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IN



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Also serving C

Brooklyn's bridge

Second Ward initiative revives history of long-destroyed inner city neighborhood

By Herbert L. White
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Urban renewal killed the Brooklyn neighborhood. Urban revival would bring it back to life.

Lost in the hype of building a baseball stadium in Charlotte's urban core is remaking the long-destroyed neighborhood with a nod to its history.

Brooklyn Village is the linchpin of the Second Ward Neighborhood Vision Plan, a joint effort between city planners, developers and stakeholders from the historically-black community that was razed in the 1960s as part of Charlotte's urban renewal push.

Brooklyn Village, which boosters describe as "urban revival," was approved by Charlotte City Council in 2002 and

would bring new housing and retail to center city. Once obliterated, Brooklyn, which was the heart of black Charlotte for most of the 20th century, became home to corporate-owned hotels, Marshall Park and the Mecklenburg County Aquatic Center. Single-family homes, most black-owned businesses and Second Ward High School, opened in 1923 as the first built for blacks in Mecklenburg, were wiped out. Other neighborhood landmarks, such as Friendship Missionary Baptist Church, were relocated.

"A lot of us feel that part of the community should've never been destroyed," said Charlotte architect Harvey Gantt, who is consulting with Spectrum Properties, Brooklyn Village's developer.

How quickly Brooklyn's restoration becomes reality depends on baseball. Charlotte Center City Partners, the engine behind bringing baseball to the

Please see BROOKLYN/6A



CHARLOTTE CENTER CITY PARTNERS

Top: Second Ward High School homecoming queen Margaret Alexander, 1941. Second from top: Condos and apartments at Stonewall Street would be part of the proposed Brooklyn Village, as part of the Second Ward redevelopment plan.



CHARLOTTE CENTER CITY PARTNERS

A baseball stadium for the Charlotte Knights, like Brooklyn Village, would be built with private funds if Charlotte City Council, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools and Mecklenburg County commissioners agree to a complex land swap.

Bailey Teague stands in front of his Plum Street home. The site of Teague's home and the neighborhood grocery store he owned are now part of the I-277 and Independence Boulevard interchange.



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A view of Brooklyn

Highlights of the Brooklyn Village plan if an uptown land swap is approved:

- Recall some of the history of the original Brooklyn area;
- Build mixed-use, mixed-income village with shops, and homes;
- Bring back streets that were obliterated by urban renewal in the 1960s that made Brookshire Freeway and I-277 possible;
- New park;
- Provide a new headquarters for Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools;
- Could add a new magnet high school

Illegal immigrants stay on alert with their every move

By Hazel Trice Edney
NATIONAL NEWSPAPER
PUBLISHERS ASSOCIATION

WASHINGTON — Michele sits up startled in her full-size bed. Her heart is thumping. Her mind races with fear as she peers at the glow of the digital clock in the dark. It's near midnight. Who could be knocking at her door at this hour?

She crawls from her bed and tiptoes slowly across the carpeted floor of her efficiency apartment, horrified at the prospect of who could be awaiting her. She holds her breath as she nears the door. Peering through the peek hole, she sighs with relief. It's only a fireman.

The 37-year-old laughs heartily as she recounts the incident.

Michelle (not her real name) is an illegal immigrant from Trinidad, having overstayed an Immigration and Naturalization Service Visa that expired nearly 10 years ago. She has no driver's license, Green Card or passport.

"Sometimes you're getting up with night sweats and you're thinking, 'This is them.' You know they're coming... You feel as

though you're confined," she nearly whispers in her rich Trinidadian accent. "I can't go anywhere that requires an I.D. I can't tell anybody. I pick and choose the ones who I can trust. And I know who I can trust by having a conversation with them. It's hard; it's hard even to travel. So, in cases like mine, it's in the

Please see ILLEGALS/7A



J.C. Smith eyes rebound against Fayetteville State/3C

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Covenant yields forum on disparity

January summit to bring Charlotte leadership to work on tangible solutions

By Erica Singleton
FOR THE CHARLOTTE POST

Call it a meeting of the minds. Or an open forum for change. Or a chance to be heard.

In January, it's a summit to eliminate disparities that leave African Americans disadvantaged.

On Wednesday, members of the Charlotte-Mecklenburg African American Agenda, or CM3A, met with the media to announce a summit to address the need for collaboration among African Americans in Charlotte-Mecklenburg to affect change. The CM3A Town Hall Meeting will be held January 5-6, 2007 at the Charlotte Convention Center. Admission is free.

CM3A Chair, N.C. Sen. Malcolm Graham, discussed the organization's vision.

"Three years ago as a member of the (Charlotte) City Council, I thought it would be a good idea to have a meeting of the minds," said Graham.

From that thought, spawned the vision to "launch and maintain a powerful communication vehicle that engages... dialogue and action around issues affecting the African-American community." The main components to the organization's mission are "building collaborative relationships; prioritizing issues relevant to the Charlotte-Mecklenburg African-Americans; and empowering the community to hold all leaders responsible for improving the quality of life for African Americans living in Charlotte-Mecklenburg."

CM3A urges countywide participation, because "all citizens have a stake in the progress of the African American community."

Please see JANUARY/2A

the box

NEWS, NOTES & TRENDS

Remembering Earle Village with reunion

By Herbert L. White
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Earle Village is throwing a party this weekend.

The Earle Village Reunion will be held Saturday from 12-7 p.m. at Independence Park on Seventh Street and Hawthorne Lane. A social dance will kick off the festivities Friday at 7 p.m. at the Afro-American Cultural Center, 404 North Myers St.

The reunion will include a health fair with screenings for blood pressure, diabetes and drug and alcohol abuse; children's village with games and arts and live entertainment provided by hip hop, gospel and open microphone artists.

Please see REUNION/7A