



PARK PLACE ACTIVITY CENTER STUDY

Meeting Date: January 29, 2007
Meeting Location: The Embassy
1925 Glenn Club Drive
Attendees: 52 signed in

Agenda

Introductions - *Brett Harrell - 78 CID Executive Director*
Format of Tonight's Meeting - *Gary Cornell*
Overview of Project Goals and Schedule - *Gary Cornell*
Community Preference Survey - *Charlotte Weber*
Break Out Sessions

Presentation

Brett Harrell, Executive Director welcomed all the attendees and expressed how important this project is to the community's future. Gary Cornell from JJG then gave an overview of the evening's agenda and then an overview of the project goals and schedules. Some of the highlights from the presentation include:

Project facts:

- **Population:** 3,567 persons in 1,371 households
 - Median Age: 39.4 years (12.6% of population > 65 yrs.)
 - Median HH income in 2006 is \$54,086
 - Median Value of Home is \$162,500 (72% are Owners)
 - Racial composition is 53% non-white/ 47% white
- **Employment:** 445 businesses with 5,928 employees
 - 38% are retail jobs and 31% service sector jobs
- **Traffic:** Average Daily Traffic on US 78 was 57,000 vpd in 2005

Study Area Issues:

- Changing Demographics and Economics
- Traffic Congestion
- Mobility Needs
- Access Management & Connectivity

Study Area Opportunities

- Stone Mountain Park
- Attractive Work Places
- Accessible Neighborhoods
- Vacant Land

Project Goals

- Foster Sense of Place and Create a Distinctive Character
- Address Transportation and Land Use Needs within the Study Area
- Establish Specific Master Plan with Design Standards



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The presentation also included information from the transportation analysis, real estate market analysis, land-use and transportation relationship, and public outreach and involvement.

Next a question and answer session was held to address specific questions, which are summarized below:

General Notes/Q&A:

- What about service roads?
GC – we are looking at that – especially re-widening/access
- How will the study look at housing?
GC –new housing types for changing demographics (e.g. smaller households, more elderly)
- What about the reversible lanes changing to raised medians? Won't that make it difficult for existing businesses?
GC – not if we “minimize” curb cuts and add inter-parcel access and service roads
- Are any CID's having successes?
GC – Yes, Perimeter/Cumberland CIDs
- Help the businesses that are here rather than adding new business.
GC – shift commercial mix to more mix of uses, less total retail
- The 78 median is designed and likely to be built
- Do CIDs look at mix of businesses?
GC – Ackerman will help with that – example is Decatur business mix
- Relationship between 78 CID and study area

Notes from Comment Sheets:

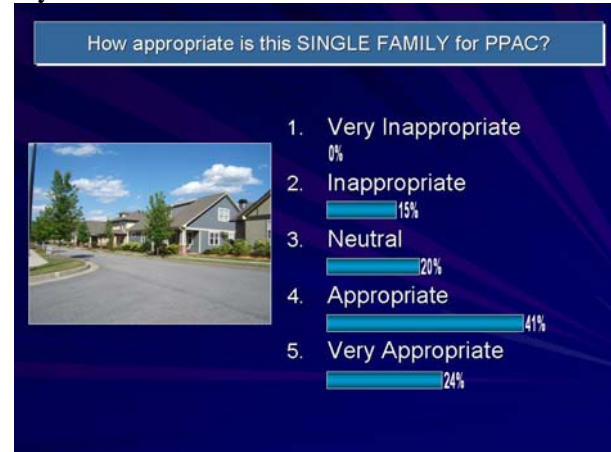
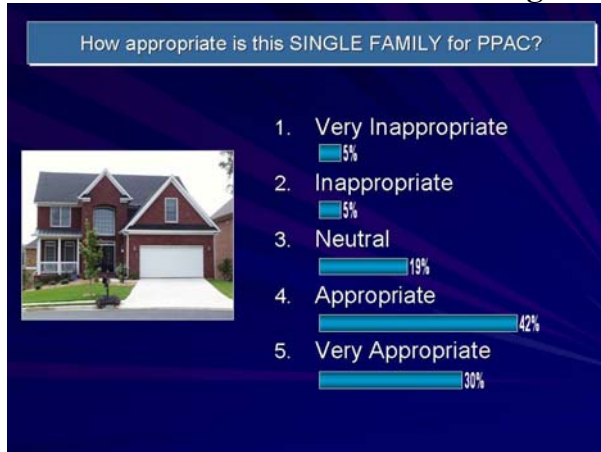
- Priorities – pedestrian-oriented changes; housing types
- Thoughts – to be able to walk through residential subdivisions (cut through) to get to business district
- Move post office on East Park Place to empty Cub Food area

Community Preference Survey

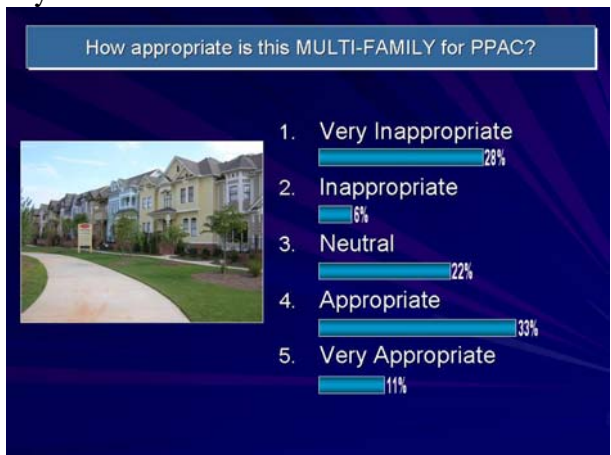
After the completion of the question and answer session a community preference survey was held using wireless keypad voting. Every participant was given a keypad and then were asked to rate their preference from [1: Very Inappropriate to 5: Very Appropriate] on a variety of land uses including single family, multi-family, commercial, industrial/office, mixed-use, and street types. The results appeared on the screen immediately after each voting slide and participants were able to discuss the results. The top two highest rated images for each topic are featured on the following pages. Additional analysis will be conducted on the results later in the project.

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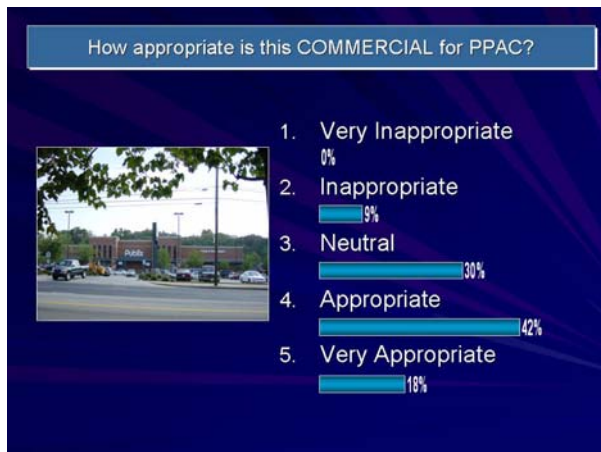
Single Family Results



Multi-Family Results

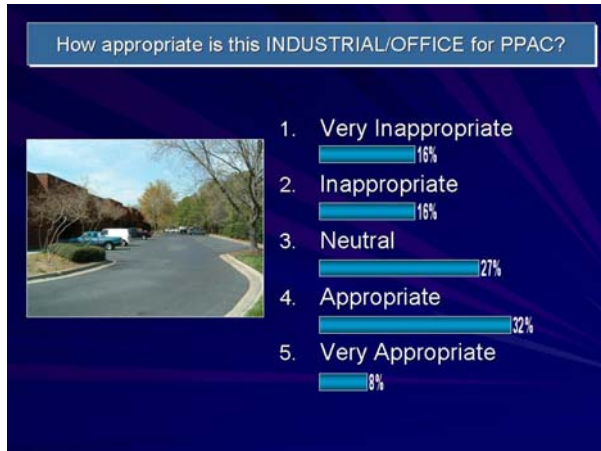


Commercial

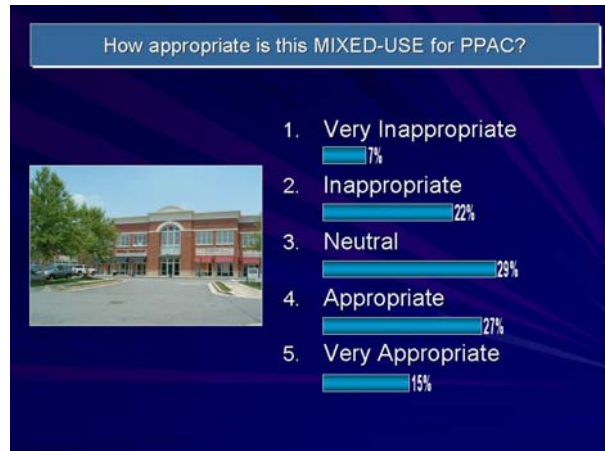
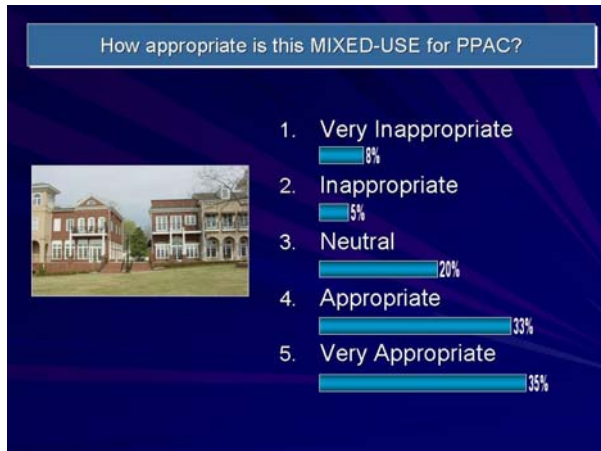


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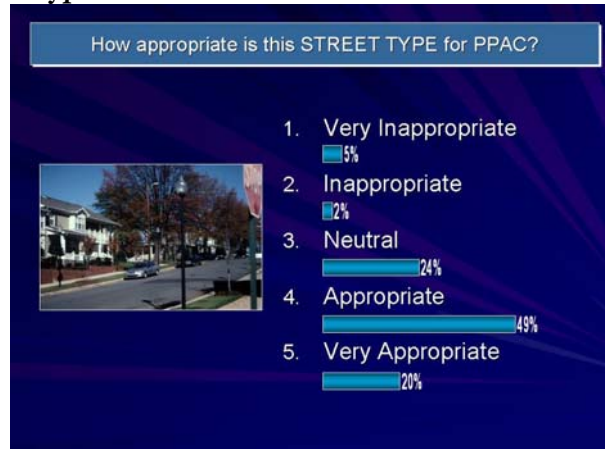
Industrial/Office



Mixed-Use



Street Type





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Break Out Sessions

At the conclusion of the Community Preference Survey, participants were then asked to break out into two groups and were led in a SWOT analysis S: Strengths, W: Weaknesses, O: Opportunities, T: Threats. The results of this are listed on the following pages.

Group 1:

Facilitated by: Gary Cornell:

Strengths

- Schools
- Recreational opportunities
- Accessibility
- Close to 285
- Close to Stone Mountain Park
- Housing good – large lots & homes; single-family – not cluster homes
- Very few apartments
- Good emergency services – police, fire, EMS
- Strong homeowner association
- Easy to get around inside the area
- Friendly community
- Good mix of churches
- Retirement community
- Lots of parks in the area

Weaknesses

- Empty/vacant buildings
- Increasing rental property
- Appearance of 78
- Lack of sidewalks (sidewalks to nowhere)
- 78 traffic
- Pedestrian unfriendly
- Deteriorating neighborhoods
- Poor variety of retail/services
- Not enough nice restaurants
- No grocery store in study area
- Schools declining (south of 78)
- No theaters (movie)
- Traffic is speeding (Park Place)
- Not bike-friendly – hard to get to Stone Mountain Park on bike
- No sidewalks in subdivisions



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- No focal point
- No beginning – no end
- Hodgepodge of businesses – no organization
- No landmarks
- Library needs improvement
- Cut-through traffic (DeKalb Co.)
- Too many “Rockbridge Roads”
- Not enough senior living options
- No transportation system for seniors

Opportunities

- Vacant buildings
- Room for improvement
- Undeveloped real estate
- E. Park – Davis service road would open more business opportunity
- Upper class restaurants- sidewalk cafes
- Mixed-use buildings
- Ethnic restaurants
- Bike options – pedestrian options – multi-use paths
- Special lane for trucks
- Transportation for non-drivers
- Zoning – limits on big box stores
- Book stores – special books
- Express bus to Emory/CDC

Threats

- Property value decline
- More deteriorating homes/retail
- Deteriorating schools
- Crime on the increase
- Not enough law enforcement – manpower
- We could be passed over for Snellville
- Subdivisions could change from safe to ones with lots of crime
- Increase in rentals (single-family)
- Investor-managed housing
- Code enforcement decline
- Vandalism – hard to arrest
- Perception worse than reality – fear
- Increased cut-through traffic on residential quiet streets
- Rezoning to high density (500 homes on 60 acres)



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Group 2:

Facilitated by: Charlotte Weber and Jonathan Lewis

Strengths

- Single-family homes stability
- Few apartments
- Strong community/neighborhood association
- Community involved in schools
- Retail & accessibility to stores
- Locally owned businesses
- Good local access
- CID
- Sign control
- Stone Mountain Park
- High visibility/gateway
- Access to 78
- Many parks nearby
- Good place to commute from
- Access to 124
- Low crime
- Not overly developed, potential to add, not out of control
- Personality maintained
- Schools
- Close to I-285
- Retail
- Access to airport, Downtown
- “Out, but not too far out”
- Trees, greenery

Weaknesses

- No right-hand turn lanes
- Vacant retail space
- Few upscale restaurants
- Non-vehicular crossing of 78
- Aging infrastructure
- Lack of investment
- Speed limit (too fast)
- Reversible lanes (begin in June, take 2 years)
- No direct access to Stone Mountain Park – especially bike/pedestrian access
- Shopping areas in decline
 - Former Cub Foods



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- Former Kroger
- Ingles
- Vacant theater
- No movie theater
- Rental properties
- Plenty of parking
- Duplication of retail

Opportunities

- Attract large businesses (e.g. UPS), high-tech to help support schools
- To diversify retail
- More upscale restaurants & retail (e.g. Avenues, Forum)
- Outlet mall
- More offices
- Improve signage & storefronts
- More parks & greenspace
- Outdated architecture
- More walkable community
- More upscale hotels
- Bed & Breakfast

Threats

- Overloading the schools
- Apartments
- Without intervention, the area could decline
- More County support
- Increasing crime
- Gangs
- Area gets passed by
- Public transit
- Taxes – Suwanee/Duluth (question was asked if taxes increased)