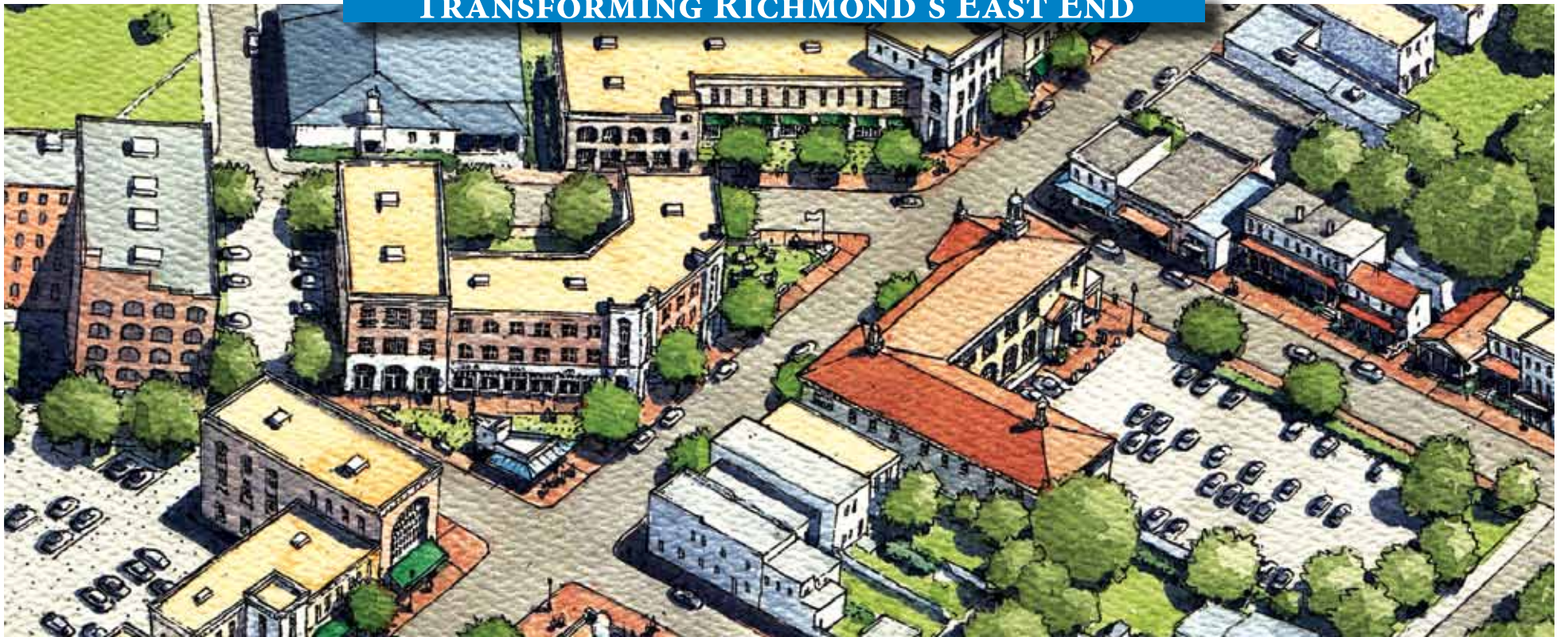


POST-CHARRETTE PAPER

EAST END

TRANSFORMING RICHMOND'S EAST END



A depiction of how the intersection of 25th and Venable streets could be transformed to become a vibrant and thriving part of the neighborhood.

Illustration: Duany Plater-Zyberk & Company

Charrette Promises Transformation for East End

BY ELIZABETH PLATER-ZYBERK

The East End Transformation Charrette represents an extraordinary collaboration. Beginning with the public/private partnership of the City of Richmond, Bon Secours Health System and the Richmond Redevelopment & Housing Authority, and extending to more than 800 people who participated in the opening and closing sessions, the hundreds of citizens who joined sessions throughout the week, representatives from neighborhood residential associations, business owners, foundations and corporations, as well the families and students who participated in the youth charrette, many points of view were shared. Designers worked throughout the week to illustrate the vision of the community in concert with the historic integrity of the neighborhood and current best practices in neighborhood planning.

Community Assets

The charrette partners outlined broad goals for the outcome, seeking to secure a healthy community through a strong economic base, renewal of historic architecture, environmentally and socially sound streetscapes and landscapes, enhanced services and reinforcement of social diversity. Everyone recognizes that the East End is a legacy neighborhood with a beautiful fabric of historic buildings and streetscapes.

The underlying assets of the natural environment — the fact that the neighborhood



Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk at the opening of the charrette.

is a hill unto itself — establish a vital community identity. The ideal neighborhood structure — a series of identifiable neighborhoods all within walking distance of shops and other mixed-use structures — generally is in place, poised to thrive as businesses and retail provide the necessary centers. Furthermore, the existing block sizes are ideal for walkability and connectivity, two leading indicators that contribute to more people walking and better health outcomes for residents.

Additionally, the neighborhood benefits from a wonderful store of civic buildings — more than 50 churches — and a number of other buildings that could be incorporated into a historic trail that would inform visitors and residents about the people and events significant to the community's history.

"Main Street" Focus

Given the many strengths of the East End, the partners and charrette designers focused on its "Main Street," 25th Street, from Broad through to Nine Mile Road, with intersections at Jefferson, Venable,

Fairmount, 28th Street and 31st Street representing important centers. Projects were developed with an eye toward potential resources that the city has identified. These include Promise Neighborhoods, Choice Neighborhoods and other federal funding programs, as well as current allocations, such as state and federal government funding for a roundabout and a sewer system renovation, and foundations and not-for-profits, including two community garden groups, which are ready to participate in renewal initiatives.

Projects range from infill, such as those that could be supported by a community land trust at the scale of individual homes that would provide housing priced between supported and gentrified housing to aggregated parcels, such as those acquired at the intersection of 25th and Nine Mile Road by the Housing Authority, or larger parcels, such as Richmond Community Hospital and the Armstrong School, which exemplify opportunities for landmark campus development.

Building on the success of the existing neighborhood and related initiatives, the charrette's emphasis on the corridor concentrates on "Main Street," leveraging public investment in order to enhance both reality and perceptions of the overall area, ensure a predictable future, and encourage private investment. This sequence of actions has proven to produce success: a plan, public investment, public realm improvements, regulatory changes as needed, and private investment.

Thank You from Mayor Jones

Ladies and Gentlemen:

I want to personally thank all the residents who joined in the effort to develop plans for revitalizing the East End and Nine Mile Road corridors of our city. Your participation and energy during this process is an example of how our residents are taking an active role in "Building a Better Richmond" and becoming a Tier One City.

The charrette included ideas for design, housing and business opportunities, as well as policy and management recommendations for redevelopment. The discussion highlighted several key items that the residents of the East End and Nine Mile Road corridor want in revitalization. The East End has enormous potential that will be achieved through this process.

Thank you again for sharing your ideas and helping us to "Build a Better Richmond."



Sincerely,
Dwight C. Jones
Mayor

VISIT THE DRAFT PLAN AND PROVIDE YOUR INPUT AT www.EastEndVision.org.

THE TOWN PAPER

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The Richmond East End Charrette was sponsored by ...



“The East End Charrette was one of the best charrettes I have ever attended because of the involvement of key players and the participation of the community.”

~ Mary Robinson, Senior Ambassador Council Member

Richmond's Promise Neighborhood: East End Achievement Zone (EEAZ)

BY CYNTHIA I. NEWBILLE
COUNCIL MEMBER

There are many exciting and innovative initiatives targeting the East End of Richmond these days – Promise Neighborhoods (education), Choice Neighborhoods (housing), 9 Mile Road/25th Street Corridor revitalization (economic development), and the LISC United for Progress Neighborhood Initiative in Fulton (community development).

As a result, in a relatively short period of time, unprecedented public, private, civic and resident resources have been engaged in an ongoing collaborative planning process to advance these initiatives to improve the quality of life of current and future East End residents. The recent Bon Secours Health System- City of Richmond- and Richmond Redevelopment and Housing-sponsored community planning and design charrette is a phenomenal example of how collaboration has made a difference in identifying ways to improve the East End community.

During the charrette, many stakeholders, organizations and residents shared in planning that supports the Promise Neighborhoods initiative, which focuses on creating a pipeline of academic, developmental, social enrichment, and support services for children and families in the Woodville Element-



Cynthia I. Newbille
Richmond City Council Member

tary School and its catchment area with the goal of maximizing their educational achievements and opportunities.

This Promise Neighborhoods initiative builds upon the Harlem Children's Zone, which is a program that strives to overcome the limits of traditional approaches for fighting poverty. Based on the success of this “best practices” model, the U.S. Department of Education will award Promise Neighborhood planning grants of up to \$500,000 to 20 communities

across the country. There are occasions when grants are submitted to help a community without engaging and involving those who would ultimately be affected in the planning process. However, the East End planning and design charrette gave us an opportunity to change that by reaching out to the community, adults, youth, organizations and other stakeholders for their input on what would create a better community.

During the seven-day charrette, community meetings were held with almost 2,000 stakeholders and residents that will not only shape the social and physical infrastructure of the neighborhood surrounding the Promise Neighborhood target area, but will also inform the city's comprehensive 9 Mile Road/25th Street development plan, as well as Bon Secours/Richmond community's future

plans in the East End.

A series of the charrette sessions also targeted youth of all ages. Specific questions were posed to solicit responses regarding many facets of neighborhood life, i.e. social factors that make neighborhoods great places to live, work and visit were discussed, along with concerns, such as public safety, neighborhood amenities and education to name a few.

The charrette provided an invaluable opportunity to validate and affirm many of the things the Promised Neighborhood team already knew. It was especially exciting to hear young stakeholders articulate the change that they feel is best for their own neighborhood.

This direct input from youth, adults and other stakeholders served to inform and strengthen the East End's Promise Neighborhood's federal grant application, as it will and/or has informed the other initiatives currently underway in the East End community.

While the Promise Neighborhood federal grant application will be extremely competitive, we believe that the ongoing work begun in April 2009 by a diverse and engaged group of community leaders and organizations under the leadership of the Robins Foundation and the Community Foundation, combined with the community-wide stakeholder input from the Bon Secours Health System- City of Richmond- Richmond Redevelopment and Housing-sponsored charrette has uniquely positioned Richmond to become one of 20 communities across the country to receive this award.

RRHA Is Ready for the Future

ANTHONY SCOTT
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
RICHMOND REDEVELOPMENT
AND HOUSING AUTHORITY

The Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authority (RRHA) is pleased to take this opportunity to express sincere thanks and appreciation to the residents of the City of Richmond's East End for their participation, enthusiasm, interest and tremendous insight throughout the charrette process.

We applaud everyone — the residents, community leaders, property owners, businesses, community organizations, city agencies and the public-at-large — for stepping up to support this unique opportunity to build a vibrant, ambitious vision for the East End of Richmond.

The East End community and The Jefferson Family Resource Center were gracious hosts throughout the process and truly demonstrated that undeniable Richmond pride and hos-



Anthony Scott
RRHA

pitality. It was exciting for RRHA to be a part of this process along with the city, Bon Secours, Duany Plater-Zyberk & Company (DPZ), architect consultant Joanna Lombard and design consultant Lew Oliver. We look forward to continuing to engage the community and stakeholders in dialogue regarding a vision for revitalization and the future of the East End of Richmond.

RRHA is committed to ensuring the long-term viability and sustainability of the housing in one of the city's most important neighborhoods. Our vision, mission and values support the transformation of our public housing assets and advancing the rebirth of the city's East End through our commitment to partnerships and innovative strategies to bring success and quality results we can all be proud of.

The outcome of the charrette represents an ambitious vision for a vibrant urban neighborhood. Our revitalization efforts through

the Nine Mile Road/25th Street corridor, the advancement of the Neighborhoods in Bloom Program, and the modernization of the Creighton Court public housing community will enhance our ongoing efforts to support the city's focus of “Building a Better Richmond.”

The renewal of the East End of Richmond will result in a thriving community. It will be architecturally beautiful, have historic significance and hold mixed-use, mixed-income housing and economic development opportunities.

Reaching the goal of neighborhood revitalization will require substantial expertise and resources. With the momentum building amongst all partners to begin to bring this broad vision of these plans into reality, we know with your help we will be able to reach the goal and maintain the revitalized community's vibrancy for years to come.

We have come this far with your support, and we encourage you to stay involved and continue to work with RRHA, the City of Richmond, Bon Secours and DPZ to make the East End one of Richmond's premiere neighborhoods.



Improvements to the entrance of Bon Secours Richmond Community Hospital could encourage new businesses, such as a luncheonette and coffee shop, to locate along Nine Mile Road and screen the existing parking lots.

Illustration: Duany Plater-Zyberk & Company

New Ideas for Our Hospital

BY MICHAEL ROBINSON, HOSPITAL CEO
AND DEREK BATTLE
DIRECTOR, OPERATIONS & OUTREACH

While charrettes are known for bringing forward a diversity of voices and a broad spectrum of ideas, the participants in the East End Transformation Charrette spoke in unified voice when describing the significance of Bon Secours to the neighborhood. We share an appreciation of the importance of the hospital's history and its role in the neighborhood, yet we were surprised to hear repeatedly the desire for Richmond Community Hospital to look and feel more like the other Bon Secours hospitals in Richmond, even to the point of residents asking when we will give it a “proper saint's name?”

We also appreciated the frank and open discussions about why people choose Richmond Community for health care, as well as why they don't. Throughout the weeklong sessions, we learned that, in addition to providing health care, Bon Secours represents a stable and safe presence in the neighborhood.

Regarding the campus, residents shared ideas that they would like to see facilities that support the neighborhood. We heard, for example, that many of the hospital's

lunch-time visitors are from the neighborhood and not related to patient care. Neighbors tell us that a café, the expanded pharmacy with Dr. Edloe, and the security of the campus are all important to a safe and stable community. Some residents suggested that Bon Secours house a bus shelter to extend the sense of safety from the campus to the public transit stop.

We asked the design team to listen to the charrette participants and develop campus proposals that respond to the community vision. In response, the team has offered three scenarios.

The first proposal creates a new façade along 28th Street. In this scenario, there are opportunities for small clinical practices to infill along Nine Mile Road and for the hospital to provide a new look and renovated facilities.

The second scenario adds new medical office buildings to the hospital campus and provides a new face for the hospital and campus along both 28th Street and Nine Mile Road. In this proposal, two new parking structures would be needed to support the new medical buildings. Various opportunities for infill, which could include live-work units as well as retail and physician practices, could occur across Nine Mile Road

The third scenario is based on a larger consideration of the neighborhood recognizing that most signature destinations host a campus or institutional setting that is an aesthetic and practical benefit to the neighborhood. St John's Church and Patrick Henry Park, for example, provide a significant landmark and green space for the neighborhood. With this in mind, the third proposal considers the possibility of unifying the triangle of property bounded by Nine Mile Road, T and 28th streets. The resulting courtyard campus could become a Nine Mile Road landmark with amenities for the neighborhood, as well as adjacencies for clinical care.

All of these concepts represent a range of ideas and opportunities for consideration. They share the desire for Bon Secours to provide a stable and consistent presence to the community long into the future. Each concept approaches this goal differently. We look forward to your comments as you review the proposals on the website www.EastEndVision.org.

We are grateful to all those who participated in the charrette. Through this ongoing dialogue and development of ideas, we will continue to explore the visions that come forth from this wonderful process and strategize together to support a bright future for Richmond's East End.

Community Commitment Brings Vision to East End

Dear Friends:

I want to congratulate the residents and business leaders of Church Hill and the Nine Mile Road Corridor for demonstrating their commitment to the community with strong attendance at the planning sessions for the East End Vision.

High attendance from residents, business leaders and those with vested interest in the community spoke volumes about your desire to see the community grow and flourish.

I was proud to be a part in both the opening and closing sessions of the charrette, which together hosted nearly 1,000 participants. People of all ages and professions attended the events, and it was great to see that you recognized the importance of bringing the opinions and expertise of many to the table.

Perhaps what moved me the most was the input we received from those who participated in the Youth and Family Charrette. Often, children are the best barometer of what needs to happen in a community to make it work for the future.

The planners from Duany, Plater-Zyberk & Co. (DPZ) assessed the input of the children, teens and parents and brought their thoughts to the table as they planned for the community's future. Our hope is that the revitalization will touch and improve the lives of children and families, in addition to businesses and other stakeholders in the community.

Bon Secours was pleased to be part of the initial planning sessions, and we look forward to continued participation as we see this effort through to fruition. Richmond Community Hospital is a vital part of Church Hill and the East End. Our commitment to the health and vitality of the community is steadfast, and we will continue to support Mayor Dwight C. Jones and his team as they make progress in this important initiative.

Once again, congratulations! We look forward to your input as DPZ's initial plans become available for your review.



Peter J. Bernard
CEO, Bon Secours Virginia

“I was pleased that members of the community were asked to share their input. When we all work together we can stand and make a difference in the community.”

~ Mary Thompson, Senior Ambassador Council Member

Sincerely,



RECOMMENDATIONS

The leading projects that emerged through the charrette include new centers along 25th Street, campus plans for the larger parcels, a new gateway to the city along Nine Mile Road, improved pedestrian and bicycle access to downtown Richmond, and enhanced streetscapes throughout. Some of the highlights are illustrated here:

SOUTH 25TH STREET

At the southern end of 25th Street, the area is largely intact and the plan proposes continued renovation and in-fill. An examination of regulations, including the zoning code and historic design guidelines led to suggestions about adjustments, such as the lifting of parking requirements for neighborhood restaurants, to promote new uses in renovated buildings.

BEFORE AND AFTER



25TH AND VENABLE STREETS

This triangle of an historic gas station, existing seniors housing, the Shiloh Baptist Church, and the police station, shown as a new building, forms an important town center. The former Sunny Market is proposed to become an arts and learning center, a place for after-school programs and various activities for children, as well as a central focus for artists. The East End could be the next neighborhood in Richmond to offer artists residences, working studios, galleries, and other support facilities. A central shared focus for artists is often an attraction for private investment in housing and work space.

This plan also proposes additional housing above retail, facing a public plaza. The plaza and streets surrounding the triangular building are shown as paved to support both walking and parking space that also could be used for a farmers' market. The art center parking lot opposite could be maintained as open space for sculpture and outdoor activities.

The proposal for a new police station — the result of conversations with representatives from the 1st Precinct police force and neighbors — includes a phased addition with an initial building to the front, which allows the parking to stay in place, and a subsequent phase that replaces the existing building, includes additional parking and adds a meeting space upstairs for the community, one of the new building components the police representatives requested.

EXISTING



PROPOSED



FAIRMOUNT, NINE MILE ROAD AND 25TH STREET

The Housing Authority has aggregated land here, and previous studies have suggested this site as a supermarket location. The charrette proposal focuses on a new supermarket along Fairmount with an expansion of a currently proposed traffic circle into a town square, which engages the existing laundromat and gives the library room to grow on the square. This area becomes a prominent civic plaza located at the geographic center of the East End, the heart of the community. The town square provides a sense of place, while serving drivers in and out of downtown who help the supermarket flourish.

EXISTING



PROPOSED



PROPOSED — MARKET SQUARE



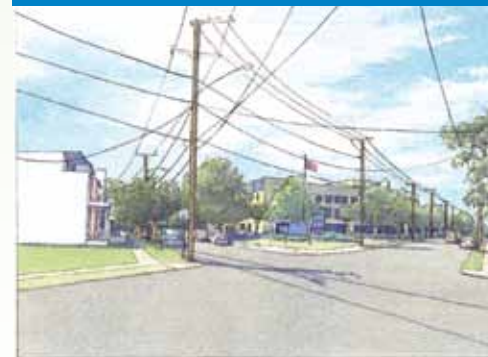
MEDICAL DISTRICT

Various studies of the hospital area show how Nine Mile Road frontages might redevelop with precise infill buildings, possibly live-work buildings providing commercial space for businesses or other kind of professional work. There are several studies of this area showing concepts for buildings at the hospital entry that could house a coffee shop or another activity related to the hospital, and screen the existing parking lots. An alternative, or second phase, proposes a new medical office building on the same site or to the west.

Assuming any future hospital extension to occur to the west, 28th Street is shown with additional street trees to support the existing houses and connect to the redevelopment effort already planned for the old Beckstoffer's mill buildings just two blocks away. Meanwhile, along Nine Mile Road there is the opportunity for supporting the hospital with small medical office buildings.

A long-term growth scenario engages all the blocks to the west in a medical district concept with office and professional development along Nine Mile Road. All three options illustrate hospital growth, which is not in its current plans, but are offered as a starting point for discussions since clarifying a future vision for an institution's potential footprint in a predictable manner can encourage re-investment by other property owners in the area.

EXISTING



PROPOSED



EAST END GATEWAY

As the entrance to the City of Richmond from I-64, enhancements to Creighton Court impact commuters as well residents. Proposing a community garden for the front of the cemetery in combination with a landscape plan that includes the beautiful trees along Creighton Court provides a memorable gateway to the neighborhood and city. Between Creighton Court and the Armstrong School there is a complex intersection of streets. Plans for reorganization include a new soccer field or green that permits full visual access and is useful to residents. The existing strip-shopping center remains an important retail resource for this side of the East End, with the understanding that its tenant mix will change over time. A new traffic circle facilitates flow into the city.

Within Creighton Court itself, an initial proposal realigns walkways to provide shared courtyards and private yards. A future plan reconnects Creighton to the surrounding blocks introducing new streets and sidewalks, as well as additional townhouses.

EXISTING



PROPOSED



THE EAST END VISION

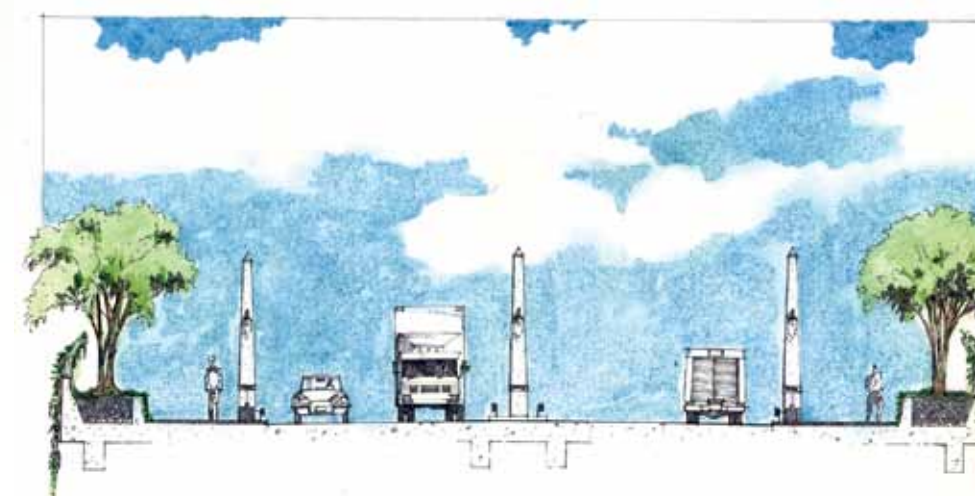


PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLE ACCESS

Access to downtown Richmond can be enhanced through a transformation of the Martin Luther King Bridge into a pedestrian — and bicycle — friendly streetscape. Since the volume of traffic can be handled in four lanes, the remaining two lanes can be used for pedestrians and cyclists. With expanded sidewalks on both sides, along with new landscape and bike lanes, the bridge provides a dynamic connection between the city and the East End.

STREETSCAPES

A street tree initiative completes the existing tree-lined streets of the neighborhood to extend through the East End. Generally, all sidewalks are lined with lawn verges and street trees, except in front of businesses, where the sidewalk pavement extends all the way to the curb with tree planters. This allows improvement over time, as property owners enhance the sidewalk and complete the streetscape with each property renovation.



A proposal for Martin Luther King Bridge as a grand entry boulevard into both the East End and the City of Richmond.

Illustration: Duany Plater-Zyberk & Company

“I was impressed with the participation of the community and to see the sincerity of everyone involved.”

~ Ida Ellet, Senior Ambassador Council Member

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION



Shaping the Future of the East End



Photos by David Everette

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION



East End Youth Impacting Future of Community

Local Youth Propose Ideas for the Community



BY RACHEL CLAYTON BULIFANT R.D. COMMUNITY DIETITIAN BON SECOURS RICHMOND HEALTH SYSTEM AND YAWANDALE BIRCHETT-THOMPSON - PLANNER, CITY OF RICHMOND

The Youth and Family Forum attracted a wide range of ages and perspectives. Preschoolers through high school students shared ideas and drawings as part of the weeklong East End Vision Planning Charrette.

The primary concern shared by the middle and high school students is the need for a higher level of public safety. Nearly every student began speaking with a statement about the changes needed in the adult population and the exclusion of people who bring trouble to the neighbor-

hood. The students want to see drugs and violence gone. Some of the students pointed to locations where drug dealers traffic and expressed the hope that neighborhood enhancements would focus on eliminating criminal and anti-social behavior. Students also identified problems with the large size of the school and the fact that the majority of the school encompasses all of the subsidized housing, causing an imbalance in terms of economic diversity among the students. They asked for smaller and more diverse schools. At the same time, they wished for a larger public library and more activities along 25th Street — restaurants, shops and more businesses, including a veterinary clinic — so that there would be summer jobs and internships in the neighborhood. The youngest participants also felt strongly about how life could be better in the East End. While the preschool children asked for gym-sets, and elementary school children tended toward after-school activities and streetscapes with youth-oriented amenities — ice-cream shops, a bakery and movie theater — all ages expressed keen interest in having more places to go. Every age group asked for more recreational opportunities, basketball courts, football and baseball fields — all spaces that could be supervised closely and kept safe. Overall, they share a great appreciation for the closeness of family and friends, the ability to walk everywhere and the sense of history in the neighborhood. What these students really want is a clear future for the neighborhood and, in this regard, they seek the same goals as the adults.

A Victory Garden for Richmond's East End

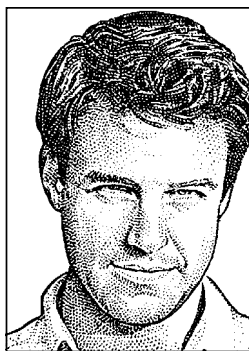
BY WILL SNYDER

Do you remember snacking on freshly boiled corn from your childhood? Or slicing up a tomato and smearing it with a little mayonnaise? If you're old enough (and I'm showing my age here) chances are good that those vegetables came from someone's backyard, probably your grandmother's. My own grandmother would plant a huge garden in her yard that looked like a jungle by August, overgrown with cucumber vines, melons and peppers.

She's 94 years old now and swears good health comes from a fresh tomato. And I believe her. So today I tend my own garden on Oakwood Avenue and work with others to start their own. (I don't have the green thumb yet — my tomatoes are a little stunted — but I hold out hope to someday have tomatoes like my grandmother.)

With each garden that's planted, whether large community plots or a small planter in the backyard, we're reclaiming a tradition as old as our country. During World War II, Victory Gardens were a sign of patriotism. In fact, over 50 percent of American households had food-producing gardens during the 1940s.

Not only did those Victory Gardens save money and conserve our food resources, they kept us healthy. But when we gave up the garden as a nation we started buying



Will Snyder
Wall Street Journal

food from corner stores and fast food chains. That means we're feasting on chips and sodas instead of okra and peaches. Now our city faces a health crisis. Richmond ranks number two in the country on per-capita dollars spent on junk food. And almost half of the deaths in this city are diet and lifestyle-related.

The East End suffers especially with these health problems. And that's because our neighborhood is a food desert. You might have heard this term during the charrette and it's an important one. The East End of Richmond lacks outlets for neighbors to buy fresh, reasonably-priced produce. We can solve that as a community by gardening in our backyards, at community gardens like the one on Jefferson Avenue, or by building urban farms.

The charrette created a great vision for the future of Church Hill including the suggestion of a new grocery store at 25th Street and Nine Mile Road. But many of the proposals will take years to implement. However, there's one that won't, and that's the call for urban agriculture. In any scale, from window boxes to community plots to full-scale farms in the city, urban agriculture installations can be quickly built and start producing in one season. Each crop that's harvested means more food security for our neighborhood and another outlet to combat hunger and poor nutrition. Hopefully one more ear of corn means one less



The lack of fresh, reasonably-priced produce in the East End can be solved by gardening in our backyards as shown by Tricycle Gardens.

Photo: Lisa Taranto

bag of corn chips.

Already in Manchester, Tricycle Gardens' model 1/2-acre farm is growing healthy food that can be sold cheaply to neighbors since it doesn't have to be distributed. It's creating a meeting point where the community can gather, and Tricycle Garden is

an engine for economic development.

Economic development? Yes. The local food movement is the fastest growing sector of the agricultural economy. And up until now, local food for the Richmond area has been grown in Goochland, Hanover or Chesterfield. But why not the East End? A farm doesn't have to be hundreds of acres tilled by heavy-duty tractors. An acre or even a corner lot can produce enough food for a neighborhood.

The East End is littered with empty land, from small lots to a 7-acre parcel behind Woodville Elementary. Not all of this needs to be consumed by housing or commercial buildings. Let's use some to grow food. And with each sustainable project comes the need for hired hands to manage the crop.

While the contractors are laying the brick and mortar for our much-needed grocery store, I challenge us to take progress a step further. We need a farm in the East End that could not only supply produce for a new store, but could hire fellow neighbors to plant, water and harvest. It could also serve as a learning center for both children and adults who want to grow their own food and learn about nutrition.

Let's imagine a greenhouse on Nine Mile Road where citizens can grow greens during the winter. What makes this neighborhood so unique is that we are residents with a myriad of life stories. But we share one thing as neighbors, and that's a desire to eat the freshest, juiciest tomatoes we can grow.

William Snyder is a writer for The Wall Street Journal and created a food column for its weekend magazine. He lives in the East End and gardens year-round.



A supermarket is proposed in the town square at 25th Street and Nine Mile Road in Church Hill.

Illustration: Duany Plater-Zyberk & Company