

Outreach Team Meeting Agenda and Notes

Wednesday, June 2, 2021 6:00 –7:30 PM

ZOOM Meeting

1. **Welcome & Introductions** - Eight members of the Outreach Team and six members from the City-County Planning Department were present.
2. **What's Next**
 - [Presentation](#) - Staff gave a presentation on the upcoming scope and schedule for the rest of the plan. This included an overview of the next pieces of the plan, specifically: The Place Type Guide, Place Type Map, Policies, Focus Area work, the Community Goals and Objective Report Card, and Implementation list. It also included a general timeline for this work.
 - Guiding Questions for the Outreach Team
 - Are there any general questions about the pieces of the plan?
 - Do you have any big picture thoughts about how we're sharing information on the remainder of the plan to make it more clear to residents? We will invite suggested edits to the document after the meeting.
 - Are there other ways you want to be involved in this work? What frequency would you like to be involved?
3. **Discussion & Questions**
 - OT Member – Some folks are concerned about the changes to S Alston and they didn't seem to understand that it wasn't a part of the comp plan, but instead something that had already been programmed.
 - OT Member – Many people are not on Zoom, not on the internet. There are no PAC meetings, no in-person meetings right now. There are people that are not in any loop. Are they ever going to know about this project? I'm concerned about the people that are not organized. Folks have been given opportunities but then everything shut down. I'm feeling frustrated about how far we've gone and who's left behind. When we can have in-person meetings, will there be opportunities to come out to a meeting again?
 - Staff: One thing you highlighted is that as we try to learn how to do engagement better and more equitably, we want to provide resources to people as we're engaging them. Also we have a big opportunity in the remainder of this work in continuing to work with Engagement Ambassadors. Looking at the map of our community and where folks are that we most need to reach: how can we start making connections with folks that could be engagement ambassadors in future work on the plan?
 - OT Member – when we first started, going out and signing up for what we were going to do, I didn't have enough time. I signed up for 30 something groups and brought literature to them – but group schedules made it tough. I have certain relationships that could be part of a new iteration of that. But I hope that the people that were never

reached can be brought into the process. I'd like to visit and get 10 people together and then have those get 10 people.

- Staff– That's good to keep in mind. We're looking at 3 month blocks of time for engagement on two big chunks of the remaining work so that should help Outreach Team members have more time to reach residents.
- OT Member – One of the weaknesses in the current future land use map is that that was pulled together by a group of 15 or 20 people that were appointed people and a few staff and sat around every month and basically planned (“this should be residential, this should be industrial, etc.”). The only opportunity for community engagement was when the public hearing process. It was basically just going through the motions. I think what you should really do – to determine where those place types should go – is to leave it up the individual neighborhoods to make decisions about the place types in that part of the community. For example – would it fair if a bunch of residents who didn't live in the neighborhood made recommendations about what the place types should be there? Even worse, if people from a neighborhood showed up at a meeting for another neighborhood and tried to dictate the conversation on what should happen in a different place. I think the schedule is overly aggressive, I think we need to reach out, have the neighborhoods redefine themselves both geographically and the places that they want to be – and let each neighborhood have the strongest voice about what they think their neighborhood should be. EHC showed how not doing this will be an issue, but this is even bigger. This is going to dictate growth or non-growth for the next 20 years. If I were to come in with a rezoning that didn't meet the place type map then the staff would be compelled to recommend denial. But think of the flipside. If that developer came in with a proposal that met the place type, but the neighbors didn't like the place type – they wanted to change it – then at that point Staff would have to say we want to change the place type actually. We need to engage the neighborhoods.
 - Staff – We definitely understand that it's essential to focus on geography-based engagement for the remainder of the plan. It's much more tangible, it's easier to get involved when you're talking about your neighborhood and the places you care about. One thing that we would say we are challenged to do – we have to think about the whole community. We can't let neighborhoods chose their future in isolation. We have to think about how we address the challenges and unequal histories in our community that require solutions throughout the community, in particular focusing on affordability and sustainability.
- OT Member – All the outreach that has been done, Especially the first initial one when I was at Hillside – a lot of people showed up. I'm not sure if we have time, but I wonder if we could do some kind of bigger outreach meeting to explain to the whole neighborhood. Well, we can't get together so maybe never mind about that. I don't know how we get everyone together. With all the outreach that has happened, I don't know if people are that deeply involved. It's not that they're not interested, they're just not that deeply involved to count on them coming out for something. We'll get some neighborhoods, but a lot of people won't do it if we haven't gotten it already. Unless we can think of another way to bring people together. I just don't have confidence that we'll get an equitable response. In my area I've seen absolutely nothing of what we've

done - I don't know why. I don't have a suggestion, I just don't know if people are going to invest the effort.

- OT Member– Do you think looking at the place type maps in small communities would be an “aha” moment? I think the map thing is brilliant! The developers might know – but people in the community say we already have these things in our community– we want less of a bad thing. It’s compelling to me. Somebody knows that this is here. The map thing could possibly help people to know that the City knows.
- OT Member – I can agree with that. I can agree that the map is great. But I don't know how we could get the large opinions to help develop that map. How do we get the community involved if they haven't already been involved? The “aha” moment is almost here to pass. If things are already rolling – how do we get people further more engaged?
- OT Member – I think engagement is the challenge. It’s “not in my back yard” vs “what is good for the whole city”. As I’ve been in this group I’ve tried to keep listening and learning. I come from a neighborhood that has a fair amount of clout and power and wealth. Enabling my neighbors to steer the conversation may not be good for Durham at at large.
- OT Member – I think it’s important to think about where we are in the process. Even though we haven't had engagement for everyone – but I think the goals and objectives are reflective of what our community would say. Where we’re headed is the map where people start to realize, oh, this is it – we have something to react to. I think that’ll create opportunities. I want to pat staff on the back. We’ve been in the “boring part” but we’re headed to a place where people will react to and be engaged when they see the map for their neighborhood. I think we should think about how to equitable engagement. We’ve done great work to get to this point.
 - Staff – there have been times we’ve had challenges engaging folks because it’s hard to see the connection. But now we’re going to be talking about where people live and work and where they are. We’re excited to ask residents to help us look at the goals and objectives and think about: how we make that a reality through the map – thinking about our whole community and how to make a more equitable Durham for all?
- OT Member – if we’re able to use the more tangible stuff to get people more excited and engaged – could we figure out a way to get this group back up in numbers? We started to close to 120 people almost 2 years ago. We now have about a dozen people usually now. This is a good group – but I think we need more folks in this piece. We might be short on credibility when it’s time to get up in front of people and say “this is who’s on the Outreach Team”. Also, I would love to meet in person!
- OT Member– I really like that, I’m thinking there is a really different new phase of the plan. But it’s not a huge map, it’s your own local map! The map of your place. I want to bring a guest – someone who is a leader in an area. To show people we have things going on. Early in the process, some sort of distilled version would be nice. If we could bring people that had capacity or credibility. Meeting in-person and people actually seeing how much staff familiarity there is with this.
 - Staff – This is good time to get people interested or (re)interested

- OT Member – I want to start by thanking everyone. I have a question on making sure we hear from as many communities as possible. Is there a way to get an idea as to we have heard from?
 - Staff– in terms of demographics or geography?
 - OT Member– yeah, what neighborhoods, what areas? So that we know we’ve heard from a lot of folks from here or there – then we can fill those gaps.
 - Staff – That's a great question. So far the info we’ve asked is the ZIP code. But I think as we go forward, we need to have a tighter understanding how where exactly people are that we’re hearing from. To see who we’re hearing from to see where we need to fill gaps. Specifically the small focus group discussion over Jan/Feb, those were intentional to fill gaps from who we hadn’t been reaching. In particular we weren’t reaching Hispanic/Latino folks. I think we want to focus in and continue to do that general approach as we go forward.
- OT Member – the last in-person meeting I attended I remember there being a huge discussion about trust. Based on the history of Durham – particularly Hayti. I think one thing to work to overcome is how to build that trust. If I am a part of a community who feels as though over time my community was left behind or actively harmed...Now there’s people who want to build in this area. How do we gain trust from those communities? So that they see what I say in my voice makes a difference. One issue that I can see being there is that trust. “My voice doesn’t make a difference” “Why would I bother?” “Why would I attend?” How do we get around that?
 - Staff– yeah you hit on something that has been a huge part of the barriers and fears around doing this work. We have, throughout our engagement, but particularly folks Engagement Ambassadors (EAs) and their folks, we’ve heard the lack of trust so clearly. I don’t think we can do enough to acknowledge that. I think that the way that we have been able to start hearing honestly from people is by it not being staff who are talking to them. Talking to people in their community that they know and trust. That’s where the EA has been so helpful. It’s something that takes a certain level of trust for the EAs. They put themselves in a position where they act as a representative of local government. At the same time, we can’t have just one or even just 3 departments trying to do things differently because anything that the City does has the opportunity to breach trust in something they do. We as staff are advocating and lobbying other departments to change how they talk to residents, how they build trust with residents. Your point is on-point and certainly there’s more to do the build trust. We’re interested in learning about how to chip away at that.
- OT Member – I love the idea that regarding hearing from individual neighborhoods and communities. I understand that can be hazardous in terms of where the plan goes, if some neighborhoods take over. But listening to you say that it has been difficult to get ambassadors in certain communities. Is it possible to do an in-person gathering in those communities? Things are opening up. That’s how I was brought in. At a block party and you all were there and that’s how I got into this work. So could staff help people organize meetings to get more people involved?

4. Finishing Up

- Notes from this discussion will be posted on the ENGAGEDurham website as well as included in a meeting follow-up email.
- We shared this information at the JCCPC meeting this morning, you can watch the meeting with their questions and discussion on the City's YouTube (**JCCPC Comprehensive Plan Update Presentation: <https://youtu.be/PnAVgfbqU1E?t=289>**)
- Please let us know if you have any feedback/suggestions on how we can improve our communication with you all and facilitation of meetings.
- Thank you!