



Noisette™ NEIGHBOR

Volume 3 Number 1

Fall 2003

WHAT DO YOU THINK OF THE BIG PICTURE?

Neighbors react to Noisette Master Plan

In early November, more than 600 Noisette Neighbors came to the North Charleston Performing Arts Center for a first-hand look at the evolving Master Plan for our New American City. Reactions were varied, ranging from enthusiastic to cautious.

Park Circle resident Laura Jewell liked the ideas so much she wrote “residents, business owners and agencies involved...should feel privileged to be part of Noisette.” But, like many Noisette Neighbors, she also had concerns about proposed changes to Park Circle, noting “the almost unanimous opposition to any commercial activity within the square.”

Meridith Lang of Palmetto Gardens wrote us that she was “overwhelmed by (the Noisette) vision of our city,” but she hoped to see more attention paid to the Mixon Avenue streetscape she called “a mix of commercial, residential and missing teeth.”



WHAT OUR NEIGHBORS ARE SAYING

In neighborhood break-out sessions, Neighbors explored the plan's impact on each area within Noisette's 3,000-acre city-within-a-city. Here's a sampling of major issues raised in each session:

Liberty Hill

- What's in the plan for new roads, sidewalks, community center, parks?
- What about affordable housing?
- Tax impact on senior citizens?

Oak Park/Cameron Terrace

- Can concerns about truck and train traffic be considered?
- What about access to Filbin Creek Preserve?
- Is there a plan for flood and tide control?

NE Park Circle/Olde North Charleston

- Shouldn't we leave Park Circle alone?
- What about people who are displaced?
- Can we manage congestion, safety, and protect the park identity?

SW Park Circle/Palmetto Gardens

- Future changes to Montague Avenue: widen or decrease?
- What about “forgotten areas” near Michaux Promenade?
- What about density, business health, and taxes?

Whipper Barony/Rivers Avenue

- Restoring vegetation in median may be a good idea.
- Parking along Rivers Avenue may be a good idea too.
- Is there a way to help businesses?

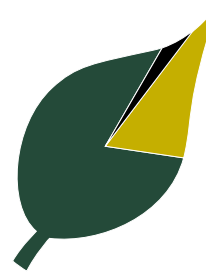
Navy Base/River Center

- What is the impact of removing St. Johns, Otter Bridge?
- Can the fence be removed soon?
- Perhaps include a dance hall and a dog park?

WHAT YOU WROTE

Response cards were filled out by 87 Neighbors and they offered more insight into community reactions to the plan. Here's how Neighbors answered the four questions:

What is your Overall impression of the Master Plan?

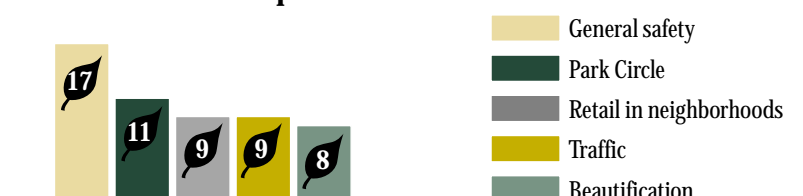


- 81** positive
- 17** wait-and-see
- 2** negative

What do you want to know more about?



What are the most important issues?



PEOPLE, PLANET, PROSPERITY - Highlights from the Master Plan

Although this long-term plan is still taking shape, several roll-out highlights were offered for discussion and feed-back – just like planners have done in dozens of neighborhood meetings over the last three years.

Presentations included topics like developing a shared vision for Noisette, restoring natural systems, restoring connections, helping neighborhoods become catalysts for change, and developing the old navy base property into a unique mixed-use area.



Building a shared vision for Noisette

Noisette is the product of a unique public-private partnership between the Noisette Company and the people of North Charleston. The aim is to create

...a vibrant, healthy city, embracing its heritage and celebrating its role as community, ecosystem, and marketplace.

The Noisette Company is charged with redeveloping 400 acres of the old naval base, and working with the community to lead planning and redevelopment of neighborhoods and commercial corridors within the rest of the 3,000-acre Noisette Area.



Present

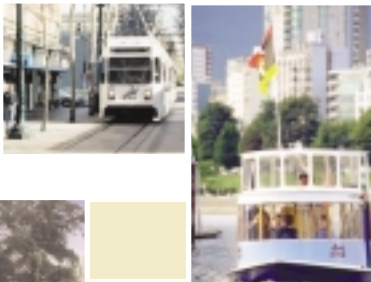


Future

Restoring natural systems

A major part of the environmental plan calls for restoring a healthy watershed through improved water collection and reuse, reducing runoff volume rate, and enhancing water quality. In one proposal, numerous drainage ditches in neighborhoods and along roads could be converted to features called bio-swales like those used successfully in other parts of the country to absorb and filter rainfall while controlling flooding.

Other conservation proposals include creating the Noisette Creek Preserve, building backyard rain gardens, using plantings from native plant nurseries, and encouraging aqua culture to replenish threatened fish and shellfish populations.



Present

River Center Park



Future

Restoring connections

Plans suggest creating people-friendly transit options connecting neighborhoods to community centers like schools, shopping areas, recreation areas, and the riverfront. Abandoned rail lines can become biking-walking paths. Additional boat, light-rail, and road-based mass transit systems can connect Noisette with the greater Lowcountry community. Small parks can be expanded and modified to encourage community use. Retail areas can be recrafted into pedestrian-friendly attractions.

Reconnecting neighborhoods to the Cooper River is another pivotal idea. The Noisette plan calls for creating a River Center park offering active-passive recreation while promoting environmental enjoyment and protection of habitat.

Neighborhoods as catalysts for change

Re-thinking various commercial corridors can attract business and help build pride among neighborhoods. Rivers Avenue and Spruill Avenue are two of the targeted byways that could be converted to shopper-friendly environments by reducing traffic speed and volume, and building people-friendly access to storefronts.

Schools and the community could profit by combining uses of school facilities. After-hours, schools could serve as community centers, libraries, and performance centers. It may be possible to bring a mixed-use definition to school buses too, combining ridership at various times of the day.

River Center base redevelopment

The process of converting the old navy base properties into an exciting mixed-use commercial, residential, recreational center is already underway. The plan calls for the Storehouse Row buildings (along old Avenue D) to be converted for use by businesses aggregated by common needs, goals, and business focus. Preservation of architectural elements and historic character are central to this effort – as is the use of environmentally friendly, non-toxic building and maintenance products that help create healthy buildings.

The entire area will evolve into a bustling center of commercial and leisure activity. Open-air markets will attract shoppers. Wireless Internet service will free office employees from their desks. Oak-shaded roads and paths will connect a network of businesses, nonprofit groups, and organizations cultivating the fine arts, dance, music, and theater. The old base will emerge as a cultural-commercial center attracting people to live, work, play, study, and enjoy life.



Present



Future

Rivers Avenue



Future




Future

Storehouse Row



PRSR STD
US Postage
PAID
Permit No. 137
Charleston, SC

Old Navy Base Complex
1360 Truxtun Avenue
N. Charleston, SC 29405

 Printed on recycled paper with soy ink.

**For further information on Noisette, call (843) 302-2100
www.noisettesc.com**

Next steps

Thanks to plenty of feedback by Neighbors, our design/architecture team is working to revise the Master Plan for presentation to the North Charleston City Council in January.

Following that session, plans will be presented at community and neighborhood meetings throughout Noisette.

Everyone involved in this process thanks you for your interest and comments. And we pledge to keep you at the heart of this process as the plan unfolds.



Photos from the Community Meeting - Thanks to all who came!