

MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor and Town Council

FROM: George Cianciolo, Chair, Sustainable Community Visioning Task Force

SUBJECT: Sustainable Community Visioning Task Force Status Update

DATE: November 23, 2009

PURPOSE

Tonight, on behalf of the Sustainable Community Visioning Task Force, I am providing a summary of the work to date of the Sustainable Community Visioning Task Force. This status report is in response to the Chapel Hill Town Council's request that the Task Force provide a status report by November 24, 2009.

BACKGROUND

The Task Force Plan (Attachment 1) developed by the Mayor's Strategic Planning Committee provides an overview of the appointment process, describes the charge of the Task Force and lists possible tasks to be undertaken by the group. The work of the Task Force to date can be broken into 4 categories listed below. A detailed chronology is included as Attachment 2.

Community Listening Sessions

The Task Force gave feedback related to a week-long series of community input sessions hosted at different locations in Chapel Hill. Community input was gathered in a format developed by Town Staff and UNC School of Government professor Vaughn Upshaw. These sessions were held in the first week of June, 2009.

Task Force Expansion

The composition of this Task Force was an important issue identified by the Task Force at its first meeting on May 27, 2009 and remained an issue that needed to be dealt with in order for the Task Force to move forward. The initial efforts of the Task Force centered on recruiting minorities which were not represented in its initial composition. On June 16, 2009, the Council gave the Task Force permission to recruit and recommend for appointment up to six additional members; such appointments to be made by the Town Manager on the Council's behalf. The Task Force suspended its late July and early August meetings to actively recruit new members and to insure that the new members would not be 'left behind' regarding the informational studies to be provided by Staff. On August 25, 2009, the Task Force recommended the appointment of six new members, three African-Americans, two Latinos, and a UNC-CH student.

Review of Background Materials

After the composition of the Task Force was finalized, the group spent their first five meetings, beginning on September 02, 2009, reviewing background materials about planning issues relevant to the Task Force's future work. More details about these meetings are presented in Attachment 2 (Detailed Chronology) and 3 (Meeting Summaries). Town Staff felt it was important for the group to have a common knowledge base as the membership was diverse and included experienced advisory board members along with relative newcomers to the Town's planning processes.

Development of a Group Vision and Work Plan

The Task Force is currently working with Phil Boyle, PhD., President of Leading and Governing Associates, to identify, define and affirm the core values essential to the identity, character and sustainability of Chapel Hill. After this task is completed, with an estimated timeframe of December 2009, the Task Force should be able to use these values to develop a framework for examining the goals and trade-offs inherent in growth and development choices. The Task Force is expected to draft a set of normative principles based on these core values that should guide development and growth decisions over the next decade. The Task Force has met twice with Dr. Boyle thus far.

Anticipated Timeframe Going Forward

It is our goal to have identified, defined and affirmed the core values of the Task Force over the next several meetings and by the end of this calendar year. I think that Task Force members have been encouraged that, in spite of the diversity associated with our 23 members (one member resigned because of the time required), it is apparent that we share many of the same values. The more difficult task will be in determining how our core values get balanced as we begin to look at various areas which are potential sites of future growth. It is unlikely (but possible) that the Task Force members will assign equal weight to each of these values for each of the potential areas of future growth and development. Indeed, determining the correct balance of these values for the individual areas will require that the Task Force members rely heavily on our "collective wisdom" and function as a true team. In addition, we intend to seek public input on the values we have set and our apportionment of these values to various sites.

Our goal is to provide Town Council a set of recommendations regarding future growth and development in Chapel Hill and what it should look like by sometime in the second quarter of 2010.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Task Force Plan Adopted by Mayor's Strategic Planning Committee (p. 3).
2. Detailed Chronology of Task Force Work to date (p. 7).
3. Meeting Summary Binder (p. 8).
4. Draft Work Plan (p. 21).