

# Citizen Input Necessary For Areas Under Consideration

(Continued from Front)  
residents must overcome differences, accept the commonalities and put together a representative group of people to work with the city planners.

From the planners' point of view, working with the people means going out to the areas, gathering a team of residents and through a series of community meetings thrash out an identity of the major issues affecting this area and its future. The planners then translate these issues into planning projects, drawing them on maps and explaining to the citizens how the planners view the issues in terms of their impact on the neighborhood and their priority.

With more meetings, the issues get thrashed out again. The planners' viewpoints can be challenged. The goal is a consensus, both as to the issues' impact and their priority. Once the consensus is reached, it's put into a plan and presented to the council.

Then the people, working with elected officials, must decide which projects should be paid for first, and determine where the money should come from. A point worth making is that there will probably not be much federal money to pay for Durham's plans. Durham's future is going to have to come out of Durham pockets.

"Using this approach," Norby said, "it will take us about five years to cover all the neighborhood planning areas and develop a presentable plan for each one."

There are three planners assigned to the neighborhood planning project,

and their goal is to do four neighborhood plans each year.

Theoretically, this process makes sense, particularly when you add the citywide planning approach, the planners take a broad, overview look at the city, plugging two other vital components into the neighborhood scheme. These are the local economy and the citywide infrastructure.

The basic thesis for an economic development strategy for Durham is "...to improve the standard of living of its citizens by encouraging increased private sector investment and activity in the local economy." As a practical matter that means attracting goods and services that meet both the consumer needs of people living here, and provides jobs.

The citywide infrastructure is that network of streets, highways and other urban level services that are needed to support both economic development and residential livability.

But while the theory is sound, an example of state-of-the-art urban planning, logistically, this process could produce major headaches.

The biggest headache is Durham's history.

Durham wasn't planned, to say the least. It sort of sprung up along the railroad tracks during the mid-1800's. During the 1880's, the tobacco and textile industries became the little town's economic anchors, and for the next fifty years or so, these industries almost totally determined Durham's shape

and structure.

Fledgling city planning came to Durham in 1927 with the appointment of the City Planning Commission. The commission hired a New York planner, Herbert Swan, to study Durham and help its leaders plan for the city's growth. Swan's report, "The Durham Plan," was published in 1927. Though Swan's plan dealt mostly with streets and traffic, parks and schools, a key statement in his report proved prophetic. Swan warned that zoning is an ineffective tool for shaping a well planned city unless it is based on a comprehensive plan for land development. Apparently no one took Swan's observation seriously, and the tragic lesson of Durham's history is sufficiently covered in the introduction of Durham's very first effort at comprehensive city planning, adopted in 1960. "Durham adopted its first zoning ordinance in 1925. Subdivision control was belatedly extended one mile beyond the city limits in 1949. In 1946, Durham established the first municipal planning department in the state of North Carolina. On the basis of studies prepared by the Planning Department, the city adopted a regional thoroughfare plan in 1946 and a revised zoning ordinance in 1951.

A period of economic deceleration between 1945 and 1957 prompted renewed vigor in directing the future development of the City. Durham found that it was not keeping pace with the State of North Carolina in industrial development. It was losing many of its wholesaling activities to other cities and retail sales were declining. The City was designated by the U.S. Department of Labor as an area of chronic unemployment. Factors suggested as contributing causes of the economic decline have been a lack of community spirit, a lack of dynamic and imaginative leadership, the poor physical organization of the city, and a general unsightly appearance."

There's strong indication that most of these negative factors that warped Durham's history continue to plague the city today and could seriously curtail the city's future unless Durhamites overcome them.

Durham's sad and seething racial climate is certainly not the least of these problems. Much of today's tension and distrust between blacks and whites here grew out of Durham's first

effort to comprehensively plan its future.

In 1960, the Durham City Council adopted a 20-year Master Land Use Plan that was supposed to have guided Durham's emergence as the center of a major Piedmont megalopolis. The plan's goals were ambitious to say the least, it said, for example: "Durham must be considered as a part of the urban complex which also includes Raleigh and Chapel Hill. The recently formed Research Triangle has provided the impetus for growth which is expected to weld the three cities together into a single metropolitan area. The development of southern Durham County, which appears to be the centroid (heart) of the evolving metropolitan complex, is considered not only in relation to Durham, but to the entire Research Triangle region."

Needless to say, almost none of what the 1960 plan projected happened. Durham, Raleigh and Chapel Hill are not welded. Southern Durham is not the heart of anything, and as a matter of fact, Durham has attracted only a small percentage of the growth sparked by the Research Triangle Park.

The 1960 Plan's twenty years ended in 1980, and since that time, according to Norby, his department has been gathering information, and data, analyzing issues and trying to build a planning capacity into the local government structure.

"We're faced with ten to twenty years of catching up to do just to build a planning capacity," Norby said. "That's what we're doing now."

The planning capacity deficiency was created mostly because no one updated Durham's twenty-year plan, and therefore many new issues and other factors were largely ignored.

But in the process of trying to pull this plan off, Durham's leaders planted seeds of racial discord that continue to produce an annual crop of distrust and misunderstanding.

The 1960 Plan had six major features. Two of them were urban renewal and the East-West Expressway. And good intentions, notwithstanding, urban renewal and the expressway killed the local black community's economic base and left a festering wound that has yet to heal.

"I think that back then," Ickes said, "everyone thought that urban renewal would be a good thing. But now we

know it wasn't."

Social and racial barriers aside, Durham is not physically an easy city to plan. Physical barriers include I-85 that separates much of the northern section from the rest of the city, making it hard for the two segments to establish an affinity; acres of vacant land, such as that to the south between the city and the Research Triangle Park, and the vast Duke University acreage, which contributes also to a physical splitting of the city. In other words, Durham is so physically decentralized, with no real central hub that ties the various parts together, that comprehensive planning faces a real uphill struggle.

Local planners hope their neighborhood planning process will be the cornerstone of a citywide welding process.

"If people who want to live in the city can find livable neighborhoods that are compatible to their needs, maybe they will work together to overcome some of the other barriers," Norby said. "But each neighborhood needs an organized vehicle that ties it into the planning process."

And so it all comes back to you — Durham's people. Durham's past mistakes and its physical barriers cannot be overcome, and its exciting possibilities cannot be achieved unless everyone here gets involved in the planning process, right now.

Norby summed it up this way: "There is a risk that we take with this planning process and that is the chance the neighborhood organizations will become too powerful, and major citywide concerns will fall prey to neighborhood issues. But the alternative to taking that risk is to do nothing. I think the two-approach process is healthy because they sort of act as a check and balance against each other. When the citywide approach identifies implications an issue has for the entire city, the impact of those implications can be checked against neighborhood concerns and vice versa."

And so, Durham is planning again. Two previous efforts failed miserably. And now whether Durham fans the breeze in a gigantic urban strikeout, or connects solidly for a long range hit depends almost completely on how effectively citizens help to swing the planning bat.

## John Hope Franklin to Speak at Friends of Library Dinner

CHAPEL HILL — Dr. John Hope Franklin, nationally recognized authority on black and southern history, will be the featured speaker at the annual dinner meeting of the Friends of the Library of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill on Tuesday, April 6, at the Carolina Inn.

Franklin will speak on "Politics and the Public Library: A Personal View."

The dinner will celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Friends of the Library. The group has made many invaluable contributions of books, papers and financial assistance to the library and its special collections since it was begun by Louis Round Wilson in 1932.

Franklin is John Matthews Distinguished Service professor and former chairman of the History Department at the University of Chicago, currently on leave as Senior Mellon Fellow at the National Humanities Center. When he completes that fellowship, he will become James B. Duke professor of history at Duke University.

He also has taught at Fisk University, Howard University, North



DR. FRANKLIN

Carolina Central University and Saint Augustine's College. Franklin has written a number of books including *The Free Negro in North Carolina, 1790-1860*; *From Slavery to Freedom: A History of Negro Americans*; *The Militant South, 1800-1860*; *Reconstruction After the Civil War*; and *A Southern Odyssey: Travelers in the Antebellum North*. He is working on a biography of George Washington Williams, a 19th century historian.

He has been active in numerous professional and educational organizations and has been president of the American Historical Association and several others.

He has been widely honored for his work, receiving honorary degrees from a large number of colleges and universities. He is a member of the Oklahoma Hall of Fame, and in 1978, he was one of eight Americans cited by *Who's Who in America* for significant contributions to society.

The Friends of the Library sponsors the annual dinner to honor individuals who have made significant contributions to the library by installing them as life members of the group.

The dinner will begin

with a social hour at 6 p.m. Cost for the social and dinner is \$10 per person. The event is open to the public, although advance reservations are required.

For more information or to make a reservation, contact the Friends of the Library, Wilson Library 024A, UNC-CH, Chapel Hill NC 27514, telephone 962-1301.

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HAVING QUALIFIED as the Administrator CTA of the Estate of Mollie H. Lee, late of Durham County, North Carolina, the undersigned does hereby notify all persons, firms and corporations having claims against the Estate of Mollie H. Lee to present them to the undersigned within six months from the date of the first publication of this notice, or same will be pleaded in bar of their recovery.

All persons indebted to said Estate will please make immediate payment to the undersigned at the address of the Administrator CTA given below.

This the 24th day of February, 1982.

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