Southwest Winston-Salem Area Plan Update

The Winston-Salem City Council adopted the Southwest Winston-Salem Area Plan Update in August. The City-County Planning Board recommended the plan for approval in May. The planning area is home to the Ardmore neighborhood, the city’s first automobile suburb, and Hanestown, an early 20th-century mill village. The plan was last updated in 2009.

Approximately 70 people participated in a series of community meetings to gather input on the area’s future. The plan highlights several areas where mixed-use development could be beneficial, including in the West Salem Activity Center on Peters Creek Parkway, and the Thruway Activity Center on South Stratford Road.

The Thruway Shopping Center could potentially be transformed into a dense, walkable area should a developer use the sloping topography of the Thruway Shopping Center site to build parking structures under multistory residential and commercial buildings facing South Stratford Road.

The parcel of land that generated the most discussion with the community was the “goat farm” property at the corner of Silas Creek Parkway and Ebert Street. Based on neighborhood input and staff discussion, the plan recommends that the seven-acre parcel be developed with moderate-density multifamily housing.

The plan is available online at: http://www.cityofws.org/Departments/Planning/Area-Plans/Southwest

October Is National Community Planning Month

In October, the City-County Planning Board and the Planning & Development Services staff will join with planners from across the country to celebrate the lasting value thoughtful planning has on communities of all sizes. The theme of this year’s National Community Planning Month is Civic Engagement, underscoring the necessity of engaging citizens, community leaders, and elected officials in discussions that shape the future of our cities. Thoughtful local planning cannot happen without meaningful civic engagement.

As part of the month’s activities, City-County Planning Board members will ask the Winston-Salem City Council and the Forsyth County Board of Commissioners to adopt proclamation resolutions and will submit opinion pieces on the importance of planning for publication in local newspapers. Community members are invited to engage in planning by getting to know planners in our community; learning about local planning initiatives; and attending a Planning Board meeting or an area plan community meeting.

For more information about Community Planning Month at the national level, including the American Planning Association’s Great Places in America recognition program, visit: https://www.planning.org/ncpm/. For information about local planning activities and upcoming planning-related meetings, visit: www.cityofws.org/planning.
During the very successful 2016 Historic Preservation Month in May, the Forsyth County Historic Resources Commission (HRC) held two historic marker unveilings. A large group gathered at Reynolda House Museum of American Art to celebrate the installation of a historic marker to remember the Five Row community that once was a part of the Reynolda lands. Five Row was a community of African-American farmworkers and their families who worked at Reynolda House. First occupied in 1916, it began as two rows of five cottages and gardens that fronted an unpaved road along Silas Creek. The Five Row School was active with academic classes and Sunday worship services from 1918 to the 1940s. Many children raised at Five Row were later employed as domestic servants at Reynolda House. Five Row was demolished in 1961 to make way for Silas Creek Parkway.

The HRC celebrated with the Friends of the Malloy Jordan East Winston Heritage Center Branch Library at the historic marker unveiling recognizing the East Winston Library. In April of 1953, three African-American physicians and their wives, Dr. H. Darius and Laney Malloy, Dr. H. Rembert and Elaine Malloy, and Dr. J. Charles and Beatrice Jordan, offered a site to the City for the new African-American branch library. The community celebrated the East Winston Branch Library’s dedication on November 14, 1954. Librarian of Congress and North Carolina native L. Quincy Mumford delivered the keynote address. The East Winston Library was renamed the Malloy Jordan East Winston Heritage Center in 2004.

Over the past year, the City’s Information Systems Department has been working with multiple City departments, including Planning & Development Services, to implement an electronic plan review solution. The City selected idtPlans as the vendor and has been working with them to create a system that is tailored to meet the needs of the various departments who oversee development review. Through the idtPlans system, applicants are able to fill out applications, upload plans, and pay review fees online. Applicants are also better able to track their submittals through the review process by seeing comments as they are created by the various reviewers.

The City went live with the idtPlans system on August 26, allowing submittals to the Planning Division for Sketch Plan Review and Minor Subdivisions and to the Inspections Division for Preliminary Commercial Plan Review and Commercial New Construction or Additions. Additional development review applications will be added to the system as it continues to be developed. For more information, visit the City’s electronic plan review website: https://winston-salem.idtplans.com/secure/