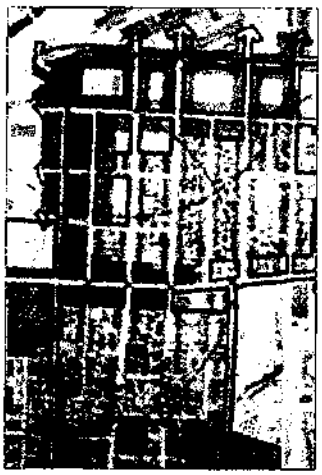

Workshop 4
Home Park

Blueprints for successful communities

The Home Park Community Design Workshop

results of a community design workshop for Home Park, Atlanta, Georgia

A component of The Blueprints for Successful Communities Initiative of The Georgia Conservancy in Partnership with:

The Interprofessional Community Design Collaborative and,
The Georgia Tech Urban Design Workshop

November 1998

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The Blueprints Initiative

Renowned planner Jan Gehl once compared cities to all-night house parties by saying, "Cities, like parties, come in three versions. Some you don't go to unless you have to; some you leave as soon as you can; and others you go and stay for much longer than you planned." When cities, towns and neighborhoods become lost in the morass of sprawl development they begin to feel like places you want to leave as soon as you can.

There is a growing consensus among members of the environmental and business communities that the current trend of low-density, decentralized, automobile-dependent development so common in this country for the past 50 years is a major threat to quality of life. Not only is it expensive for local governments to serve, but the impact that this urban form has on the environment is staggering. Automobile emissions create toxic air pollution. Stormwater surging across miles of asphalt poisons rivers and streams. Thousands of acres of farms, woodlands and open space are lost to strip malls and parking lots.

In Georgia a diverse group of people including home builders, architects, planners, developers, environmentalists and neighborhood leaders are among a growing number of people who are beginning to understand the link between the health of our environment, our economic stability and the way we use land. In 1995, The Georgia Conservancy convened such a group of people to foster public awareness about better ways to grow communities. A coalition was formed called the Successful Communities Partners.

The Successful Communities Partners have been instrumental in raising public awareness in Georgia and in the Atlanta region specifically about alternative land use and transportation strategies that are good for the environment and good for the economy. Part of the work of the partnership includes a project known as the Community Design Workshop. With the Urban Design Workshop of the Georgia Tech College of Architecture and the Interprofessional Community Design Collaborative, the partnership conducts workshops in selected communities in Georgia to address specific development issues in those communities which may be prototypical for the state in general. The workshops also serve to integrate the Successful Communities Principles that have been established as a result of this initiative.

The Home Park Community Design Workshop was conducted in November 1998. By participating in the design of their own neighborhood, residents were able to create a model to guide the future of their community. This model will hopefully lead to a community designed for people, where walking to the corner store is commonplace, where tree-lined streets and bike paths are the norm, and where traffic congestion and air pollution are minimal.

Successful Communities Principles

Successful Communities:

- work together to produce a high quality of life that they want to sustain;
- work to create regional strategies for transportation, land use and economic growth;
- understand that sustainable community design is based on the effect of the built environment on the natural environment, aesthetics, scale, history and culture;
- promote efficient use of existing infrastructure, energy, water and land;
- incorporate compact integrated land uses which bring people closer to work, to school and shopping and safeguard undeveloped lands for agriculture, greenspace and recreation;
- provide transportation options so that each member of the community has access to goods, services and recreation;
- are designed to be safe, healthy, economically strong, environmentally sound and inclusive.

Objectives of Urban Livability

- Diversity of income.
- Diversity of family/household type (age,size composition).
- Balanced economic growth for both job development and commercial services.
- Diversity of land uses, closely integrated within the community.
- Access by all persons to housing options, including single family, multi-family and extended family opportunities in both rental and ownership formats.
- Access by all persons to transportation options (pedestrian, bicycle, automobile and transit) supported by a fine-grained street system.
- Efficient use of existing physical/social infrastructure.
- Availability of a variety of civic uses and spaces for both social and recreational purposes.
- Preservation and efficient use of historic architectural and landscape character.
- Strong visual community identity through legible neighborhood edges, gateways, and public spaces.

THE HOME PARK COMMUNITY ASSETS AND ISSUES

The workshop process included weekly meetings of the Home Park Workshop Steering Committee which consisted of neighborhood residents and representatives from the City of Atlanta, Georgia Tech, the Atlantic Steel Development Team, the Midtown Alliance, Turner Broadcasting System and the Atlanta Development Authority. Presentations and discussions were held concerning each of these adjacent areas and their current development plans and policies.

In addition, the process included two separate sessions where residents were asked to list and rank the assets and issues of their community. The questions posed were:

1. What do residents value most about living in Home Park? What attracted you to the neighborhood and what do you regard as its most important assets?

2. As the development pressures build up within and around the neighborhood, what problems will need to be addressed in order to maintain, preserve and enhance the characteristics most valued by the residents?

The results are presented in the following table. A ranking of 1 is the highest.

NEIGHBORHOOD ASSETS AND VALUES	RANK
A. Quality of Life	
1. Strong sense of community; ever-present vitality.	2
2. The place is quiet; it has a small town quality.	3
3. Diversity and the acceptance of diversity.	8
4. Having a community-run day care center.	12
B. Physical and Natural Excellence	
1. Walkability of the community; the presence of sidewalks	4
2. Predominance of single-family houses, with front and rear yards.	6
3. Narrow streets give a compactness to the residential character	7
4. There are places of historic value and interest in the neighborhood	9
5. "We live in a forest. There are Wild Things about."	10
C. Economic Opportunities	
1. Location: nearness and good access to downtown, the interstates, Hartsfield Airport, Centennial Park, places of work, medical facilities, Georgia Tech, private schools.	1
2. Affordability of the housing (although this is changing).	5
3. Proximity to Georgia Tech has meant that faculty members are part of the community.	11

NEIGHBORHOOD ISSUES	RANK
A. Land Use/Zoning and Building Codes	
1. Inappropriate land uses and development are widespread. Many uses are incompatible with existing buildings. Architectural styles are mixed; the neighborhood's historic character is threatened.	2
2. Enforcement of the City's building and zoning codes is spotty.	5
3. Lack of neighborhood convenience retail	7
B. Property Values/Absentee Ownership	
1. Absentee ownership of many properties has brought about many negative impacts	1
2. Rising property values, while appreciated by long-term homeowners, is tending to change the character and affordability of the neighborhood	13
C. Streets/Sidewalks/Traffic	
1. Traffic congestion on 10th and 14th	8
2. On-street parking is made more troublesome due to employees who work in nearby offices and students from Georgia Tech who park all day	9
3. Narrow streets limit access (especially with so many on-street parked cars. Emergency vehicles are constricted.)	10
4. Many sidewalks are in poor repair and difficult to walk on, especially for older citizens	11
D. Public Services and Safety	
1. Crimes against property are not uncommon. Concern about crime against people is not as great, but there is an uneasiness in walking after dark.	6
2. City does not provide sufficient police and sanitation services.	12
E. Impact of Adj. Existing and Proposed Uses	
1. Atlantic Steel, impacts unknown (north of 14th, south of 14th)	3
F. Need for a Comprehensive Future Vision and Master Plan	**4**

VISION FOR THE FUTURE

Residents, businesses and institutions regard Home Park as one of Atlanta's most desirable communities in which to live and raise their children. It enjoys strong personal associations, considerable physical charm, buildings of historical importance and abundant natural beauty. Diversity can be found throughout: in its people, its housing and other land uses, and in its institutions. A close-in location gives easy access to places for shopping, education, entertainment, health services, and work. It's housing remains affordable.

The residents, businesses and institutions of Home Park value these assets and are committed to their preservation and enhancement. They recognize that this will require the building of a broad community consensus around a Master Plan for the neighborhood to assure that the quality of life they now enjoy will constantly improve. Such a plan will need to address many problems which could threaten this sustainability: the condition of housing, infrastructure and open spaces, as well as problems associated with traffic, parking and safety. It will describe the neighborhood's future within a changing City's environment: its relationship to the development of the Atlantic Steel property and to the growth of Georgia Tech, Midtown and other close by properties. It will identify its role in proposed improvements to transportation systems and modes.

The future of Home Park is tied to recognizing and confronting this change. Its residents, businesses and institutions are committed to addressing the critical issues in order to realize the planning goals which it has set for the community's future.

The overall goal of the Home Park neighborhood is to achieve a livable and sustainable inner-city community. This can only be achieved by integrating all parts of the neighborhood into one diverse and vital whole, including

- The historic traditional residential neighborhood
- The new development on the Atlantic Steel property
- The emerging multi-use district west of Northside Drive

Long term sustainability for an integrated Home Park community consists of the following components at least:

- Housing diversity of household type (age, size, income, demographic composition) in a balance of rental and owner formats
- Diversity of land uses that serve the neighborhood population, including retail, civic and recreational uses
- Balanced population of permanent residents, students, and daytime workers.
- Balanced accessibility to, from and within the neighborhood to a variety of transportation options (pedestrian, bicycle, automobile and transit) supported by a fine grained street system

GOALS OF THE WORKSHOP NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN

1. Retain and enhance the neighborhood's physical character

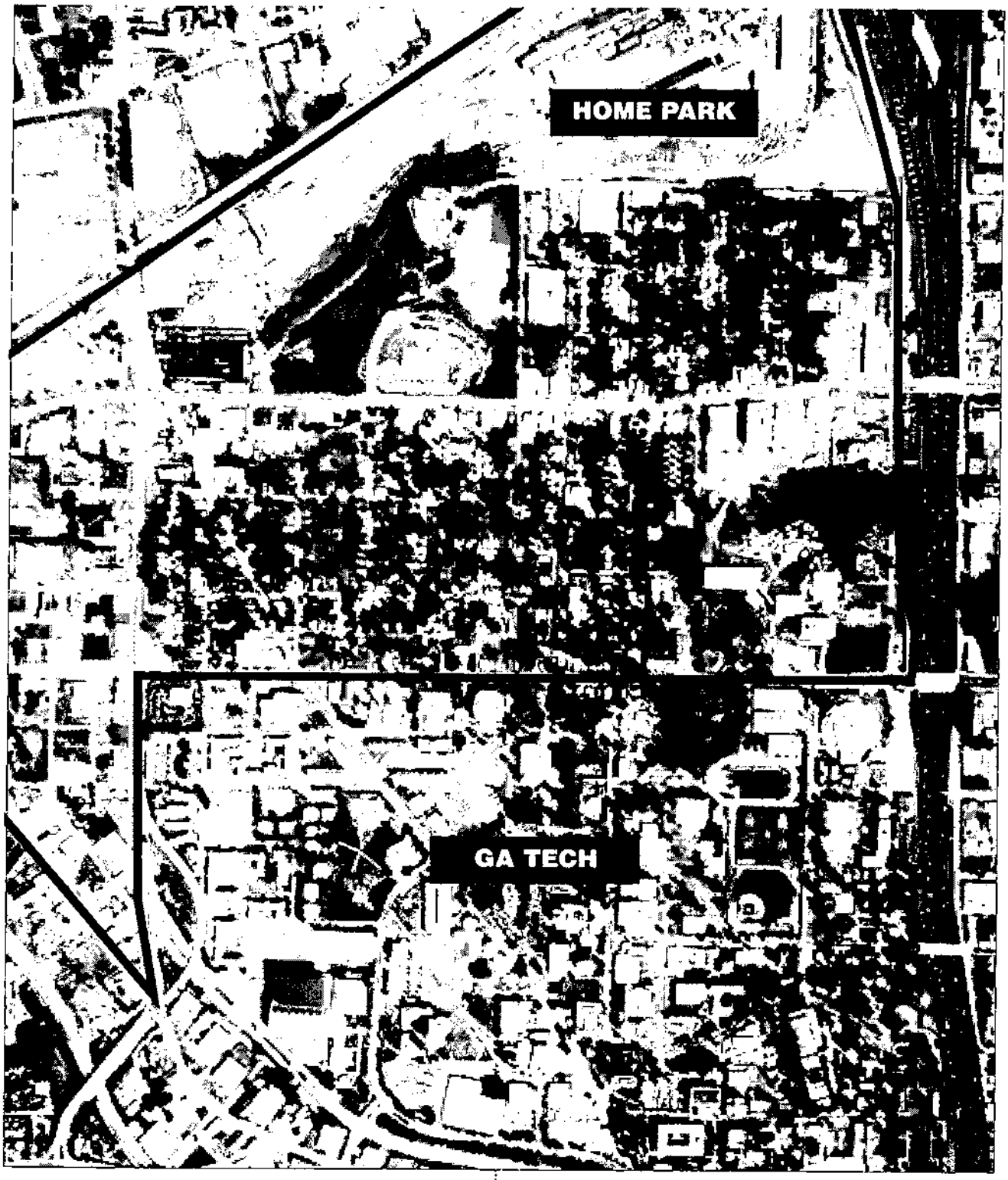
   The plan seeks to maintain the small town character of the neighborhood, including qualities reflected by its narrow streets, sidewalks and walkability, heavy tree cover, and its close-knit and compatible architectural style. Included also is the protection of the historic buildings and places valued by the community. It seeks, above all, to continue to preserve the serenity of the neighborhood.

2. Maintain Home Park's sense of community

   The plan seeks to sustain the neighborhood's present cohesiveness and vitality, which grow out of strong community institutions and associations. To maintain this sense of community, the goal is to establish a continuous planning process, provide open and widespread citizen involvement, and retain a balance in the diversity of residents who live in the community.

3. Strengthen Home Park's organizational structure

   The plan seeks to describe the means to implement its recommendations. This will require modifying the existing organizational structure in order to undertake the recommended program or to reach out to other appropriate public and private organizations which have the responsibility and capacity to undertake the recommendations.



Home Park Neighborhood Context

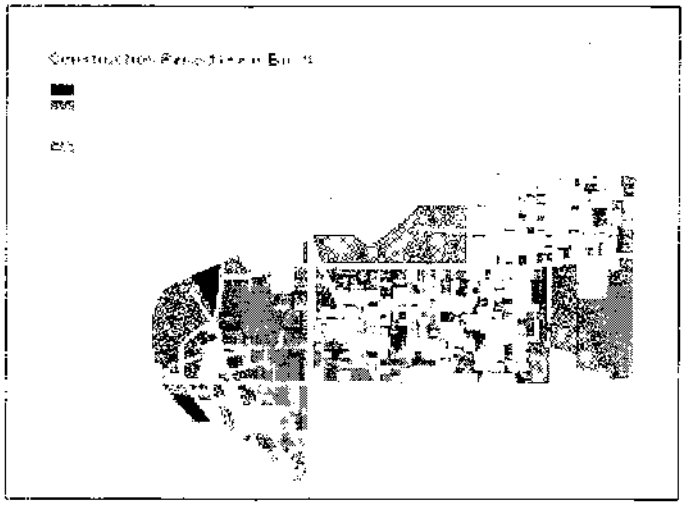
HISTORY OF HOME PARK

The area of Home Park was originally known as Chastaintown, in honor of Avery Chastain, a large estate owner whose house was located at the intersection of Hemphill Avenue and Emmet (now Tenth) Street. Chastaintown was a center for horse-trading. Until the end of nineteenth century, it was a largely undeveloped area of woods and fields with few conveniences associated with city living. Home Park was first platted in 1905 on State Street at Emmet (now Tenth) followed in 1906 by the Hunerkopf property between State, Hunerkopf, Plum (now Francis) and Emmet Streets.

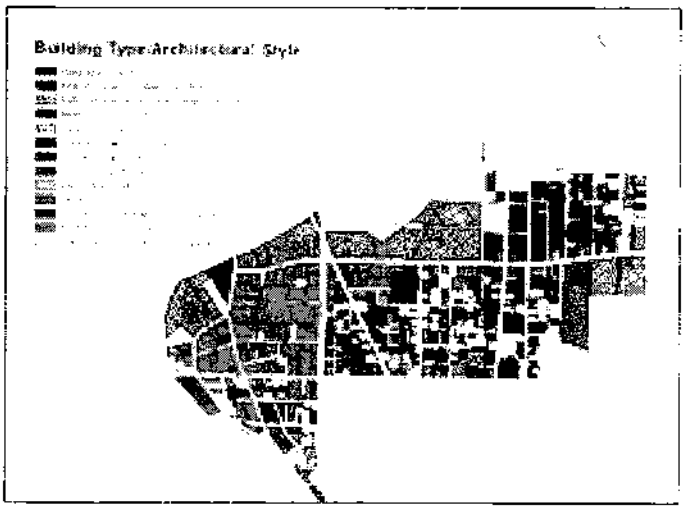
In 1901 George Washington Connors, along with several business associates, founded the Atlanta Steel Hoop Company. Connors realized the cost savings of establishing a local manufacturer of ties and hoops for cotton bales instead of ordering them from Pittsburgh. The property for the company, located just north of Home Park in land lots 148 and 108 of the 17th District, was purchased from A.L. and E.C. Kontz and Captain James W. English. Atlanta Steel Hoop Company became Atlantic Steel Company in 1907 and went on to become one of Atlanta's largest manufacturing establishments. Its growth fostered residential development in the area now known as Home Park. In addition to the employees of Atlantic Steel, the Home Park neighborhood also housed workers of the Exposition (Cotton) Mill on Marietta Street and the Miller Union Stockyards off Howell Mill Road.

Home Park was incorporated into the City of Atlanta in 1909, when a state ordinance expanded the city's boundaries beyond Fifth Street. This expansion had a clear effect, however, on Home Park's growth and physical appearance. In 1911 the Ethel Street School closed and the Home Park Elementary School opened on State Street. Hugh Richardson, developer of the Home Park subdivision, donated the property for this school to the city. Churches were very much at the heart of Home Park's religious and social life. Home Park residents were predominantly involved with one of the four Methodist Churches (Warren Candler, Hemphill, Payne Memorial or St. James) or the North Atlanta Baptist Church. In 1951 the four Methodist churches merged into the Tenth Street United Methodist Church.

The commercial area located at Tenth Street and Hemphill Avenue served as the shopping and social center of the neighborhood. A large brick building at the northwest intersection built by Avery Chastain contained a grocery store, drug store and barber shop, among other retail spaces. Accessibility was a major advantage to living in Home Park. The three high schools that serviced Home Park, as well as downtown Atlanta, were easily accessible by public streetcar. The streetcar line was constructed to service Georgia Tech and Atlantic Steel long before Home Park was incorporated into the City of Atlanta. Convenience, good schools and churches, abundant grocery stores and other retail shops, along with the availability of public transportation, made Home Park an attractive neighborhood in which to reside.



Age of structure



Building Type/Architecture Type

In the 1960s, elderly homeowners died and young homeowners moved to the suburbs resulting in an increasing number of available residential properties. With Georgia Tech expanding and the student population increasing, many properties were purchased with the sole purpose of renting them to students resulting in subdivided houses and absentee landlords. With the influx of Georgia Tech students, housing conditions seemed to decline while the crime rate rose. In 1990 there was an estimated owner-occupied rate of 27% (figures were revised to reflect census data as reported in the 1993 CODA Report). The percent of owner-occupied households is increasing as younger owner-occupants have been moving to the area to take advantage of its location and affordable housing. Today the community of Home Park is a blend of student renters, older residents and young homeowners new to the neighborhood. In addition, the Home Park Learning Center, which was established as the Home Park Child Care Center in 1974 under the Home Park Community Improvement Association still operates in the neighborhood.

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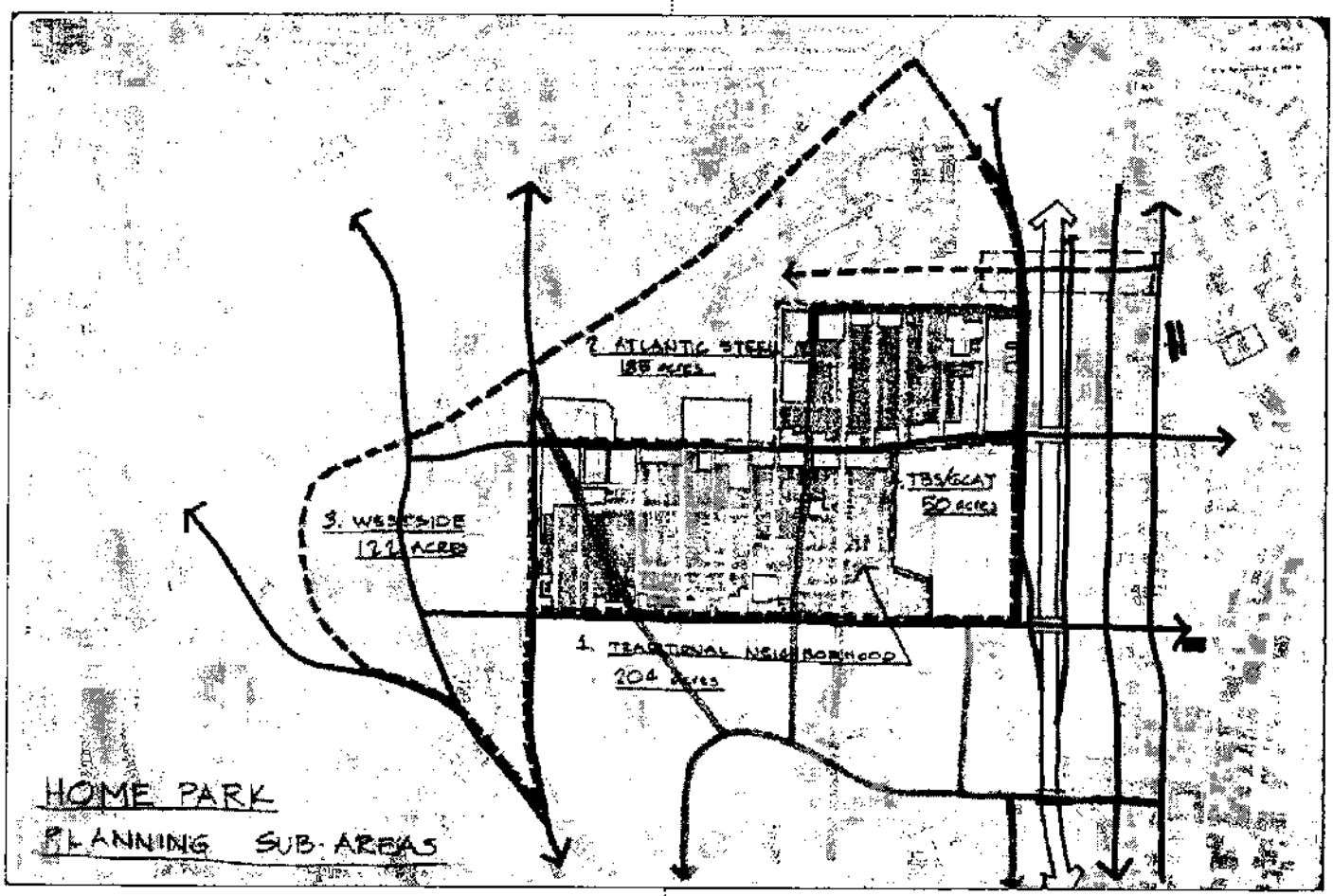


Neighborhood Sub Areas

HOME PARK MARKET CONTEXT

INFILL RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT IN CENTRAL ATLANTA

Atlanta, one of the nation's best examples of uncontrolled suburban growth, is experiencing an urban renaissance. The market for infill housing is stronger now than ever before, as conditions for infill development, both rental and owner occupied, are increasingly positive. Some other factors supporting this higher level of market interest are inherent in Atlanta's historic development context:

- Restricted federal funds for new road construction due to Atlanta's non-attainment status relative to the Clean Air Act;
- The low densities of development north of the I-285 perimeter make transit less workable;
- The refusal of many suburban counties to permit the extension of MARTA bus and/or rail service;
- The anonymity and lack of character in the suburbs

There are also trends in the City, which support this new in-town residential development:

- Strong restaurant and entertainment districts in Buckhead, Virginia Highlands and Midtown;
- 1996 Olympic investments in beautification and the City's infrastructure;
- Demolition and redevelopment of large public housing complexes including nearby Techwood;
- New office growth in the Buckhead and Midtown areas;
- Rapid home prices appreciation in numerous in-town neighborhoods.

The combination of these factors has led to mid and high rise construction of condominiums in the Buckhead area, conversion of high rise and loft apartment projects in downtown and Midtown into condominiums and massive apartment construction from downtown to Buckhead. People who work in the city have proven to be a strong market segment for in-town housing, representing approximately 70% of demand. These levels of interest are reflective of the infill development patterns thus far. Buckhead and Midtown have seen the bulk of the new residential construction in the city, followed by the fringes of Downtown and lastly the heart of Downtown.

In terms of specific locations, developers in Atlanta are looking for sites that possess the following characteristics:

- Accessibility to MARTA, particularly rail service;
- Proximity to retail and entertainment uses;
- Proximity to major "focal points", such as a museum, park, established retail, etc.;
- High visibility locations;
- Sites with zoning in place, few negative "site issues" and good schools, if possible;
- Availability of older buildings with strong architectural character for re-use.

Specific market audiences for infill product in Downtown and Midtown Atlanta have generally consisted of young singles and couples seeking an urban life style; empty nesters tired of long commutes; students, faculty and staff in Atlanta universities; and young professionals. Historically missing in any significant numbers are families with children, to a large extent a result of perceptions about public schools.

Downtown and Midtown infill development has largely centered on a rental product, particularly garden apartments and loft conversions, although rental high rise development appears to be gaining momentum with a number of new projects underway. For sale product has emerged more recently, resulting from loft and high rise apartment conversions.

The overall dynamics are in place in Atlanta to support a growing market base for in-town housing. Rental apartment development within infill locations is strong, as

moratoriums on apartment development in the suburbs combine with a renewed focus on in-town locations by several major apartment developers.

The market for new condominium development is also strong. Developing more moderately priced condo units appears to be the major challenge, as most new product is priced above $200,000. The majority of new condo units on the market below $200,000 can be found in the apartment conversions such as the Grandview in Buckhead and the Mayfair in Midtown.

The major piece of the puzzle still missing is a plan of action by the City of Atlanta to encourage, on a larger scale, the development of housing for the middle class. Such a policy could make development of "affordable" residential housing more viable in the City of Atlanta and would help to satisfy not only the City's goals of attracting more middle class housing, but would contribute to the area's regional development patterns and need to bring housing closer to employment.

Today there is increasing demand for affordable in-town housing from persons who want to own their own home, and with tremendous housing value appreciation throughout the Atlanta market, the Home Park neighborhood will become increasingly attractive. This will probably result in a significant increase in full time residency in the neighborhood.

COMMERCIAL SERVICES SUPPORTED BY THE HOME PARK NEIGHBORHOOD

If you take the existing 1,100 households in the neighborhood and multiply that by the average of $11,000 spent on retail goods and services by households in the area, that equates to over $12,000,000 in retail expenditure potential. That means the neighborhood could theoretically support 50,000 to 55,000 square feet of retail space. When you break that down by category, for example, grocery, there is enough support from the neighborhood for 16,000 to 17,000 square feet of grocery store space. The existing neighborhood, with substantial residential development on the Atlantic Steel site, easily supports substantial neighborhood–serving shopping and services.

INFLUENCE OF ATLANTIC STEEL DEVELOPMENT

The Atlantic Steel Development will have substantial impact on the neighborhood, and the neighborhood should have impact on whatever happens at the Atlantic Steel property. They are part of one community. Home Park should influence the character of what happens at Atlantic Steel, even if the scale of development is different. This should effect such things as landscaping, architecture, site planning, pedestrian and automobile connections. Both the neighborhood and the new development will benefit from linkages between the new and the old.

Immediate impacts will likely include the development of the retail portions of the site. Ideally this retail will be a combination of specialty retail, entertainment retail, and community-serving retail establishments. Urban Land Institute case studies of urban "town centers" demonstrate that they succeed best when they include all three of these retail categories. The neighborhood will be important to the success of the center, because with the neighborhood, particularly in the early years, the center will rely on people coming by car from somewhere else. Neighborhood support, even though small in terms of total potential retail expenditures, will help make it more of a "real place", especially if pedestrian activity results from good pedestrian connections.

The success of the Atlantic Steel site will create further redevelopment pressures on the neighborhood, so it will be important to determine the essential aspects of the neighborhood's character that should be preserved, and to take steps to ensure that those aspects of character are protected. For example, there will be interest in combining residential lots for multifamily housing development in some areas of Home Park, particularly along the edges of the existing residential core. The neighborhood will need to decide if this is desirable, and to take steps to determine where conversion of the largely single family character will be allowed to change, if at all.

This section prepared by Gregg Logan of Robert Charles Lesser & Company and a professional panelist for this workshop.

COMMUNITY SURVEY AND ANALYSIS

Using the Geographic Information System (GIS) survey prepared for Home Park as a designated Olympics Impact neighborhood in 1993 as a base, current field data was recollected and remapped by students and residents for the workshop. Results of this effort for primary data categories are summarized as follows:

LAND USE

Land use patterns for Home Park show four distinct sub areas.

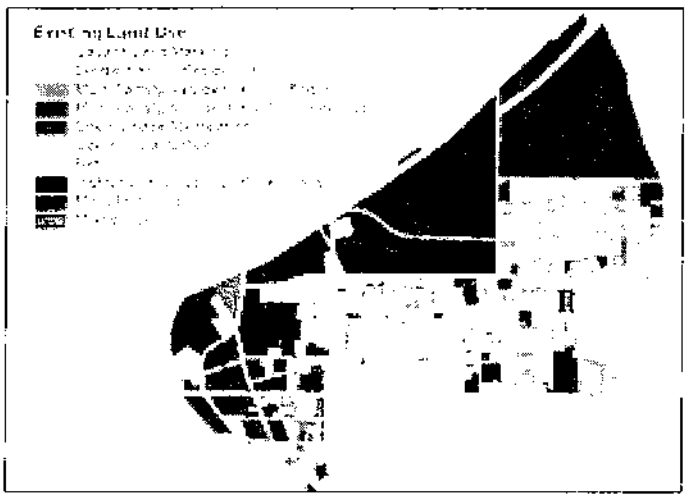
- The traditional neighborhood, consisting mostly of single family and low-density multi-family lots and associated commercial and institutional uses
- The area west of Northside Drive, consisting of mostly older industrial buildings with significant transitioning to mixed-use and live-work uses
- The area near to the I-75/85 connector with higher density commercial uses, including headquarters for Turner Broadcasting and Georgia Center for Advanced Telecommunications Technology (GACATT)
- The Atlantic Steel property to the north, now unoccupied with a major mixed-use development pending.

BUILDING CONDITIONS

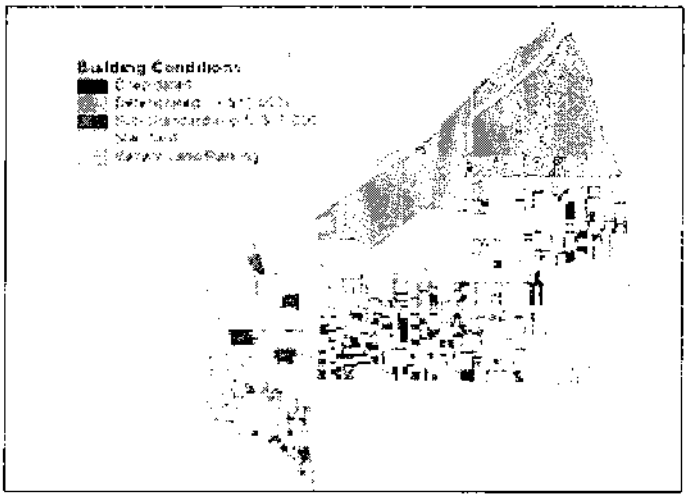
Exterior structural conditions were mapped based on a visual inspection from the street in four categories

- Dilapidated (unsafe and should be demolished)
- Deteriorated (significant repairs needed)
- Sub-standard (minor repairs needed)
- Standard (good condition and/or cosmetic repairs needed).

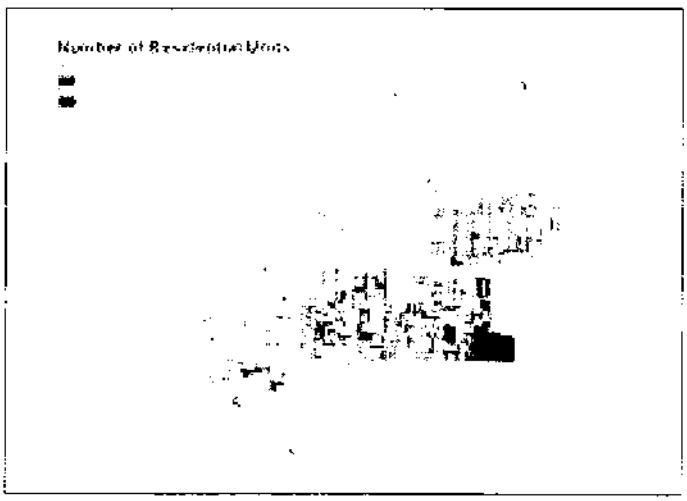
The survey shows the majority of neighborhood structures to be in standard or substandard condition despite their age. This demonstrates the economic pressure on the neighborhood for upgrading and rehabilitation.



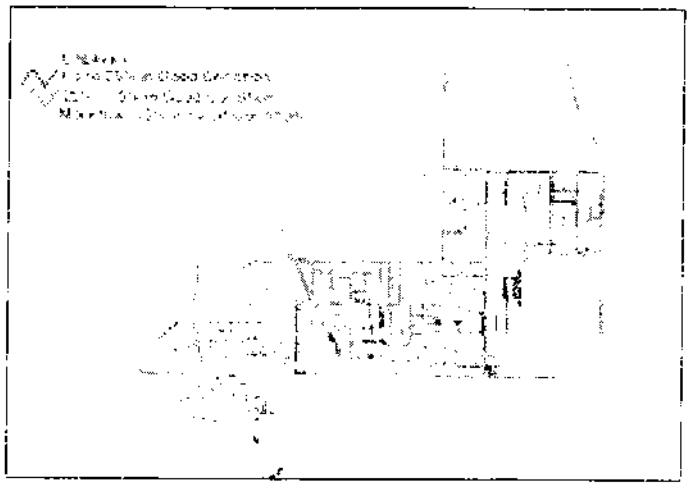
Existing Land Use



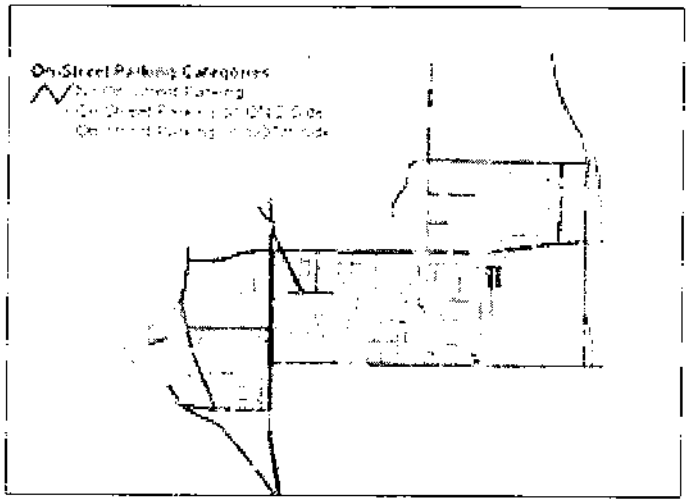
Building Conditions



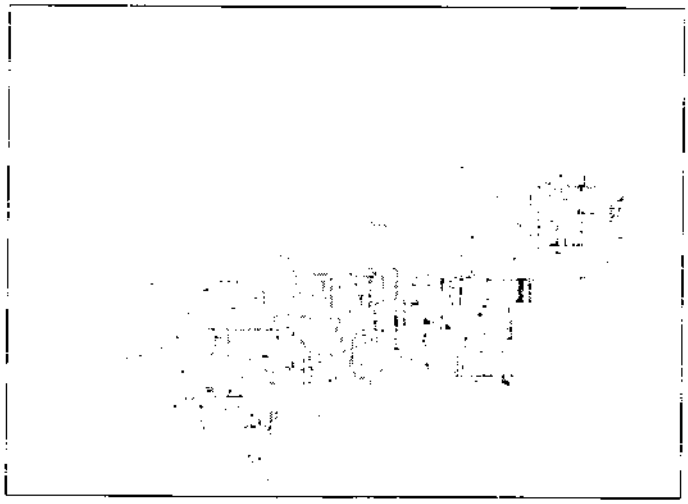
Number of Residential Units



Sidewalk Conditions



On Street Parking



Off Street Parking

NUMBER OF RESIDENTIAL UNITS

The number of residential units on each lot was estimated from a visual exterior survey. The map shows both the low-density nature of the neighborhood and the random scattering of lots with more than one unit. This is due to newer construction of multi-family units permitted by zoning as well as the subdivision of older houses into smaller units, responding primarily to Georgia Tech student demand.

SIDEWALK CONDITIONS

Street and sidewalk conditions were mapped. Sidewalk conditions are illustrated here and show general deterioration in neighborhood sidewalks and a significant number of blocks with no sidewalks present.

ON STREET PARKING

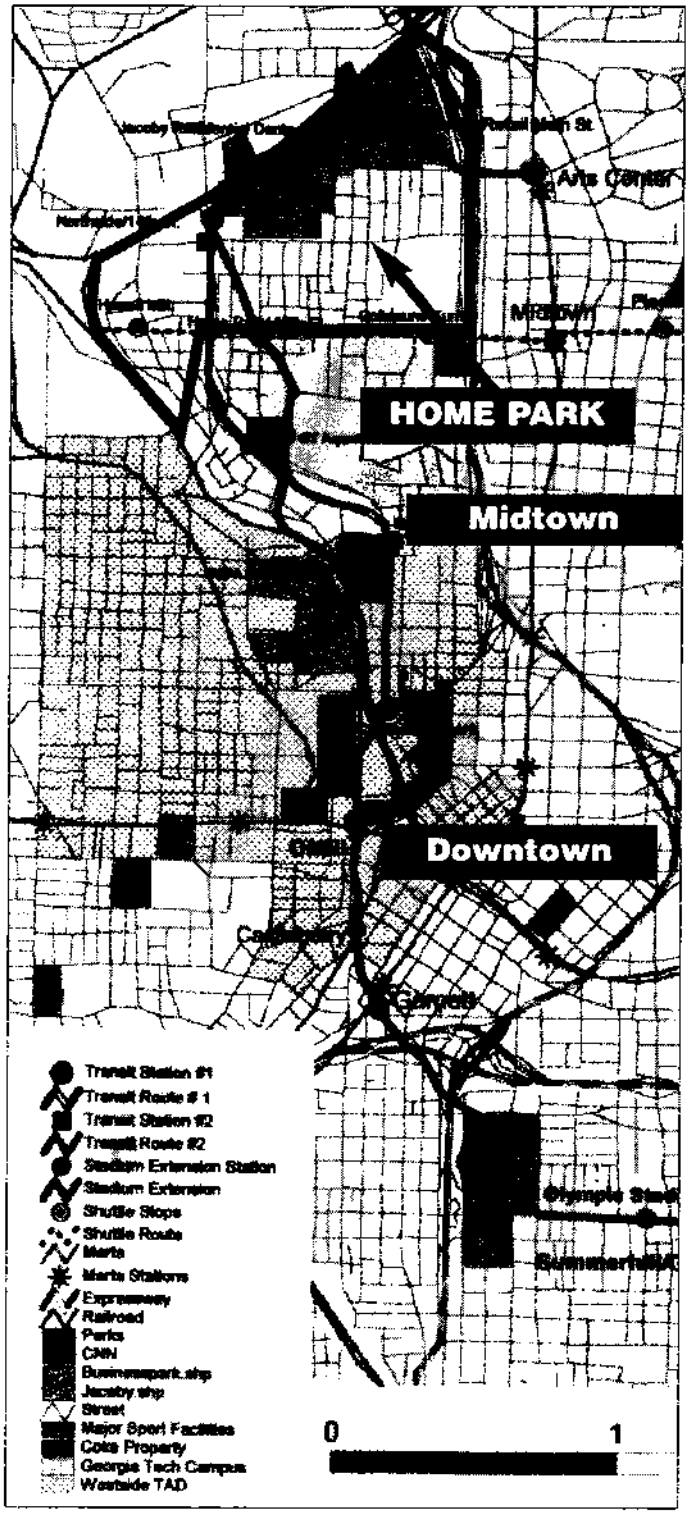
The small lots in Home Park result in few driveways causing a high demand for on-street parking. This is compounded by the neighborhood's narrow streets and pressure from commuting students, faculty, staff and neighboring businesses wishing to avoid parking registration at Georgia Tech.

OFF STREET PARKING

The demand for parking in the neighborhood has forced parking into alleys (where they exist) and onto lot yard areas in both legal and illegal configurations. The overall parking problem has resulted in special zoning provisions for on-street permit parking, which requires labor intensive management by neighborhood residents.

TRANSPORTATION

As a centrally located in-town neighborhood Home Park experiences significant transportation problems while enjoying extraordinarily good accessibility to both traffic and transit opportunities.



Transportation context and proposed westside light rail line (Source: Atlanta Development Authority)

TRAFFIC

Issues related to automobile traffic can be summarized in four categories:

- Major urban arterials serve the neighborhood; 10th and 14th Streets serve east west movement and the corridor consisting of Northside Drive, Howell Mill Road and Marietta Street serve primary north-south access. All experience significant peak hour congestion.
- The neighborhood is also adjacent to the I-75/85 connector with direct access at both 10th and 14th Streets and an exit ramp system which permits exit traffic onto 16th Street. The 14th Street exit cannot adequately handle current traffic volumes creating a bottleneck condition on 14th Street throughout the day.
- While narrow neighborhood streets dissuade cut-through traffic in general, this demand is forced onto those streets which can accommodate it - i.e. Hemphill, State and Atlantic, creating both a speed and volume problem which degrades both safety and the environment in the neighborhood.
- The proposed Atlantic Steel development will greatly increase traffic in the area and will force more traffic onto existing neighborhood streets. The proposed freeway bridge at 17th Street is necessary to serve a development of this size and help keep increased neighborhood through traffic to a minimum and alleviate congestion at 14th Street. Additional signalization and traffic calming devices will be needed throughout the neighborhood to help mitigate these impacts.

TRANSIT

Home Park is well served by bus lines and two MARTA rail stations, although they are not within walking distance for most people. Recent studies for a west side "light" transit system (light rail, trolley, fixed guideway bus, etc.) indicate adequate ridership to support such a system. In general, this system can serve neighborhood residents, help reduce traffic impacts from the Atlantic Steel development and positively effect revitalization on the west side of the neighborhood. Home Park does support the accessibility afforded by such a system while opposing any negative impacts created by some of the proposed alignments and technologies.

SYNTHESIS

Two maps have been prepared which combine and analyze the recently collected field data, and help to draw general conclusions about the neighborhood.

NEIGHBORHOOD STABILITY

This combination of data relating to both age and condition of structures indicate a strong core of historic character and stability in the neighborhood, which is more predominant north of 14th Street than south of 14th Street. This data is inconclusive as to the eligibility of the neighborhood as a National Register Historic District without further study.

REVITALIZATION OPPORTUNITIES

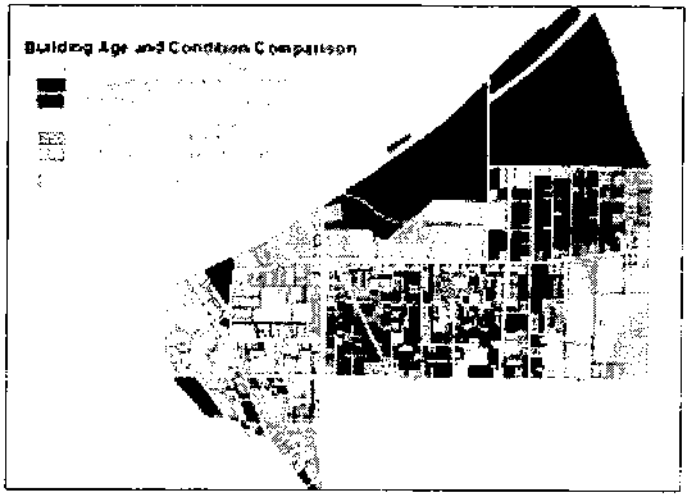
This map combines vacant and/or underused lots with deteriorated or dilapidated structures. It indicates that even with recent rehabilitation activity there are significant opportunities for infill revitalization, particularly on the west side of Northside Drive.

WORKSHOP STUDY AREAS

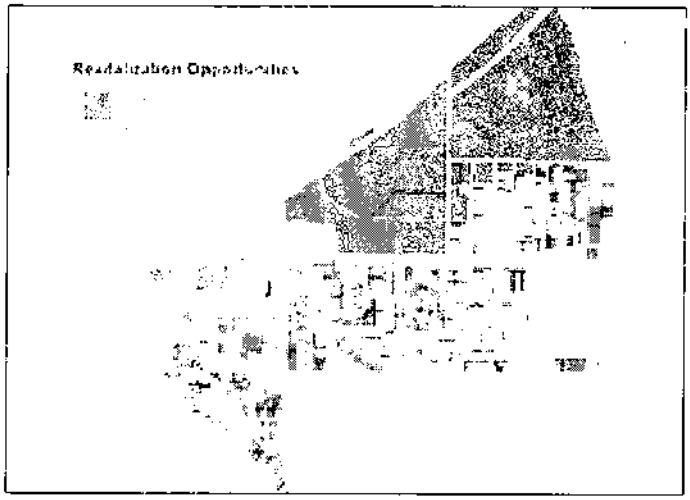
After analyzing the data, and assessing and ranking the issues, the steering committee chose five study areas for the workshop to address:

- Land use in general, including zoning issues, absentee ownership and code enforcement
- The public environment, including traffic, transit, parking, pedestrianization and open space
- The 10th Street corridor, including the neighborhood's relationship to the Georgia Tech Master Plan
- The 14th Street corridor, including edge conditions along the Atlantic Steel property
- The 16th Street/Mecaslin corridors, also focusing on the Atlantic Steel edge.

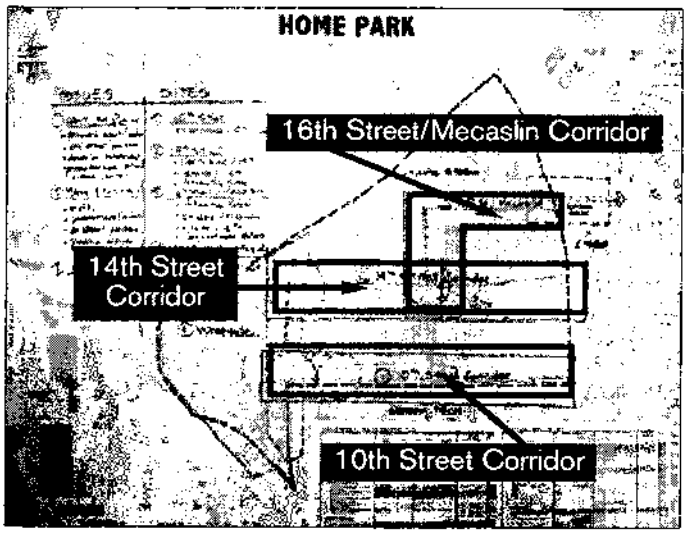
While Northside Drive and the diverse area to the west were considered to be of equal importance, it was decided to defer a study of this area pending the results of this study, the Atlantic Steel development and the west side transit system study and when more adequate representation from this area can be involved.



Comparison of Building Age & Conditions



Revitalization Opportunities



Workshop Study Areas

STUDY AREA RESULTS

View east along 14th street

1. LAND USE, HOUSING AND ZONING

MASTER PLAN

Develop a Master Plan with broad community consensus, which would express the community's development and revitalization vision, goals, plans, policies and programs. The plan would be used to guide decisions related to land use, housing, transportation modes, public open space, environment enhancements, and historic preservation, as well as implementation strategies and regulatory guidelines and controls. Examples of important specific elements of the plan would include:

- Development guidelines related to land uses, bulk and density, definition of character, and techniques for improving the neighborhood's identity.
- Detailed designs for future development and redevelopment of the neighborhood's edges
- Seek commercial development which would serve the community's needs
- Programs for increasing the amount of open space and for protecting and enhancing the natural environment

SINGLE-FAMILY PROTECTION

Preserve, protect and enhance the single-family core both south and north. Examples of actions include:

- Additional guidelines for an amended SPI district
- Infill of vacant lots and spaces with single family -style housing, pocket parks and community gardening
- Encourage home ownership
- Seek closer review by City agencies of proposed improvement plans and stronger code enforcement of possible violations
- Work with GA Tech's Housing Office to provide students living in the neighborhood the opportunity to assert their tenant rights
- Seek out owners of poorly maintained properties and secure their cooperation in maintaining and upgrading their buildings and lots

NEIGHBORHOOD EDGES

Define the single-family edges to determine how these would be developed and redeveloped to protect the single-family edges.

- Provide clear buffers where commercial building abut housing areas
- Explore transition of land uses in edges where the new growth would help secure and firm up the adjacent single family housing.

ATLANTIC STEEL

View Atlantic Steel property as an integral part of the Home Park neighborhood and seek to assure that its development, design and land uses are compatible with the developed areas of the neighborhood and supportive of the needs of the residents.

- Extend the Home Park street patterns into the interior of the Atlantic Steel property
- Develop the contiguous areas so that they are compatible with development both within Home Park developed areas and proposed Atlantic Steel development
- Provide commercial uses which would serve needs of citizens who live in the developed areas of Home Park.

DIVERSITY

Adopt programs which would ensure that a diversity of housing and income groups would continue to be present in Home Park

- In the R-5 areas, identify and seek to control vacant and abandoned properties, utilizing those which are suitable to house the working poor and those requiring affordable housing, preferably owned by the occupant
- Identify housing opportunities to house working poor within transition areas, on land controlled by the neighborhood.

INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

Establish strong and representative institutional mechanisms capable of addressing the current Home Park challenges and moving the elements of change toward the community's long-term vision. This includes a:

Community association which would, among other roles:

- Continue to encourage widespread citizen participation
- Create a means for working closely and continuously with Atlantic Steel, GA Tech, Turner, Midtown Alliance, and City planning and enforcement agencies, seeking their involvement in, and commitment to the Home Park revitalization efforts
- Establish the means for rewriting the requirements for quality development under the SPI designation.

Community Revitalization Corporation with the authority, among others to:

- Attract grants, loans, and donations with which to undertake the implementation of master planned projects
- Acquire and/or control property and enter into contracts to develop, manage development, lease and sell parcels, consistent with the intent of the maser plan
- Enter into partnerships with others to carry out the mission of the corporation
- Manage rental properties
- Provide incentives to encourage home ownership.

Land use team leader Leon Eplan with the Georgia Conservancy's Ellen Keys

STUDY AREA RESULTS

View of proposed linear park site along Mecaslin Street

2. PUBLIC ENVIRONMENT

TRANSIT

Support west side rail line
- helps reduce traffic from GA Tech and Atlantic Steel
- benefits neighborhood by creating neighborhood center and connector

Support stops at Mecaslin/14th/Northside edges of neighborhood to support retail development and serve neighborhood (more efficient, faster, more riders).
- stops at Mecaslin/14th, Northside/14th, Northside/10th (serves west side)
- no transit through neighborhood unless no negative impact shown

Explore high frequency bus shuttle on 10th Street to serve Georgia Tech, Turner Broadcasting and neighborhood

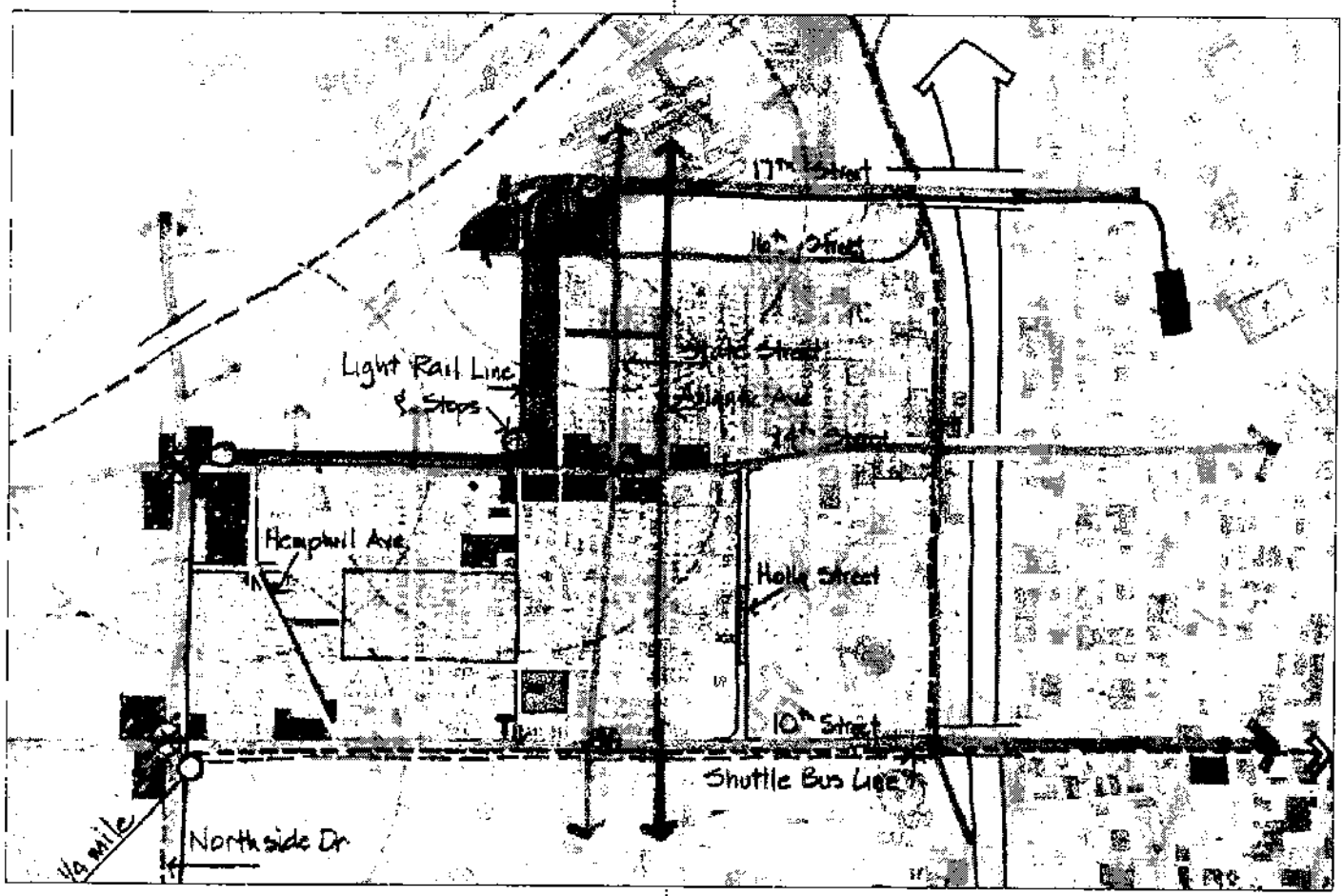
TRAFFIC

Neighborhood wide:
- pursue traffic calming measures where possible
- avoid closing streets in general
- keep all on-street parking and improve parking management and enforcement
- study benefits of one-way streets

Specific Areas:
- maintain State Street as primary north-south through street
- connect Holly Street from 10th Street to 14th Street to alleviate north-south traffic
- reconfigure Hemphill to greatly reduce through traffic options:
  - –close Hemphill between 14th Street and Northside Drive
  - –narrow block south of 14th Street
  - –widen bike/pedestrian connection
- manage Center Street to prohibit cut through traffic from Atlantic Steel
- maintain and protect 16th Street as neighborhood transitional street (i.e. no freeway access)
- study connections to Atlantic Steel to improve accessibility but limit cut through traffic in existing neighborhood
- prohibit truck traffic on 10th and 14th Streets

OPEN SPACE

Neighborhood-wide
- Improve sidewalks throughout
  - –Add where non-existent
  - –Improve where needed
  - –Add street lights and street trees where needed
- Create system of new park spaces and connectors
  - –Larger parks at Mecaslin at 14th Street extending into Atlantic Steel with connection along Tumlin to connect to school and Mosque
  - –Explore swap between City and Georgia Tech of Couch Park
- Create three or four mini parks to serve various areas
- Establish connectors
  - –Pursue pedestrian and bikeways on unpaved streets
  - –Pursue pedestrian and bikeways on key streets that connect parks
- Create a wide setback/park on north side of 14th Street to accommodate light rail, bikes and pedestrians
- Create a system of signs and gateways to create a cohesive community image



Public Environment Plan

STUDY AREA RESULTS

View west along 10th street

3. 10TH STREET CORRIDOR

MASS TRANSIT

- Investigate feasibility of high frequency bus shuttle on 10th Street serving Midtown MARTA station
- Continue Georgia Tech Stinger
- Improve bus stops

VEHICULAR TRANSPORTATION

- Slow and modify speeds through modifications and additions of signalization
- Evaluate route options for commercial truck traffic
- Investigate other traffic-calming devices

PEDESTRIAN CORRIDOR

- Improve sidewalk and streetscape environments
- Improve signalization and crosswalks
- Create streetscape amenities
- Evaluate and recommend bike route options, possibly through increased Georgia Tech setback on south side of 10th Street.

PLANNED LAND USE

- Maintain as much residential as possible
- Allow limited multi-family
- Preserve residential environment edge

ARCHITECTURAL GUIDELINES

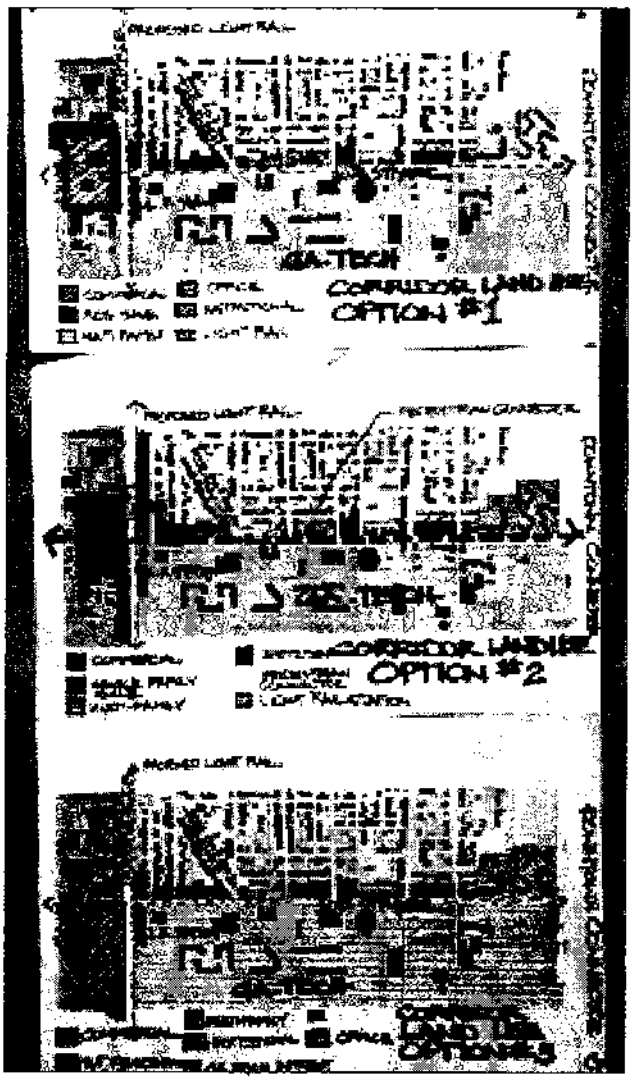
- Corridor edge needs to protect remainder of neighborhood
- Limit on-grade parking to residential or commercial use

GATEWAYS

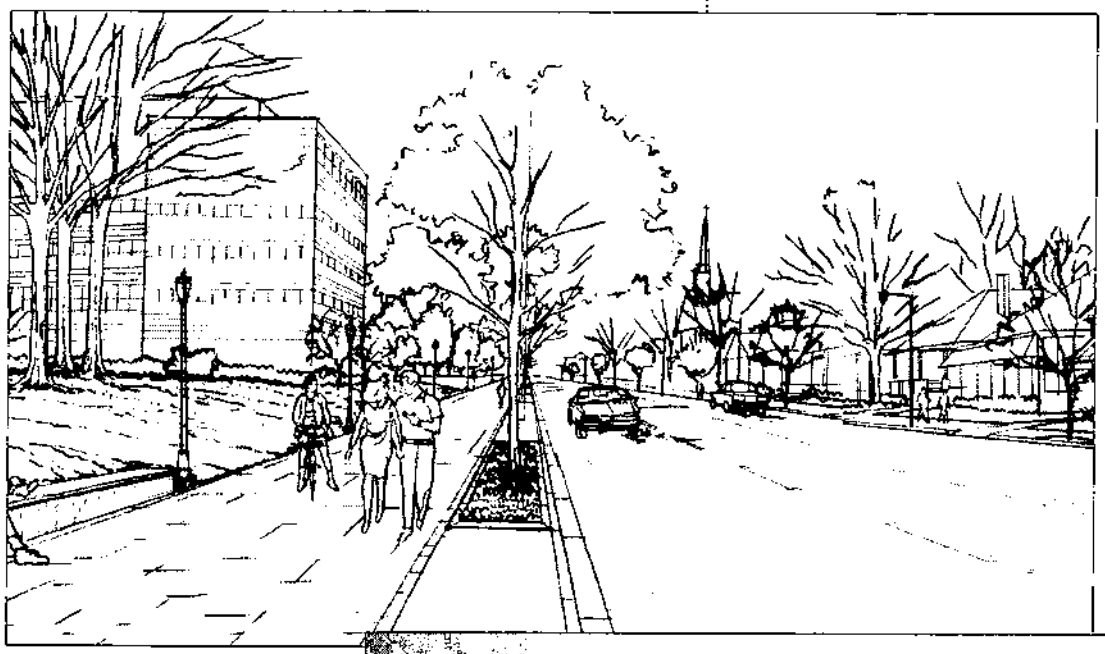
- Enhance primary entrances to community, primarily at Northside, Hemphill and State Streets
- Explore western gateway as potential "Tech Village" commercial center
- Enhance 10th Street bridge for pedestrian use and gateway

OPEN SPACE

- Create green connections and open space
- Look for unstructured recreational open space in comprehensive plan
- Investigate vest pocket park opportunities

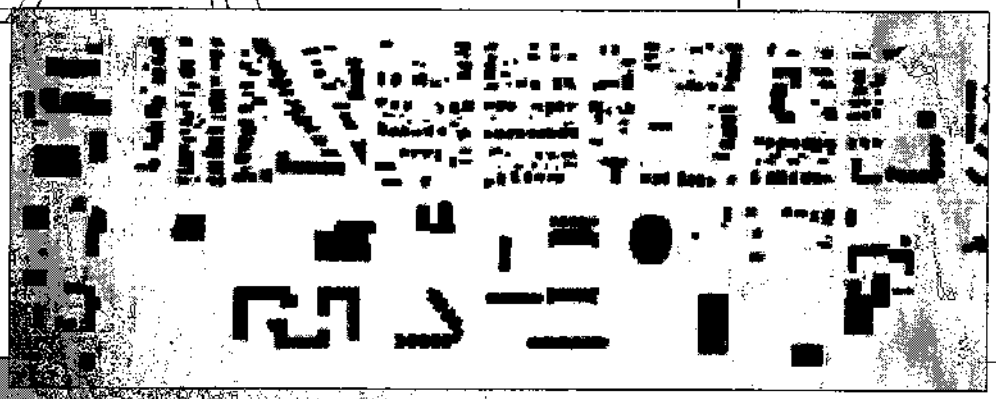


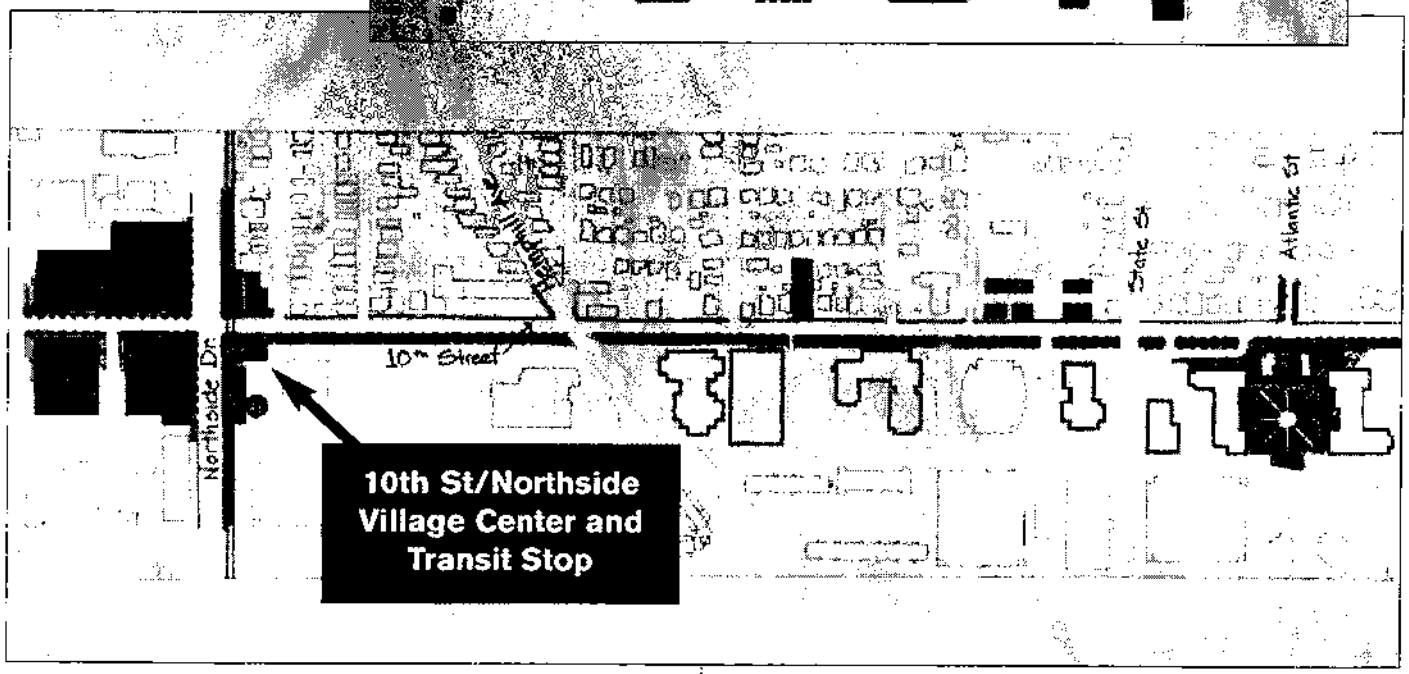
Land Use Alternatives



View west along proposed 10th street corridor

Existing Conditions





10th street corridor plan

STUDY AREA RESULTS

View west along 14th street

10th street team leader Paul Brickey

4. 14TH STREET CORRIDOR

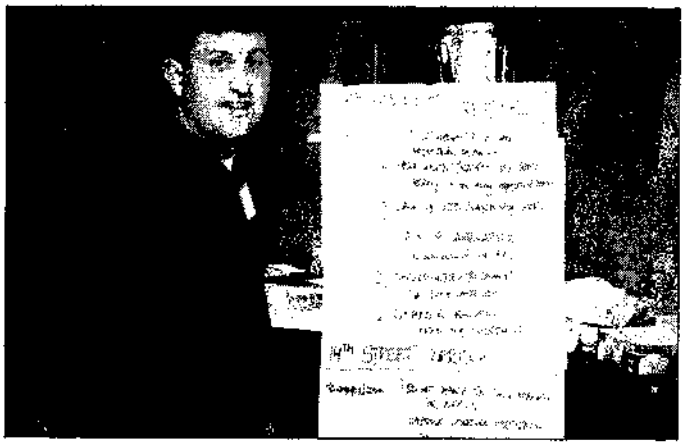
ISSUES:

- Area needs to be more pedestrian friendly
- Vehicular traffic is very heavy
- Lack of landscaping and abundance of utilities
- Opportunity to change existing land uses
- Need for buffers and circulation to surrounding residences.

RECOMENDATIONS:

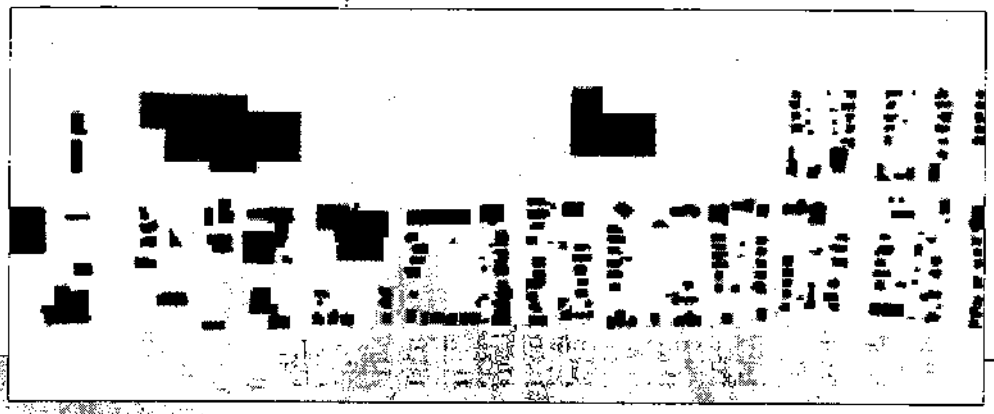
- Do not change existing roadways for vehicles
- Improve pedestrian environment by widening sidewalks, adding trees, relocating utilities
- Consider neighborhood center between Tumlin and Atlantic Streets
- Create transit station site at Northside, near Mecaslin and 14th Street
- Increase access points to Atlantic Steel; encourage street front building in new development
- Create site plan standards and controls
- Repeat design elements throughout neighborhood

Home Park residents
Timothy State and Beryl Martinson



14th street team leader Stan Harvey

View east at proposed village center on 14th Street



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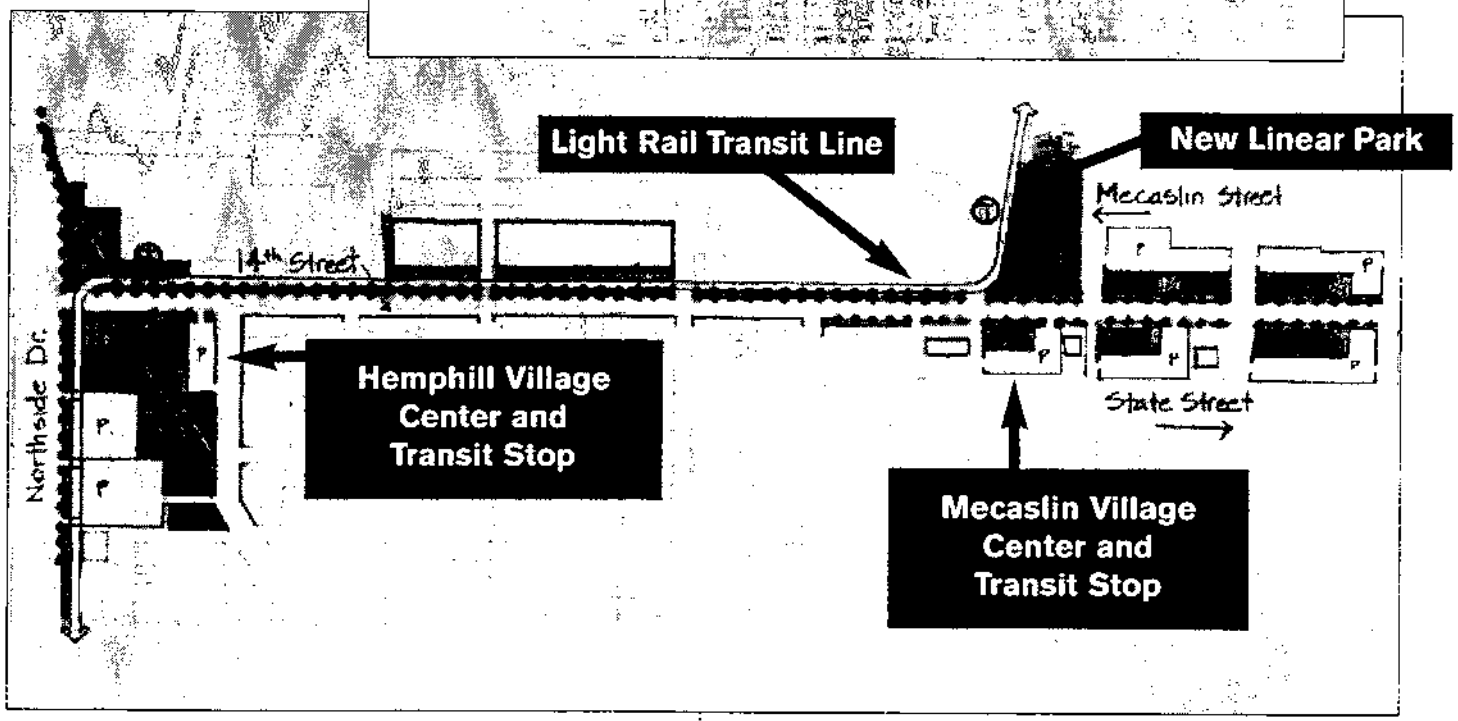


14th street corridor plan

STUDY AREA RESULTS

View west along 16th street into Atlantic Steel property

5. 16 TH STREET/MECASLIN CORRIDOR

ISSUES

- Let height and density build gradually, not abruptly.
- Extend street grid into the development; do not relocate 16th Street
- Complete existing neighborhood fabric to 16th Street and Mecaslin through single family developments
- Reclaim street right-of-way for pedestrians
- Include open space/recreational area large enough for ball field. Green corridor west of Mecaslin
- Explore possible greenway connection to Water Works
- Create ability to walk to convenience stores and light commercial that meets community needs
- Provide community services—library, police precinct, middle school

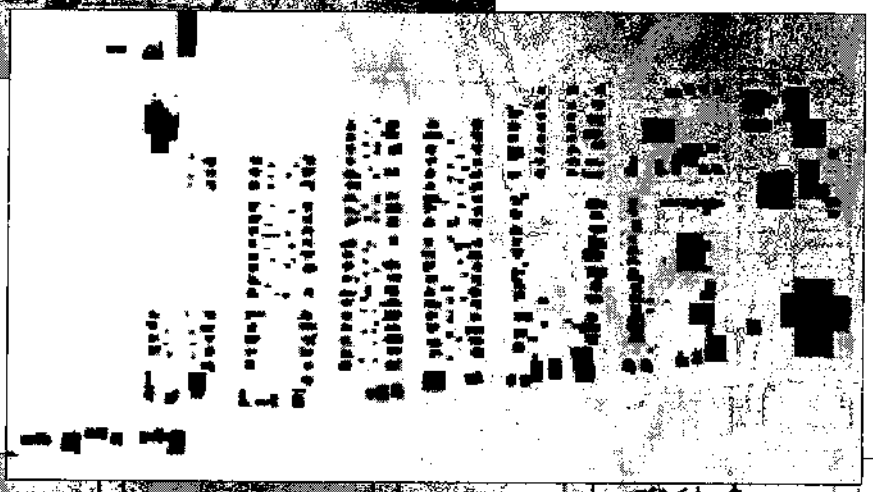
OUTCOMES TO AVOID:

- Gridlocking traffic
- 16th Street as a high speed divider
- 16th Street eliminated as east/west access
- Excessive speeds on all streets
- Grotesque change in community character
- 30 year construction period
- Child unfriendly/elderly unfriendly environment
- Lack of enforcement on site development controls
- Lack of landscaping and above ground utilities
- Intrusion of multifamily or inappropriate land use, especially south of 16th Street and east of Mecaslin.

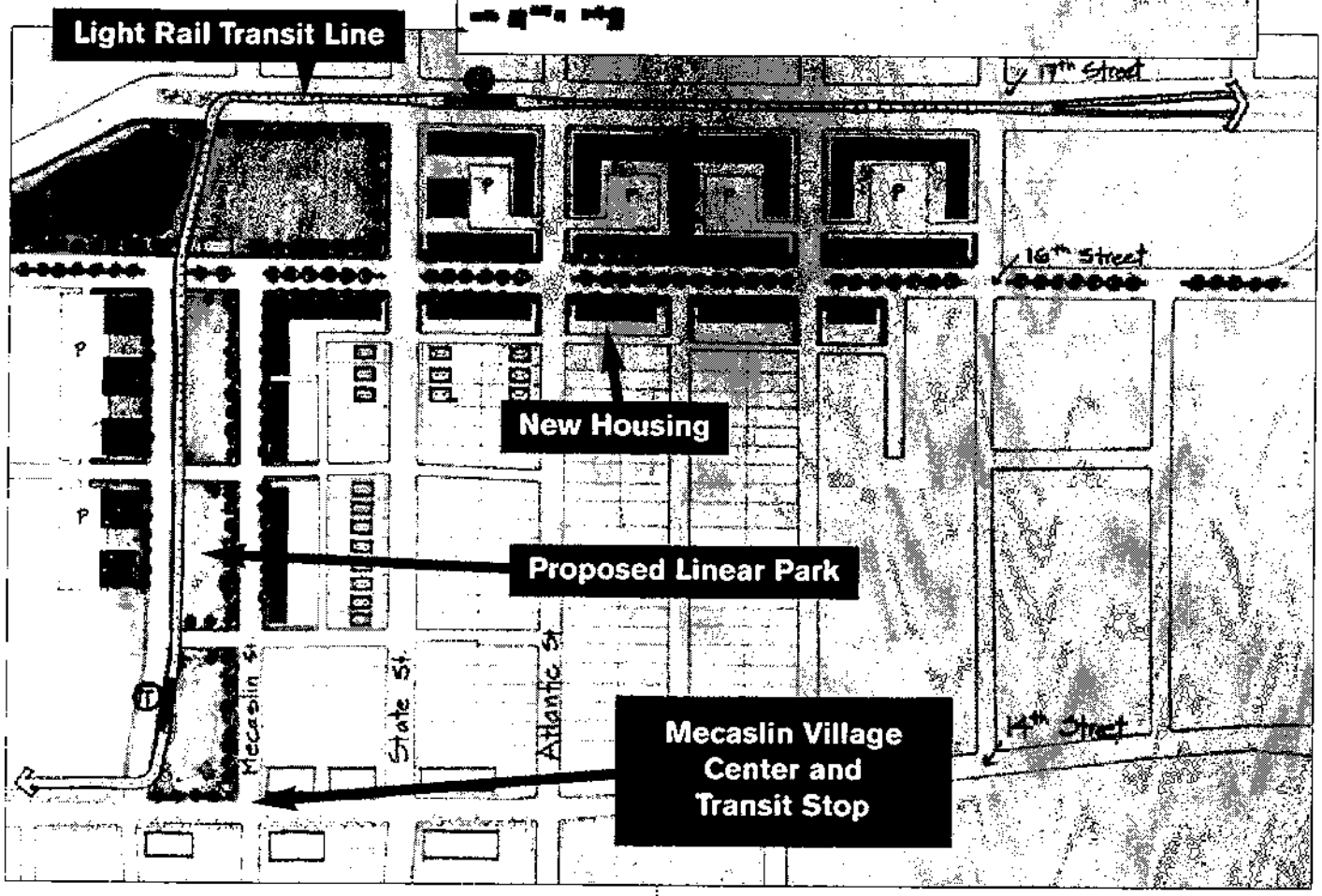
Home Park residents Bernadette Smith and Joe Grimland

16th street team leader Ortrude White

Section through proposed Linear Park



Existing conditions



16th Street/Mecaslin Corridor Plan

SUMMARY OF GOALS

The following goals were reiterated and elaborated at the beginning of the workshop by all participants:

Physical Characteristics–we support:

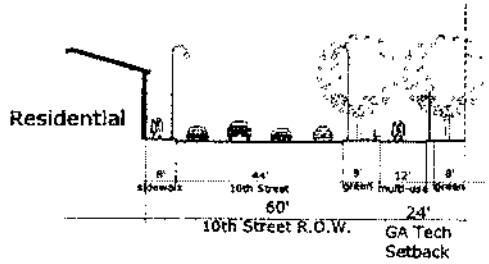
- Sidewalks–pedestrian friendly environment
- Well maintained properties
- Public gathering spaces
- Natural environment
- Ease of circulation
- Improved appearance of public infrastructure
- Fewer incompatible uses
- Control of inconsistent residential appearance and density
- Better management of on and off street parking
- Increasing percentage of owner occupied single family housing
- Minimizing negative traffic impacts of Atlantic Steel on neighborhood
- Better compatibility where residential and business meet
- More recreation, both active and passive
- Stronger visual community image (gateways)
- Commercial/public vehicles and routes consistent with neighborhood character
- Greening of public spaces and private spaces
- Retaining and enhancing historical context
- Maintaining residential character at interface with Atlantic Steel
- Positioning retail in Atlantic Steel to recognize entire Home Park market.

Sense of Community–we support:

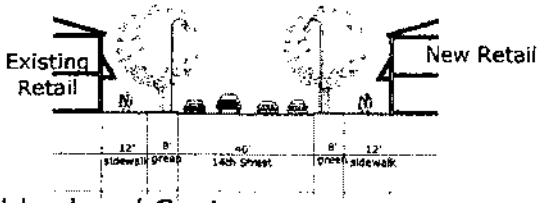
- Creating external identity at Home Park
- Strong internally generated community definition – signage, special events
- Vested residents and property owners; business pride in the community
- Strong community association
- More families
- Appreciation of diversity
- Community programs to build sense of community
- New residents (Atlantic Steel) sharing sense of community with residents
- Georgia Tech students sharing a sense of commitment with other Home Park residents
- Community institutions that enhance sense of community
- Future retail and commercial development patterns to enhance sense of community
- Improved communication
- Retaining opportunities for income diversity and housing affordability
- Decreasing percentage of rental property and increasing quality
- Improving quality of relationship with renters
- Georgia Tech encouraging and promoting development on the fringe which is compatible with the neighborhood
- Clarifying and establishing neighborhood boundaries
- Consistent with Georgia Tech current master plan, Georgia Tech working to support the revitalization and stabilization of Home Park
- Changes in Georgia Tech master plan and actions of Georgia Tech Foundation made to collaborate with the community and be consistent with neighborhood goals and plans.

Organizational Structure–we support:

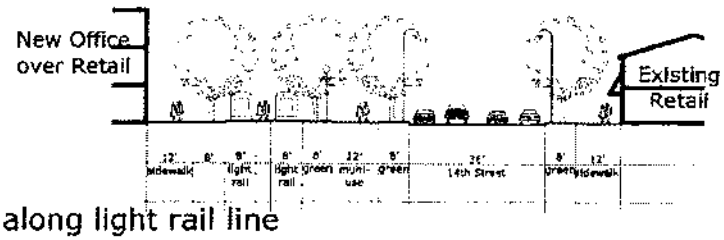
- A community "watchdog" committee to monitor zoning and other land use compliance
- Improving relationship with city code enforcement office
- Community association proactively consulted on all zoning changes
- Expanding purview of SPI to include all land use matters
- Creating neighborhood/community development corporation
- A strong and vibrant community association
- Broader civic involvement by community members



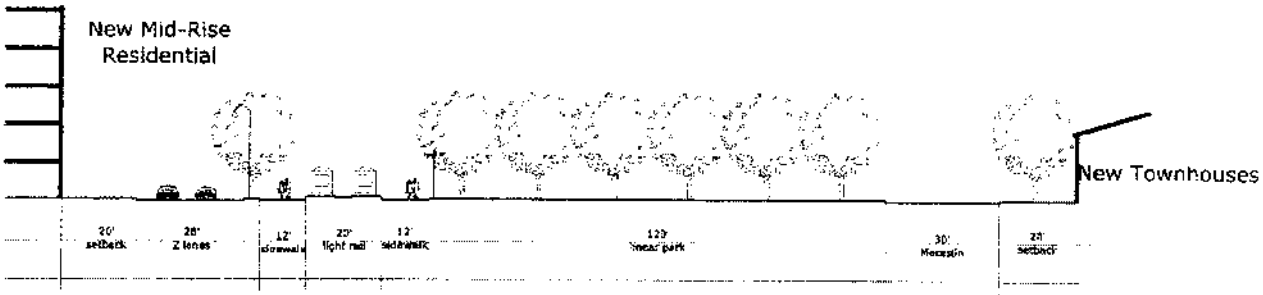
10th Street



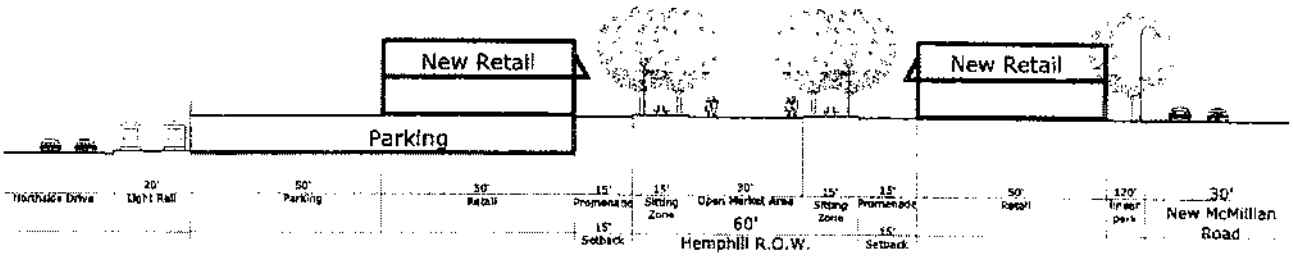
14th Street at new Neighborhood Center



14th Street along light rail line



Mecaslin Street at Linear Park



Hemphill at Neighborhood Center near 14th

Proposed street sections of major corridors

PHASE I STRATEGIC ACTIONS

1. Seek inclusion of the recommendations of this workshop in the Comprehensive Development Plan of the City of Atlanta.

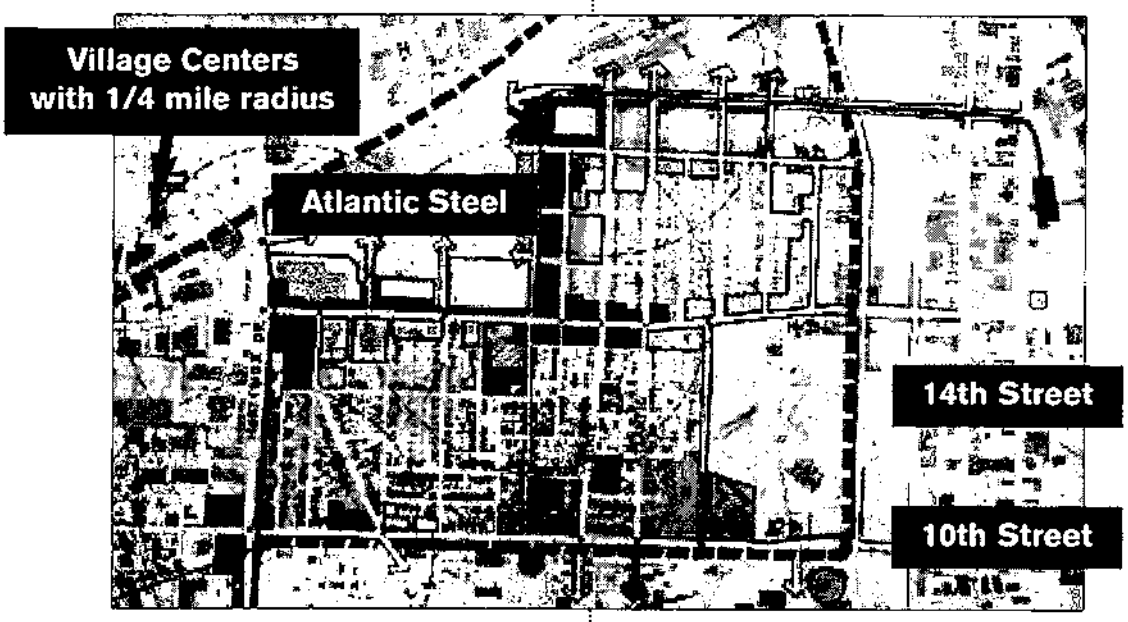
2. Seek corporate funding to prepare a detailed Master Plan including:
- Detailed land use recommendations
- Design guidelines for street and sidewalk improvements
- Study of Historic District eligibility (with the Atlanta Urban Design Commission)
- Study of potential to amend SPI zoning district to include all land use and physical characteristics in the neighborhood
- Traffic study for proposed improvements, particularly the closing of Hemphill Avenue and the extension of Holly Street.

3. Establish a Home Park Development Corporation to focus initially on market and development feasibility studies for three main areas in the following order:
- Village Center Area commercial infill and redevelopment:
- Northside/14th Street/Hemphill Avenue commercial infill and redevelopment area
- Northside/10th Street commercial infill and redevelopment area.

4. Strengthen partnerships with neighborhood and adjacent entities in order to have active voice in critical decision processes:
- Atlantic Steel
- The Atlanta Development Authority (ADA):
  - –Economic revitalization west of Northside Drive
  - –West side light rail system
- Georgia Tech:
  - –Resolve campus Master Plan conflicts with neighborhood
  - –Joint support of 10th Street transit shuttle
- Turner Broadcasting System
- Midtown Alliance

5. Pursue public funding for urgent public improvements:
- CMAQ or TEA 21 funds for sidewalk, streetscape and traffic improvements (with City of Atlanta)
- Feasibility of tax allocation district to fund public improvements and new elementary school (with ADA)

6. Establish Community Services Task Force with Atlantic Steel to study feasibility and location of badly needed services:
- Elementary school (with Atlanta Public Schools)
- Branch library (with Fulton County)
- Police mini precinct (with City of Atlanta)



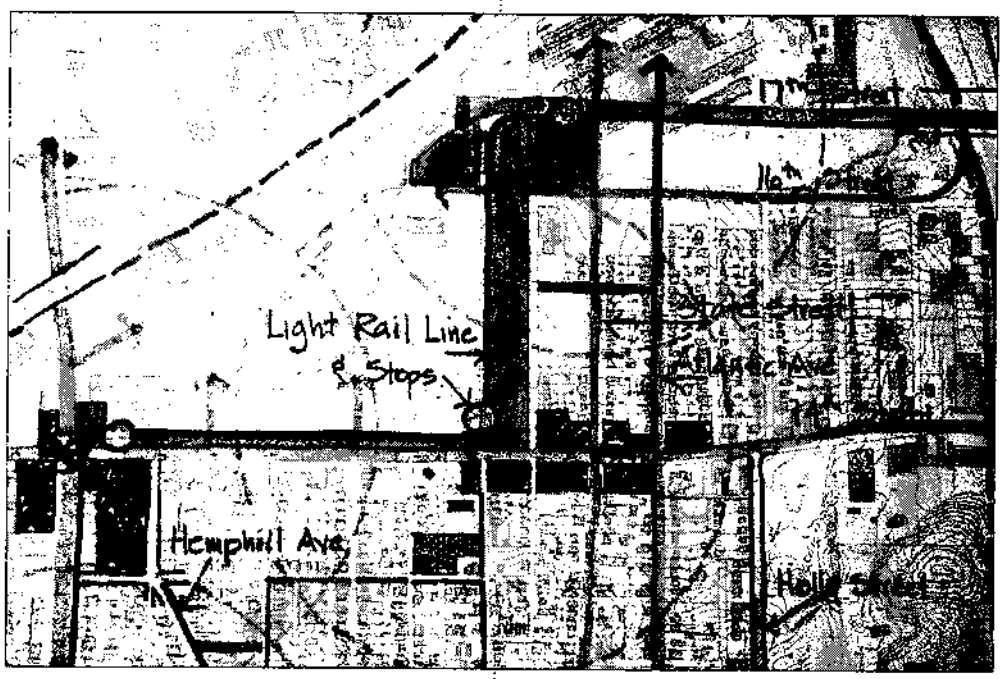
Strategic actions

THE ATLANTIC STEEL SITE

General Conclusion: The Atlantic Steel property is part of the Home Park Neighborhood. A successful Atlantic Steel project depends on its positive contribution to a diverse, livable, environmentally healthy and sustainable Home Park Community.

The following goals prepared by the Home Park neighborhood as a result of this workshop were submitted to the Environmental Protection Agency for their considerations in recommending revisions to the proposed Atlantic Steel Plan.

GENERAL GOALS	IMPLICATIONS FOR THE ATLANTIC STEEL PROJECT
1. Home Park supports the maintenance and enhancement of the social, economic, and age diversity of the existing community and the protection of the existing traditional neighborhood core.	Protect and develop neighborhood edges, particularly along the Atlantic Steel boundary, with residential uses that carefully provide transition from existing lower to proposed higher densities.
2. Home Park supports the continuation of street, block and lot types and sizes that promote a pedestrian, street oriented urban community.	Protect and infill residential blocks along the Atlantic Steel boundary and extend the urban block scale and street connections into the residential portions of the Atlantic Steel Development.
3. Home Park supports the creation of a viable neighborhood center serving all present and future residents that contains retail, civic and recreational uses near the center of the community.	Combine convenience retail elements of the Atlantic Steel proposal with un-met retail demand in the existing neighborhood to create a single center that helps bridge the gap between existing and future residents.
4. Home Park supports the creation of accessible public spaces of various types and sizes to support both the proposed and badly under served existing neighborhood.	Locate proposed Atlantic Steel open spaces to be accessible to existing neighborhood residents and to facilitate physical connections between the existing and proposed residential community.
5. Home Park supports promoting the use of transportation alternatives to the automobile to provide both better accessibility to all Home Park residents and to control automobile traffic through the neighborhood.	Locate the proposed west side "light rail" transit line and stops to maximize walking distance accessibility to residents of both the existing and proposed neighborhoods and to serve the proposed neighborhood center and major open spaces.



Recommendations for Atlantic Steel interface with neighborhood

PARTICIPANTS

Coordinators:

- Ellen Keys, The Georgia Conservancy
- Randal Roark, AIA, AICP, Georgia Tech Urban Design Workshop
- Michael Dobbins, Commissioner, Department of Planning and Development, City of Atlanta

Professional Panel:

- Marta Goldsmith, Chair, Urban Land Institute
- Larry Frank, Transportation Planning, Georgia Tech
- Stan Harvey, AICP, Urban Collage, MCI Inc.
- Mtamanika Youngblood, Historic District Development Corporation

Representing the ICDC:

- Paul Brickey, ASLA, HOK Architects & Planning
- Rick Day, ITE, Day Wilburn Associates, Inc.
- Leon S. Eplan, GPA (former Commissioner of Planning and Development, City of Atlanta)
- Ortrude White, AIA

Home Park Steering Committee

- Michael Brandon, Chair
- Brian Leary, Jacoby/Atlantic Steel
- Richard Long, Turner Broadcasting
- Shannon Powell, Midtown Alliance
- Paul Vanderhorst, Georgia Tech
- Jim Vaseff, Georgia Power
- Susan Barnes –10th St. United Methodist Church
- Kurt Belgum
- Maher Budheir
- Jeff Burg
- Nelson Burke
- Richard Chatham
- Ellen Corrie
- Joe Grimland
- William Grissom
- Ehab Jaleel
- Rhonda Kocher
- Beryl Martinson
- Joseph McAleer
- Rainey Rembart
- Faset (Bill) Seay
- Bernadette Smith
- Thanks to Jim Schneider–NPU-E

From the City of Atlanta

- Dan Cohen, Bureau of Planning
- William Fleming, ADA
- Aaron Fortner, Bureau of Planning
- John Krueger, Department of Public Works,
- Jean McGuire, Housing Code Inspector
- Doug Young, Atlanta Urban Design Commission

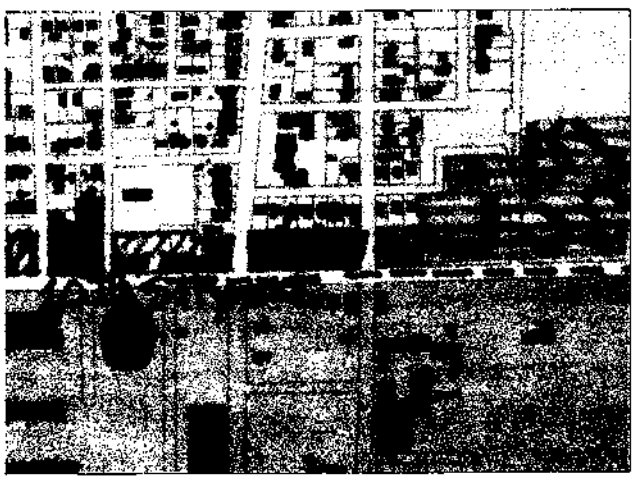
Georgia Tech Students:

- Reid Betz
- Beth Hagberg
- Shauna Haggerty
- Braj Hart
- Vanessa Lampe
- Christina Muzzi
- Shawn Turanchik
- Rajiv Wanasundera

Workshop Panel and Students

Workshop 4
Home Park

Blueprints for successful communities



Successful Communities Partners:

The Georgia Conservancy, the Urban Land Institute, the Greater Atlanta Home Builders Association, the American Institute of Architects, the American Society of Landscape Architects, the Institute of Transportation Engineers, the Georgia Trust for Historic Preservation, the Consulting Engineers Council, the Georgia Planning Association and the National Association of Industrial and Office Properties.