

West Nashville Community Plan Update

November 3rd Visioning Workshop

Summary of Table Discussion

This is the summary of the West Nashville Community Plan Update – Visioning Workshop held on November 3, 2008. About 90 people participated in the discussion at 8 tables. The Visioning discussion is summarized by Likes and Dislikes and also by opportunities to Preserve, Enhance, or Create community character. By doing this, some thoughts appear in more than one category. There is also a section for issues that particularly need further discussion in order to clarify how these should be addressed in the plan update.

Likes

Open Spaces

- Trees, parks, greenways, rivers, creeks, open space areas, wildlife habitat areas, undeveloped floodplain areas
- Golf courses – McCabe Golf Course, Hillwood Country Club, Belle Meade Country Club
- Green spaces, natural features, natural character (“living in the woods in a city”)
- West Meade Conservation Policy – would like to see more of it
- West Nashville Community Farm (57th/Tennessee Avenues)
- Trees buffer noise and temperature extremes

Community Facilities and Services

- Good city services
- Very low crime
- Cohn School building
- Police Precinct is scheduled to move; new location will provide better access for emergencies
- Councilmember Emily Evans

Neighborhoods

- Trees, tree canopy, large trees, green neighborhoods, abundant vegetation, older established landscaping
- Single-family nature of neighborhoods throughout West Nashville
- Existing established neighborhoods in general as they are
- Large residential lots – want them to remain RS40 and RS80 (especially in West Meade/Hillwood area)
- Rolling hills in the neighborhood, undeveloped scenic quality
- Diverse mix of residential types; residential of all sizes, including multi-family
- Unique neighborhood characteristics, distinct neighborhoods, neighborhood character, know neighbors, quaint character
- Peaceful and quiet
- Old homes, houses are not too close together, rising home values
- Dense neighborhoods
- Strong neighborhood associations, email listservs keep neighbors in touch
- Neighborhoods are on the other side of major arterial roads, convenient yet buffered
- Belle Meade Links (‘it’s a work of art’)

Centers

- Nashville West Shopping Center – building materials, lighting, quaint look, contains smaller commercial along Charlotte Pike with big box stores set back by the interstate and screened by smaller commercial up front
- Highway 70/100 Shopping Area
- Transition from retail to higher density residential to lower density residential
- Neighborhood-scale businesses, small groceries – Jack’s Market, Italian Market, Blue Moon Restaurant, Boss Hogg’s BBQ
- Good mix of private businesses
- Retail/pedestrian connections

Corridors

- Local businesses that re-use older buildings – Rhino Books, FABU, McPhersons
- Charlotte Avenue – on-street parking
- Some like Charlotte Avenue as it is, others want to see improvements
- 46th Avenue/Murphy Road – complete street with trees, sidewalks, and parking
- White Bridge Road commercial benefits Cockrill Bend businesses

Districts

- Industrial uses are separated from residential
- John C. Tune Airport – convenient, a general aviation airport
- Separation of prisons from neighborhood

Transportation

- Roads all connected, not many dead ends, traffic dispersed easily, access, good traffic flow and mobility
- Good public transportation; Charlotte Pike – good bus services
- White Bridge Road – sidewalks, good traffic flow
- Ability to walk some places, ability to walk in neighborhood
- Nice areas to bike in, ability to go places on bicycles
- Low vehicular traffic on local streets
- Rock Harbor Marina – well balanced, works with neighborhood, not too big

Overall Character

- Convenient – Downtown, interstates, Nashville West, universities, other communities, Percy Warner Park, churches, athletic clubs, shopping, medical areas
- Connectivity to other neighborhoods, accessibility of area to entire county, leave town easily
- Diversity of people, casual living, neighborhood character
- Historic buildings – specifically mentioned were those along Charlotte Avenue, Church of Christ Church building at 46th and Charlotte, Cohn School building. Suggestion was to check with historic and see if rock wall on top of ridge separating West Meade from Bellevue is historic and if not, include in inventory of historically significant features in West Nashville
- Land Use Policies as they are (“If it ain’t broke, don’t fix it.”)
- General character of West Meade / Hillwood area
- Growth never taking priority over livability
- Best part of town to live in; it’s home – everything about it
- Few LED signs

Dislikes

Open Spaces

- Not enough trees throughout the community
- Not enough access to creeks/rivers
- Not enough parks
- Bulldozing of hills
- Jocelyn Branch of Richland Creek in Post Road/Sedberry Road area – pollution threatens it, what is the cause, problem needs to be solved

Community Facilities and Services

- Crime (seems to be increasing in Richland Park area, business parking lots, unsafe feeling on Charlotte), not enough Police presence, need to get Police Precinct away from traffic
- Belle Meade Police – over-enforcement
- Charlotte Avenue/Pike area – increased graffiti
- Nations/Charlotte Park area – lacks services, schools and health-care facilities
- Lack of Codes enforcement, especially rental properties, homes/yards not always kept up (example: Robertson Road, Thunderbird Road)
- Litter

Neighborhoods

- Lack of buffers against commercial areas
- Large houses replacing smaller houses
- Subdivision of lots, especially in West Meade
- Condo development in Belle Meade
- Rodney Drive – noise pollution due to trees being removed for adjacent multifamily development

Centers

- Vacancies, lack of leisure/entertainment/sit-down restaurants/new grocery store on Charlotte
- Auto dealerships on Harding Road
- Not enough gathering spaces
- Nashville West – things were presented that are not there now, lack of residential as was originally proposed
- LED signs
- Grandfathered businesses which pollute (example metal-plating plant)

Corridors

- Businesses along Charlotte Avenue – business types and character, discount tobacco, 21 video, check cashing, title loan, pawn shops, seedy businesses, tattered appearance, need to attract better merchants, too many adult businesses (from Annex Avenue to I-440 boundary)
- Lack of Charlotte looking like one route out to River Road
- Proliferation and ugliness of commercial signs (LEDs, billboards) – Charlotte Avenue, Hwy 70/100 area
- Creep of commercial along Charlotte into the neighborhoods – keep commercial and higher density residential along Charlotte

Districts

- Too many correctional facilities in Cockrill Bend
- Industrial area too close

Transportation

- Lack of walkability, lack of pedestrian and bicycle accessibility (examples: Charlotte Avenue from Hillwood to 46th Avenue North, around Hill School), sidewalks where they exist are too narrow
- Lack of bikeways (especially along Hwy 70S, Charlotte Avenue, Harding Pike); bike trails not connected
- Pedestrian accessibility problems in most commercial areas and along most major streets
- Too many driveway cuts; needs coordinated access
- Lack of transit options; no park & ride
- MTA issues – needs more predictability, standardization at bus stops, clearly identifiable MTA logo or symbol on sign, route numbers serving the stop, shelter, timetables, lighting, trash cans

- Parking in bike lanes (example: Nebraska Avenue, 46th Avenue/Murphy Road)
- Highway 70/100 – trying to walk or bike from Highway 70S to Highway 100 is very unsafe, bottleneck for pedestrian/bicycle connectivity, needs bicycle path/pedestrian facilities/crosswalks
- Highway 100/Vaughns Gap Road – needs traffic signal, unsafe intersection, limits access to the park
- Cut-through traffic – increased external traffic, may be related to developments along the edges of Hillwood/West Meade, has potential to turn neighborhood into sieve for cut-through traffic (example: Bresslyn Avenue)
- Traffic speeding and congestion, too much traffic on main arteries, construction traffic, increased traffic in area, aggressive driving
- Traffic congestion on Charlotte and Harding, especially during rush hour
- Some concerned about proposed improvements to Charlotte Avenue
- Charlotte Pike – bottleneck of 2 lanes, narrowest road in city for its size, inconsistent right-of-way width, causes traffic congestion, road too narrow, too many driveways/curb cuts
- Speeds in relation to pedestrian/bicycle traffic on Charlotte Pike
- Speed limits are sometimes too high (example: Charlotte Pike 45 MPH and over in sections)
- Thought Nashville West would be more pedestrian friendly
- Impact of multifamily dwellings on traffic
- Trucks cannot turn around in the alleys so they must load/unload in the center turn lane (example: West End Avenue)
- Traffic flow problem around condos in Belle Meade
- Crooked road over bridge at Hillwood Blvd. coming out onto Harding Road
- I-40 noise, I-40 was a mistake, need to improve I-40, should have extended I-440 past I-40

Overall Character / Other

- Lack of a unified vision
- Loss of trees / too much pavement
- Too many auto-oriented businesses
- Lack of transparency with the development approval process, average citizen needs to see details, up to and including site plan
- Don't want to be told what to do as a business and property owner
- Overlay zoning / lack of overlay zoning
- Concern about what happens if Brookmeade Elementary closes
- Nashville West should not be a T5 center

Issues Raised that Need Additional Discussion

(This does not mean that we are finished discussing other topics; this simply means that people expressed concerns or conflicting views about the following.)

Needs Additional Discussion

- Charlotte Avenue/Pike – character, appearance, function – some want it to remain as it, others want some improvements, others want major improvements. Comments include: Trying to tie in what was achieved in draft Charlotte Avenue – Richland Park Detailed Corridor Design Plan into this community plan update without a full venting. Merchants along Charlotte are doing the best they can. Need to take affordability to business owners into consideration. Others want to see more pedestrian/bikeway connections and improved streetscape.
- Area across from Nashville West Shopping Center – currently residential and churches, should it remain this way or transition into something else? Concern regarding houses opposite Nashville West on Charlotte Pike turning into businesses – if there is any change, would prefer to see higher density residential – how would any changes affect surrounding residential areas? Mixed use or townhomes across from Nashville West Shopping Center; should provide a transition between the commercial and the single-family residential. Concerns already about cut-through traffic.
- Future of strip of land between Charlotte Pike and Old Charlotte Pike near Nashville West, concerned especially about the trees being lost in this area?
- Future of area where Templeton and Charlotte Pike come together?
- May Town Center – concerns over new bridge proposals and how a bridge or bridges would impact West Nashville (Hillwood Blvd. specifically mentioned)

Preserve

Open Spaces

- Trees, tree canopy, woods, parks, greenways, rivers, creeks, natural elements, natural beauty, green spaces, floodplains
- Parks, golf courses, greenways – all existing publicly-owned open space areas; retain for other open space use if current use ceases
- West Meade Conservation Policy (apply it to other areas with similar characteristics)
- Open space along Highway 70S corridor has potential to be bikeway
- West Nashville Community Farm (at 57th/Tennessee Avenues)
- Migratory bird corridor between Bells Bend and Warner Park

Civic / Public Benefit / Community Services

- Cohn School building, other historic buildings, rock wall
- New Post Office
- Cleeces Ferry
- Kelly's Battle Point – historic battleground site near Cumberland River (*Note: this is just outside the community in the Bellevue Community Plan area*)

Neighborhoods

- Existing neighborhoods, protect 'human scale', feel of neighborhoods, character, closeness, sense of community, integrity
- Existing single-family nature of neighborhoods (example: Long Blvd. development was cited as something not wanted in neighborhoods); don't allow lots to be subdivided
- Topography in neighborhoods, rolling hills, trees, wooded areas, hilltops, abundant landscaping
- Lot sizes in Hillwood/West Meade area, prevent infilling/subdividing/ tearing down homes to build larger ones
- Historical character of neighborhoods
- Historic areas preserved with a 'common sense' approach (including Cohn and Sylvan Park) – valid historic buildings only
- Diverse mix of residential types, all sizes, including multi-family, character of urban and rural homes

Centers

- Transition from retail to higher density residential to lower density residential
- Charlotte Pike as commercial center
- Shops with frontage on Charlotte Pike (buildings up to sidewalk)
- Smaller centers such as 46th Avenue/Murphy Road, Highway 70/100 split area
- Residential and religious uses along Charlotte Pike, across from Nashville West Shopping Center
- Nashville West Shopping Center – building materials, lighting, quaint look, contains smaller commercial along Charlotte Pike with big box stores set back by the interstate and screened by smaller commercial up front
- Neighborhood-scale businesses, small groceries – Jack's Market, Italian Market, Blue Moon Restaurant, Boss Hogg's BBQ, Wendell Smith's
- Good mix of private businesses
- Retail/pedestrian connections

Corridors

- Existing uses / building form along Charlotte Avenue (*Note: there are differing views on the Charlotte Avenue Corridor*)
- Older buildings and re-use them like others have done – Rhino Books, FABU, McPhersons
- On-street parking along Charlotte
- White Bridge Road commercial area
- Along Highway 70 – keep large lot character using deep, wooded setbacks, despite the subdivision of 5-acre lots – (example: near Vossland Drive)

Districts

- Separation of industrial from residential uses
- Old prison building (find a new use for it)
- John C. Tune Airport as a general aviation airport
- Separation of prisons from neighborhood

Transportation

- Road network connectivity – not many dead ends, traffic disperses easily, good mobility, connected to other areas and neighborhoods, access to services/shopping/churches/universities/entertainment, low traffic on local streets
- Ability to walk places, ability to walk in neighborhoods, ability to bicycle places
- Not building sidewalks and bike lanes in the West Meade area – low level of auto traffic, street connectivity does not warrant sidewalks – TDR-type scenario needs to happen, with West Meade/Hillwood being ‘sending’ areas and the Nations/Sylvan Park being ‘receiving’ areas for sidewalks and bike lanes
- Yards along local streets in some areas instead of building sidewalks (example: Sylvan Park)
- White Bridge Road – sidewalks, good traffic flow
- Hillwood Blvd. – do not put a bridge from May Town Center to connect with Hillwood
- Rock Harbor Marina – well balanced, works with neighborhood, not too big

Other

- Large trees throughout the community
- Diversity of people
- Existing land use policies in the 1999 West Nashville Plan, carefully review policies, retain them unless agreement that they not be carried forward
- Livability taking priority over growth
- Lack of LED signs

Enhance

Open Spaces / Civic

- Parks – increase quantity/quality and access/linkages, more pocket parks in West Meade area
- Greenway – more greenway access, extend Richland Creek Greenway to Percy Warner Park (along Harding and Belle Meade Blvd., possibly along railroad)
- Natural beauty of the area – well-suited to planting more trees, informal landscaping
- River access – not many places currently to access river and creeks, improve Cleeces Ferry ramp
- Better protection of streams
- Expand West Meade Conservation Policy northeastward toward Knob Hill and other green areas
- Reclaim/remediate some floodplain where it has been built upon (Cockrill Bend, Richland Creek)
- Historic prison building with new use

Neighborhoods

- Buffer areas between residential and commercial areas, don’t allow commercial to creep into residential areas
- Transition between the Nations neighborhood and Cockrill Bend
- Highlight neighborhood character
- Nations/Urbandale/Robertson/Charlotte Park area – increase access to services, health care, schools
- Multifamily buildings should face street

Centers

- More pedestrian activity, sidewalks and bikeway connections
- More shopping diversity/leisure/entertainment/dining opportunities in centers
- Smaller centers – such as 46th Avenue/Murphy Road, Highway 70/100 area
- More gathering places
- Environmental and aesthetic standards for businesses
- Add street lights at Richland Park
- Nashville West Shopping Center with more landscaping, pedestrian connections, residential

Corridors

- Put growth along corridors, not in neighborhoods
- Charlotte Avenue – business type/character, shared parking, street trees, limit access points/driveway widths, continuous sidewalk, more walkable, better appearance of strip development, unified character/clean up, as its condition, good or bad, seeps into/affects adjacent neighborhoods (*Note: There are differing opinions about the Charlotte Avenue corridor*)
- White Bridge Road – as a commercial corridor with good design
- Charlotte/White Bridge Road – opportunities for multifamily development
- Limit commercial signage such as LEDs and billboards

Districts

- Cockrill Bend area – more access to rivers, more public open space

Transportation

- Sidewalk connectivity, pedestrian/bicycle friendliness, more sidewalks to fill in gaps (along Charlotte, Highway 70/100, the Nations, along Morrow Road, current sidewalks too narrow)
- Extend greenway from Richland Creek Greenway to Percy Warner Park (could use Post Road as bike path, could also go along railroad track)
- Charlotte Avenue/Pike corridor – more crosswalks, continuous sidewalk, bike lane, mass transit with park & ride locations scattered throughout, reduce number of curb cuts, widen Charlotte at White Bridge Road
- Highway 70/100 corridor – pedestrian connections to keep neighborhood feel, with managed densification
- Bus service – bus stops need more predictability, standardization at stops, clearly identifiable logo, route numbers, schedule posted, shelter, lighting, trashcans – increase transit service through neighborhoods – don't require walk to main artery to catch transit
- Traffic calming; slow growth of traffic; better speed limit enforcement (specifically mentioned Charlotte and 42nd Avenue)
- Reduce traffic congestion, especially along Charlotte and Harding
- Pedestrian bridge over I-40 west of Briley Parkway – needs wayfinding signage/mapping to help in accessing it – it's hard to find it and people don't know about it
- Reduce noise from I-40

Other

- Community character
- Add more trees throughout the community
- Aesthetics of community – avoid garishness
- Infrastructure to handle growth, including sewage infrastructure
- Water quality
- Enforcement of rules, hold developers' feet to the fire, more 'green' rules for development
- Charlotte Pike overlay should include signage, materials, design guidelines
- Preserving older buildings along Charlotte is ideal, but understand constraints of functional obsolescence – someone noted that 'new' does not always mean 'strong/durable' and advocated that new buildings be made strong and solid, not cheaply
- Stakeholders who are most directly affected by the plan
- Communication with Planning staff
- Land Use Policies within the 1999 West Nashville Plan
- Support change when it improves the community but not just for the sake of change

Create

Open Spaces / Civic

- More greenways, including greenway/bike path on railroad right-of-way along Highway 70 (*also under Enhance*)
- More access to the Cumberland River within Cockrill Bend
- City garden in Cockrill Bend, convert some of former prison farm land to park
- More pocket parks, in Hillwood/West Meade, park in Sylvan Heights
- Riverside park in Cockrill Bend near airport / prisons
- Urban bird park, suggested by the Richland Creek Watershed Alliance, on both sides of creek at Charlotte Avenue and connect to greenway
- Expand Richland Creek stream buffer zone into riparian natural area at Charlotte Pike

Neighborhoods

- Gateway signs at entrances to neighborhoods
- More buffers for residential adjacent to commercial, with more dense residential zoning
- Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND) in Cockrill Bend

Centers

- More small grocery stores/markets/retail within walkable distances
- Mixed use or townhomes across from Nashville West Shopping Center; should provide transition between commercial and single-family residential
- Detailed Design Plan for the Highway 70/100 split area

Corridors

- Boulevard along Charlotte Avenue
- High density on main corridors only
- Sidewalk along Davidson Road along the Hillwood side of the street, not the residential side

Districts

- Use industrial land for new development since there are not many large tracts of land left in West Nashville
- Put new Sounds Stadium in Cockrill Bend
- Cockrill Bend – if prisons ever go away make some of that parkland

Transportation

- Additional pedestrian/bike routes, more bike lanes, better walkability to retail – Charlotte and White Bridge corridors, Highway 70/100 area, across Richland Creek, on Vaughns Gap Road to Percy Warner Park (*Also under Enhance*)
- Better pedestrian connections under/over/through railroads and highways
- Sylvan Park – sidewalks needed on major streets (arterial, collector), not local streets which would create a loss of yards/greenspace, suggested Nebraska Avenue
- Streetcar service down Charlotte – dedicated, short-headway buses as second choice / Street cars (electric) along major corridors
- Additional transit options, including light rail, park & ride lots along Charlotte, transportation options from Charlotte Park to Vandy area
- Water taxis on river, maybe with a park & ride or park & shuttle system for access, reinstate Cleeces Ferry
- East-west connection between White Bridge Road and Sylvan Park area, providing alternate east-west route to congested I-40 or Charlotte Pike, perhaps Knob Road as a possible location
- Traffic calming on collector streets
- Additional traffic lights in key locations (specifically mentioned Vaughns Gap Road and Highway 100)

Other

- Some higher density housing okay in appropriate areas
- Set 'green' rules for redevelopment
- Better regulations aimed at preservation/protection of existing trees, especially in conjunction with new construction
- Safety in zoning, requirements to protect women in parking areas, lighting, location of parking
- Move utility lines underground
- Permeable parking lots
- Pervious concrete
- Solar-powered street lights