two and three and the bullets after five.

Mr. Dietrich stated that he didn’t have a problem with bullet number three being included since he thinks that is what a good landlord should do.

Chairman Best stated that the sentence begins with the registration of the violators.

Mr. Bellis answered yes.

Chairman Best stated “but we don’t go out and require registration”; he also stated “we do establish registration, but it begins with problems”

Mr. Bellis said that certification of the registration is being deleted and being replaced by the reporting. Then he asked “are we still able to do the education component”?

Ms. Antieau stated that the goal is the stabilization of the neighborhoods; all of this meaning number (10) goes towards that.

Mr. Holthouser stated that all of these strategies were designed to work together and that number ten alone does nothing and in fact, one through nine were very important.

Chairman Best then asked Mr. Holthouser did the ordinances on record have the capability of working without number ten.

Mr. Holthouser answered that he did not know of anything in place now that stipulated that an owner would loose their ability to rent a property.

Chairman Best asked would number ten give you that ability as originally stated in this document?

Mr. Holthouser answered “yes”.

Mr. Joyner stated that just listening to the committee talking about identifying renters, he questioned if the committee was saying that renters are bad.

Several members said no.

Mr. Joyner then made the comment that what difference does it makes if someone rents beside him as long as they are in compliance. Mr. Joyner stated that some people are going to have to rent, because

they cannot afford to buy or they don't want to buy. But as long they are in compliance, it should make a difference.

Ms. Antieau and Mr. Bellis both agreed.

Ms. Outterbridge stated that if what Mr. Holthouser stated was true, then why revitalize West Greenville?

Mr. Holthouser stated that the goal of West Greenville is to convert as many rental properties into owner occupied properties as soon as possible, reducing that number so that it will become a more attractive place for people to invest their money as owner occupants.

Mr. Joyner asked the question: For people who cannot afford to buy, where are they going to go?

Mr. Holthouser stated we have a ten percent vacancy rate in town, but he was hearing that it was closer to eighteen percent vacancy rate on rental property.

Mr. Flood then briefly talked about the City's revitalization efforts. Mr. Flood stated that the city has found that twenty percent of the properties in West Greenville are owner occupied and eighty percent are rental. Mr. Flood stated that the problem that Mr. Holthouser mentioned has been studied for years and that homeownership does more than stabilize an area in that it stops the downward slide of a neighborhood.

Mr. Joyner stated all the city was doing was moving citizens from one place to another.

Mr. Flood answered: not necessarily. Sometimes it would be in another neighborhood, or sometimes it will be in the same neighborhood, if that's where the citizens would like to stay.

Ms. Otterbridge questioned if the regulations in number ten would apply to the revitalization areas.

Mr. Flood stated that it would apply, because it's a single-family neighborhood.

Ms. Antieau commented that an important part of the puzzle was providing low interest loans so people could afford to become homeowners.

Chairman Best stated that the committee needed to close the discussion and that he thought that the committee had engaged in excellent discussions on the matter before them. Chairman Best asked for a vote on the Dietrich amendment, which Chairman Best restated as follows:

We will eliminate bullet number one under number ten, which states: "Require registration of all rental dwelling units within single-family zoning districts." Then chairman Best read the second bullet.

Mr. Dietrich stated that the committee should rearranged the bullets and put the last one on top and eliminate number one and put "Problem Rental Property Owners under bullet number two. Mr. Dietrich stated that he could accept the entire package, and he though it was a useful.

Chairman Best reiterated that the Task Force needed to make the last bullet number one, beginning with "Focus enforcement on repeated offenders, while not burdening those who comply with the law."

Mr. Dietrich indicated the item that should be number one and everything else could follow.

Chairman Best stated the problem properties would accrue fines.

Mr. Dietrich answered yes.

Chairman Best asked if the committee was in agreement with the statement, they all said yes.

Mr. Holthouser stated that this was beginning to sound a little bit like what the Raleigh compromise was in that there is a system but you operate outside that system until you prove that you are a bad apple. Once you are a bad apple you become part of the system and are required to comply with all the rigors of that system.

Ms. Antieau asked to put a sub-point at number three, she wanted to move the next star as a bullet under number three, because it tells what you're going to do to the property owners; that star will become a sub-point in other words.

Mr. Saad stated that Ms. Antieau wasn't referring to all tenants, but just the ones for repeated offenders.

Ms. Antieau answered yes, because they have no way to reach the non-registered and non- problems tenants.

Chairman Best stated that it was good because he felt that sometimes what is happening is the landlord hasn't done the job of educating the tenants or holding the tenants to being responsible for the ordinances that they are violating and that is why we have the problems that we have.

Ms. Antieau asked the question: Does the city or state require property managers to be registered?

Mr. Saad answered yes, if you manage someone else property, but you have to have a real estate license to manage someone else property.

Mr. Dietrich stated that the educational process is very important. If we would like to state that require property owners to certify their units meets zoning and minimum housing coded requirements after the first violation that would be fine.

Chairman Best stated that without the registration, we really don't have any way to know whether the landlord did or didn't. We can't make a requirement other than those who are violators.

Ms. Antieau stated that she agreed.

Mr. Dietrich asked if the proposal could state that it is an expectation of the government and the city council and this Task Force that all tenants will be educated as to their rights and responsibilities and those rights and responsibilities are available through the City.

Mr. Joyner stated that the property manager's meet once a month and someone from the city comes by to educate them.

Mr. Saad stated that if you attend the property manager's association meetings, then you would get about eighty percent participation, because he helped formed the meetings about 7 or 8 years ago.

Chairman Best asked if Mr. Bellis could remain after the meeting to talk with Mr. Holthouser to make sure that we have all the words exactly the way the committee wanted them to say and he would work with them.

Mr. Bellis replied that the statements had gotten so complicated now that he felt that he did not understand what was going on.

Chairman Best explained that the committee had approved one through nine, then the Chair asked if everybody agreed. The committee members said yes.

Then Chairman Best stated that number ten has always been the biggest problem. Chairman Best stated that Mr. Dietrich had made an amendment that the committee needed to vote on and that it had been seconded by Mr. Joyner. Chairman Best called for a show of hands.

Mr. Garrett stated for clarification; it was his understanding that bullet number one where it refers to: " Single-family zoning district" had been stricken.

Mr. Saad answered: Yes sir.

Mr. Bellis stated that he needed some more discussion and that he was in a quandary now because the discussion had gotten so complex in his mind, that he was not convinced that staff could make the new proposal work.

Chairperson Best then asked the staff, starting with Mr. Holthouser.

Mr. Holthouser stated that the committee was preparing to go to council with a recommendation and that the committee will have to say "Council" I want you to somewhat get a handle on the repeated offenders, but I don't want you to burden the people would are going to comply. Mr. Holthouser then stated that it's going to be the Task Force Members job to explain that logic to Council as to how the Task Force wants to deal with offenders. Mr. Holthouser advised the Task Force not to think of the issue in terms of how the staff would operate the system.

Chairman Best asked the staff did they know of any legal issues that the Task Force members might face by targeting that one group?

Mr. Holthouser stated that he had a difficult time imagining a problem with a system the simply tracked code violations.

Mr. Dietrich stated that you have to look at whether or not you want to get people to comply, or whether you want to shut down a landlord. Mr. Dietrich stated that most people would have a very low tolerance for escalating fines.

Mr. Holthouser explained that the escalating fines are housed in other ordinances and not in the registration system and that's the way it is currently and that's the way it is also envisioned through the system. The piece that is now missing from ten includes the ability to revoke a permit when an owner fails to pay the fines.

Mr. Holthouser stated he didn't want to put words in the committee's mouth or restate their position, but going back to what the committee originally said, it appeared that they wanted to accumulate some violation data over the course of a year and then maybe talk about registering only those properties.
Ms. Antieau stated that issue had gotten extremely complex and that the best idea might be to get the issue down on paper and then give the City Attorney the chance to look over it.

Mr. Bellis stated he had an alternative solution; and that would be that the committee recommended the registration system as written to city council and then let the council deal with the question of whether they want to have a direct approach to the problem for individuals or for everyone. Mr. Bellis stated he had another reason for doing this too, and that was that he wanted to get a good turn out at the Public Forum.

Chairman Best stated that the committee had an amendment to the original motion to adopt number ten as is. Then Chairman Best stated that the members needed to vote on that amendment. Then Chairman Best asked all in favor of the Dietrich amendment to indicate their support by a show of hands.

Mr. Garrett asked: Is the committee voting on the amendment or to the amendment to the amendment?

Chairman Best answered "no." The committee is voting "only" on the original Dietrich amendment.

Chairman Best counted five members in favor of the amendment. There were also five members opposed.

Ms. Antieau reminded Chairman Best that the committee had a motion on the table.

Mr. Holthouser added that in the charge from Council, it clearly states that the chairman and vice chairman shall have the right to vote on elections.

Ms. Antieau stated again, that there was a motion on the table, and the committee had to figure it out or bring it to closure.

Mr. Bellis asked if a tie indicated defeat of the motion?

At this time the tape is turned over-------The secretary did not record an answer to the question from Mr. Bellis.

Mr. Holthouser stated that the committee had only one through nine going forward at this time, although that could change based on public comments or on further work by the Task Force.

Ms. Antieau made a motion to present two versions of number ten at the meeting, she wanted to rule both of them in, and that the committee could present both of them at the hearing and that the committee could use the public comments to make a final decision.

Mr. Bellis stated the decision to vote on these individually was the decision of the chair; it was not a decision of the group. Mr. Bellis didn't think that a split vote automatically rules out conclusion of the issue. Mr. Bellis stated that he thinks that if the committee is going to get to the public, that the committee should give it in some form that the public can understand.

Mr. Joyner asked if was there a motion on the floor?

Ms. Antieau said "there is a motion" and that it had received a second.

Chairman Best asked if there were any further questions?

Mr. Garrett asked: What was the motion?

Chairman Best stated the motion was to present both versions of number ten at the Public Forum.

Mr. Garrett stated that he could not support that.

Chairman Best stated to Mr. Garrett that it was just a motion right now, and that the committee was going to vote on it. Then Chairman Best asked if there were any further questions.

Chairman Best asked that all in favor indicate their approval by a show of hands. Four members were in favor and six members were against so the motion failed.

Mr. Joyner stated he made a motion that the committee approve one through nine.

Chairman Best stated to Mr. Joyner that the committee was presenting one through nine as "stated" as the committee had already voted.

Chairman Best stated that he would first update the City Council. Then he asked the committee if they had their schedules with them.

Ms. Antieau made the comment to Chairman Best that she wasn't sure of what just happened.

Chairman Best informed Ms. Antieau that the committee had just voted against number ten.

Ms. Antieau commented that the committee did vote against number ten, but there were pieces of number ten that the committee all liked but were now being voted down the drain because the committee is not going to be able to present it to council or in the City Public comment section. Ms. Antieau stated that she was very uncomfortable with that and she was not sure if it was because of the late hour.

Mr. Bellis asked if it as appropriate to make a motion to simply add those as a separate item to number ten. Then Mr. Bellis asked if that could be done?

Chairman Best stated that the committee had already voted the issue down and that the committee needed to recognize that and move forward.

Mr. Holthouser stated that the Task Force will have to approve the report to Council and that members could reintroduce items at a future date if they wished.

Chairman Best asked the members to look at their schedule and to be aware of the upcoming meetings especially noting the joint meeting with the City Council on December second.

Mr. Dietrich asked if the meeting was going to be a standard city council format, with television, etc.

Chairman Best answered "no sir."

Chairman Best then asked the members if he had a motion to adopt this schedule as presented.

Mr. Joyner made the motion to schedule the meeting and Mr. Bellis seconded it.

Chairman Best then wrapped up the meeting going over the schedule and asked each individual member if they wanted to share things and asked if they wanted to pass out any handouts at the meeting.

Mr. Crisp stated that one of the things in marketing the items to City Council was the need for City Council members to get a really good idea of what was going on in neighborhoods. Mr. Crisp provided the Task Force with a brief write-up on on the Elmhurst - Englewood neighborhood that had been prepared by a long time resident. Mr. Crisp read a portion and stated that he hoped that the piece would provide some insight in to how people felt about their neighborhood.

Mr. Joyner passed around to the members an article from the newspaper printed on September 18, talking about crime on Tobacco Road over the past three years. Mr. Joyner went on to say he still felt that there has been a lack of enforcement over the years and that area had been neglected, that's why he wanted the whole city included in the process.

Next Meeting

Chairman Best announced the next schedule meeting is November 9, 2004 at 7:00 p.m. at the 1st floor conference room of City Hall.

ADJOURNMENT

Chairman Best thanked all the members for their comments and adjourned the meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 8:55 p.m.

DRAFT MINUTES FOR TASK FORCE ON PRESERVATION OF NEIGHBORHOODS AND HOUSING

November 9, 2004
Greenville, NC

The Task Force on Preservation of Neighborhoods and Housing held a meeting on the above date at 7:00 p.m. in the first floor conference room of City Hall located at 201 Martin Luther King Jr. Drive.

CALL TO ORDER: 7:05 p.m. by Chairman Best; Mr. Garrett lead the committee in a short prayer.

TASK FORCE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mary Lou Antieau	Vince Bellis	Tom Best
Richard Crisp	Bob Dietrich	Reggie Elliott
Brenda Ernest	D. D. Garrett	Max Joyner
Lillian Outterbridge	George Saad Jr.	

TASK FORCE MEMBERS ABSENT:

Brian Billups	Jarvis Mills
Annie Suggs	Donna Whitley

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:

Carl Rees - Neighborhood Services Coordinator, Neil Holthouser Senior Planner - Long Range Planning, Harry Hamilton – Chief Planner, Sylvia Horne - Secretary.

OTHERS PRESENT:

Michelle Lieberman, Student Neighborhood Relations Facilitator
Ernestine Purvis, Greenville Housing Authority, Section 8
Michael Best, Greenville Housing Authority, Operations
Scott Batchelor, The Daily Reflector
Patricia Jones, Greenville Resident
Greg Gardner, Neighbor

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: SEPTEMBER 29, 2004:

Chairman Best asked for approval of the September 29, 2004 minutes. A motion to approve the minutes was made by Ms. Antieau and seconded by Mr. Joyner. There being no further discussion, the minutes were approved unanimously.

REVIEW/COMMENTS ON PUBLIC FORUM

Chairperson Best reminded the member that they had an informative meeting on October the 20th were the committee listened and received public comments. Chairperson Best stated that what the committee would do is review the comments from the Public Forum. Then Chairperson Best asked if anyone wanted to share anything that they learned from the forum?

Mr. Crisp stated that one thing he heard loud and clear from eight to ten people that stood up and indicated that they thought that registration was vital to the program and actually challenged the committee as to why the committee had not put the registration process in. And with that in mind, Mr. Crisp stated that if it wasn't too early, he wanted to make a motion, that the committee re-consider number ten, in the original form of which copies had been passed out to the committee.

Mr. Biles second the motion.

Chairperson Best stated that the committee had a motion to re-consider item number ten. Then Chairperson asked about using the original wording and discussion.

Mr. Elliott stated yes there was a need for discussion because this geared towards single-family dwelling units. So, Mr. Elliot wanted to amend the motion, so the registration would apply to multi-family housing dwelling units. The reason being is because it has come the Mr. Elliott attention that some dwellings, mostly the older ones, probably had been sold off by the original owner(s) to someone else and the new owners are not keeping up the property "maintenance wise" as the prior owners had. So when have circumstances like this going on then, if the committee don't amend the motion, this issue will probably continue to go on and will come back to bite the committee later on because of not including, and maybe the mayor and city council would catch the omission too, and ask the question: Why wasn't the registration included.

Chairperson Best then asked the committee if there was a second to the motion to the amendment of the first motion?

Mr. Joyner second the motion, just because he felt that he wanted all the citizen treated the same for single-family and multi-family.

Chairperson Best then asked if there were any discussions?

Mr. Biles commented that first of all, he didn't disagree with anything that Mr. Elliott had said , he thinks that some treatment of multi-family is badly needed by the city, but he did felt that the committee "charge" from the city council was to consider the preservation of single-family neighborhoods and he felt that for the committee to take it upon ourselves to add multi-family to the committee recommendation, goes beyond the committee "charge" from the council, he did feel that – that initiative to work itself up through to the council the same way that the single-family dwelling units did. But his feelings are not appropriate for the committee, because it was beyond the committee "charge".

Ms. Ernest commented that in preparing for the meeting, because she was a new member, she had to do a lot of homework, and she stated that the committee and staff members had done a lot of work and she was proud to be asked to join the committee, but trying to read through all the minutes and to come to where the members are now. The 1st thing she had to do was to keep going back to the committee "mission" which was, what city council wanted the committee to do and she agreed with Mr. Biles, that the committee was not asked to address anything beyond the single-family neighborhoods.

Mr. Joyner gave an example of having rental property in the Glen Arthur neighborhood adjacent to the university area and there is a six-unit apartment building there and that's the type of thing that raises the suggestion, it's in the single-family neighborhood. And there are several 6 to 8 units of apartments in university area. Mr. Joyner thoughts were that while the committee is looking into the matter, he wanted the committee to try to solve the whole problem, instead of giving the people in single-family housing relief now, but in a year other people are still suffering in the apartments.

Chairperson Best, then asked Mr. Hamilton for comments.

Mr. Hamilton stated just for clarification, the areas that are currently zoned for single-family units. Then Mr. Hamilton pointed to the map that showed the residential districts in Greenville. The single family currently zoned areas are showed in the pumpkin color; the yellow area represent other types of zoning that will allow multi-family duplex or single family as well; the gray or the non-residential. What the city is talking about doing is; is going into a lot of these areas and re-zoning them to single-family such as the Tar-River and West Greenville Neighborhoods. So you would bring the multi-family units within the jurisdiction of this rule.

Ms. Antieau asked if someone could define single and multi-family?

Mr. Hamilton answered: A single-family unit is a dwelling that is detached structure; it's for occupancy by one family ; related person; not more than three un-related people; a duplex would be two units and multi-family would be three or more.

Ms. Antieau stated that the committee "charge" was to determine any type of rental property specifically it says: duplex and single family or duplex on rental property being located in the neighborhood.

Mr. Rees stated that under the motion that the committee have to adopt number ten as stated would include multi-family units within single-family.

Ms. Outterbridge asked the question to Chairperson Best: Would that include multi-family dwellings in single-family? And what about those that are not within.

Chairperson Best stated that it would not include them. Then Chairperson Best went on to say that the new amendment that the committee is discussing would include all.

Mr. Bellis stated that they would assuming that; and he knew in his neighborhood; for instances ; not now, declared single-family, but there are a number of people in his neighborhood that have said that if this passes they want to right-a-way declare single-family jurisdiction .

Ms. Outterbridge stated that Tobacco Road and all of those units, are they in-exclusive?

Chairperson Best answered: As this is worded right now. The first motion was to consider this as written; then there was an amendment to change it; what the committee is discussing right now is the amendment, and "yes" it would include everything in the city limits of Greenville.

Mr. Elliott commented on his neighborhood by stating he had a multi-family dwelling and he had a problem with the landlord. That's why Mr. Elliott came up with the idea, because he went to the people and they complained to him, so when the committee first started talking about the single-family dwelling, this did not include the multi-family, even though they were in there because the way he interpreted it ; they were excluded them based on the fact they were multi-family dwelling, but at the same time. When Mr. Elliott looked back at the map, it would have included it. Some people have a tendency to interpret things and leave things out, so then they say this doesn't include that.

Mr. Garrett stated his reason for agreeing with the amendment: when we vote to have only single-family resident districts registered. To him it sounds discriminatory, it just don't sound as though the committee is treating all the citizens the same. If the city is going to require people who owns single-families to registered their rental property, then he would like to see the committee require all rental properties registered, regardless of what zoning they fall under. That was his point of view from where he was sitting. Mr. Garrett went on to say that people had been discriminated against without even realizing that they were discriminated against. Laws have been passed to discriminate against people that they did not realize that they were being discriminate against, so if you tell him that just because I'm able or whenever I am able to move out of a single-family district and can move into a multi-family then I am exempted from this registration, it doesn't seem right to him to do it that way. Mr. Garrett stated he would like to see the committee have everybody who rents rental property to register.

Mr. Rees stated that the staff had one thing; and that was information that the committee was given very, very early in the process. Mr. Rees stated, just so the committee can understand the magnitude of what is that the committee was discussing with this amendment and the initial motion, Mr. Holthouser then give out some statistic.

Mr. Holthouser stated that currently there are roughly nine thousand; seven hundred single-family detached dwelling units in the whole city. Mr. Holthouser told the members to keep that figure in mind. There are over fifteen thousand multi-family dwelling units in the city, so other than those ten thousand single-family dwelling units. Mr. Holthouser stated that ten percent was owner occupied, so under the

system that was originally quoted by staff, this might apply to about a thousand properties in the city. If the committee open it up and make it universal, it will apply to more than fifteen thousand units. Staff brings up this information to the committee so that the committee might understand some of the financial physical consequences as well. Staff , do believe that a fee will have to be charged in a comprehensive city wide system to be able to minister a registration system for fifteen thousand - plus units.

Mr. Saad asked: How about just with the single-family, do you feel like current staff can handle those?

Mr. Holthouser stated that will probably be about one thousand

Mr. Crisp commented that the comment had spoken at every meeting about discrimination and he stated that he could well understand, but one thing he wanted the committee to realize is that whatever the committee recommend is going to go through three levels of review, the city manager, the city attorney , and the city council and possibly a fourth ; and that is input from citizens who speaks to them when they hear what is recommended. Mr. Crisp stated that he would like to almost see the committee divorce from their minds the fact of whether it's discriminatory or not and look at what the need is. Mr. Crisp stated that the need of the committee was "charge" with working with single-family neighborhoods. If the city council and the manager and the attorney feels that the committee is discriminating it their options to move on . Several committee members couldn't meet with the city manager earlier, but he indicated that the same discussion came up Gainsville and other places and basically it broiled down to where the real need was; and that apparently where the city council feel that's where the need is right now in the single-families. Mr. Crisp asked the committee to keep that thought in mind ; because nothing was cast in stone ; if the council felt that the committee was stepping on the citizens toes ; the council members will step in and correct the problem.

Mr. Joyner commented that speaking of the city manager, he stated that in Gainsville, they have a hundred and sixty-thousand people, and ten staff members; one was strictly assigned to the university . The city manager stated that each staff person cost the city 75 thousand dollars with benefits. He also talked about a fee, that the people who are registered; pay for the staff members .

Mr. Joyner also stated that there is a cost involved in this registration, but he felt that it would be much easier to spend because of among twenty-six thousand, seven hundred units ; instead of whatever the number is …….but if the city was going to do this, he assumed to make a law that really works that benefits everybody, not just the college areas, but the people in other parts of the town.

Mr. Bellis commented that it wasn't necessary in the university area; it will be wherever it will be created .

Mr. Joyner said "okay", and the more spread out it is ; the more you will have to have the drive .

Mr. Elliott stated that what they was looking at and talking about is we're trying to eliminate the crime in neighborhood; because if the city don't do something like this; you will later on have these so called landlords that don't like to keep up their properties maintenance wise, you will have a decline in the neighborhood and property value go down.

Ms. Outterbridge stated that she agreed with Mr. Joyner; because his frame of reference was the same as hers. Ms. Outterbridge also stated that she realized that the information had to go before council, so she went back and look over all the examples that was given out to the committee, and it did not deal with a specific area ; it; dealt with the total city. So the question came to her mind is: why is the committee just dealing with specific areas of the city; why not the entire city?

Mr. Bellis stated that the committee "charge" was to deal with the areas that were designated as single-family.

Ms. Outterbridge answered "right",

Mr. Rees stated that there was a survey that was handed out to the committee two months ago that had a dozen of cities represented and the types of registrations that they had, and if you re-called there were actually quite a variety. Some cities only registered in “S” districts, some registered in revitalization areas (Roanoke Virginia) for example and then other certainly did have all rental properties within the city. Without reviewing it, Mr. Rees stated that he would say probably the preponderance of them or the majority of them actually did register all rental properties within the city, but it there was quite a variety and really depending on what the individual city was trying to achieve.

Ms. Outterbridge asked the question: What is the committee trying to achieve? She stated; because if you look at the long-term impact. Is the committee going to come back and address this issue again, because they will need to.

Mr. Bellis stated that Multi-family is going to come down the road, he just didn’t think the committee was asked to look at it right now.

Mr. Dietrich asked Carl or Neil did he have any idea, based on research about what it would cost to have the staff, computers and everything to track the registration system ?

Mr. Rees told Mr. Dietrich that he was a little ahead of the staff, the staff is actually preparing that for the next phase which will be city council and the staff have actually had meeting with Information Technology Personnel on contingency on if the committee should approved or some version of number ten . But also on some of the other items that the committee talked about such as the code enforcement tracking as well as being able to register complaints on line. Mr. Rees stated that staff is not at the point yet; where he could provide information to the committee.

Mr. Dietrich asked Mr. Rees: How many additional full-time people do the city need to draft the registration and just item ten?

Mr. Rees stated that under the scenario that is number ten, not the amendment , in other words just the one thousand or so properties. Mr. Rees did not anticipate any additional personnel. But going to a larger number of fifteen thousand. Mr. Rees stated that it’s automatic or the city would hope that it would automatic, but you might well need a position or a half of a position to do the work. Mr. Rees went on to say that there are other personnel needs based on the new emphasis or for code enforcement that will call for additional personnel. But to manage the system, Mr. Rees stated that he wasn’t sure if personnel was needed ; but having the technology.

Mr. Dietrich then asked the question: What would it cost to implement one through nine?

Mr. Rees stated that the staff working on that question, and Mr. Rees thought was having a hand full of position, Mr. Rees couldn’t get any more specific than that. Then Mr. Rees gave an example of the cost in Gainsville; which was seventy-five thousand dollars; which Greenville would be shy of that amount.

Chairperson Best stated that if there were no further discussion then the committee needed to vote on just the amendment that Mr. Elliott motion for all rental registration.

Mr. Garrett asked Chairperson Best could he ask a question before the committee voted on the motion? Mr. Garrett question was: If the committee pass number ten as it is , what will be the possibility of addressing multi-family at a later day?

Chairperson Best answered : It will always be there, it will always be an opportunity to add it later, it is something that can be continued.

Mr. Bellis stated that in realization you would have to have some citizens squawking, just like a lot of citizens squawking about single-family, that’s what, was brought it to council’s attention.

Ms. Antieau stated that there is one thing that conclude this commission from making the recommendation to city council in addition to these that they either establish another Task Force or extend the life of this Task Force since the members have the background to consider multi-family.

Mr. Bellis stated that the multi-family topic came up, and the members discussed there are equal concern about multi-family and the committee consider the topic equally throughout their discussion.

Chairperson Best asked Mr. Joyner the question: How are the people being hurt?

Mr. Joyner answered: By pointing out Tobacco Road, Mr. Joyner stated that they met with the city a year ago and be meeting again on November 17, 2004. Mr. Joyner stated that crime in that area is terrible and just the quality of life. Mr. Joyner went on to say that the area is multi-family and there is about five or six different home owners associations. But to his knowledge, the area has not gotten any better within a year. Mr. Joyner stated commented that the change needs to be inclusive with all areas in the city. Mr. Joyner informed Chairperson Best he had two more things he wanted to discuss. Mr. Joyner said asked the city manager if this process could be done without a fee, and the city manager said no he didn't think so and the people who rented would pay for it. Mr. Joyner stated that – that was in first direct opposition to the first amendment. And also we asked the manager who they had gotten ready was efficient to do it. Mr. Joyner said that the city manager thought they needed registration too, because they tweet it a little bit over the years and one of the things was now is that when you go to get a landlord license, you have to get approved for a parking plan.

Mr. Bellis asked the question: Is the amendment that the committee recommend to city council that they consider registration multi-family units as well.

Chairperson Best stated that – that was the amendment.

Mr. Joyner asked does that count section 8?

Chairperson Best stated that he didn't think they would be excluded in any way, because they are rental property.

Chairperson Best told the committee that first they had to vote on the amendment, before they could come up an amendment, to the amendment. He told the committee that they had to vote on that one amendment first. Chairperson Best went on to say they were just voting on one thing; they are not voting on item ten in it's entirely, they were only voting right now to consider that recommend to city council that they consider extending these regulations to all around units in the city.

Ms. Antieau asked if the committee was recommending or requiring.

Chairperson Best stated that everything the committee does is require, because the committee could not recommend anything.

Mr. Bellis commented that he still had some concerns, as whether this is in our "charge", but he appreciated the fact that it was an issue, but he sees it an obligation on the committee part to inform the city council that this issue has been raised and ask the city council to address. Mr. Bellis personally didn't think that the committee could make the recommendation.

Chairperson Best stated that the committee may – make the recommendation, Chairperson Best stated that the committee had the authority to make the recommendation.

Mr. Bellis stated again, that the committee was not "charge" to consider the recommendation.

Chairperson Best stated that the committee may have not been, but this is the path that it has taken the committee too, but it an amendment, and the committee will have to vote on it and there is nothing that tells the committee that they may not.

Ms. Antieau stated that the committee do have to vote on the amendment as proposed; however it is possible for the committee to turn down the amendment to this “requiring all” and then to go back and make a recommendation to city council. Ms. Antieau stated that the committee didn’t have the appropriate information.

Mr. Bellis stated that – that’s what he would prefer to do .

Chairperson Best told the committee that they needed to vote to amend.

Mr. Bellis stated that he wanted the committee to understand that if they vote against the amendment that – that doesn’t mean that they can’t make the recommendation to council.

Chairperson Best stated that you could make another motion after the committee finishes this process to do other things.

Mr. Rees commented that he simply asked that members voting either way hold their hands up long enough for the secretary to record your vote.

Mr. Garrett asked if the committee was on safety ground to say that if the amendment fail then the committee go back to the original statement.

Chairperson Best answered, “Yes sir”. Plus someone else can make a motion to make a recommendation.

Chairperson Best then asked the committee: All in favor as the amendment to this has been stated, by a showing of hands. Listed below are the recorded hands that were raised:
1. Max Joyner, 2. George Saad, 3. Reggie Elliott, 4. Bob Dietrich, 5. Lillian Outterbridge, 6. D.D. Garrett.

Then Chairperson asked the members to raised their hands who opposed. Listed below are the recorded hands that were raised:
1. Vince Bellis, 2. Brenda Ernest, 3. Mary Lou Antieau, 4. Richard Crisp.

Chairperson Best announced from the recording of hands that the amendment carried to include all. Then he reminded the member that all they did was passed the amendment to this, but they had not pass the other.

Mr. Garrett asked what was the count?

Chairperson Best answered six to four to be all-inclusive.

Chairperson Best told the members that they were back to the original as amended.

Mr. Crisp commented that unless the chair wants to delete the no-fee on the part on the registration.

Chairperson Best stated that it was up to him to delete anything, unless someone makes an amendment.

Mr. Crisp stated then the committee would vote on the original motion.

Chairperson Best said, “okay”.

Mr. Joyner asked was there a discussion on the motion?

Chairperson Best answered, “yes”. The committee was getting ready to vote, the committee had a second to motion, the chairperson Best asked for discussion.

Mr. Joyner stated the discussion he had was ten percent of people in violation , ninety percent must in investment. What Mr. Joyner commented that if the city was going to do this process the want to see the city create a compliance violation based rental property registration program. And focus enforcement on repeated offenders with less fines and not burden the citizens who comply with the law. Tracking and monitor complaints and violations associated with rental properties in single-family neighborhoods, so the violators after they get so many points, they should register their properties . Points assess with each violations, keeping them on the books for twelve months.

Chairperson Best asked Mr. Joyner was he reading all of this?

Mr. Joyner said yes, it was something that he had written down.

Mr. Bellis asked the question to Mr. Joyner, are you saying only violators or people that have complaints will be required to register.

Mr. Joyner answered: That's right, and then they are charged with a fee too. The citizen will pay the fee for the enforcement. Mr. Joyner went on the say, it's pretty much what the committee has reviewed already, but it's a compliant base.

Mr. Bellis commented it sounds to him like the basic difference is the way they have it now everybody who falls in a certain class would be required to register. What Mr. Joyner is saying is that only a sub-set of the people, mainly the people who somehow to be in violation will be required to register, and the committee had the public hearing, Mr. Bellis heard a lot of people say is that they thought that one of the disadvantage of a registration system for everybody was that allows you to have a responsible person identified with every rental unit, so that neighbors or anybody else could phone up and say who owns this piece of property and it seems to him that Mr. Joyner is telling him is that might not be possible , but it that would only be possible for those area that have previous been identified as causing problems.

Mr. Joyner stated that he had talk with Tom and Carl about having the Pitt County Tax to do that and if they could amend their records so the citizen can find out who owns the property.

Ms. Antieau commended to Mr. Joyner, that she didn't understand the burden of registering ?

Mr. Joyner answered, "it's the cost".

Ms. Antieau asked what's the cost to register.

Mr. Joyner stated that the City Manager said this could not be done without a cost, but that's in Gainsville.

Ms. Antieau asked a cost to whom?

Mr. Joyner answered to the people who register.

Mr. Bellis commented that Mr. Joyner concern was if this would get on the books , it will come in at no cost and two years down the city finds out it's not paying for itself and then the city will start charging a fee.

Chairperson Best said right now the funds comes from the violations, the way that's currently worded. Then the Chair read the last sentence that stated: may be resolved by monetary payment or by adoption of best practices. It's a no fee for registration , the recommendation as the committee had before that the committee is considering. Then Chairperson asked Mr. Joyner is he making a motion?

Mr. Joyner stated that he is making a motion that it is compliant base registration?

Chairperson Best asked Mr. Joyner did he have a second for that?

Mr. Garrett stated that the committee had a motion on the house.

Chairperson Best stated they did, but now the committee have another amendment again. There is single motion made to amend a motion.

Mr. Joyner asked the question: How many motions are presented?

Chairperson Best told Mr. Joyner that he had to have a second for his motion.

Chairperson Best asked Mr. Joyner to re-state his motion.

Mr. Saad stated that maybe if the committee just took everything the committee had, but instead of putting "create a rental" registration, but put in "create a compliant violation based rental property" registration. Mr. Saad said he didn't think that it would change anything on paper; it will just change how it will be directed. How the staff will direct their position in a short period of time, any problem properties will be taken care of very quickly if the public is given accurate information.

Mr. Bellis asked the question: How will neighbors will be able to identify a property in their neighborhood?

Mr. Dietrich explained that he was a resident in a single-family neighborhood by the university for five years , he had a wonderful experience, he admitted it wasn't tamed free , but he lived on Harding Street. Mr. Dietrich stated that now he is an investor , because he still like the neighborhood, but the house he lived in just didn't meet his family needs. Mr. Dietrich went on to say he never went without the knowledge of who owned the houses on the street near him. Mr. Dietrich stated what bothered him was the simply mathematic; it's going to take a handful of people ; at sixty thousand dollars a year to implement one through nine and you got maybe ten percent of five-hundred or a thousand people causing problems in the landlord population. Who is going to pay for those five or six or seven or twelve extra full time employees on the city staff that it will take to provide what the people really want . All Mr. Dietrich ever wanted from the city is when he lived on Harding Street, was for someone to write a ticket to the people screaming in the middle of the night, people urinating in his front yard, breaking up his pumpkins, but it never happened; because the city never enforced it. The problem that the city is dealing with around the university , because that's what this organization is about : is the fact that the city has never enforced the regulations. The cost of enforcement is huge, the cost of registration is small right now , but it's not going to take long to realize that the cost of the enforcement is going to have to be passed on to somebody. It's not going to be a no-fee registration, it's going to cost money and where is the money going to come from ?

Ms. Ernest stated that she had a concern and hearing from many of her neighbors about the registration. One of the issues was it seem that it's the teeth of everything else, and she believe it was true. But one of the neighbors concern is looking up the ownership was not as simple as going to get tax records. Because of limited liability corporations and other holding organizations; it is sometimes hard to find the local contact. Now if the county can do it through tax records, that great; but can the city do that, she stated she didn't know.

Mr. Bellis commented that the citizen is looking is for a different person; the city will be looking for someone who has ditched the responsibility; not necessary the owner ; but the registration will require a name to be identified with each site as the responsible person, that's quite different from trying to find out who the city is zoning or who rents it or anything like that. You can rapidly go to a responsible person and request your compliant.

Mr. Elliot addressed Mr. Dietrich regarding the area of Harding St. Mr. Elliot stated that there are other areas in the City of Greenville, where the landlord rent to anybody and a lot of those people the landlord rent to in different areas of Greenville ; they are not always the kind of people , you would want to live next to , because some are on drugs and some are drug dealers. Mr. Elliott then went on the say living in a criminal area , so if the city will have this in areas of the city, we need something to be done in reference to the landlord, they need to be contacted immediately, so that the problem can be corrected.

The tape was turned over at this time…….

Chairperson Best stated that he was using Mr. Joyner amendment; not Mr. Saad.

Mr. Joyner stated to let Mr. Saad make an attachment to his amendment.

Chairperson Best told Mr. Joyner that he could not make an amendment to the amendment , chairperson Best stated that - that too confusing.

Chairperson Best stated that the amendment is: A compliant driven as stated , and it was seconded by Mr. Dietrich.

Ms. Antieau stated that the statement included a web-site for landlord and tenant use; and it includes negative statements ; Ms. Antieau stated that this is not an amendment; this is ideas put down on paper . Ms Antieau stated that the committee needed to have an articulated of what the amendment is.

Mr. Joyner stated it would read: "create a compliant violation based rental property registration certificate program," and remove the first line where is says require registration of all rental dwelling units within single-family zoning districts .

Chairperson Best announced it was time to vote and asked the committee all in favor of the amendment as stated by Mr. Joyner as a "compliant driven and it is multi-family and not single-family".

Chairperson Best then asked the committee: All in favor as the amendment to this has been stated, by a showing of hands. Listed below are the recorded hands that were raised:
1. Max Joyner, 2. George Saad, 3. Reggie Elliott, 4. Bob Dietrich, 5. Lillian Outterbridge, 6. D.D. Garrett.

Then Chairperson asked the members to raised their hands who opposed. Listed below are the recorded hands that were raised:
1. Vince Bellis, 2. Brenda Ernest, 3. Mary Lou Antieau, 4. Richard Crisp.

Chairperson Best announced from the recording of hands that the amendment carried to include all. Then he reminded the members to keep it mind that it's compliant driven on a violation base.

Chairperson Best announced to the members that staff wanted to make a comment.

Mr. Rees then commented to the committee that he wanted to make sure that what the committee was talking about is not attempting to create a web-site that would list the names of tenants.

The committee answered; no.

Mr. Rees confirmed just tenant information, Mr. Rees stated that the city could list information relatively to the property owners as landlords, but by law the city could not list who the tenants are.

Ms. Antieau stated that what she was looking for was a web-site that list every landlord and tenant.

Chairperson Best then told the committee that he wanted to get the wording of what the committee just passed; which was Mr. Joyner original motion.

Mr. Joyner then read his motion: "Create a compliant and violation based rental property registration and certification program." Then Chairperson Best read the first sentence: Registration for all rental dwellings units .

Then Chairperson Best asked the member were there any more changes. The committee commented on adding the web-site.

At this time Mr. Rees wrote the change on the Board; which read: "**Create a violation based rental property registration and certification program inclusive of all rental properties."**

Then Chairperson Best asked the committee if everyone was in agreement of the change and announced to the committee that's what the committee voted on.

Ms. Ernest comment that here the city would be educating and informing tenants in problem areas but not necessary informing all tenants.

Chairperson Best stated it's not preventive, it's compliant driven, again that what the committee voted on and was passed.

Ms. Antieau said, "no," the committee had not voted on number three amendment yet at all.

Chairperson Best said……..no, no, no! he said the committee was not going step by step . He informed Ms. Antieau that the committee voted the entire package just now.

Ms. Antieau said, "no the committee didn't."

Chairperson Best said, "yes," the committee did, can amend it, but the committee voted in entire package.

Ms. Antieau stated that the committee voted on one and two.

Chairperson Best said ,,,,,,,,,no, no, no! The committee voted the whole package modified. Chairperson Best stated that the committee was voting sentence by sentence.

Chairperson Best said the committee was voting the entire package.

Ms. Antieau comment that she understood what was going on very much so.

Chairperson Best asked the committee are there anymore amendments to Mr. Crisp original motion.

Mr. Crisp commented that the committee needed to take out single-family in number four.

Mr. Rees stated for clarification is the committee saying that anywhere that previously said rental properties, should stated "registered rental properties."

The committee answered "yes".

Mr. Garrett asked the question: When you speak of landlords; would it be feasible to say landlords or his /her representative?

Mr. Bellis stated that – that's a question for the attorney to deal with when it passes city council.

Mr. Holthouser stated his opinion on that would be the term landlord is broad enough to cover both property owner and property manager; it not specific enough to say property owner; but landlord covers the entire relationship.

Chairperson Best announced to the committee that each time the committee finishes an item, the committee have to go back to the original motion which was to adopt as the original type.

Chairperson Best told the committee that they amend this topic further, by adding things, and web-site, etc.

Mr. Saad stated he wanted to establish a web-site where landlord and tenants information can readily be disseminated to the public.

Chairperson Best stated that – that would be a separate new bullet, that's not modifying an existing bullet.

Chairperson Best stated that – this was a motion.

Mr. Joyner second the motion.

Mr. Saad stated that he was proposing was a web-site where a landlord could go and pull up information that the city wants to give regarding rules and regulations and also for the tenant can pull up on their own and read.

Ms. Antieau stated that she supported the web-site.

Mr. Holthouser stated that he wanted to point out that in recommended actions in number two, the committee had already signed off it and it's already under the non-strategy that's moving forward. It is to create rental property data-base; code enforcement tracking system that was to be well and able. The original thought behind that; so that people who was calling in complaints; to make their compliant electronically ; but extensively that's going to require a web-site. Mr. Holthouser recommended to the committee that rather than to attach this amendment to number ten registration system ; but to attach that one to number two; which is the rental property data-base code enforcement tracking system. It would be much more logical room for that _____.

Chairperson Best asked again : Are there any more amendments?

Mr. Bellis asked are you ready for it by fees now?

Chairperson Best said, "yes sir, " if he makes a motion.

Ms. Ernest stated that since the committee is leaning towards compliant violation and registration that there be a fee so that it can be enforced because the city will have the funds.

Mr. Garrett second the motion.

Mr. Crisp commented that he re-called correctly, the city manager, when the committee talked about fees; indicated that that's not the responsibility of citizens like ourselves. Mr. Crisp stated personally he would like to take out the "no fee" and let the city staff if they need a fee. Or just delete the no fee.

Mr. Bellis stated that he agreed with Mr. Crisp.

Chairperson Best if there was a second?

Mr. Joyner second the motion.

Chairperson Best asked the committee: All in favor of striking the recommendation of a "no fee registration".

The committee voted unanimously.

Chairperson Best stated that since the talent was in the room, he asked Council Pat Dunn if she wanted to share any comments. She didn't have any comments.

Chairperson Best then read the changes: Focus enforcement on repeated offenders while not burdening those who comply with the law amendment. The modification was starting with properties under no fee for registration; that are subject of repeat violations would accrue points against their Rental Certification.

Ms. Asked was the landlord given a year time frame?

Mr. Bellis answered basically, “yes.”

Chairperson Best asked Mr. Bellis did he mean require registration certificate?

Mr. Dietrich stated that he would like to see registration with a fee and a certificate that goes along with the registration that’s good for twelve months, and at the end of the twelve months if you don’t comply or you’re the problem landlord who has five or six complaints at the same property, you will not get re-newed.

Mr. Rees stated the way the committee titled this is written on the board as: Is compliant violation based rental. The way that the city view the word compliant and violation, they are not one in the same, they are two completely things. A compliant is when someone calls in there is problem with “X” property.

Mr. Bellis stated to write it as compliant lash violation.

Mr. Rees asked the committee are they registering complaints, because the city could have ten complaints and none of them are verified and none results in violations. Mr. Rees went on to say that in city language a violation is something that is confirmed, it means that it exist under the city codes, laws or whatever the city is enforcing.

Mr. Joyner stated that he wanted to make a motion to change the wording to: Create a violation base rental property registration and certification program inclusive of all rental properties.

Chairperson Best asked the committee: All in favor say I.

The committee voted unanimously .

Chairperson then asked who opposed. Chairperson Best stated that the motion unanimously.

Ms. Antieau second the motion.

Mr. Dietrich stated that he would to define rental certificate; be a one-year privilege to rent a property that has had a documented violation. That will have to be re-newed subject to adoption of best practices such as: paint the building, pick up the trash, and paying any existing fines. So if you have a violation, or your property and you registered and whatever the fees are associated; the penalties and fees. You get a certificate that’s good for one year, and at the end of the year, you would have to register again, because you are a violation red based registration system and if those violations have not been corrected or if they are repeated offenses at that same property the renter would have to move.

Mr. Dietrich asked Mr. Rees: How would you word what he just stated.

Mr. Rees stated: Rental Certificate equals one-year privilege to rent a property; required when violation has taken place; must be re-newed if violations continue, fines not paid. Repeated violations may result in revocation of permit.

Mr. Elliott asked Mr. Rees: Isn’t on the books under the ordinances that landlords can be fine up from fifty to two hundred and fifty dollars?

Mr. Rees answered any properties owner(s) in the city of Greenville for certain violations of the city code can be fined from fifty to two hundred and fifty dollars.

Mr. Rees then asked the committee did the wording capture enough of what was discussed.

The committee said, “yes.”

Chairperson Best stated the committee had a change a motion of this change and the committee had a second. Chairperson Best asked who second the motion. Ms. Outterbridge second the motion. And Mr. Dietrich made the motion.

Chairperson Best asked the committee: All in favor by showing a rising of the hands.

The committee voted unanimously.

Chairperson Best then asked the committee to vote on the package of number ten as amendment. Then he asked the committee all in favor to say I.

The committee voted unanimously.

REVIEW/COMMENTS ON PUBLIC FORUM

Chairperson Best told the committee that they could still have any further comments on the Public Forum . Then he asked were there any issues or anything at all.

Mr. Bellis stated that he would like to reiterate that most of the people or the great majority of people that spoke – spoke in favor of a registration system and they also stated that the reason for that was they wanted to be able to identify the responsible person.

Mr. Garrett stated that the committee had just finished addressing what a lot of people in the Public Forum expressed and that is they wanted the committee to re-consider number ten ; in which the committee had.

Ms. Antieau stated that she wanted the committee to re-visit number two, because she believed we there was a fact needs to be noterfiy . She read: Create a rental data-base and code enforcement tracking system to monitor violations and enforcement activities to distribute information to neighbors. Automate enforcement process by allowing citizen to file complaints electronically and to track the progress in enforcement using web-based access . Encourage landlords to monitor activities involving their properties.

Ms. Antieau went on to say: Unless somebody else takes the time or efforts such as the city staff to create this data base based on tax rolls, it can’t happen given on what the committee just voted on, because there is no registration system so the city is not going to know who owns the properties. Ms. Antieau argued that the point is what the committee made is moved that way. Her argument is that ought to have that information so the city staff could put that together, or else the committee is right back to the same issues that was raised at the meeting; can’t find out who owns it; don’t know where to go; too hard to get to the tax rolls; people don’t have time to do it; we should make it easy for people to find out owns or who is the agent is.

Mr. Dietrich asked Ms. Antieau, did she really think it was that hard?

Ms. Antieau, answered “yes.”

Mr. Bellis stated whether its hard or not the perception is that it is, because that’s one of the things that Mr. Bellis stated that he hear mostly from neighbors is: I don’t know who to go , the citizen go to one place and they are sent to another and the citizen gets very frustrated in the process .

Mr. Dietrich stated that – that had something to do with the city agencies, but as far as identifying landlord Mr. Dietrich felt that resident of any street know who owns the houses and the web-site could have a link to the tax rolls and also to the secretary of state that list the LLC's .

Ms. Antieau told Mr. Dietrich that his idea was great for people who had a little back ground and training of education, but we're talking about people that don't have that background.

Mr. Rees informed the committee that what they had created here; there will be rental property data base; but it will only be the rental properties that by their actions put themselves into this category. It will not be all rental properties ; it will include the potential for all rental properties of the city, but only those by reaching some level to be determined of violations put themselves into this system.

Ms. Antieau then commented was that the committee intent, that was her question? Because the intend of this when the committee first voted on this; was that it would be a rental property data base on one property.

Ms. Ernest comment that it actually it says violations and enforcement; number two says create a rental property database and code enforcement tracking system.

Ms. Antieau commented it says to: Monitor violations.

Chairperson Best this gives the committee collection of those……..

Mr. Bellis stated not really , because it won't have those people in there who haven't already a repetition for violations and if someone has what they think is a group of students living next door and they want to find out who owns the house, they have to wait until those students have done a violations and becomes a part of the system. Mr. Bellis went on the say the people who came to the forum said they want to deal with the rapidly identify a responsible party, and the committee is not providing that opportunity.

Ms. Lieberman commented that the problem wasn't that you can't find the person who owns property very easy the problem ; the problem is you can't find the number to contact the person, because they live out of state or out of town, or they are under LLC, and that makes you have to find the property management involved. She stated she have used other means of using other departments.

Mr. Elliott brought out the point that main thing that was brought out, was that the numbers are not readily available. If you don't have a name and a number nothing has been accomplished.

Mr. Elliott then made a motion that the committee create a database that gives the resident a name of a landlord or his or her representative and a number so that the resident can contact the landlord.

Then Chairperson Best asked the committee if there was a second to Mr. Elliott motion?

Ms. Antieau and Mr. Bellis second the motion.

Mr. Rees commented that the committee had more information that the committee needs to consider; is this voluntary that all that owns rental property is just going to call the city and tell the city of what rental that they have; if not what are the procedures of where the mechanism for them registering their properties and finally if they don't list registered or whatever; are there consequences for not registering. Mr. Rees informed the committee that they needed to consider all of those things.

Mr. Holthouser stated that he felt that is very impracticable; he stated that the committee was asking for staff to essentially research and locate all rental properties in the entire city ; that the city will create this database; and you don't create all at one time. Mr. Holthouser stated it was a bigger dis-service to the citizen to have out dated contact information; and then you will have a citizen calling another citizen that doesn't even own the property; waking them up at night and harassing them and they don't even own the property. Mr. Holthouser stated that the city will have to maintain this system and keep it current and up-

to-date every minute of the day, every day of the week. You're talking about the staffing; well that far greater than to create a universal registration.

Mr. Dietrich commented that if the committee go back to the information that only 10% of the properties are problems; finding the owners of those 10% of the properties might not be that much of a problem.

Mr. Elliott stated that if that was the case supposed the 10% of those property owners don't live in the state of North Carolina. Suppose they live out-of-the state?

Ms. Antieau asked for property to be rental property; Ms. Antieau asked : Do they have to have a registration agent in town, is that a requirement?

Mr. Saad answered no, he didn't mean that they would still have to register.

Ms. Antieau commented that she felt that it was too easy to hide, and that's her problem and she heard the citizen say the same that Mr. Bellis said, and that was the citizen wanted to have quick access when something goes wrong, maybe not that night, but certainly by the next day.

Mr. Elliott asked Mr. Rees: what about the system where you can go into and look up the property value and then it's automatically matches the property owner.

Mr. Rees stated that what staff is trying to point out the committee is that – that's absolutely durable and essentially what the staff had initially proposed to the committee ; its just that in order to do it ; to make it practical for staff to do it ; you must have safe guard as a first thing to come to mind; but you must have a process to do it ; by which you're required ; or essentially putting the ownest on the property owner. You are required to do it ; if you don't there are consequences to not doing it; you must do it on an annual bases; and the other point would be that initially the staff talked about the "S" district and a thousand properties; we are talking about sixteen thousand properties to keep up with; it is bigger system to create and maintain. Mr. Rees stated those are the issues to keep in mind as the committee debate. But keeping in mind what Mr. Holthouser stated which is that if the staff leave it a voluntary system and that what's thing the odds are the information in there is going to terribly accurate and therefore not terribly useful to anybody.

Mr. Garrett at this time wanted to inquire about the document. He stated that the committee had gone through and approved one through nine . Then he asked was the committee going back over these items?

Chairperson Best stated that – that was not the committee intent. But there was a question on number two only. Chairperson Best stated the committee had a motion, and they have heard a lot of good discussions. Then Chairperson Best if there was a second.

Ms. Antieau seconded the motion.

Then Chairperson Best asked the committee all in favor of this motion of creating a listing of all rental owners and contacts.

Then Chairperson Best asked the committee agree by a showing of hands.

The voting was unanimously by the committee.

Chairperson Best then stated that if there were no more comments on the public forum. He wish to go ahead and review/discussion on the Final Report.

REVIEW/DISCUSSION ON FINAL REPORT

Chairperson Best asked the committee, does anyone; other than the change that the committee just voted on; does anyone have any other comments regarding the final report?

Mr. Crisp stated that the report was well written and very well prepared.

Mr. Bellis stated that it was very useable and very reader friendly.

Ms. Antieau agreed that it was well written and very reader friendly, but she didn't think it began to address the issues that the committee had been struggling with and that the committee needed to send something forward to city council to reflect the struggle.

Mr. Holthouser stated to the committee to keep in mind that this was a draft prior that was meant to reflect the status that's now revised to reflect the in conclusion of number ten.

Ms. Antieau stated that there was struggle in the Task Force on this issue and she wanted city council to be aware of it before it goes to city council, this isn't a clean number ten ; this is a compromise and she thinks even in the compromise the committee has box themselves in that the committee can't feel the deep felt needs of the citizens, Ms. Antieau went on to say that she at least wanted to see a paragraph reflecting the issue.

Mr. Bellis stated that the committee had not address the multi-family issue , and he felt that – that issue needed to be addressed in some way ; just for information that the committee did not set out to look at that, but the topic came up and it deserved the council attention.

Mr. Rees stated that the way that – that is currently reflected is only in the minutes, that's the only piece that is included as a draft as written; would be the minutes; so obviously it would be reflected in that matter; what you are suggesting and Mr. Rees stated that he didn't know if the committee should do this formally or if the committee could come to a consensus ; is that there be a paragraph added that detailed the struggle or whatever you want to call it with how rental registration _____.

Mr. Bellis stated that maybe it should be summarize it ; to indicate that there are a couple of options here and there are some areas that are in balance agreement and there are some other issues that the committee didn't feel that it was up to them ; in other words the committee need to alert the council on some of the issues that have come up that the committee didn't solve.

Ms. Antieau asked Council Member Pat Dunn did she realistically read all of the Task Force Minutes.

Council Member Pat Dunn answered: she does, absolutely she reads all of her minutes. She said that she couldn't answer for the rest of the council members, but she finds the minutes very instructive when she reads the conversations and discussion that goes on.

Mr. Bellis stated that if the committee had about a one page or two-page summary on some of the issues that could alert the council.

Mr. Holthouser stated that this boils down to statements and preferences and other documents that talked about the efforts of this task force. There were some discussion early, early on in the meeting that your preference was that the committee wanted to take something to council that all the committee stood behind unanimously because there was a feeling of the Task Force that – that would increase the odds of council picking up on _____set among the ranks that the entire package might crumble under the weight of that consensus. Mr. Holthouser pointed out that all ten of the items received unanimously vote. The amendments behind number ten were spilt. But all the committee did vote unanimously to send number forth . So that Mr. Holthouser encourage the committee to think about the spirit of dominion of going forth if you are still applicable to say that all ten strategies had the animus support of the Task Force. Now it's some of the languages about struggling with these issues; these were difficult concepts; they didn't always agree; we came into different positions on the mechanics on how the staff should operate.

Ms. Antieau stated that for the record and for the minutes, that her vote and views on number ten was reflected as a compromise and that's all and she did not support number ten exactly. She felt that the committee had disenfranchised themselves to a great deal and she was disappointed but she recognize the fact that the committee wanted to send something, so she voted for it as amendment, but that doesn't mean that she believes in her heart that – that was the best way to go and she thinks "sure" that the committee needs to have unanimously recommendations to go forth, but she thinks that it wise of the committee to say to city council that there was some hearty discussions behind the topic that was split .

Chairperson Best asked the committee did he have a motion to adopted the final report along with the recommendations the committee made to staff.

Mr. Saad made the motion, and Mr. Crisp second the motion. Then Chairperson stated all in favor say I. The committee voted unanimously.

Mr. Crisp stated that before the committee adjourned, Mr. Crisp stated that all the committee recognized that the staff and secretary had done a fabulous job and that the committee had been well educated.

NEXT MEETING

Chairperson Best announced the next schedule meeting is December 13, 2004 at 6:00 p.m. at Sheppard Memorial Library.

Mr. Bellis asked: what would be the format of the meeting?

Mr. Rees stated that the meeting will be ran differently than the other meetings and that it will be ran by the mayor and by the city manager; the way the normal council meetings are ran and that the city clerk will transcribe the minutes. The mayor will take the lead and Mr. Rees expect that there will be introductory remarks; probably by staff and possibly by the manager, but Mr. Rees stated that he didn't know what his preference will be Mr. Rees went on to say that City Council will probably have a lot of questions for the committee.

Before Chairperson Best adjourned the meeting he asked Mr. Michael Best for comments of what he heard the committee discussed from the committee.

Mr. Best stated that the housing authority stand point of being a part of government agency if this involves into a putative type action it would be considered what they call unfunded mandate so which means that they will automatic exempted; so they will their authority to find out how they handle the task.

Mr. Garrett asked the question: What kind of turn-a-round time is the committee looking at committee looking at from this point of the time that the committee has recommended go into effect.

Mr. Rees stated that the next step is the 13th from there Mr. Rees would except the council will have some discussion on their on; rule everything in and rule something out; prioritize some things based on what could be now in the future. Mr. Rees stated that city manager Bowers was telling a group this afternoon that from the time when they finally came from what the Task Force agreed upon items were adopted it was a full year. Mr. Rees stated that he felt that it was reasonable to assume that some of these things may take a full year. Other things Mr. Rees stated that he thinks the committee will see in the near term; but then within these is one thing for council to adopt the concept the next the step would be to for them to approve the items in the budget.

Chairperson stated if there was no further comment or discussion the meeting is adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 8:57 p.m.

Survey of Neighborhood Improvement Strategies Adopted by Other Communities

Question: ***How long has the rental registration system been in place?***

CITY	COLLEGE TOWN	RESPONSE
Blacksburg, Virginia	Yes	Since 1999
Bloomington, Indiana	Yes	Since 1972
Boulder, Colorado	Yes	Since 1992
Chapel Hill, North Carolina	Yes	Since 2002
Gainesville, Florida	Yes	Since 2003
Garner, North Carolina	No	Since 2003
Lawrence, Kansas	Yes	Since 2002
Raleigh, North Carolina	Yes	Under Consideration
Roanoke, Virginia	No	Since 1996
Salisbury, Maryland	Yes	Less than six months

Question: ***What issues is the registration system designed to address?***

CITY	COLLEGE TOWN	RESPONSE
Blacksburg, Virginia	Yes	Inadequate off campus housing conditions for students, health safety and welfare issues in single-family neighborhoods
Bloomington, Indiana	Yes	To ensure compliance of all rental housing with the standards of the International Property Maintenance Code
Boulder, Colorado	Yes	To ensure the safe and sanitary maintenance of rental dwellings and the health safety and welfare of tenants and other citizens
Chapel Hill, North Carolina	Yes	Used as a way to distribute information related to the rights and responsibilities of property owners and tenants; used to ensure quality rental housing
Gainesville, Florida	Yes	To address citizen concerns related to a disproportionate number of calls for service related to housing conditions and other nuisance issues coming from rental properties
Garner, North Carolina	No	To develop a list of rental units; to track code violations at those units, particularly related to minimum housing code
Lawrence, Kansas	Yes	To assist in monitoring and enforcing code violations related to overcrowding, parking, noise, trash and housing.
Raleigh, North Carolina	Yes	To reduce the likelihood that rental properties with a history of zoning and housing violations or other public nuisance violations continue as problem properties; registration also requires listing of person/agent responsible for property for immediate contact
Roanoke, Virginia	No	Response to outcry from public with regard to extreme substandard conditions in many rental properties.
Salisbury, Maryland	Yes	To address issues related to overcrowding and housing conditions; also noise and trash

Question: ***Is there a fee associated with the registration system?***

CITY	COLLEGE TOWN	RESPONSE
Blacksburg, Virginia	Yes	No fee
Bloomington, Indiana	Yes	Single family - $50 per unit Multi-family - $40 plus an additional $10 per unit
Boulder, Colorado	Yes	$45 per unit
Chapel Hill, North Carolina	Yes	$10 per dwelling unit
Gainesville, Florida	Yes	Starts at $80 – failure to pay results in month by month increase to $160, $240, $320 (Fee reduced by 50% in enterprise zones)
Garner, North Carolina	No	$ 25 per property
Lawrence, Kansas	Yes	$25 per dwelling unit
Raleigh, North Carolina	Yes	$200 – good for two years
Roanoke, Virginia	No	$75 – good for two years
Salisbury, Maryland	Yes	$25 annual registration fee – one time $25 fee per unit to set up in system

*** All fees annual if not otherwise listed

Question: ***Does the registration system apply to all properties, only rental properties or only select rental properties?***

CITY	COLLEGE TOWN	RESPONSE
Blacksburg, Virginia	Yes	Rental properties in single family districts
Bloomington, Indiana	Yes	All rental properties
Boulder, Colorado	Yes	All rental properties
Chapel Hill, North Carolina	Yes	Any rental property within Town limits except for Section 8
Gainesville, Florida	Yes	Rental properties in single-family zoning districts
Garner, North Carolina	No	All rental properties
Lawrence, Kansas	Yes	Rental properties in single family districts – do not require registration for non conforming multi-family units in single-family districts
Raleigh, North Carolina	Yes	Includes all rental properties – only rental properties with two or more violations in a 24 month period would be required to register
Roanoke, Virginia	No	Only rental properties in “Conservation” & “Rehabilitation” districts
Salisbury, Maryland	Yes	All rental properties in residential zoning districts

Question: ***Has the registration system worked as intended?***

CITY	COLLEGE TOWN	RESPONSE
Blacksburg, Virginia	Yes	The system has been very effective in improving the quality and appearance of rental housing; staff even noted some increase in property values that they attribute to the program
Bloomington, Indiana	Yes	The system has worked and staff believe that it has even saved lives over the years
Boulder, Colorado	Yes	The system has been effective in improving quality of rental housing. Has also worked in conjunction with other measures to improve quality of life in neighborhoods surrounding the University of Colorado.
Chapel Hill, North Carolina	Yes	Staff believe that the system has worked to improve housing conditions and reduce neighborhood nuisances; staff did note that landlords frequently express dissatisfaction with the system calling it unnecessary government regulation
Gainesville, Florida	Yes	Staff believe that the system has been effective, particularly in dealing with extreme nuisance situations involving rental properties; staff also noted that their system was expensive to operate and maintain
Garner, North Carolina	No	The system has been particularly helpful to the staff in identifying rental units and problem areas
Lawrence, Kansas	Yes	The system has allowed the City to take a proactive stance on many frequent code violations associated with rental housing; the system has led to a reduction in nuisance violations and to better housing conditions fro tenants
Raleigh, North Carolina	Yes	Registration system not yet in place
Roanoke, Virginia	No	The system has been effective in improving housing conditions; staff expressed concern over property owners who evaded the system
Salisbury, Maryland	Yes	The system has not been in place long enough for much evaluation; staff did note that it appeared that by intensifying enforcement in some areas, rentals were spreading out to other areas of the city

Survey results compiled by Neighborhood Services Staff – September 2004

Population and Housing Trends
Greenville & Pitt County
North Carolina

Figure 1.

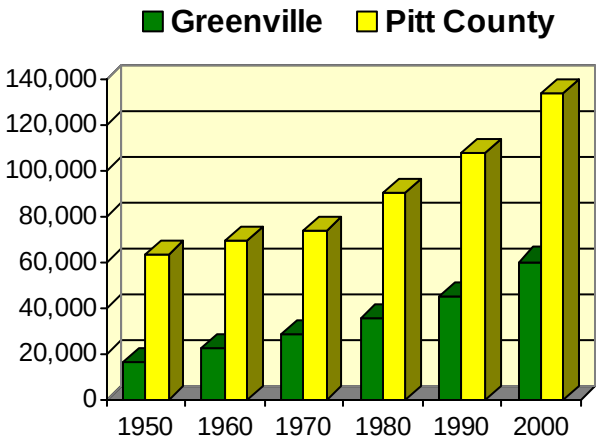


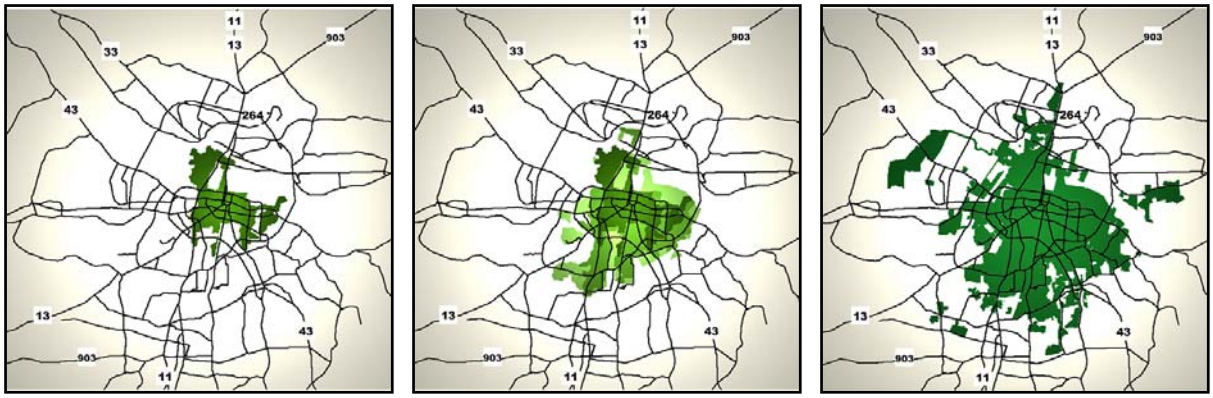
Figure 1.
While the populations of many rural towns and counties in Eastern North Carolina have experienced declines in recent decades, the populations of both Greenville and Pitt County have increased steadily over the last 50 years. Greenville's population increased by nearly 35% from 1990 to 2000, while Pitt County's population increased by 24% over the same period.

Table 1.

	Population		
	Greenville	as a % of	**Pitt County**
1950	16,724	26	63,789
1960	22,860	33	69,942
1970	29,063	39	73,900
1980	35,740	40	90,146
1990	44,972	42	107,924
2000	60,476	45	133,798
2002	63,477	46	137,001

Table 1.
At the same time, Greenville's population is growing as a percentage of Pitt County's total population. In 1950, Greenville accounted for roughly one out of every four Pitt County residents. Today, nearly one out of every two Pitt County residents live within the city limits of Greenville.

Figure 2.



Greenville City Limits 1960 | Greenville City Limits 1980 | Greenville City Limits 2000

Table 2.

	Annexation Activity		
	Area within City Limits	**Area Annexed in past 10 years**	**% change**
1960	5.8 sq. miles	-	-
1970	10.5 sq. miles	4.7 sq. miles	81 %
1980	14.9 sq. miles	4.4 sq. miles	42 %
1990	18.5 sq. miles	3.6 sq. miles	24 %
2000	26.5 sq. miles	8.0 sq. miles	43 %

Figure 2.; Table 2.

Based on population data alone, it may appear that Pitt County residents are migrating from rural areas to urbanized areas within Greenville. While this may be true to some extent, it is also true that Greenville's geographic boundaries have expanded significantly over the past 50 years. Greenville's "footprint" now occupies a larger portion of Pitt County's land area. Greenville's population as a percentage of Pitt County's population is therefore a function of both rural migration and annexation activity.

Figure 3.; Figure 4.; Table3.

Two factors explain population growth within Pitt County: 1) the rate at which births exceed deaths; and 2) the rate at which in-migration exceeds out-migration. From 1995 to 2000, Pitt County experienced a net in-migration of 8,278 new residents. Roughly 56% of those new residents moved here from other counties within North Carolina; about 44% moved here from other states. On average, Pitt County lost residents to large metropolitan areas, such as Wake, Mecklenburg, Guilford and Durham counties, and gained residents from rural areas, such as Beaufort, Lenoir, Craven and Martin counties.

Figure 3.

Components of Population Growth
Pitt County, NC
1995 - 2000

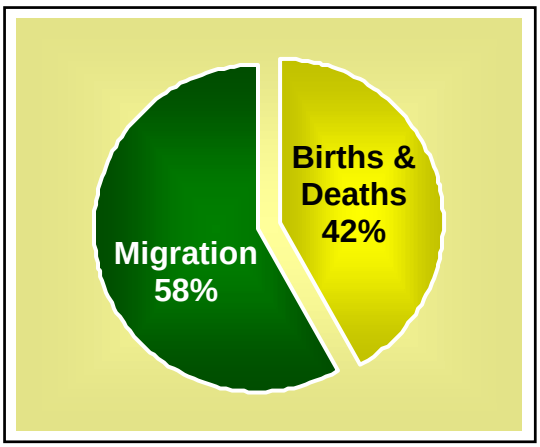


Figure 4.

Migration Patterns
Pitt County, NC
1995 - 2000

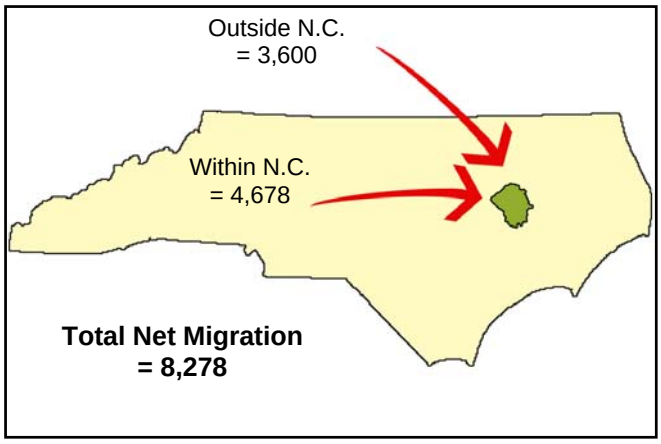


Table 3.

Migration Patterns, Pitt County, NC 1995 - 2000					
Within North Carolina					
People who moved to Pitt County from:			People who moved from Pitt County to:		
1.	Wake County	2,169	1.	Wake County	2,792
2.	Beaufort County	1,914	2.	Mecklenburg County	942
3.	Lenoir County	1,074	3.	Beaufort County	887
4.	Craven County	1,028	4.	Greene County	872
5.	Martin County	897	5.	New Hanover County	681
6.	Edgecombe County	842	6.	Lenoir County	646
7.	Cumberland County	685	7.	Durham County	564
8.	New Hanover County	678	8.	Guilford County	554
9.	Onslow County	643	9.	Edgecombe County	526
10.	Mecklenburg County	607	10.	Craven County	473
	All other	10,159		All other	7,081
	In-Migration:	**20,696**		Out-Migration:	**16,018**
Outside North Carolina					
People who moved to Pitt County from:			People who moved from Pitt County to:		
1.	Virginia	1,895	1.	Virginia	1,158
2.	New York	1,580	2.	Georgia	780
3.	Pennsylvania	794	3.	South Carolina	644
4.	New Jersey	732	4.	Florida	548
5.	Florida	696	5.	Maryland	439
6.	Maryland	683	6.	Pennsylvania	437
7.	Ohio	514	7.	Ohio	380
8.	South Carolina	466	8.	California	377
9.	Georgia	456	9.	Texas	330
10.	Texas	453	10.	New York	276
	All other	3,982		All other	3,282
	In-Migration:	**12,251**		Out-Migration:	**8,651**

Table 4.

Age Cohort	Age Cohort Survival, 1990 - 2000					
	Greenville			Pitt County		
	1990 Population	2000 Population	Survival Rate	1990 Population	2000 Population	Survival Rate
0 - 9	5,088	6,594	-	14,915	17,603	-
10 - 19	7,607	10,008	197 %	16,763	21,003	141 %
20 - 29	13,385	18,138	238 %	23,238	27,439	164 %
30 - 39	6,392	7,565	57 %	17,870	19,144	82 %
40 - 49	4,276	6,722	105 %	12,239	18,733	105 %
50 - 59	2,905	4,640	109 %	8,308	12,794	105 %
60 - 69	2,682	2,915	100 %	7,596	7,962	96 %
70 +	2,637	3,894	145 %	6,995	9,120	120 %
Total	44,972	60,476		107,924	133,798	

Table 4.
"Age Cohort Survival Analysis" is a method often used to track the flow of residents by age group, or "cohort," over time. Based on this analysis, it is clear that Greenville and Pitt County experienced significant in-migration of children, teenagers, students, and retirees from 1990 to 2000. However, Greenville and Pitt County lost residents in their 20s, and saw only modest gains in the 30- to 60-year-old population.

Table 5.; Table 6.
In order to understand how population translates into housing demand, it is necessary to understand how people are grouped into households. In 2000, the average household size in Greenville was 2.18 persons. By dividing the population (60,476) by average household size (2.18), there were a total 25,204 households in 2000. The supply of all dwelling units in 2000 (both rental and owner-occupied) exceeded the number of households by 2,941, which translates into a vacancy rate of about 10%.

Table 5.

Population & Household Characteristics, 2000		
	Greenville	Pitt County
Total Population	60,476	133,798
Total Households	25,204	55,539
Total Population in Households	54,886	127,465
Average Household Size	2.18	2.43
Total Families	12,003	32,237
Family Households w/ children	6,368	17,353
Family Households w/out children	6,635	14,884
Population in Families	34,946	97,410
Average Family Size	2.91	3.02

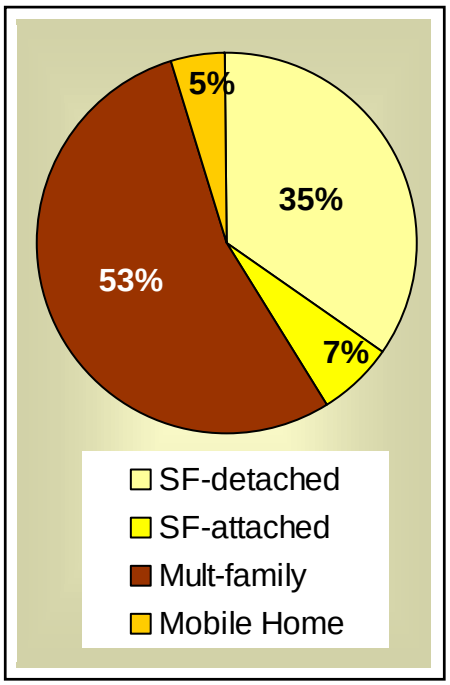
Table 6.

	Housing Units & Types					
	Greenville			Pitt County		
	1990	**2000**	change	**1990**	**2000**	change
Total Dwelling Units	18,054	28,145	56%	43,070	58,408	36%
Owner occupied	7,168	9,906	38%	23,516	30,541	30%
Renter-occupied	9,849	15,298	55%	16,975	21,998	30%
Vacant	1,037	2,941	184%	2,579	5,869	128%
Housing Composition						
SF, detached	7,670	9,787	28%	23,324	28,246	21%
SF, attached	1,254	1,862	49%	1,593	2,260	42%
Multi-family	8,199	15,247	86%	10,307	17,334	68%
Mobile Home	805	1,366	70%	7,480	10,318	38%

Figure 5.; Figure 6.
Approximately one third of all households in Greenville live in owner-occupied dwellings, compared to more than half of Pitt County households. Approximately 56% of all residential dwelling units in Greenville are renter-occupied, compared to 38% in Pitt County. Most of Greenville's renters live in multi-family apartment complexes, while a considerable number of Pitt County's renters live in mobile homes.

Figure 5.

City of Greenville
Housing Composition, 2000



Pitt County
Housing Composition, 2000

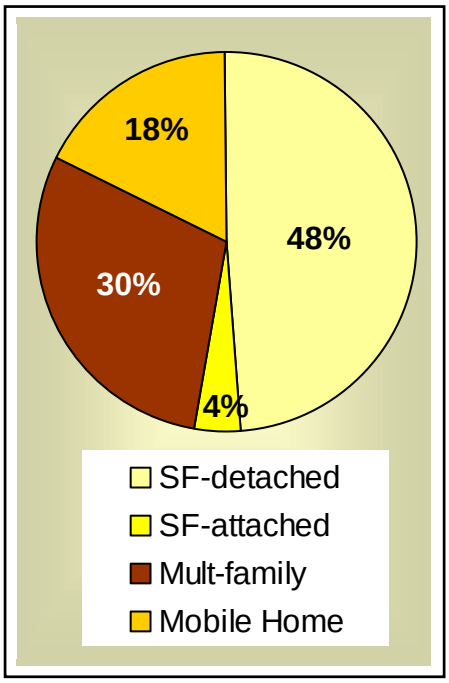
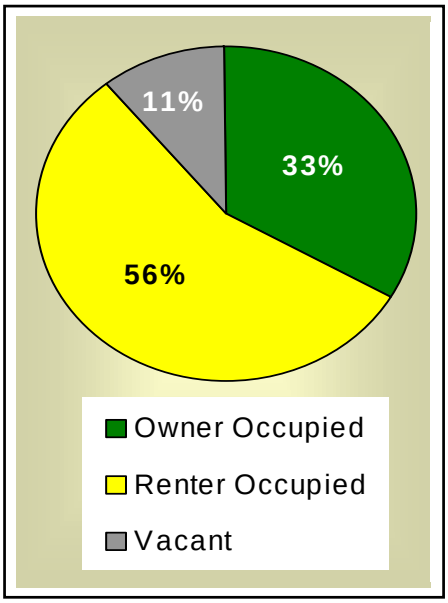


Figure 6.

City of Greenville
Housing Occupancy, 2000



Pitt County
Housing Occupancy, 2000

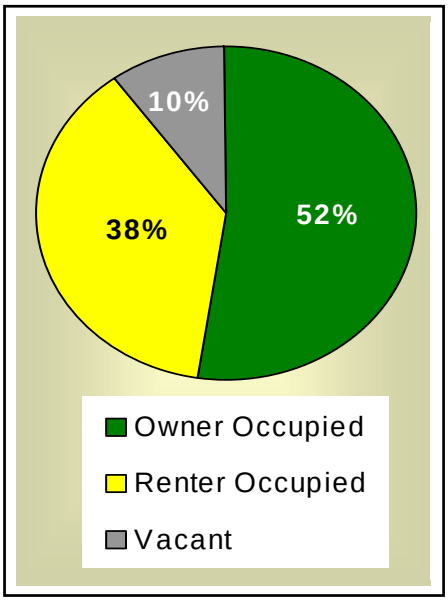


Table 7.

Despite a 10% vacancy rate among residential structures, Greenville has experienced a significant increase in the supply of new residential dwelling units since 1990. From 1990 to 2000, the City of Greenville issued permits for 2,336 new single-family homes, 1,194 new duplex units, and 7,990 new multi-family dwelling units. These figures include permits issued within the city limits and extraterritorial jurisdiction, but do not include activity in Pitt County, Winterville, or other jurisdictions.

Table 7.

City of Greenville
Permits Issued for New Residential Construction
(City Limits and Extraterritorial Jurisdiction)

	Single-family, detached	Two-unit, attached	Multi-unit, attached
1990	167	40	620
1991	111	30	488
1992	174	110	751
1993	236	160	1,005
1994	214	160	1,112
1995	163	182	822
1996	216	104	375
1997	237	178	681
1998	284	104	614
1999	222	82	495
2000	312	44	1,027
Total, 1990 - 2000	**2,336**	**1,194**	**7,990**
2001	277	210	914
2002	338	162	786
2003	312	42	800
2004 YTD	102	16	144
Total, 1990 – 2004 YTD	**3,365**	**1,624**	**10,634**