

# Greensboro Neighborhood Congress (GNC) Meeting Notes Saturday, November 14, 2015

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GNC Co-Chairperson **Susan Taaffe** convened the **November 2015** GNC meeting at the Central Public Library, beginning with our traditional introduction of all participants followed by presentations by guest speakers.

## Guest speakers:

**April Richardson** described activities of the non-profit **Healthy Homes Greensboro Initiative** – a collaborative effort of the Guilford County Public Health Department and the Greensboro Housing Coalition -- working to reduce the number of residential foreclosures, homelessness, and to promote healthier homes. Their EPA funded Asthma Program aims to assess over 300 homes in east Greensboro and provide information about reducing moisture and rodent infiltration and providing home cleaning supplies and healthy homes education. Visit <http://greensborohousingcoalition.com/what-we-do/healthy-homes-greensboro/>. 336-691-9521

**Kista Mansell** and others with the **Transit Alliance of the Piedmont (TAP)** discussed the growing importance of smart transit policies which can improve community growth, employment, and health. Local examples of TAP advocacy include: 1) a “Go Pass” to more conveniently pay for bus travel and 2) the “5 Mile Challenge” to encourage riding public transit at least 5 miles and donating \$1/mile to encourage our City to develop a 9pm-3am urban shuttle bus service to connect near-town neighborhoods with downtown. TAP volunteers encourage increased ridership and local funding of public transportation. We are encouraged to listen to a 2014 **TED talk by Enrique Peñalosa of Bogota, Columbia** who proposes “An advanced city is not one where even the poor use cars, but rather one where even the rich use public transport”. Visit <https://www.facebook.com/TransitAllianceTriad>.

**Alex Arnett**, Waste Reduction Supervisor in the City Solid Waste Division, encourages greater recycling through City **ReCommunity Recycling** education. Greensboro citizens throw away ~50% of materials that instead could be recycled, and unfortunately ~20% of what we do recycle are non-recyclable materials which contaminate good recyclables. For example, **plastic bags of any type are not recyclable by our City! Please return plastic bags to your grocery store**, because they do have a recycling source. Greensboro hires a contractor for both hand-sorting and machine-sorting of recyclables, and can save as much as ~\$70/ton – about \$2.1Million/year -- by selling properly recycled materials and lowering garbage disposal/landfill costs.

Please learn to properly reduce/reuse/recycle materials from your household and workplace and purchase products made of recycled materials. Greensboro offers residents one extra recycling container/household if requested, plus over 20 public recycling drop-off locations throughout city limits. Learn about recycling in Greensboro, including what can and can't be recycled here, by visiting <http://www.greensboro-nc.gov/index.aspx?page=483> or call 373-CITY.

**Participatory Budgeting (PB) Greensboro** Steering Committee members Ann Stringfield and Art Davis encourage all neighborhood leaders to submit ideas for capital improvement projects on city property – up to \$100K/City Council District -- now through December 15, 2015. Then December 2015 through March 2016 PB volunteers and City staff will collaborate to develop your ideas into full project proposals. April and May 2016 these proposals will be presented back to the community during several project expos at which time Greensboro residents will be allowed to vote to determine winning projects submitted for consideration in their own City Council District. Each City Council District will have its own ballot on which to vote.

The **PB Greensboro** project intends to increase the number and diversity of residents generating and choosing public projects throughout Greensboro. Upcoming neighborhood information sessions are:

- Sunday, Nov. 22, 3-5 p.m. at the Benjamin Branch Library
- Monday, Nov. 23, 6:30-8:30 at the Windsor Recreation Center, and
- Tuesday, Nov. 24, 6:30-8:30 at the Kathleen Clay Edwards Library.

Learn about the history of PB elsewhere and its new implementation in Greensboro at <http://www.greensboro-nc.gov/index.aspx?page=4796> . The project submission form will be online soon. For details contact Ranata Reeder at [ranata@participatorybudgeting.org](mailto:ranata@participatorybudgeting.org) or phone at 336-373-7750.

## Committee Reports:

**Issues and Bylaws** — In an effort to continue neighborhood-friendly development, Mike Pendergraft of this Committee requested and today's GNC participants voted to support Planning staff's recommendation for a City of Greensboro Zoning text amendment (as recommended by the Planning Board at its October 21st meeting) provided that multifamily development in commercial zoning is directly accessible from a major thoroughfare and said development is located within ¼ mile walking distance of a usable portion of a public park/greenspace along public sidewalks and crosswalk and this text amendment is publicly reviewed in two years. The GNC shall communicate this position to the City Council and may appear at the Council Meeting.\*

**Treasurer – Jack Zimmerman** reports bi-monthly due to his other meeting date conflicts.

## Announcements/News:

- Former GNC Membership Committee Chairperson **Sadie Blue** and current GNC Co-Chairperson **Linda Bennett** kindly provided morning refreshments for today's meeting.
- A **Stop the Violence** event today encourages people to turn in guns and ammunition safely to the Greensboro Police Department.
- The City has agreed to survey underground storm water drains throughout the **Aycock Neighborhood**. Other old neighborhoods in Greensboro are encouraged to request this service because old storm water drains may need repair to preclude significant underground damage to foundations of buildings in older neighborhoods.
- Add [thegreensboroneighborhoodcongress@outlook.com](mailto:thegreensboroneighborhoodcongress@outlook.com) to your address book to ensure GNC emails are not blocked as spam.
- The **GNC annual holiday dinner is Thursday, December 10, 6:30-8:30 p.m.** at the College Park Baptist Church, 1601 Walker Avenue, near the intersection of Walker Ave. and Aycock Street, near UNCG. Our meal will be provided. GNC members are asked **to bring a dessert to share**.

The next regular GNC meeting is **Saturday, January 9, 2016, 9-11 a.m.** at the Greensboro Central Public Library.

Visit the GNC website at [www.GreensboroNeighborhoodCongress.org](http://www.GreensboroNeighborhoodCongress.org) for information about the GNC and notes of previous GNC meetings.

Respectfully submitted by Ann Stringfield of the Fisher Park Neighborhood, November 16, 2015, with an Issues and Bylaws Committee wording correction of December 5, 2015.\*