



Carrboro Connects – Task Force Meeting #3 Summary

301 West Main Street, Carrboro, North Carolina 27510

November 12, 2020 – Remote Meeting via Zoom

Task Force Members	Public	Town Staff	Consultant Team
Catherine Fray (Chair)	Christine Abernathy	Ben Berolzheimer (Planning)	Michael Blue
David Jessee (Co-Chair)		Jon Hartman-Brown (Economic Development)	Lee Brown
Quinton Harper (Co-Chair)		Rebecca Buzzard (Housing Community Development)	Carol Brobeck
Tim Turner (Co-Chair)		Zachary Hallock (Planning)	Erin Cigliano
Sarah Brown		Charles Harrington (RPCR)	Benito Garcia
Wamiq Chowdhury		Anita Jones-McNair (RPCR)	Scott Goldstein
Lorie Clark	Town Council	Catherine Lazorko (Communications)	Teresa Lockamy
David Dixon	Damon Seils	Patricia McGuire (Planning)	Francie Sallinger
Miles Fitch		Tina Moon (Planning)	
Braxton Foushee		Marsha Pate (Planning)	
Maggie Funkhouser		Wendell Rodgers (RPCR)	
Rachel Gaylord-Miles			
Jacqueline Helvey			
Mariela Hernandez			
Lauren Joca			
Conner Lopez			
Elmira Mangum			
David Markiewicz			
Dan Mayer			
Mark Moshier			
Jim Porto			
Eliazar Posada			
Abirami Raja			
Soteria Shepperson			
Amy Singleton			

Rasam Tooloee			
Anahid Vrana			
Alyson West			

Task Force Members Not in Attendance: Jacqueline Thompson

OVERVIEW

On November 13, 2020 the Carrboro Connects Task Force held its third virtual meeting on Zoom from 5:30-8:00 PM. In total there were 46 participants, including Task Force members, Town staff, Town Council and the consultant team. The Task Force was asked to complete pre-meeting homework: read and review two Draft Issues and Opportunities Reports on the topics to be covered (Demographic Trends and Land Use and Affordable Housing), and continue to complete three “Conversation Café” interviews to gather additional input on the comprehensive plan.

Task Force Meeting 1 focused on the vision for the plan, an overview of community engagement, and breakout discussions about issues and opportunities by each plan topic area. Meeting 2 was a deeper dive into social and racial equity, climate change and natural resources. Meeting 3, summarized here, was a closer look at issues and opportunities relating to Town demographics, land use, and affordable housing.

OPENING AND INTRODUCTIONS

Quinton Harper, Task Force co-chair, gave opening remarks. He thanked everyone for their participation, and reminded everyone to 1) [register for the November 19th Community Workshop](#) and 2) spread the word with their networks, encouraging everyone to sign-up for the Carrboro Connects website and RSVP for the workshop.

TOWN COUNCIL MEMBER WELCOME

Council Member Damon Seils was present and provided thoughts to the group via a pre-recorded video on the importance of land use, zoning, and the effect that Town policies can have:

“Historically, land use and zoning have been used to segregate and keep people separated. Carrboro’s policies could support the well-being of traditional and non-traditional families, such as college students, multi-generational families, etc... Zoning policies dating back 50 years ago shaped the town into what it is today—so our work now will shape our future. Reach into your networks to bring more people to the table and the conversation—we need to expand beyond those traditionally involved. We’re creating space for everyone to shape our future.”

MEETING 2 RECAP

Task Force Chair Catherine Fray provided a recap of the group’s last meeting, which focused on social and racial equity, ecosystems, and natural resources. The project team is continuing to refine the Task Force’s input to draft vision, goals, and strategies, but Catherine shared some initial highlights:

- The Town conducts systematic and holistic evaluation of possible actions, that considers unintended consequences and cumulative impacts

- The community is resilient to the impacts of climate change.
- The community's visions and goals are informed, but not limited, by the budget
- The Town proactively identifies needs for all areas of the community.
- Community members express self-determination.
- Community engagement values members as advisors.
- The community values service industry workers.

The work from each of the Task Force meetings on subject areas will be compiled into a draft Vision and Goals draft that will be distributed in Spring 2021 for comment and input of the Task Force.

DEMOGRAPHICS TRENDS, LAND USE, AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Presentations from Scott Goldstein (Teska Associates), Patricia McGuire (Planning Director), and Rebecca Buzzard (Housing and Community Services Director) discussed: research and findings related to demographics trends, land use, and affordable housing; an overview of the Town's development and land use framework; and current affordable housing programs. The full presentation can be viewed at www.carrboroconnects.org/documents. The data and detailed information in these presentations informed discussion in break-out discussions of the Task Force.

BREAK-OUT DISCUSSIONS

Meeting participants were assigned to breakout groups for in-depth, facilitated discussion around a vision and goals for land use and affordable housing. "Vision" was defined as: the big picture of what we want Carrboro to be, and "Goals" as the outcome-focused aspirations to achieve the vision. Below is a summary of the input heard across all groups:

Land Use

Vision

- Carrboro is a connected community, with a cohesive trail network that makes it easier to get around by foot or by bike.
- The community incentivizes affordable housing development through policies and the zoning ordinance. There is a variety of housing, from taller buildings to tiny homes.
- All areas of town are accessible—to each other and to downtown.
- Parking is de-emphasized and development that keeps cars off the road is encouraged.
- Public art, public space, and communal "living rooms" ("Weaver Street is Carrboro's living room—what do different cultures' living rooms look like?") should be located throughout Town, not only downtown.
- Placemaking is incorporated throughout all of Carrboro and utilized as a way to make the community even more welcoming, distinct, and special.
- Consider land use as a social determinant of health (greenspace, walkability, environmental protection, safe and affordable housing, etc).
- Equitable distribution of infrastructure, public services, affordable housing, and businesses (i.e. not concentrated in the downtown).
- Carrboro has a diverse set of non-residential land uses to provide a strong tax base and enhance economic sustainability.

Goals/Strategies

- Community conversation around height and density. Taller buildings can lead to greater affordability. Town should incentivize mixed use development (4-5 stories) through the zoning ordinance. "If we get density, it should be for affordability."

- Avoid buildings that are surrounded by parking. Development that limits the need for driving also is more diverse and inclusive.
- Extension of utilities should be affordable for those that need them.
- Smart infrastructure investments can employ technology that makes it easier to take the bus (smarter scheduling, routes based on demand, etc.)
- Development should focus on who is being served—different districts might have different activities depending on the people who live there.
- Infill development. Avoid building in Greenfields—develop in areas that have already been altered in some way to preserve existing open spaces and leave room for green infrastructure.
- Density might work in some areas, but not a one size fits all solution. Explore creative housing types: tiny houses, shipping containers, retrofit existing buildings through adaptive reuse.
- “Placemaking is what makes Carrboro different from any other place and we should promote that.”
- Attract more businesses and/or a business incubator—these should provide well-paying jobs that also generate revenue for the Town.
- Emphasize downtown to attract high-density office spaces.
- Consider ways to create a designated business district/business park outside of the downtown—this could attract high tech and other employers.

Affordable Housing

Vision

- No matter your job or wages, anyone should be able to live in Carrboro.
- People can stay in Carrboro and stay in their homes, not be pushed out via gentrification.
- Affordable housing and diversity are throughout Carrboro, not concentrated in one area.
- Processes are streamlined and unnecessary barriers are removed to help developers do what is right.
- Environmental/energy focus is part of affordable housing and equity concerns (housing is the pivot/linkage between equity and the environment).
- Carrboro has options for all people and provides a balance between renting and owning opportunities.

Goals/Strategies

- Resources and access to information are provided to everyone—the community knows where to go for housing related needs (not only online).
- Rethink density as a way to increase affordability.
- Reduce housing cost burden by reducing other costs—more businesses, energy efficient housing, higher paying jobs, etc.
- Focus on the WHO – target help towards the people who work here and can’t afford to live here (teachers, service workers, immigrant community)
- Reconsider payment-in-lieu of affordable housing. Is there a better way?
- Maintain existing affordable housing by helping aging in place, home repairs, property tax increases, etc.
- Consider land banking, land trusts, and foreclosure assistance/prevention.
- Down payment assistance and credit repair. Work with credit unions to open up new lending opportunities.
- Attract more employers to Carrboro [to increase income and thereby making housing more affordable].
- Affordability as a health metric: where is it located, is there access to transit, connected to parks and the wider community

- Get creative with how we build housing and use space—i.e. use flag lots to build tiny homes, add a sense of place.
- Link walkability/transit/and housing. Create more units in places that are already walkable and have access to transit.
- Increase education and participation: participatory budgeting to help residents understand the development process, more communication about existing programs.
- Get community buy-in: need to make sure that efforts to create more affordable housing aren't sidelined by community push back when a project is “in their backyard.”

ENGAGEMENT UPDATE

Scott Goldstein shared an update on engagement and outreach efforts leading up to the first Community Meeting, taking place November 19th. First and foremost, the project website is now live – everyone is encouraged to go visit www.carrborconnects.org to register, explore the site, and begin sharing ideas.

To promote the November 19th Community Meeting, the project team has created a suite of materials to reach as many people as possible, in a variety of formats (digital and print, English and Spanish) that the Town has already posted on social media. Please share the social media links below!

- Postcards
- Posters
- Social Media Graphics ([Instagram](#), [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Next Door](#))
- Banner (8 foot x 4 foot)

We need help from all of the Task Force to share and circulate these materials widely.



All materials are posted to the website's [Documents page](#) to encourage everyone—not just Task Force members—to download and spread the word. Thank you in advance for your help!

DEBRIEF

David Jessee and Tim Turner, Task Force Co-Chairs, then shared their main takeaways from the meeting:

“I like the idea of thinking of zoning as a moral document—it is really important and should be thought of that way.” –David Jessee

“I am glad we’re thinking about how to bring energy and environmental needs and affordable housing together to attack issues that are interrelated. We’re all learning a lot – let’s continue to learn and contribute together.” –Tim Turner

NEXT STEPS

Patricia McGuire shared upcoming dates and next steps and challenged the Task Force to reach 300 attendees at the November 19 Community Workshop.

Upcoming Dates

- Nov. 19 @ 7:00, Community Meeting 1
- Jan. 19 @ 5:30, Task Force 4
- Feb. 18 @ 5:30, Task Force 5
- Mar. 18 @ 7:00, Community Meeting 2

Next Steps

- 1) Finish your three interviews
- 2) Post Community Meeting announcement on social media
- 3) Provide an update to and get input from your Advisory Board
- 4) Distribute postcards and posters if you can
- 5) Continue to share ideas on how to get people involved in the plan and attend first Community Meeting

ADJOURNMENT

Task Force Meeting #3 adjourned by 8:10PM. Thank you to all Task Force members and Town Staff for contributing to another successful and fruitful meeting for Carrboro Connects!