Assuring Community Benefits in Military Base Closing Redevelopment Processes

Presented by McPherson Residents

Fort McPherson

transparent community
comprehensive
comprehensive
comprehensive

involvement throughout

Civic collaborative

redevelopment

authorizes

STAND-UP

Georgia Tech College of Architecture

02.03.2012
Presented by:

- **Professor Michael Dobbins**: Georgia Tech. FAIA. AICP. Former Commissioner of Planning and Community Development for the City of Atlanta
- **Deborah Scott**: Executive Director of STAND-UP
- **Karen Babino**: Community Leader. MACC Member. NPU S Chair. Licensed Realtor
- **Leslie Caceda**: Georgia Tech MCRP Graduate, STAND-UP Community Planner and Researcher
- **Pamela Newkirk**: Community Leader. MACC Leadership
Agenda

1. What do you want to learn?
2. What do we want to learn?
3. Telling the Tale:
   • How can communities impacted by large scale development projects influence the process so that their needs and priorities are incorporated?
   • How we are trying to do just that in conjunction with a major base closing in Atlanta – a case study.
4. Workshop on equitable engagement in development
Identifying Community Benefits

- Organize to assure that their needs and priorities are incorporated into the development process
- Identify community benefits, like jobs, housing, recreation, infrastructure, amenities, and then
- Engage the planning and zoning approval processes
- Engage any public financing, incentive and budgeting Process
- Establish a legal entity to negotiate Community Benefits Agreements (CBAs) to assure results
The broad spheres of interest always present in the development process:

The interests, the motives, the purposes, the measures, and the relative power of each – can partnerships be forged so that all can benefit?
Location

- Halfway between downtown and the airport
- Bordering 3 NPUs
  - R, S, and X
- Bordering 2 Wards
  - A and B
- Abutting 2 Marta Train Stations
- 488 acres of prime land filled with existing assets
Guiding Principles

- Transparency
- Communication/Disseminating Info
- Accountability
- Support Each Other
- Involvement
- Advocacy
- Objective Criteria & Standards
- Serving Common Interest
- Consensus and Unity
- Economic Development
- Education
- Atlanta/East Point Unity

Developed at Community Engagement Work Session - Studio Project Fall 2009
## Demographics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Population¹</th>
<th>AA Pop¹</th>
<th>%&lt; $25,000/yr¹</th>
<th>MHHI²</th>
<th>Pop over 65³</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fort McPherson Community</td>
<td>ATL- 59,130 EP- 31,786</td>
<td>92.5%</td>
<td>45.2%</td>
<td>$28,000</td>
<td>~30%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Atlanta</td>
<td>ATL-408,873 EP- 33,172</td>
<td>61.4%</td>
<td>38.1%</td>
<td>$45,171</td>
<td>~6.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1- 2000 Census Data  
2- 2005 – 2009 American Community Survey Data  
3- 2010 Census Data
Employment

Total Employment in 2009 for the Fort McPherson Study Area (Outlined in Black)

Employment in 2009 for The Top 5 Highest Paying Jobs for the Fort McPherson Study Area (Outlined in Black)

Source: 2005-2009 American Community Survey

Source: 2005-2009 American Community Survey
What is an NPU?

• **Neighborhood Planning Unit**
• Established in 1974 by Atlanta’s 1st black mayor, Maynard Holbrook Jackson.
• There are 25 NPUs. Each is lettered A-Z except U.
• Each operates by its own set of by-laws
• Each is assigned a City of Atlanta Planner
• Each sends a representative to the Atlanta Planning Advisory Board.
Housing in distress –
Fort McPherson vicinity housing inventory

Vacant and/or Boarded, For Sale & For Rent

Legend
- For Rent
- For Sale
- Vacant and/or Boarded
- Parks
- Parcels

*Map should be used only for representation of distressed residential properties in the area.*
Reclaiming Public Space

Intention

- “Economically uplift surrounding communities…,”
- “Enhance community services and promote life-long learning…,”
- “Develop through a collaborative process…,”
- “Develop with respect to the local community…,”
- “Create a place for everyone…”

Delivery

- Insular “top-down” planning
“...don’t miss the opportunities...”

The base has buildings and grounds that could help meet community needs.

The base plan calls for community involvement.

The base will have lots of job opportunities, both in the short and long term.

BUT, the base had no plan for interim use of its facilities.

The base carefully selected which “community” to involve.

The base has not committed to local hiring or training.
The Path

MACC is Created

STAND-UP Assists PICL Project

STAND-UP Commissions GA TECH

Policy Institute Class Project 2005

Base Closure Announced
Focus on lending technical support to community initiatives, particularly in low wealth and minority communities.
The Studio Work

• **Purpose**
  - Emphasize and fulfill community service commitments
  - Apply and recalibrate classroom learning to real situations
  - Provide resources where access is often lacking
  - Learn from community – where at least half of what planners need to know to be useful comes from
  - Support the creation of a **community action plan**
Local Redevelopment Authority’s Master Plan – internally focused – doesn’t mesh with community or take advantage of MARTA

Sketch of Communities’ Action Plan – meshes with community, provides for jobs and housing cooperation, and focuses on MARTA station Transit Oriented Development opportunities
Award Winning Effort

Outstanding Student Project Award

Georgia Planning Association 2011
THINK

• Research + Policy Analysis
• Policy Institute for Civic Leadership
• Community Enrichment Workshops

• STAND-UP Alliance
• Community Organizing
• Community Benefits Campaigns

ACT

STAND-UP
STAND-UP’s Purpose

- Empower Communities to be active participants in shaping their own future
- Link + Support the work of Social Justice Activists, Labor Organizers, Faith-based Groups, Neighborhood-based Organizations and Grassroots Citizens
- Provide the tools and training to create sustainable progressive public policy
- Build Power for a Progressive Movement in Georgia, and creating a model for the South
CBAs

- Community Benefits Agreement are negotiated between developers and leaders of community groups from community-labor coalitions and community based organizations. The agreements reached are legally enforceable documents that summarize the commitments developers make to the community.

Diagram shows the development process without CBAs. Source: http://www.communitybenefits.org/

Diagram shows the development process with CBAs. Source: http://www.communitybenefits.org/
Accomplishments

- Representation of Elected Officials on the LRA Board with leadership from State Senator Vincent Fort
- Community Engagement Sub-Committee was formed with leadership from Councilmember Joyce Sheperd
- MACC (McPherson Action Community Coalition) formed as entity with ability to negotiate Community Benefit Agreements
- New Mayor’s attention and support
- Incorporation of the Community Action Plan into the city’s comprehensive development plan and rezoning deliberations
- Rapid broadening of public awareness and involvement in the base’s future
Next Steps

- Remaining vocal during zoning processes
- Growing MACC Membership
- Working for win-wins now and down the path
- Enter into negotiations with developers as they are announced
Contact Info (in order of appearance)

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Thank You.
Workshop

Guiding Principle

• Development projects turn out better for all when all are included from the beginning, in which impacted communities negotiate Community Benefits Agreements (CBAs).
Workshop

- **Objective.** Enter into a negotiation to discuss the following:
  - Agreement on overall development strategies
  - Agreement to incorporate aggressive sustainability measures
  - Agreement on a timeline for development
  - Agreement on beneficially using the buildings and other facilities already on the property, like housing, athletic facilities, and light industrial buildings
  - Agreement on proactively incorporating a local job training and hiring program to alleviate high unemployment, particularly among young African-American men
  - Agreement that for anything to happen, the developer must earn an adequate return on investment
  - Agreement on a workable and ongoing partnership among developer, city and community to guide the development’s future (expected to last 20 years)