



Quarterly Large Group Meeting Minutes
Monday, March 14, 2022, 9:00am-10:30 a.m.
Greenville Convention Center, Room 203

1. Welcome

2. Race and Housing Presentation: Ken Kolb, Furman University

- a. Presented preliminary data on racial, economic, and demographic changes in Greenville over time.
 - i. Even though Greenville's population overall has been increasing over the last ten years, the African American population continues to decline. Furman University is conducting research into why this might be.
 - ii. History of Greenville's Population: decreased from 1960 due to the collapse of the textile industry until about ten years ago. Began increasing again in 1980 in correlation with Greenville's revitalization movement and has been seeing explosive growth in the last 2-3 years.
 - iii. Neighborhood assessment: white flight from City core to periphery → property values in the core deteriorate → public sector reinvestment into the City core creates new downtown amenities → real estate speculators swoop in and create a bidding war for properties near those amenities, pricing out current residents, reinforcing and highlighting the racial wealth gap as African American households leave and the only people who can afford to move back in are wealthy, white households.
 1. In the US, the median net worth of a white household is around \$180k, for African American households the median is around \$20k.
 2. Special emphasis neighborhoods: over 50% of the population residing in 80% or less of the AMI. Even though these special emphasis neighborhoods have received a lot of support, the African American population there has still seen a 50% drop since 1990.
 - iv. Challenges:
 1. AMI is too broad a way of describing populations and identifying targets within that population; a more precise approach is needed as the percentage of wealthy households increases and skews the AMI to misrepresent the median income of an area.
 2. Targeting deeper affordability: by the time land costs, property taxes, and insurance are taken into account, 30% rent isn't covering costs. When serving the lower-income households, there is no scenario in which a property can be built and maintained to a high quality and only collect 30% rent without an ongoing subsidy.

3. Out-of-state companies are buying up older rental properties, fixing them up, and then hiking the rent up to unaffordable rates, disproportionately affecting POC tenants.
- v. City has grown 25% in the past 30 years via annexing neighborhoods but has lost 20% of its African American population. How is it that the City continues to grow and the population continues to grow, but the African American population continues to shrink?
- vi. Part of the answer: not only is Greenville becoming unaffordable, but the culture remains unwelcoming to African Americans and people of color. The opportunities for economic advancement and promotion are limited for people of color, and the cultural environment feels increasingly inhospitable as the white population grows.

3. LMO Update: Shannon Lavrin, City of Greenville

- a. Greenville passed its new GVL2040 Comprehensive Plan in early 2021 via facilitation of czb (a national planning firm which also facilitated Greenville's Housing Policy Study in 2016, resulting in the foundation of the Greenville Housing Fund), a 41-member steering committee, and an 18-month long process of problem-solving Greenville's explosive growth and need for strategic planning.
- b. The 2040 Comp Plan was created to be more flexible and dynamic to face the coming and ongoing challenges of maintaining Greenville's affordability while promoting its economic growth.
 - i. Specific nodes and corridors within the city, identified in the GVL2040 Comp Plan, would allow for sustainable new development inside the city that upholds the three nonnegotiable tenets of the Comp Plan: developing affordable housing, preserving up to 35% open space, and improving mobility to reduce reliance on individual vehicles.
- c. One of the goals of the GVL2040 Comp Plan is to produce a new development code and zoning code to be completed by the end of 2022. New codes will create actionable pathways for the Comp Plan to be executed, such as allowing for greater density.
 - i. Development code that is simple and straightforward to use, with a basic framework of districts and uses, development standards, stormwater management, and administration and enforcement.
- d. Because the GVL2040 Comp Plan is an urban plan, the zoning code must be an urban code to stay in keeping with the Comp Plan. Otherwise, the Comp Plan would have to be revisited and changed.
 - i. The community will see changes as a result; an urban zoning code means greater density, higher buildings, larger scale, etc. Single-family zoning in Greenville accounts for 38% of its landmass. Density, building height, and structured parking are flexible ways to include new housing types and increase affordability.
 - ii. Less reliance on the usage of space: the old code focused on separation of space usage. Urban zoning will mean more focus on appearance and emphasis on mixed-use.

- iii. Development standards: landscaping, signage, lighting. How they can be incorporated into a zoning ordinance. Greenville currently lacks lighting standards and that will be part of the new one.
- iv. Code administration: city council adopts new zonings and annexations. Planning commission reviews by-right zoning reviews, multifamily development, subdivisions, street-naming, etc. Board of zoning appeals reviews any exceptions and variances in the code. Design review board looks at architectural design in both historic districts and downtown. Planning and development staff are responsible for day-to-day administration of the code.
 - 1. Goals: ensure the code is easy for everyone to use. Provide predictability for both residents, neighbors, and builders. Increase the amount of things can be approved by right in order to avoid lengthy review processes.
 - 2. Tools for better process: improve review approval process and make outcomes more predictable.
 - 3. Concepts that are currently being tested for affordable housing in the code: 4, 5, and 6 story buildings in the nodes.
- v. SC does not have inclusionary zoning so affordable housing cannot be mandated, only incentivized.
- vi. Reduce NIMBYism: explaining to communities where the nodes and corridors are and where they can expect to see change. Remind them that they advocated for this Comp Plan and this code, and this is just the Plan and Code in action.
- vii. www.greenvillesc.gov/devco to see more information and learn how to become involved.

4. Comprehensive Affordable Housing Recommendation: Nancy Lee, Habitat for Humanity of SC

- a. Habitat for Humanity of SC is Habitat’s statewide hub for advocacy and networking.
- b. ARPA: American Rescue Plan Act, comprehensive bill enacted to assist states, counties, and cities recover from the pandemic. The state of SC is receiving a little under \$2.5B for allocation. Greenville County received a little over \$101M, and the City of Greenville received \$17.9M.
 - i. So far, the allocation plan seems friendly towards affordable housing, addressing affordable homeownership, rental assistance, development, and mortgage relief.
 - 1. Any households at or below 65% AMI are automatically considered impacted by the pandemic, so no justification is needed for serving them.
 - ii. Two subcommittees met over the summer and fall of 2021 and have approved their first set of recommendations for the first tranche, which prioritizes transportation, water/sewer, and broadband.
- c. Several state housing groups (SCACED, Habitat for Humanity of SC, local housing authorities, and local housing trust funds) coalesced to ask for \$197M to be allocated for housing in the second tranche.

- i. The idea was for these groups to capitalize on the established partners, networks, and service outlets for using this funding, which must be used by 2026, and to combine efforts for greater service scope and bandwidth.
 - ii. Targeted scope: multifamily rental units, subsidy and counseling services, building single family homeownership opportunities, preservation of vacant housing stock for either rental or homeownership opportunities.
 - iii. Overview of Recommendations: \$7M for housing stabilization and assistance, \$75M for construction of new affordable rental housing units, \$25M for preservation of existing affordable rental units, \$30M for affordable rental housing development, \$50M for affordable homeownership via new construction, preservation of vacant stock, and owner-occupied home repairs, and \$10M for affordable homeownership development.
 - iv. Funds would be allocated to SC Housing, which would then distribute the funds based on the above recommendations. Nonprofits set up to handle federal dollars may not necessarily need a passthrough.
- d. Timeline: House was met on 3/14/22 in the afternoon to discuss the first tranche. Not sure if a decision will be reached this session; it may come in the summer or fall.

5. Dashboard Update: Tina Belge, Greenville Housing Fund

- a. Production pipeline for 2021: almost 600 of the units out the 1000 projected have broken ground, and the remaining units are still on track. None were pulled from the pipeline, though the timeline changed. 2022 should be heavier in terms of unit count.
- b. Preservation pipeline for 2021: goal of 300 was far surpassed with over 439 units preserved.
- c. Advocacy issues looking ahead: LMO, UDO, ADU, use-by-right, use of lots, SC ARP funds, and the state tax credit bill.
- d. Next meeting will be in June 2022 and working groups will continue to meet every other month; materials from this meeting and the SCACED and tax credit letters will be sent out.

6. Adjournment