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**Biddleville Plan To Spur Growth**

By Herb White  
Post Staff Writer

The northwest section of Charlotte surrounding Johnson C. Smith University got a shot in the arm last week with the announcement that a plan to turn the area into a middle-class neighborhood was completed.

The plan, called Project Catalyst, is designed to spur growth in the northwest corridor of the city which has lagged behind other areas of Charlotte in attracting new business and housing. The effort is a joint venture among JCSU, local government, and community leaders to create a middle-class neighborhood. The proposed development, to be called Biddle Village after the university's first name, Biddle Institute and the surrounding community, would include new businesses, housing, retail stores and a medical center at the end of West Trade Street.

The Biddle Village plan calls for the area's business district to be built near JCSU at Five Points and Three Points which the developer, Boston-Based Lane, Frenchman and Associates hopes would improve the area's image with potential shoppers.

New housing is also in the works as well as refurbishing old buildings suitable for a middle-class setting. New shops would join refurbished businesses to attract customers from around the city. The area would be made more accessible to shoppers by building sidewalks and pedestrian crossings and parking areas.

JCSU would also expand its physical plant with an honors college building, new dormitory complex and a faculty/alumni club that would tie the university to the commercial district and the neighborhood.

With the year-long planning stage completed, the next step is to develop the area, said Charles Smith, a planner with Lane, Frenchman and Associates. Project Catalyst, which should show evidence of growth "should be noticed in a couple of years" according to Smith, would bring growth



Johnson C. Smith University President Robert Albright (l) can't contain his enthusiasm as he receives a donation to go towards the

revitalization of Biddleville from Michael Burnett, President of Charlotte Home Builders Association.

to businesses and the neighborhood as a whole.

"With a commercial development here, it would be a center of pride for blacks to come from other areas as well as a place to live," he explained. The development has been a cooperative effort, Smith said, and that support is necessary to help the project succeed.

"There was a lot of untapped energy out there and there are a lot of untapped market sources," he said. "There's no lack of determination and energy. I'm convinced that it can happen."

Project Catalyst's biggest supporters have been residents of the Biddleville area. Louise Sellers, president of the Biddleville-Five Points Community organization and unofficial "mayor" of the area. "I don't know of any other place

in the United States where the citizens have planned their own community and we are grateful and thankful for that," she said. "We planned it, we told everybody this is the way we're going to do it." Project Catalyst was the brainchild of the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Citizens Forum, a countywide group that addresses land-use topics. The project has been financed by local government, corporations and developers who have donated land, money and services.

Among the donations made during a ceremony in front of the chapel at JCSU last week was \$15,000 from The Home Builders Association of Charlotte, part of a 25,000 pledge to the project.

Project Catalyst, which is expected to be finished by 1993, should cost around \$38 million.



Beatties Ford Rd. businessman, Nasif Majeed, accepts congratulations from Albright. The university President recognized Majeed for his role in Project Catalyst.



Ralph Abernathy

**SCLC Leader Speaks For Human Rights**

"Human Rights: An Agenda in Challenging Times" is the theme and Ralph David Abernathy will be the featured speaker for the National Association of Human Rights Workers annual conference and training session to be held October 22-27 at the Charlotte Marriott City Center, 100 W. Trade St.

The President of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s handpicked successor,) Abernathy has tirelessly preached on behalf of racial equality and justice across the nation and around the world. Since the death of Dr. King, Abernathy has become one of America's most respected black leaders.

He rose to national prominence when he joined with other black leaders in organizing the now-famous Montgomery, Alabama bus boycott of 1955-56. It was this protest that acquainted the world with non-violent action as practice within the United States. Since then, Abernathy has been arrested 38 times for advancing "the cause of freedom." He assumed the Presidency of SCLC in 1968.

"Hearing him," wrote one listener, "one could find it easier to believe that poverty can be eliminated with a stroke of the pen, that every qualified worker is entitled to the kind of job for which he is best fitted, that the spirit of brotherhood will erase distinctions of race, and that Thomas Jefferson intended his wording of the Declaration of Independence to be taken literally."

Abernathy will speak at the Human Rights conference on Friday, October 23, at 11 a.m.

Charlotte Mayor Harvey Gantt will also be a featured speaker during the conference. He will speak on Friday, October 23, at 10 a.m.

The National Association of Human Rights Workers is composed of professionals who have chosen to make the art and science of inter-group relations and equity under the law a way of life. NAHRW encourages the collection, compilation and dissemination of ideas, information and research among organizations and individuals engaged in the improvement of inter-group relations. The group also facilitates the exchange of knowledge, experience and research among governmental agencies and private organizations dealing with racial, religious, ethnic and cultural relations.

The three-day conference will present training sessions on the following topics: intake investigation referral skills; neighborhood crisis intervention; police community relations; affirmative action; and a workshop for Commissioners.

Registration for the conference will begin at 4 p.m., Thursday, October 22. Detailed outlines of all activities and other information of interest will be in the registration packet.

**Harris-Teeter Chief Says Statements Weren't Racist**

By Herb White  
Post Staff Writer

Bob Goodale says he is not sorry for speaking out on why there are so few blacks managing Harris-Teeter supermarkets but denies that his statements paint a racist picture.

"I'm not a racist. I am not a bigot," he says.

Goodale raised the ire of local blacks recently when he told the Charlotte Observer that blacks "have a history of compliance" that limited their chances of becoming successful managers.

"When I reflect on the response, which has been mixed, if I had known that was going to happen, I would've tailored my remarks," Goodale explained.

"I made a statement about a broad group of people. We have some fine black managers. I can attest to that."

The 52-year-old chief of the Charlotte-based supermarket chain offered an explanation why black managers are rare. It has little to do with intelligence, but family background.

"I've been concerned about the problem. I know a little bit about family systems and how it can impact through generations," he said. "I know how imposed behavior can affect generations down the road. You don't wave a magic wand (to change that behavior). The talent doesn't have anything to do with intelligence."

Goodale said he has received several phone calls and letters about his remarks, with response

running about 50-50.

"I've had an equal number of blacks to tell me that was right on," he said.

The company has taken steps to recruit more blacks in managerial and skilled labor jobs such as meatcutters and drivers, with some success, Goodale said.

According to company statistics compiled from 1982 to 1986, blacks made up 18.4 percent of skilled workers at Mecklenburg County Harris-Teeter stores, up from 9.2 percent in 1982, according to company statistics. The percentage of black managers has increased from 5.9 percent in 1982 to 7.9. Blacks made up 17.9 percent of Harris-Teeter's work force, compared to 15.7 in 1982.

Bringing blacks into the company has been difficult, Goodale said, because some stores are out of the reach of mass transit and long hours are sometime required. Nevertheless, the increase is seen as an improvement.

"That's progress," Goodale declared. "That's not proportional to where we want to be or where we will be."

Prejudice still is a factor in hiring practices, Goodale confessed. "It's a barrier. I'd be naive if I didn't say that," he commented.

The controversy has been positive in a way, Goodale believes. People are talking about the low numbers of blacks in positions of influence instead of denying a problem exists.



Bob Goodale: "I made a statement about a broad group of people. We have some fine black managers. I can attest to that."

**Mayoral Candidates To Debate**

The League of Women Voters of Charlotte-Mecklenburg, UNC-Charlotte Student Government and WSOC-TV are co-sponsoring a Charlotte City Mayoral debate between Harvey B. Gant and Sue Myrick Sunday, Oct. 25.

The event will be broadcast live from the studios of WSOC from 1 p.m. to 2 p.m. there will be limited

space for public viewing, with the audience to be seated by noon.

Bill Walker will moderate the debate. Panelists Kathy Merritt, Jim Morrill, Jeff Souier and Herb White of The Post will ask questions during the first half of the program. Audience questions will be asked during the second half.

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