



New Bern Housing Authority and the City of New Bern

CHOICE NEIGHBORHOODS PLANNING GRANT
Trent Court/Craven Terrace/Greater Five Points Neighborhood

Recreation & Green Spaces Working Group
Tuesday, April 7 at 1:00 pm at Stanley White Recreation Center

Meeting Minutes

- 1. Attendees:** Thurman Hardison (lead), Kevin Robinson (facilitator), Kathy Adolph, Mike Avery, Nancy Gray, Paul Mills, Jennifer Knight, Mickey Miller, Pam Minor, Eric Cunningham
- 2. Handouts:** Parks & Rec Existing Conditions, Minutes, Sign-in sheet
- 3. Meeting Format:** We've done a lot of great brain-storming; now we're going to depart from what we have been doing and start organizing our thoughts so that we can get to the matrix of objectives and strategies. Kevin Robinson is going to assist Mr. Hardison in facilitating these meetings.
- 4. Existing Conditions map book:** At the last meeting, the group asked for more maps in order to evaluate current conditions related to parks, recreation and green spaces. Kevin has compiled a map book containing existing and planned/proposed parks, recreational facilities, amenities, open spaces, greenways, community gardens, proposed bike lanes and sidewalks, and vacant/city-owned lots. The map book also includes extracts of parks/rec recommendations from the Gateway Renaissance Plan. This is a valuable "one stop" resource for our group. It is now on the website under Resources/Recreation and Green Spaces Working Group.
- 5. Existing Conditions Analysis -- What do we have?** Using traditional **SWOT** analysis, the group listed Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats related to recreation and green spaces:

Strengths

- Lots of parks and open space/land
- Good Parks and Recreation Dept.
- Available manpower for maintenance/upkeep programs (inmates, community volunteers)
- Lots of retirees
- Cohesiveness amongst those who are involved
- Good water access
- Centrally located as a destination for the rest of the City

- Strong African American history heritage
- Plenty of land that can have different uses than typical parks

Weaknesses

- Small lot sizes and inability to determine or locate owners
- Lack of awareness about available facilities and amenities
- Lack of transportation options to and between facilities
- Lack of funding
- Lack of community involvement
- Water and environmental issues take some options off the table
- Lack of understanding the community between residents and those outside community
- Lack of private partners to help bolster parks and recreation efforts
- Need more of a focus on fitness
- Crime
- Vandalism and lack of pride in the community

Opportunities

- Re-use of vacated residential lots in floodplain
- Partner with and use resources of neighboring historic districts/neighborhoods to create new programs
- Investment from outside
- CNI Plan and “being on the radar” now for new sources of funding
- Chance to build sustainable relationships within and outside of the community
- More water access and opening up new areas
- Youth focus on water activities
- Opportunity to become an attractive option for younger professionals by combining new housing with new recreational components
- Art displays and programs as a way to attract artists to lower income areas
- Improve/expand/integrate cultural/historical resources into programming
- Connect recreation with history and tourism
- New Golf opportunities
- Retirees provide volunteers
- Connect existing parks
- Integrate recreation trails into everyday mobility....shopping, hospitals, jobs etc.
- Involvement from private and non-profit entities like hospitals
- New and innovative use of lands beside parks, gardens, forests, farms, educational trails and others

Threats

- Continued racial segregation/division of community
- Politics
- Disinvestment/Lack of funding
- Continued decline, deterioration and abandonment of public and private properties
- Flood plains
- Gentrification, loss of community
- Not getting more pride in the community

6. Next Steps: Where are we going? From these strengths and weaknesses, we'll next create our vision for future recreational amenities and open spaces. **How will we get there?** We'll then prioritize goals and objectives, and from them develop strategies or methods for accomplishing the vision. **Will it work?** Identify partners, resources, and obstacles for implementation, areas of overlap with other groups, and modifications needed.

7. Visioning Exercise -- homework assignment. To help in visioning, everyone was asked to create newspaper headlines that they envision seeing about recreation and open space in the Choice Neighborhood in the next 1, 10 & 20 years. See attached format. **Please email these to Mickey and Kevin to compile by Friday, 4-17-15.**

8. Needs for Next Meeting. We still need to look at youth engagement before we get too far down the road. Per Jennifer, Wendy Paschal from County Cooperative Extension (4H) is willing to partner for 12-17 year olds. Mickey will talk to Debbie Hodges about other ways to get youth involvement.

9. Next Meeting: Tuesday, April 21, 2015
1:30 pm*
Stanley White Recreation Center

*note time change