## AGENDA

Meeting Type:	SPECIAL
Date:	08/31/1987
	PLANNING DISTRICTS

City of Charlotte, City Clerk's Office

### AGENDA

### CITY/COUNTY PUBLIC HEARING

# PLANNING DISTRICTS AUGUST 31, 1987

1. Convening of public hearing

Mayor Gantt, City of Charlotte
Carla DuPuy, Chairperson, Mecklenburg
County Commissioners

2. Presentation of proposal

Dan Clodfelter, Chairman Charlotte-Mecklenburg Planning Commission

- 3. Questions from elected officials
- 4. Citizen Comments
- 5. Close public hearing
- 6. Motion to approve, amend, deny district proposal County Vote
  City Vote
- 7. Motion to approve funding for citizen participation position
  - 8 Adjournment

# PROPOSED PLANNING DISTRICT PROGRAM Draft Report of the Planning Committee to the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Planning Commission Approved May 11, 1987

### Background

The idea of using 'Planning Districts' as a vehicle for promoting public participation in land use decisions has its foundations in a national movement that surfaced in the 1970s. In response to the desire of citizens to become more involved in the way that their cities and neighborhoods developed, dozens of municipalities devised systems that divided their land area into geographic regions by which plans were made and information was disseminated. Research reveals that over 50 such neighborhood or district planning programs are operating today. Though these programs vary in structure, funding level and functions, all share one common goal—to improve communications between citizens and local government.

In Charlotte-Necklenburg, the Planning District concept emerged as a result of discussions during the 1980-81 Urban Symposium. The symposium s adopted Urban Policy Program called for study of the current citizen involvement system and a final report that would recommend methods to broaden participation in planning. As a result, a citizens committee was formed to look at involvement issues.

The Citizen Participation Committee released its 'Report on Citizen Involvement' in 1982. The majority report of this document suggested that the county be divided into Planning Districts as a way to "encourage long-range community planning that reflects the needs, desires and concerns of citizens" and "to facilitate better communication and citizen understanding of planning issues ""District Planning", the report stated, "would provide a framework within which to continue the small area planning process, while maintaining the flexibility to address broader public interests'

The adopted Generalized Land Plan 2005 also recommends an involvement program by Planning Districts—The plan outlines several general guidelines to be followed as the process is designed, including that the structure encourage participation which is representative of different types of interests within the districts—The plan states that the structure should be based on the seven Planning Districts outlined in that document, but that the creation of more than seven districts should be evaluated

In early 1987, the Planning Committee of the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Planning Commission was charged to work with staff and the community on the development of a Planning District Program proposal. The process involved the presentation of a set of program functions and draft district boundaries at four community workshops. Approximately 90 citizens attended these sessions and offered their suggestions on further functions for the program and their views on where the boundary lines should be drawn. The Planning Committee then reviewed these comments with staff, discussed the issues and devised a proposal to present to the Planning Commission, the Planning Liaison Committee, and ultimately, to the Charlotte City Council and the Mecklenburg Board of County Commissioners

The Planning Committee's schedule anticipates a June, 1987 adoption of a Planning District Program by the elected officials

### Boundaries - Seven Districts Proposed

As a result of reviewing public comments and discussing the issues, the Planning Committee recommends that seven districts be used as the basis of the Planning District Program. These seven districts would be modified versions of the Planning Analysis Areas that appear in the 2005 Plan. The boundary changes that are suggested respond to concerns raised by citizens at the four community meetings.

Under the committee's proposal, the North Mecklenburg District as outlined in the 2005 Plan would be reduced in area by raising the western part of the southern boundary from Gar Creek/Alexanderana Road north to a line roughly following McDowell Creek. This adjustment would leave the Long Creek Community intact in the Northwestern District, where residents feel it should be

The Northeastern District would be expanded in area from the 2005 Plan Analysis Area designation—Citizens of both the Northeast and East areas overwhelmingly supported the idea of moving the southern edge of the Northeast District down from Highway 29 to the Plaza Road Extension—This boundary change would allow the UNCC, Research Park and Newell areas to be studied together—Another small shift was made in the western edge of the district boundary - the proposal calls for that line to be moved from Statesville Road to I-77 so that the Derita/Statesville Road community can remain together for planning purposes

Some changes are suggested, too, in the boundaries for the Central District is opposed to the lines that were drawn in the 2005 Plan—All of these modifications are related to the issue of keeping the older, more urban neighborhoods together in one district for planning—On the eastern edge, the line would be brought out from Briar Creek/Winter Street to Wendover/Eastway in order to include older neighborhoods like the Echo Hills community near the colliseum in with the rest of the center city—Similarly, the southern edge would be dropped to Billingsley Road to take in Grier Heights, which shares more common interests with the inner ring of neighborhoods than with more suburban areas. On the west side, the line would move west, allowing the established Westerly Hills, Ashley Park and West Boulevard communities to be included in with the Central District—In one case, on the southern edge of the boundary line, the committee recommends moving the edge in from Tyvola Road to Woodlawn since the Madison Park neighborhood has more issues in common with the south area than with the central city

Between the South and East districts, the boundary has been shifted to the west along the southern section from Independence Boulevard to Old Monroe Road This change was made in an effort to keep most of Matthews and all of Mint Hill in one district - the East - for planning purposes Between the South and Southwest Districts the 2005 Plan line has been shifted in from Nations Ford Road to Kings Branch Creek to keep similar land uses together

The committee made the decision to recommend seven districts rather than a larger number because members felt it was important, in District Planning, to examine land use, transportation and infrastructure issues from a broad perspective. As opposed to Small Area and Special Project Plans, which have a narrower, more detailed focus, District Plans study the larger picture, look at the way that all of the pieces fit together.

# 7 DISTRICT PROPOSAL MODIFIED 2005 PLAN ANALYSIS AREAS (PROPOSED BY PLANNING COMMITTEE)

Committee members also stressed in their discussions that planning by these seven large districts would stimulate the community to think about what their neighborhoods have in common, instead of concentrating on the differences. By keeping all the central city neighborhoods in one district, for example, issues of housing rehabilitation, revitalization and historic districts can be looked at together, since these topics are as relevant to Five Points as they are to Dilworth. Issues concerning the uptown and other urban business areas could be studied, too, as they relate to the neighborhoods of the inner ring

As the Planning District Program begins, the committee feels that the seven districts proposed would serve as the best foundation. After the seven plans are completed, the system can be reevaluated and more districts created if that is deemed appropriate.

### District Functions - The Development of District Plans

The major function of the District Planning Program would be the development of District Plans for each of the seven areas. These District Plans would serve as ten-year guides for land use, transportation improvements, water and sewer extensions, parks and open space, school needs, and the treatment of historic sites. Development strategies would be set for the district as part of the process.

The focus of the District Plans would vary based on the issues of importance in the district. In the Northwest, strategies and recommendations would likely concentrate on public improvements that could attract desirable growth to the area. In the already booming East, recommendations would deal with providing the needed improvements and open space for an urbanizing area.

To devise these District Plans, the Planning Commission staff would work with 12 - 15 member advisory groups composed of area residents, business people and interest group representatives. The Planning Committee and staff would be responsible for selecting the group, bearing in mind the diverse interests of the district and the county as a whole

Public education was a frequently mentioned possible function for the Planning District Program at the four community workshops. Citizens, particularly neighborhood leaders, feel handicapped by their lack of knowledge about land use issues and planning terms, and expressed a need for an education/information program that would help them to learn about these subjects before they have to fight a rezoning case or are asked to serve on a planning committee. During the development of the South Mecklenburg Interim District Plan, too, the need for some sort of educational program for those involved in plan development was identified. For citizens to make meaningful contributions to the planning process, they must be equipped with some basic knowledge.

In answer to the need for public education, the Planning Committee recommends that an educational component be built into the District Planning process. Two sessions at the beginning of the District Plan's development would be devoted completely to providing basic planning information to the plan advisory group and to the general public as well. These sessions would be advertised widely and would be held in large enough places to accommodate interested citizens.

The first session would establish expectations for the District Plan by providing in overview of the types of plans (long-range, District, Small Area and Special Project) so that all involved will share the same idea of what the final product can and should accomplish. The 2005 Plan would be summarized, particularly in reference to the district under study, so that the community could review the goals already set and begin to think about these in respect to the upcoming District Plan. As part of this session, citizens would also become acquainted with the functions of the Planning Commission and staff and what roles and authorities the agency does and does not have

The second session would provide an overview of land use concepts, particularly those of significance in that district. Zoning classifications would be reviewed to provide a basic understanding of what uses are allowed or encouraged in different zoning districts. Transportation planning and the agencies and funding processes related to road-building and transit would be explained. The criteria used in school site selection and pupil assignments could also be outlined. Finally, those in attendance would be left with a sense of how plans are implemented through the Capital Needs Assessment/Capital Improvement Program process.

To improve the effectiveness of the presentation of material, graphic and audio-visual aids would be developed in addition to printed materials. As needs arise during the planning process for additional education on specific topics, relevant materials would be devised.

### Program Evaluation

Following the completion of the District Plans, the Planning District Program should be reevaluated in light of its effectiveness. At that time, it should be determined whether or not the districts should be used as the basis for an expanded involvement program. As previously noted, consideration could be given then, too, to the creation of additional districts

### MEMORANDUM

August 7, 1987

TO:

Tom Finnie, Deputy City Manager

FROM:

Julie Burch, Assistant City Manager //

SUBJECT: August 31 Council Meeting

This memo is to confirm that the City Clerk's Office will be present to take minutes at the August 31 joint City Council--County Commission public hearing on planning districts. By this being an "official" meeting, the Council may take action on the Planning Commission recommendations if it desires. I have talked with Pat Sharkey about her involvement, and she will provide the necessary support.

If you have any questions about these arrangements, please let me know.

Bill Guerrant

Dave Howard Pat Sharkey

AUG 10 1987

OFFICE OF CITY CLERK