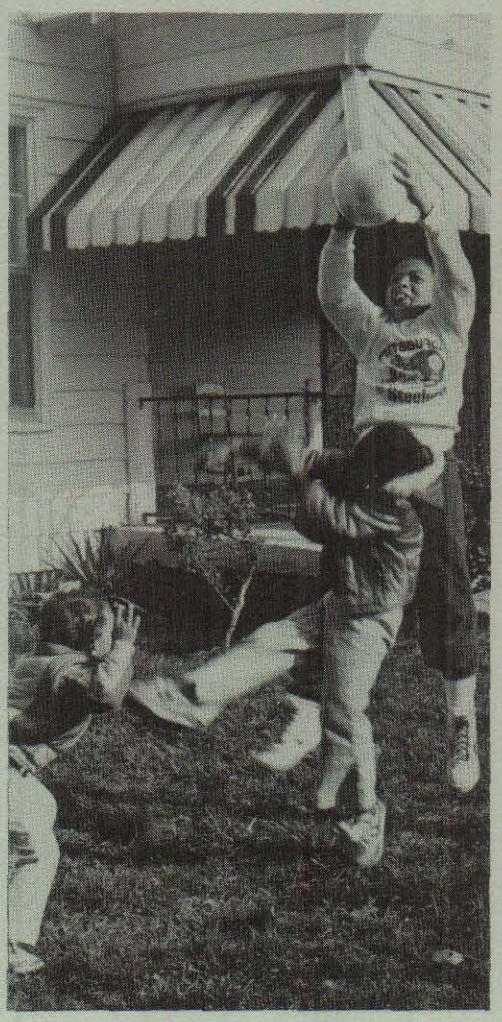
ASHEBORO NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN



CITY OF GREENSBORO

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ASHEBORO NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN

Greensboro Department of Planning
and Community Development

January 1983

Southside Hose Company. Photograph circa 1910.

Contents

Preface

The Asheboro neighborhood is one of a few surviving older inner-city neighborhoods, and it still retains the urban and architectural character and many of the buildings which at the turn-of-the-century made it Greensboro's most fashionable residential section. More importantly, it is the home for many people who have few other housing opportunities. However, today it is a neighborhood in serious jeopardy because of deteriorating housing and economic conditions.

Being home to over 3,000 residents, Asheboro is a large neighborhood by any standards. Included within its boundaries are the Asheboro, Vance and Arlington Park Community Development Target Areas. Its size and the complexity of problems in the area forestall any quick and easy solutions. Rather, upgrading of the community would require the long term dedication of neighborhood residents and property owners and the continued availability of Community Development Block Grant funds and other resources to carry out the program as herein described.

The Asheboro Neighborhood Plan recommends a series of actions designed to accomplish two goals: First, to halt the further deterioration of neighborhood conditions, and secondly, to provide guidance and direction for a gradual revitalization of the neighborhood's physical and social structure.

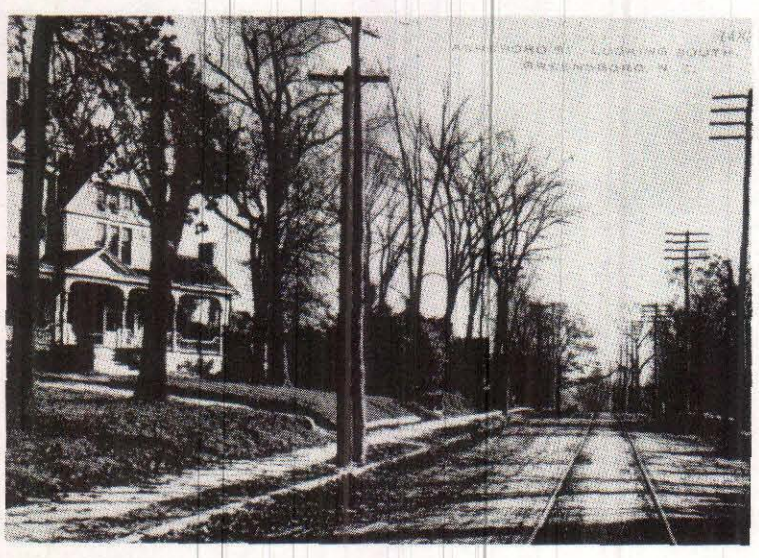
The Neighborhood Plan represents the culmination of several years of work by the City and neighborhood residents and property owners. The dialogue and cooperation which has been an important part of this planning process must now continue during the implementation phase if the plan is to achieve its intended purposes.

Early Development

The story of early growth and development in the Asheboro neighborhood is especially interesting because of the insight it provides into the historical development of the city as a whole. Because of its location near downtown and the railroad, the neighborhood played a significant role in Greensboro's evolution from a small town into a major southern city.

Prior to 1880, urban growth in Greensboro was slow because of depressed economic conditions following the Civil War. There had been little industrial development, partly because of the heavy migration of laborers to the north. The one area where there was significant growth was in the area beyond the corporate limits known then as "South Greensboro." The main portion of South Greensboro lay in the angle formed by Asheboro and Ashe Streets, the main southeast and southwest roads from town. While the Asheboro neighborhood is today physically separated from downtown by Lee Street, in the 1870s the neighborhood extended north to the railroad tracks in the downtown. Lee Street was just another neighborhood street at the time.

The earliest residential development in South Greensboro was the large estates on Asheboro Street, some built before the Civil War. Most residential development in Greensboro up until this period had focused on the area surrounding the courthouse, at the intersection of Market and Elm Streets. In fact, development along Asheboro Street marked the beginning of urban expansion in Greensboro.

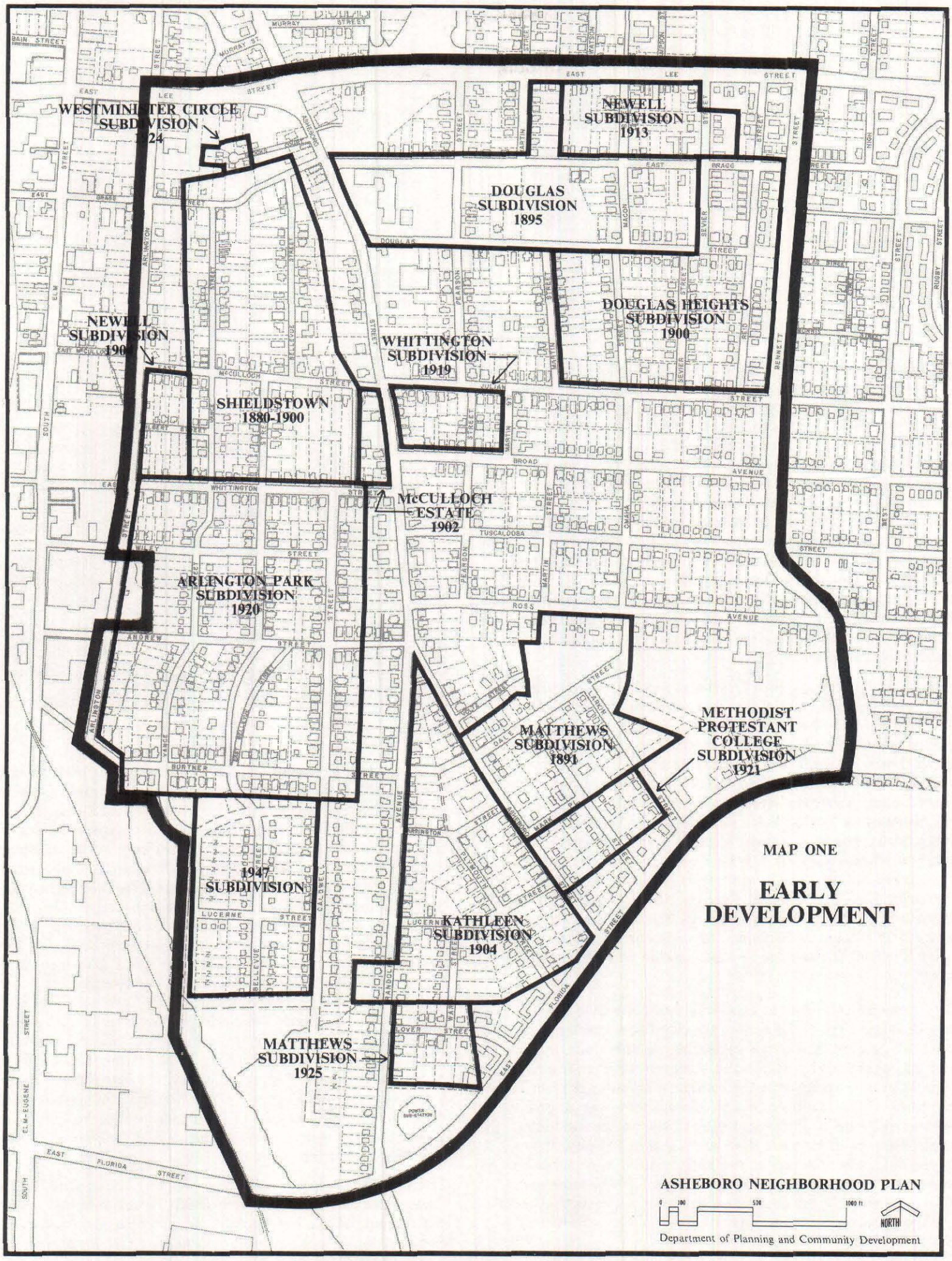


Asheboro Street. Postcard circa 1920.

Centenary M. E. Church, corner Asheboro and Arlington Streets. Photograph circa 1940's.

In the 1870s, Joseph Shields, a northern investor, purchased 50 acres behind the large estates on Asheboro Street and made building lots available. The area became known as Shieldstown and was the first speculative real estate venture in the city. At about this time Elm Street was continued south of the railroad tracks providing a convenient north-south link between the city center and South Greensboro. During this time, the town commissioners began to make public improvements in this part of town to encourage residential and industrial growth.

Another northerner new to Greensboro, Albion Tourgee, owned a large amount of undeveloped land to the east of Asheboro Street. In addition to subdividing this 90-acre estate in South Greensboro, he was Judge of Superior Court and helped write the North Carolina Constitution. While he made some local contributions, he was bitterly hated as a "carpet bagger".


WESTMINSTER CIRCLE SUBDIVISION 1924
NEWELL SUBDIVISION 1913
DOUGLAS SUBDIVISION 1895
DOUGLAS HEIGHTS SUBDIVISION 1900
NEWELL SUBDIVISION 1904
WHITTINGTON SUBDIVISION 1919
SHIELDSTOWN 1880-1900
McCULLOCH ESTATE 1902
ARLINGTON PARK SUBDIVISION 1920
METHODIST PROTESTANT COLLEGE SUBDIVISION 1921
MATTHEWS SUBDIVISION 1891
1947 SUBDIVISION
KATHLEEN SUBDIVISION 1904
MATTHEWS SUBDIVISION 1925
MAP ONE
EARLY DEVELOPMENT
ASHEBORO NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN
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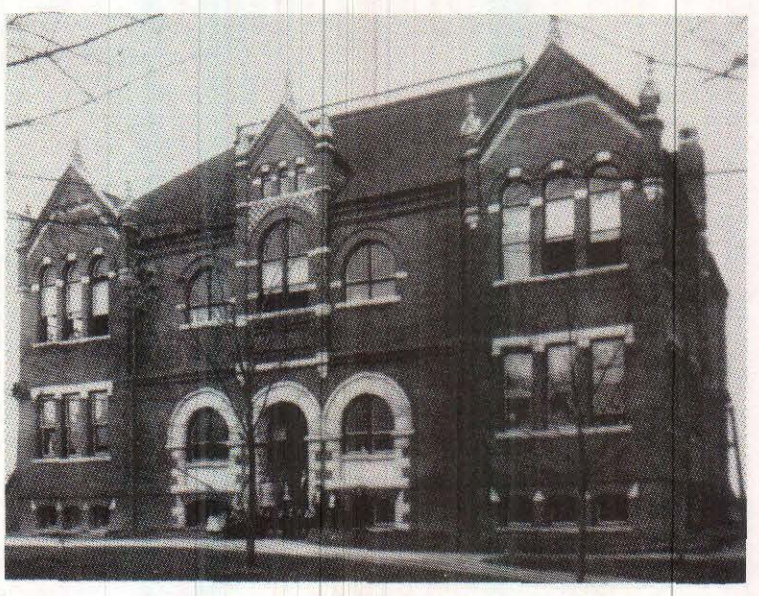
The Warnersville community was located to the west of the Shieldstown area. Yardley Warner, a Quaker from Philadelphia who recognized the need for housing for freedmen, bought land west of Shieldstown and sold half-acre building lots at liberal prices. He also built a school in the community where he taught for many years. Warnersville and the black settlements to the east of town influenced subsequent residential development. Warnersville was probably influential in keeping property values relatively low in new portions of South Greensboro to the west of Asheboro Street, and Shieldstown attracted mostly moderate income families. Over the years, in fact, the influence of nearby low income black neighborhoods to the west and east of South Greensboro was stronger than the influence of high value residential development along Asheboro Street, which failed to expand and eventually declined in value.

As late as the 1890s, South Greensboro remained a distinct community, but the distinction was beginning to blurr. Until the Asheboro Street overpass was built in 1920, frequent, slow moving trains helped to separate South Greensboro from the rest of town. By 1900, the South Greensboro area was more commonly referred to as "Southside", and centered on the Bragg Street, Asheboro Street intersection. A small commercial district was located there along with the Southside Hose Company #4, the Westminster Presbyterian Church, and the Asheboro Street Graded School (now the site of Caldwell Elementary School). In the vicinity of this intersection along Asheboro, Lee, Gorrell, and Pearson Streets lived some of Greensboro's most prominent citizens. The impressive homes of Dr. DeWitt Clinton Benbow, Mayor Robert M. Sloan, and Judge Thomas Settle were located on this part of Asheboro Street.

The railroad's influence at this time was pervasive. This influence is best seen in the shift of the city's retail center to the south along Elm Street, to capitalize on the trade opportunities opened up by railroad connections with other cities. Because of its proximity to the commercial center of town at the turn of the century, South Greensboro was a prime residential location. Between 1880 and 1910 more residential construction occurred here than anywhere in the city. It was an era of energy and excitement and a period of remarkable growth, as the city's population grew from 3,000 to more than 15,000. What little remains from this period suggests that the neighborhood contained some of the best Victorian architecture to be found in Greensboro.



Asheboro Street Graded School. Photograph date unknown.

Many of the merchants and industrialists responsible for the city's growth lived in South Greensboro. For example, DeWitt Clinton Benbow, recognizing the need for a first-class hotel, established the Benbow House in 1871, for many years one of the region's finest. An important community leader, Benbow was also at least partially responsible for securing the location of the State Normal and Industrial College for Women and the State Agricultural and Technical College in Greensboro. E. P. Wharton was another South Greensboro resident heavily involved in the city's dramatic commercial growth. Among the businesses which he helped found are Pilot Life Insurance Company, Home Federal Savings and Loan Association, Newman Machine Company, and the North Carolina Steel and Iron Company. Wharton made important civic contributions as well. He was especially concerned about opportunities for black people and was instrumental in getting Andrew Carnegie to support the Carnegie Library, the first public library for blacks and now a part of the Bennett College campus. Wharton contributed half of the funds needed to build the Westminster Presbyterian Church, at Asheboro and Lee Streets, across from his home.

There were other prominent figures living in South Greensboro as well. Judge Robert M. Douglas' home was at the current location of David Caldwell School on Asheboro Street. Douglas was a State Supreme Court Judge and son of

Typical Arlington Park development.

presidential candidate Stephen Douglas. Judge Douglas donated a portion of his large estate to the city for the park which still bears his name. The home of Judge Thomas Settle, another member of the State Supreme Court, was located at the intersection of Asheboro and Lee Streets. Judge Settle was a candidate for Governor in 1876.

Southside was an important neighborhood of ordinary families as well. Residential developments behind the large estates and homes on Asheboro Street, south of Lee Street, were largely built for middle income families. Later, subdivisions to the south contained even more modest construction, giving the neighborhood a cross-section of Greensboro society.

Adding to the convenience of the neighborhood were several churches, an ice station, corner grocery stores, neighborhood schools, and by the 1920s the area was served by the trolley. Quakers chose South Greensboro as the location for their first church in the city, as did the Moravians. The original Asheboro Street Friends Church building, built in 1891, is still located on Asheboro Street. The Moravian church was located on East Lee Street and was demolished sometime after 1926. Very little is known about the private Bellevue Institute, located on McCulloch Street, which became one of the first graded schools in the city. It was replaced by the Asheboro Graded School in 1893 after the area was annexed to the City.

Residential development in the southern part of the neighborhood continued through the 1920s, and was completed by a few modern subdivisions and scattered infill development. The housing of this period is more modest but of generally good quality construction. The largest of these later subdivisions was Arlington Park, built in the 1920s and 1930s.

The Asheboro neighborhood has moved from one end of the economic spectrum to the other during its existence. At the turn-of-the century, a Southside address suggested affluence and local prominence. The neighborhood contained some of the city's finest homes. In the last half century, however, a pattern of decline set in, and gradually the housing stock and neighborhood amenities deteriorated. As the housing stock aged, affluent residents moved to new subdivisions being built in the northwest part of the city: Irving Park in 1911, Sedgefield and Sunset Hills in the 1920s, and so on.

Poor people could not afford to own or maintain the large houses as maintenance costs increased with housing age. Absentee owners were less inclined to maintain their property, and by the 1940s, the practice of carving up large residences for apartments was commonplace. This usually accelerated deterioration and created other neighborhood problems. At the same time that the automobile was making it possible for many residents to move to suburban locations, streets and thoroughfares needed improvement to handle increased traffic. Widening and improvements to East Lee Street, including an underpass, caused the removal of some of the oldest and best structures in the neighborhood.

General maintenance and repairs are needed on many area homes.

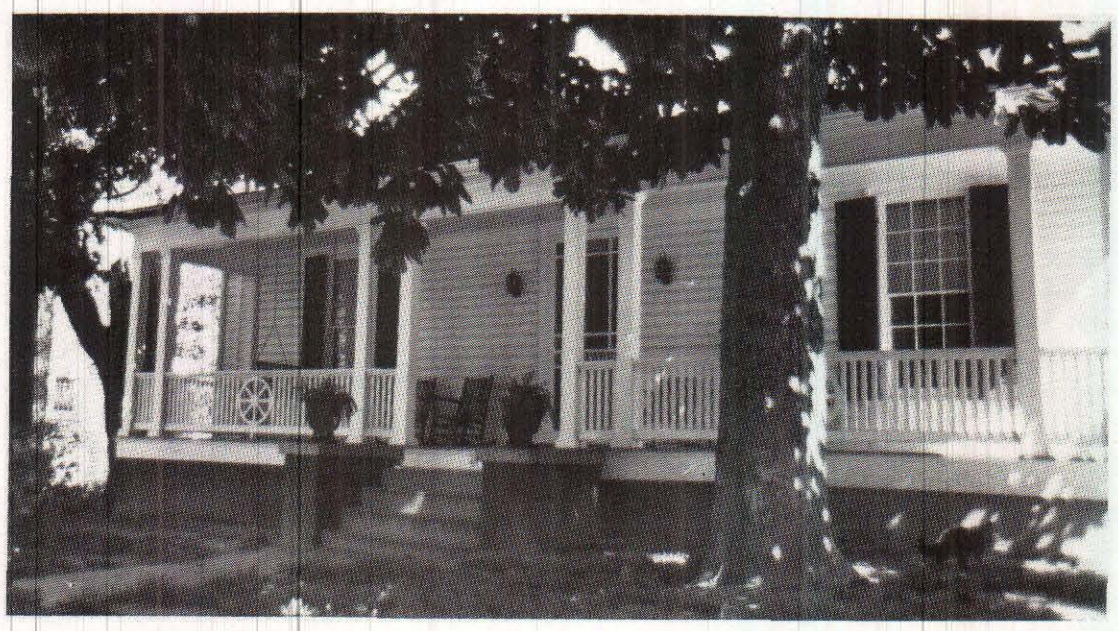
The physical decline of the Asheboro community reflects urban growth patterns in Greensboro. At the turn-of-the century, the neighborhood was popular, to a large extent, because of its convenient location near the commercial center of town, which at that time was the area around the railroad tracks. The neighborhood was in easy walking distance to this hub of activity with its new passenger and freight depots, markets, hotels and restaurants. Eventually, however, the railroad's influence waned, as the automobile opened up new growth possibilities. Between 1920 and 1929, Greensboro's boundaries were expanded greatly, its population increased to over 50,000, and the commercial center of town began to shift away from the neighborhood. Understandably, residential construction in the area after 1920 was much more modest in scale.

By the 1940s, the inexorable pattern of decline was clear. Housing conditions began to decline as houses were converted to apartments by absentee owners, and ordinary maintenance was often neglected. While houses were deteriorating because of a combination of overuse and neglect, others were demolished for the Lee Street widening and other traffic improvements.

The Asheboro neighborhood, it should be emphasized, was spared the complete clearance that occurred in other nearby neighborhoods such as Warnersville to the west and Cumberland to the northeast. Probably the single most important factor which helped Asheboro withstand the long period of decline is the high quality of construction found in most of the area's houses and institutional buildings. Unlike nearby neighborhoods, Asheboro was built as a mostly middle and upper income residential community, and the quality of construction reflects the presence of highly skilled craftsmen at the time.

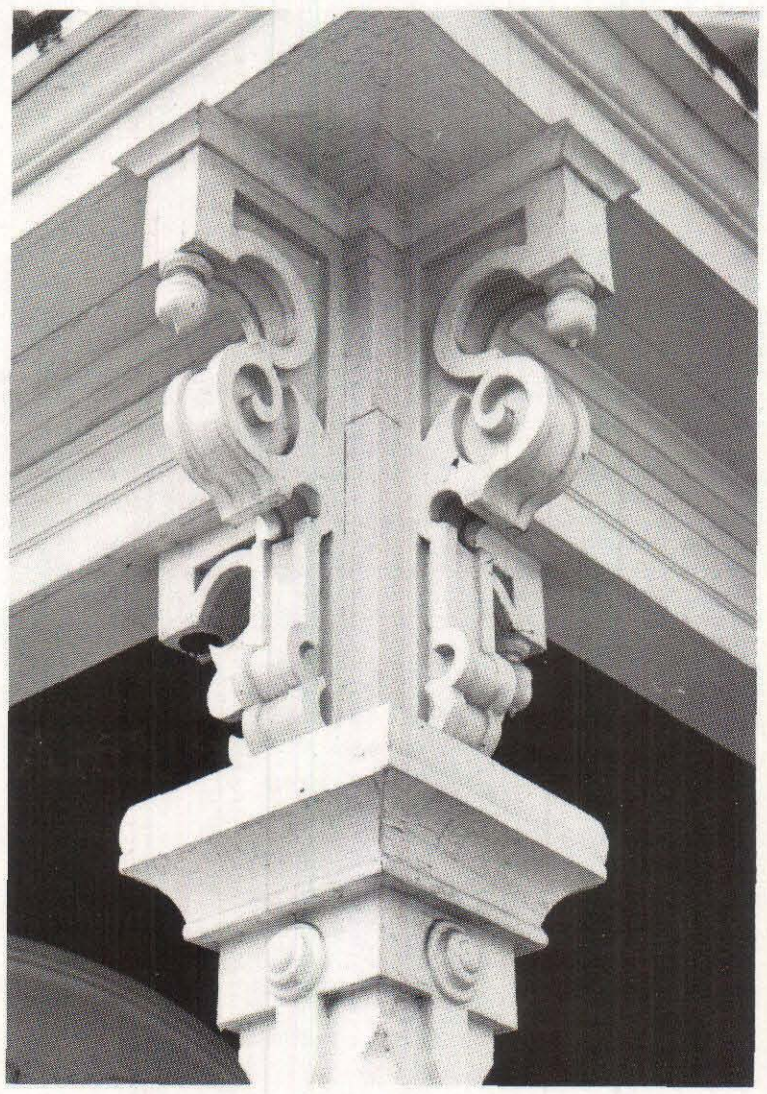
As the neighborhood declined, it was gradually occupied by blacks. Several factors were involved in this sociological change. First, the neighborhood was bounded on the west by Warnersville, and on the east by another long-established black community. In the 1950s and 1960s, the Warnersville, Cumberland, and Washington neighborhoods bordering downtown were cleared by the Urban Renewal Program. While public housing projects were constructed in these areas to house many of those displaced, others moved into Asheboro and other nearby residential areas which offered affordable rental housing. Also, there was very little new housing being built at that time which was open for blacks.

Today, the physical characteristics which once made the Asheboro neighborhood a desirable community are again recognized as desirable features. There are many problems in the community, both physical and social. But with concern and attention, both private and public, the Asheboro neighborhood can continue to be home for generations of Greensboro's citizens.



Whittington Street.

Architecture



The architecture of the Asheboro neighborhood represents a long period of residential construction in Greensboro, spanning more than 60 years. Architectural styles found in the neighborhood range from the Victorian styles built before 1890, to the bungalows of the 1920s and 1930s. Much of the earliest architecture has been lost, however. The large "country estates" which were located on Asheboro and Lee Streets are gone. The oldest remaining buildings in the neighborhood are located along Pearson, McCulloch, and Arlington Streets. The cluster of homes on Pearson Street, between Lee and Bragg Streets are perhaps the best preserved nineteenth century buildings in the neighborhood, several having been built before 1890.

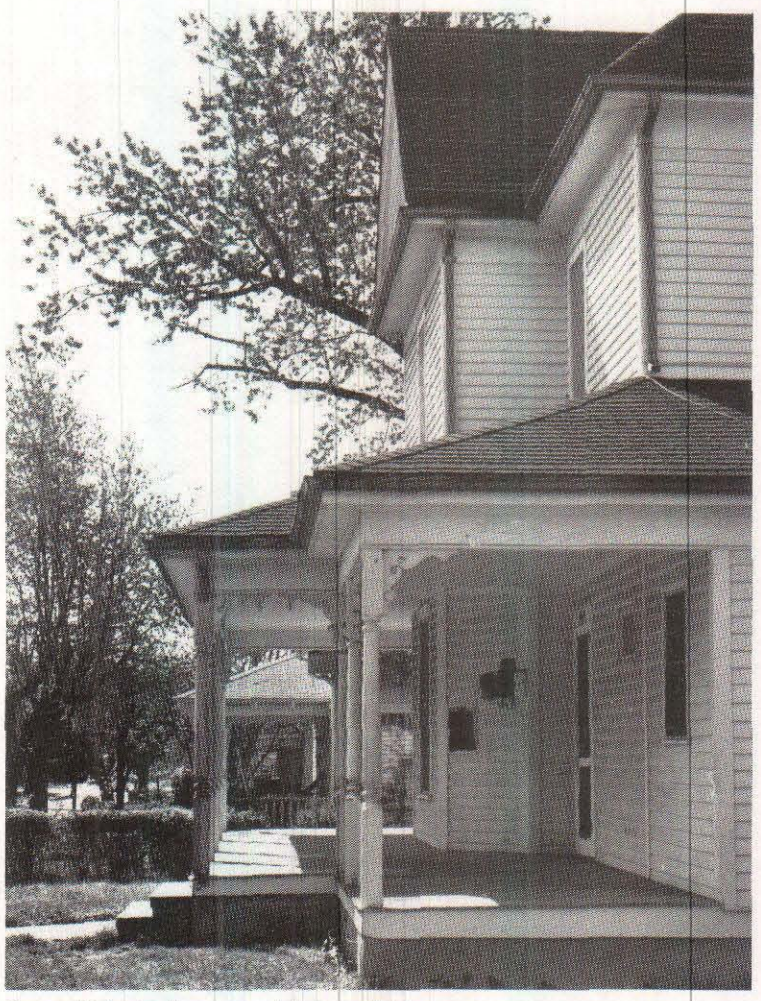
Along Asheboro Street is found the second generation of development in the neighborhood. These large Queen Anne-style homes were built from the late 1800s through about 1920. The most interesting of these is the house at 640 Asheboro Street. A complex interplay of turrets, bays, balconies, and porches makes this house perhaps the most interesting Queen Anne in the City. The entire block of homes on the west side of Asheboro between Bragg and McCulloch Streets represents an outstanding collection of victorian architecture, deserving of special reuse treatment.

Many of the nearby houses on McCulloch, Vance, and Bellevue Streets contrast sharply with the larger structures along Asheboro Street. This area was part of the original Shieldstown development which provided simple and economical housing at the turn-of-the century. These closely spaced cottages were not well-constructed originally and are in poor condition today.

Typical bungalow.

Throughout most of the remainder of the neighborhood, the bungalow-style house predominates. Bungalows were built either as infill construction between large, older houses, or in new subdivisions in the southern part of the neighborhood. Although usually of modest proportions, the bungalow is an attractive and very well constructed house.

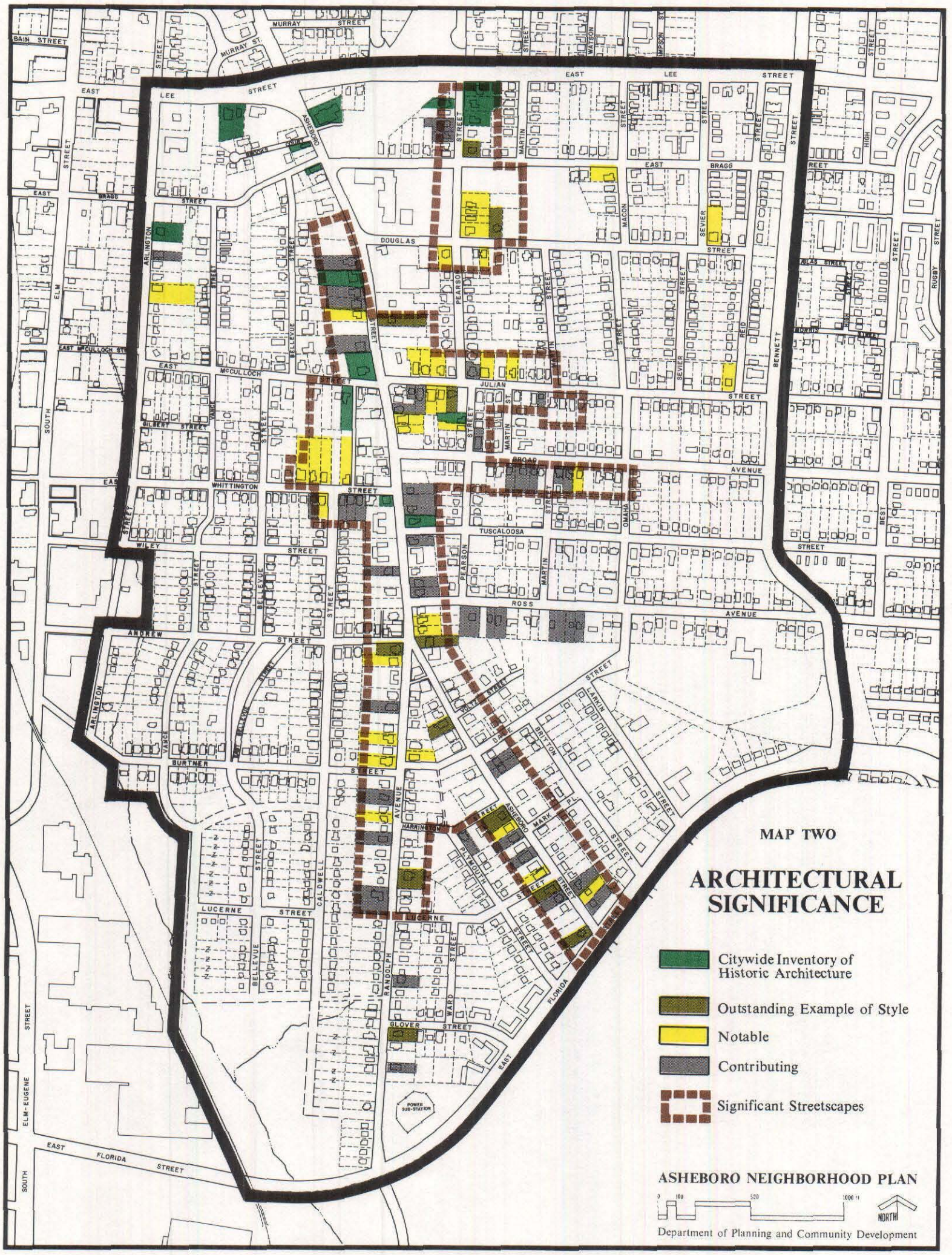
Together, the bungalows and larger Victorian homes present a dense but diverse environment. The different architectural styles and details give the neighborhood its unique character while the close spacing of structures, housing placement near the streets, and mature vegetation unite these diverse elements into a distinctly urban pattern. The tightly spaced housing close to the street also enhances the pedestrian character of the neighborhood. Sidewalks are located on most streets and walking is thereby encouraged to nearby businesses and recreational areas. Most homes have large front porches which, along with the sidewalk system, encourage contact between neighbors and contribute to neighborhood safety.



Larger Victorian homes on Asheboro Street.

A common malady throughout the neighborhood has been the gradual loss of architectural detail as homes have deteriorated and patch-up repairs have significantly altered the original structures. The most common alterations have been the use of artificial siding materials to cover original wood, the closing-in of porches, removal of porch columns, and changes in window and door treatments. The conversion of single-family homes into apartments and rooming houses has also had a substantial effect on the character of the housing in the neighborhood, since additional doorways and fire-stairs are necessary for the added dwelling units.

As shown on **MAP TWO,** most of the architecturally significant homes in the neighborhood are located within a corridor along Asheboro Street, corresponding with the oldest development in the neighborhood.


MAP TWO
ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE
Citywide Inventory of Historic Architecture
Outstanding Example of Style
Notable
Contributing
Significant Streetscapes
ASHEBORO NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN
NORTH
Department of Planning and Community Development
LEE STREET
EAST
MURRAY STREET
DOUGLAS
BRAGG
JULIAN
BROAD
AVENUE
TUSCALOOSA
ROSS
WHITTINGTON
WILEY
ANDREW
BURTNER
LUCERNE
GLOVER
HARRINGTON
FLORIDA
SOUTH
ELM-EUGENE
POWER SUB-STATION

Neighborhood Characteristics

In order to plan for the revitalization of the Asheboro neighborhood, it is necessary to first analyze existing conditions. This and the following chapter describe the characteristics and problems which together make up the neighborhood environment.

Resident Characteristics

Asheboro is a neighborhood with a diverse residential population. Table One gives a general resident profile of the neighborhood. The total population of 3,482 includes an estimated 897 persons under 18 or around one quarter of the total population. Both the percentage of 5 or more person households and the percentage of female headed households are above city averages. These households may have special needs for day care and other services.

The owner-renter ratio also indicates a neighborhood with special problems, with almost 60 percent of the households occupied by renters. Normal programs which provide assistance to homeowners only may be ineffective without additional assistance to absentee owners and renters.

Perhaps the most important characteristic is the number of heads of households 65 years of age and over. One of every four households has a head of household 65 or older. Many of the elderly are on fixed incomes and have limited ability to maintain and upgrade their properties or to pay economic rents. Consequently, many elderly property owners will need financial assistance in order to rehabilitate their homes and many elderly renters need some assistance to pay rents high enough for good property maintenance. The elderly population also creates a need for services and improvements geared to their special requirements.

The large number of elderly property owners indicates that there will be a high turnover in property ownership in the coming years. Neighborhood conditions will be greatly affected by the new property owners and the dedication they have to the revitalization of the Asheboro neighborhood.

Table One

RESIDENTIAL PROFILE

	Neighborhood*		City
Total Population[1]	3,482	---	---
Under 18[2]	897	26%	25%
65 and Over[2]	487	14%	10%
Total Households[3]	1,309	---	---
Male Head of Household[2]	772	59%	68%
Female Head of Household[2]	537	41%	32%
5 or More Person Households[2]	170	13%	10%
Persons Per Households[2]	2.66	---	2.58
Owner Occupied Households[2]	537	41%	56%
Renter Occupied Households[2]	772	59%	44%
Head of Household 65 Years and Over[2]	327	25%	17%

*Figures are for the entire neighborhood, including Asheboro, Vance, and Arlington Park C.D. Target Areas

Source
1. 1980 Census block statistics. Where blocks were divided by boundary, units were counted and % used to divide total.
2. 1980 Census tract statistics. A weighted average of Census Tracts 112 and 113 was used to determine these statistics.
3. 1980 Census. Total population divided by persons per household rate.

Land Use and Zoning

Asheboro is a predominantly residential area with the only non-residential uses located along Asheboro Street, Lee Street, and west of the community. **MAP THREE** shows land uses in the neighborhood today. There are 1,120 total structures in the neighborhood, including 1,090 residential and 30 non-residential structures.

Asheboro Street was the first street built in the neighborhood and always has been the principal activity center of the neighborhood. Most of the commercial and institutional uses are located along it as are the largest homes. Although there are two distinct commercial centers, Asheboro Street still retains much of its residential character and heritage.

Unlike many thoroughfares which radiate outward from the central business district, Asheboro Street has not recently felt pressures for commercial and industrial expansion. Perhaps this is because of the characteristics of the neighborhood or possibly the result of the relatively low daily traffic volumes. Whatever the reason, the street has remained largely unchanged for many years. The residential sections and neighborhood commercial areas along Asheboro Street provide a rare opportunity for neighborhood revitalization activities in a highly visible location.

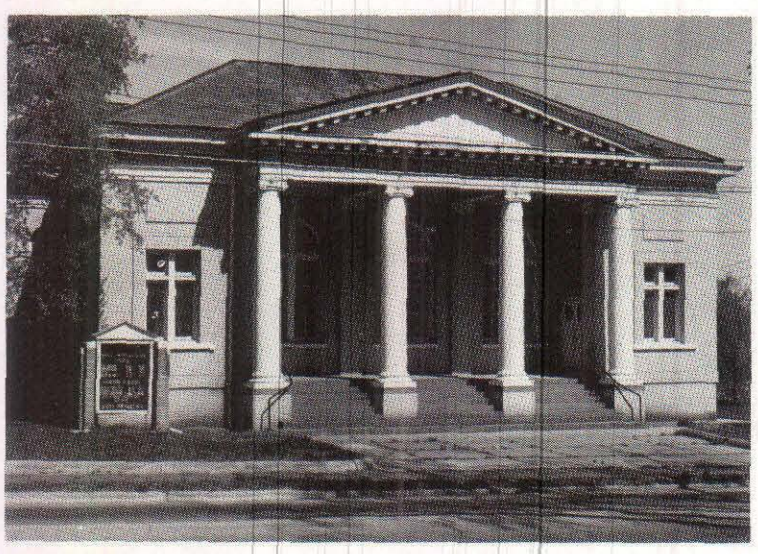
Table Two

LAND USE IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD*

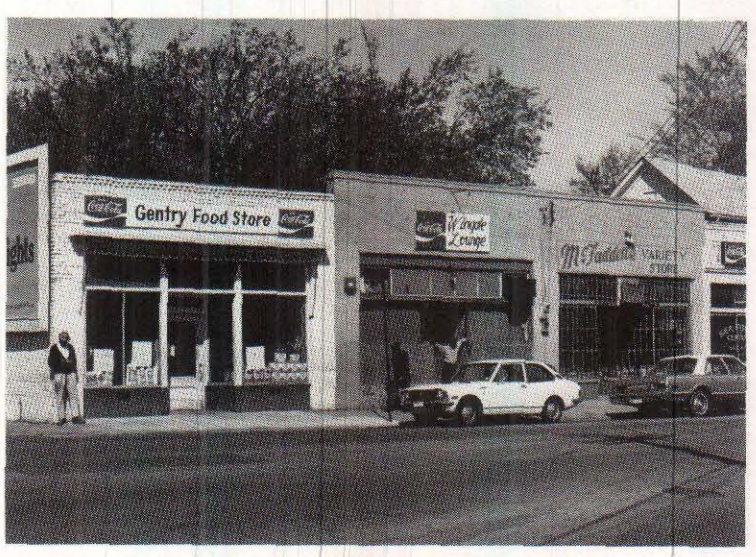
		Number
Total Structures		1,120
Residential Structures		1,090
Single Family Structures	970	
Multi-Family Structures	120	
Total Housing Units		1,286
Non-Residential Structures		30
Commercial	18	
Institutional	12	

*Figures are for the entire neighborhood, including Asheboro, Vance, and Arlington Park C.D. Target Areas.

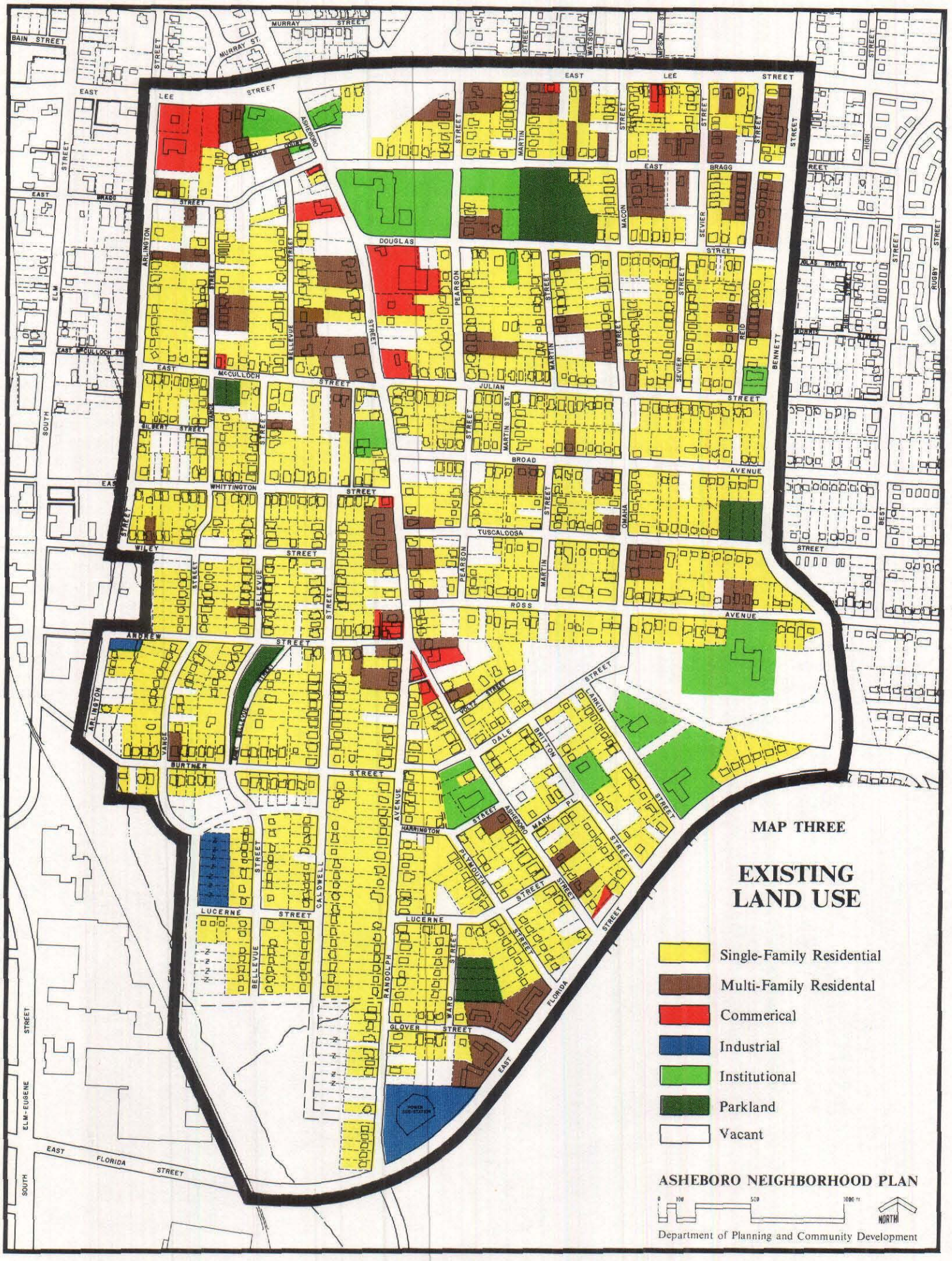
Source: Department of Planning and Community Development.



church building on Asheboro Street.



Commercial area at Asheboro and Andrew Streets.


MAP THREE
EXISTING LAND USE
Single-Family Residential
Multi-Family Residental
Commerical
Industrial
Institutional
Parkland
Vacant
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NORTH
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Off Asheboro Street the neighborhood is basically intact. There are few intrusions into the residential fabric. Problems in these areas are not related to land use conflicts but rather to the condition of residential properties.

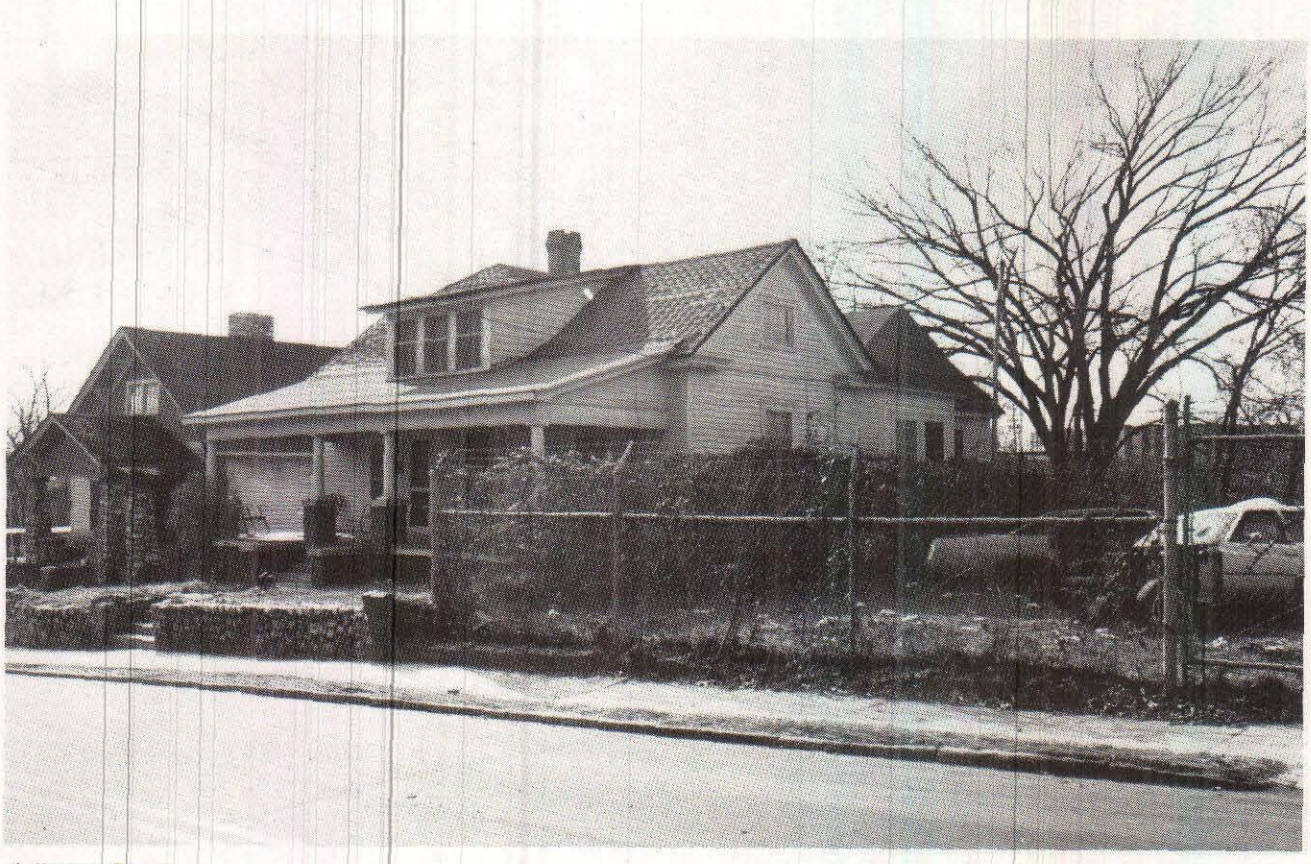
The western and northwestern boundaries of the neighborhood are the only areas where land use conflicts occur. A heavy industrial corridor borders the neighborhood to the west. Several large vacant tracts of industrially zoned land lie along the neighborhood's southwest edge. If industrially developed, these areas could have a profound effect on homes in this area. However, topographic and access problems have so far discouraged development.

Some spillover of commercial and industrial uses from the central business area also exists along Lee Street in the northwestern corner of the neighborhood. Pressures for expansion of these uses could occur eventually as a result of renewed interest in downtown development.

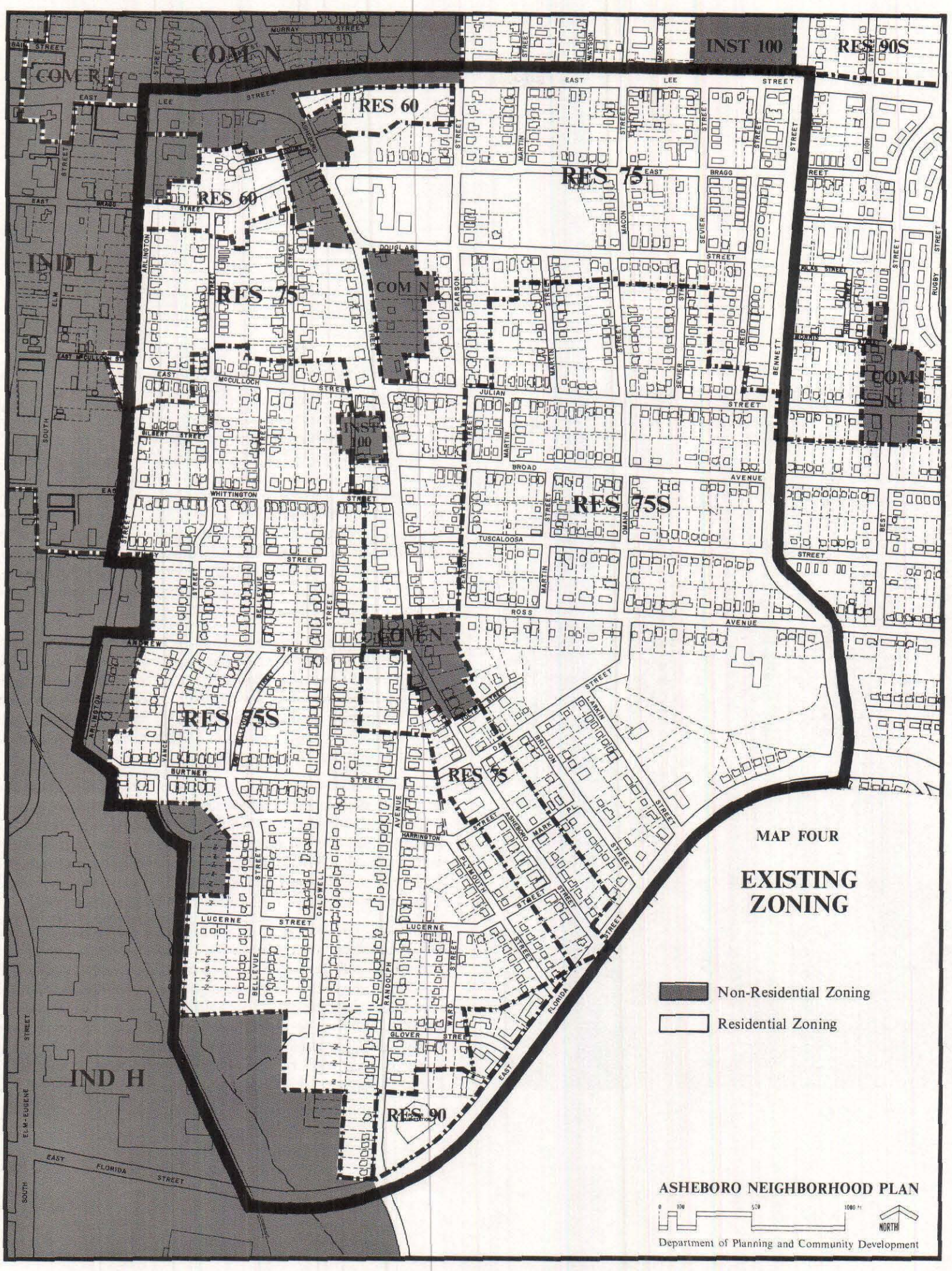
MAP FOUR identifies the existing neighborhood zoning pattern. The large areas of single-family residential zoning conform noticeably to the areas of best housing conditions. The areas north of McCulloch and Douglas Streets are zoned multi-family and have, over the years, experienced substantial apartment development and housing conversions. These areas have also experienced the most housing deterioration.

The commerical center on Asheboro Street at Andrew Street predates zoning, while the center on Asheboro Street at Douglas Street was rezoned for commercial development. The remaining commercial zoning in the northwest section was most likely placed on the property in anticipation of commerical expansion from the downtown area.

The large tracts of industrial zoning in the southwest section are the only major tracts of vacant non-residential land existing in the neighborhood. This zoning pattern probably recognized the property ownership pattern which existed at the time that zoning was first introduced.



Arlington Street.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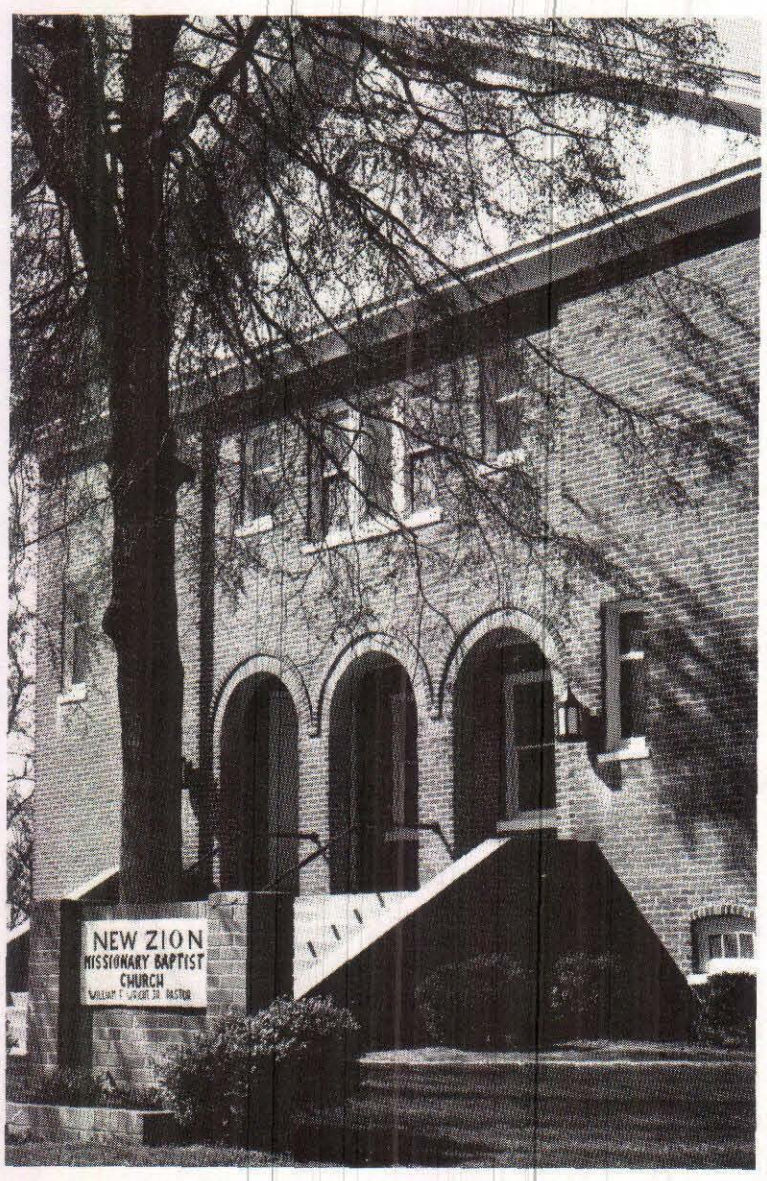
MAP FOUR
EXISTING ZONING
Non-Residential Zoning
Residential Zoning
ASHEBORO NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN
NORTH
Department of Planning and Community Development



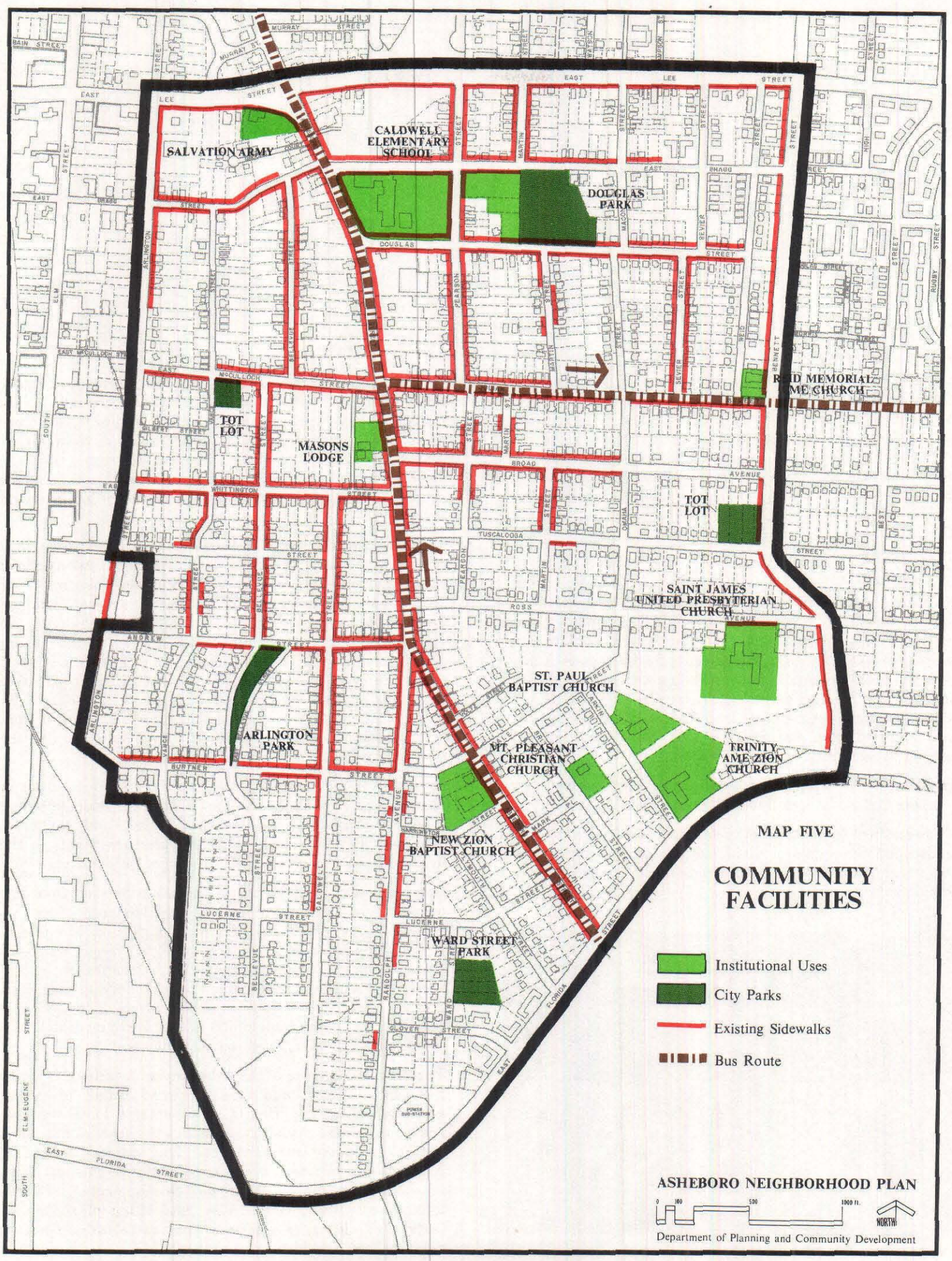
Community Facilities and Services

There are a variety of community facilities within the Asheboro neighborhood, as shown on **MAP FIVE**. Seven churches, the Salvation Army transient lodge, and a Mason's Lodge are all located within the area. Caldwell Elementary School is the only area school and its play area, along with Douglas Park, provides a large recreation area for the northern section of the neighborhood, although Gillespie School is just south of the community. Two seldom used tot lots and heavily used Arlington Park are the only other recreation areas nearby. Two bus routes serve the Asheboro area. In fact, residents feel the bus service is a major advantage to living in the neighborhood.

Many of the water and sewer lines in Asheboro have begun to deteriorate because of age or are undersized to provide high level service to existing developments. Normally, these lines are only fixed or replaced when they break. However, through the Community Development Program, repair or replacement is being accelerated to ensure satisfactory service and to produce long-term improvements to the area.

Asheboro's streets are in generally good condition. There are no unpaved streets in the neighborhood. Bragg Street needs to be built, however, and rebuilding of some streets in the northwestern section of the neighborhood may be necessary eventually. Some resurfacing is needed where the pavement is broken or uneven, and this is being done both through normal City repair and the Community Development Program.

The neighborhood has an extensive sidewalk system. In some areas sidewalks are beginning to buckle or crumble and need to be repaired. In many areas there are gaps in the sidewalk system. Some of these gaps should be completed, but there are also some which would provide little service and would be difficult to build. The large number of elderly persons in the community, in particular, makes it important to ensure that there is safe and convenient pedestrian access to neighborhood services, shopping areas, and bus stops.


CALDWELL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
SALVATION ARMY
DOUGLAS PARK
REID MEMORIAL AME CHURCH
TOT LOT
MASONS LODGE
TOT LOT
SAINT JAMES UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
ST. PAUL BAPTIST CHURCH
ARLINGTON PARK
MT. PLEASANT CHRISTIAN CHURCH
TRINITY AME ZION CHURCH
NEW ZION BAPTIST CHURCH
WARD STREET PARK
MAP FIVE
COMMUNITY FACILITIES
Institutional Uses
City Parks
Existing Sidewalks
Bus Route
ASHEBORO NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN
0 100 500 1000 ft.
NORTH
Department of Planning and Community Development

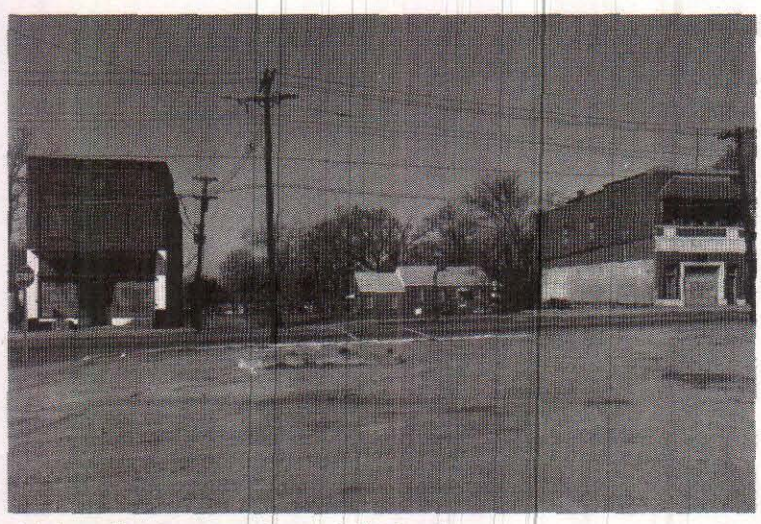
Visual Features

The features of topography, housing, streets, open spaces, and important buildings make up the visual image of the Asheboro neighborhood. Throughout the area, the density of housing, small lots, and narrow streets contribute to a dense visual environment. Major breaks in this pattern occur where buildings have been removed and the lots left vacant or have been replaced by new buildings which do not match the size or spacing of the original buildings. **MAP SIX**, Visual Features, illustrates the major visual elements and problems in the neighborhood.

The edges of Asheboro are defined by industrial and commercial uses, a major open space and recreation area, and residential development. On the west, Asheboro is bounded by a major industrial corridor. Along Arlington Street, a mixture of houses, vacant lots, and storage yards for businesses facing Elm Street creates an unattractive boundary. Between Wiley and Burtner Streets, parking lots line the east side of the street. Further south several large industrial operations are well buffered from the neighborhood by a large heavily wooded vacant tract.

The southern boundary is well-defined by the Gillespie Park complex and a stable residential area.

Bennett Street forms the eastern boundary and is a wide, well landscaped thoroughfare. No homes front on the west side of this street, and increased landscaping would further enhance this boundary.



Asheboro Street entrance into neighborhood.

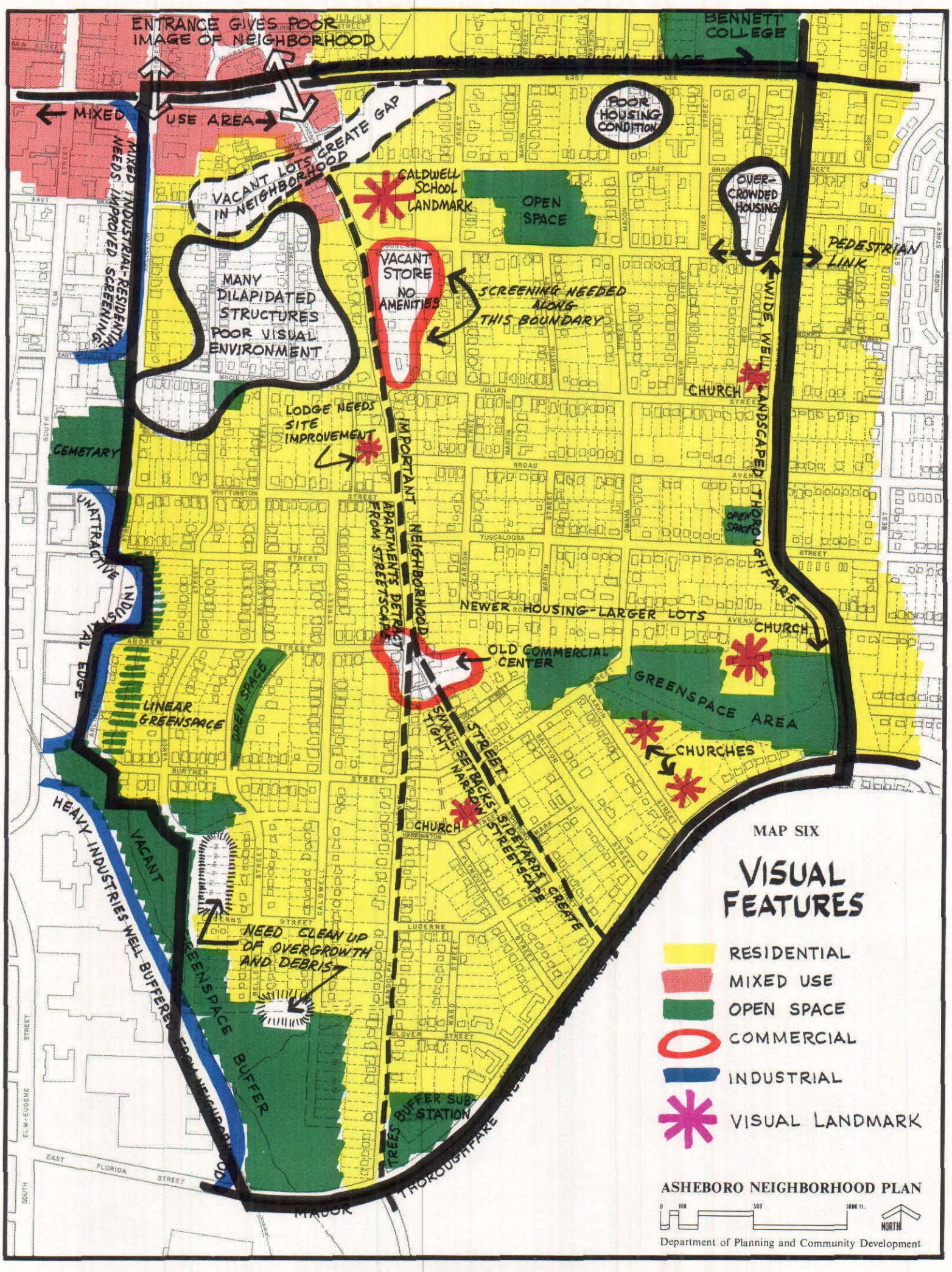
The northern boundary is Lee Street, a major east-west traffic artery. The northwestern edge of Asheboro is actually an extension of the downtown commercial area and provides an unattractive entrance into the neighborhood from either Arlington or Asheboro Streets. Further detracting from the visual environment in this area are the vacant tracts along the proposed Bragg Street alignment. These vacant lots create an unattractive gap in the neighborhood.

Asheboro Street follows a plateau which runs the full length of the neighborhood. The topography is primarily responsible for the long vistas which are experienced along Asheboro Street. North of the Randolph Avenue intersection, vacant lots and one-story apartment buildings have significantly altered the streetscape. South of this intersection, the residential pattern is basically intact. The small setbacks and sideyards create a tight, narrow streetscape. A slight bend in the Asheboro Street alignment causes the commercial area at the Randolph-Andrew intersection to become a major visual element from both directions. Future use should take into account the visual importance of this area.

Important visual landmarks because of their size, location, or design include the David Caldwell School, the Southside Hose Company building, the Mason's Lodge, and numerous churches. The landmarks serve as reference points in the neighborhood and give Asheboro a sense of identity.

Large clusters of deteriorating housing detract from the overall living and neighborhood environment. These are located in the northern section along portions of McCulloch, Gilbert, Vance, Bellevue, Macon and Reid Streets. While unattractive in their present state, these areas present opportunities for reuse and possibly new housing development. Outside of these clusters the neighborhood is a unified area despite holes in the architectural fabric caused by demolitions or left-over lots which were never built upon.

The unique character of the Asheboro neighborhood is set by the narrow streets and closely spaced homes of similar architectural styling. Recent developments have begun to change the area's visual image as has the gradual decline in general property maintenance. The visual features of Asheboro can be retained and improved through appropriate rehabilitations and compatible new developments which take into account the location, size, and siting of the neighborhood's buildings. The extensive natural features within the neighborhood should also be protected.



MAP SIX

VISUAL FEATURES

- RESIDENTIAL
- MIXED USE
- OPEN SPACE
- COMMERCIAL
- INDUSTRIAL
- VISUAL LANDMARK

ASHEBORO NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN

0 100 500 1000 ft. NORTH

Department of Planning and Community Development

Neighborhood Issues

Inner city residential areas such as the Asheboro neighborhood are a valuable asset to Greensboro and its citizenry. Older close-in neighborhoods contribute to the stability of the City and provide an alternative type of living environment. For many, these areas provide a comfortable and affordable residence with the added convenience of pedestrian oriented shopping and access to downtown services. They are important too because of the interesting architecture of the older homes which predominate in the areas. The combination of architecture, density, and human scale provides a unique atmosphere which can never again be duplicated.

To ensure that these unique inner city residential areas survive, the City of Greensboro has embarked on a conservation and revitalization program. From the City's viewpoint, survival of these close-in neighborhoods is critically important to the overall housing supply. Revitalization of these neighborhoods can also benefit the central business district by furnishing a nearby market and by adding an element of stability to development surrounding downtown.

Rear yards of Reid Street development.

The Asheboro neighborhood planning effort was initiated in response to several important findings:

1. According to a Citywide housing survey conducted in 1972 and a report prepared by the Greensboro Community Development Program in 1974, the Asheboro area contained a high percentage of deteriorating housing units, which, if left unchecked, would require clearance in the not too distant future.
2. The neighborhood provides housing and a neighborhood environment for over 3,400 people, some of whom were relocated from former urban renewal projects, and most of whom because of income have few other housing opportunities.
3. Asheboro Street has, throughout the history of Greensboro, been recognized as a significant urban corridor, extending from the central business area to the outskirts of the city. Recent changes have threatened the continued existence of this unique and significant urban street and its adjacent development.
4. *An Inventory of Historic Architecture* published in 1976 by the City and the State Division of Archives and History pointed out the existence of many architecturally significant structures in the Asheboro neighborhood.
5. Opportunities presented by the Community Development Block Grant Program were seen as potentially beneficial to the preservation and revitalization of the Asheboro neighborhood.

The Asheboro neighborhood plan is the culmination of many months of work by neighborhood residents, property owners, business leaders, and city planners.

Persons who live in or own property in the neighborhood have been actively involved throughout the planning process, from the initial meetings where neighborhood concerns were identified, to the setting of neighborhood objectives, and finally the agreement on an overall program for revitalization of the neighborhood. While some programs have already begun in advance of completion of this plan, the major elements are still to be initiated. Although agreement was reached by participants as to what the neighborhood plan would recommend, it was made clear during the planning process that approval of City Council would be necessary before these major actions could begin.

The planning process began in the fall of 1978 and consisted of three phases:

Identification of Problems and Concerns
Analysis of Alternative Actions
Final Plan Selection

A brief description of the major phases of the planning process follows.

Andrew Street.

Identification of Problems and Concerns

The first phase of the planning process involved a series of meetings held in the neighborhood. At these meetings residents and property owners were informed of the planning process which was to be followed and were asked to identify neighborhood problems or issues to be addressed in the plan.

The first major concern expressed at these meetings was that the area to be studied should be enlarged to include not only the Asheboro Street area but also the existing Vance Target Area and the Arlington Park neighborhood. Area residents felt these areas were part of the same community, and that problems which affected one area also affected the others.

Occurring simultaneously with the neighborhood meetings, the city planning staff conducted extensive surveys of the physical conditions of the neighborhood, including its buildings, facilities, and services. The findings of these surveys were also presented at the public meetings.

From these initial meetings, neighborhood objectives were defined and are shown on the accompanying chart. These objectives were grouped into six major topics for discussion. Surveys by the planning staff have borne out the significance of these issues and the remainder of the planning study dealt with the resolution of these six major issues:

1. **Neighborhood Image**
2. **Housing**
3. **Commercial Opportunities**
4. **Recreation**
5. **Streets and Traffic**
6. **Community Services**

Neighborhood Image

Asheboro Street is a neighborhood which was born in the infancy of Greensboro. It was once considered by many as Greensboro's finest residential area and as such benefitted from the construction of countless buildings and institutions of high character and design. Well into the twentieth century, the area flourished, with new subdivisions occupying all available lands, and churches, schools, and commercial ventures providing necessary services.

NEIGHBORHOOD OBJECTIVES

Improve the neighborhood image.

Undertake more neighborhood-initiated improvements such as clean-up days and community watch.

Conserve and improve the existing housing stock.

Remove blighted structures.

Prevent the development of small, poorly designed apartment buildings.

Provide housing choices which will retain existing residents and increase homeownership.

Attract new high-quality housing with amenities found in other sectors of the city.

Preserve the neighborhood architecture.

Provide safe and attractive neighborhood shopping areas.

Revitalize existing commercial areas which serve neighborhood needs.

Remove objectionable commercial uses which do not serve neighborhood needs.

Prevent an unplanned strip of commercial uses along Asheboro Street.

Improve the appearance and safety of existing recreation facilities.

Provide additional recreational facilities either on existing or new park sites.

Improve the design and safety of the Asheboro-Randolph intersection.

Repair and resurface any streets which are rough or broken.

Adopt an overall street and thoroughfare plan.

Provide adequate street lighting.

Rebuild deteriorating sidewalks.

Provide new sidewalks where needed.

Asheboro today bears striking differences to its former conditions. There are holes in the streetscape, vestiges of homes which have been demolished. Disinvestment by the business sector is obvious with several vacant commercial properties. Many homes are in various stages of disrepair, many having been converted from their original single family design to house several or more families. Poorly designed apartment buildings are interspersed among the older homes, detracting from the neighborhood character and overcrowding neighborhood streets.

During the planning process, it became obvious that the image of the neighborhood as perceived by both the residents who live there and the general populace and business sector of the community was one of a deteriorating area with few signs that recovery was imminent or even possible. When neighborhood objectives were identified, residents spoke to this problem. Above all else, it was felt that a positive self-image of the area, coupled with efforts to change outsiders' perceptions of the area, would have to be a key element in any revitalization program.

Possible means to improve the neighborhood image were discussed, including:

- More dialogue between neighbors, perhaps through the organization of neighborhood groups.
- Clean-up of unsightly and overgrown lots, especially those which are highly visible to passing traffic.
- Start-up of community watch or other programs to build neighborhood confidence and security.
- A model rehabilitation project on a key parcel along Asheboro Street to demonstrate the commitment to neighborhood revitalization.

Asheboro Street.

Rehabilitated homes in the Vance Community Development Target Area.

Housing

The Asheboro neighborhood is made up almost entirely of older homes, most built prior to 1930. As such, it has many of the same problems of other older areas, namely increasing maintenance problems and costs and overcrowding of structures as more and more houses are converted into apartments or rental units. At the same time the neighborhood is important to the City's housing supply. With almost 1,300 housing units, the neighborhood provides a large share of the City's housing available to lower income persons and families. With the scarcity of affordable housing which currently exists, the conservation of this housing stock is critical to overall housing market conditions in the City.

Table Three shows housing conditions in the neighborhood based on a windshield survey of exterior structural conditions. Thirty-three percent or 359 of the housing structures have major deficiencies or are dilapidated. This would suggest that approximately one out of every three houses is in need of either major rehabilitation or removal. While this would seem to identify a neighborhood in serious jeopardy, the distribution of these deficient structures is somewhat concentrated so that much of the neighborhood is in good condition. **MAP SEVEN** shows the percent of deficient housing structures by block.

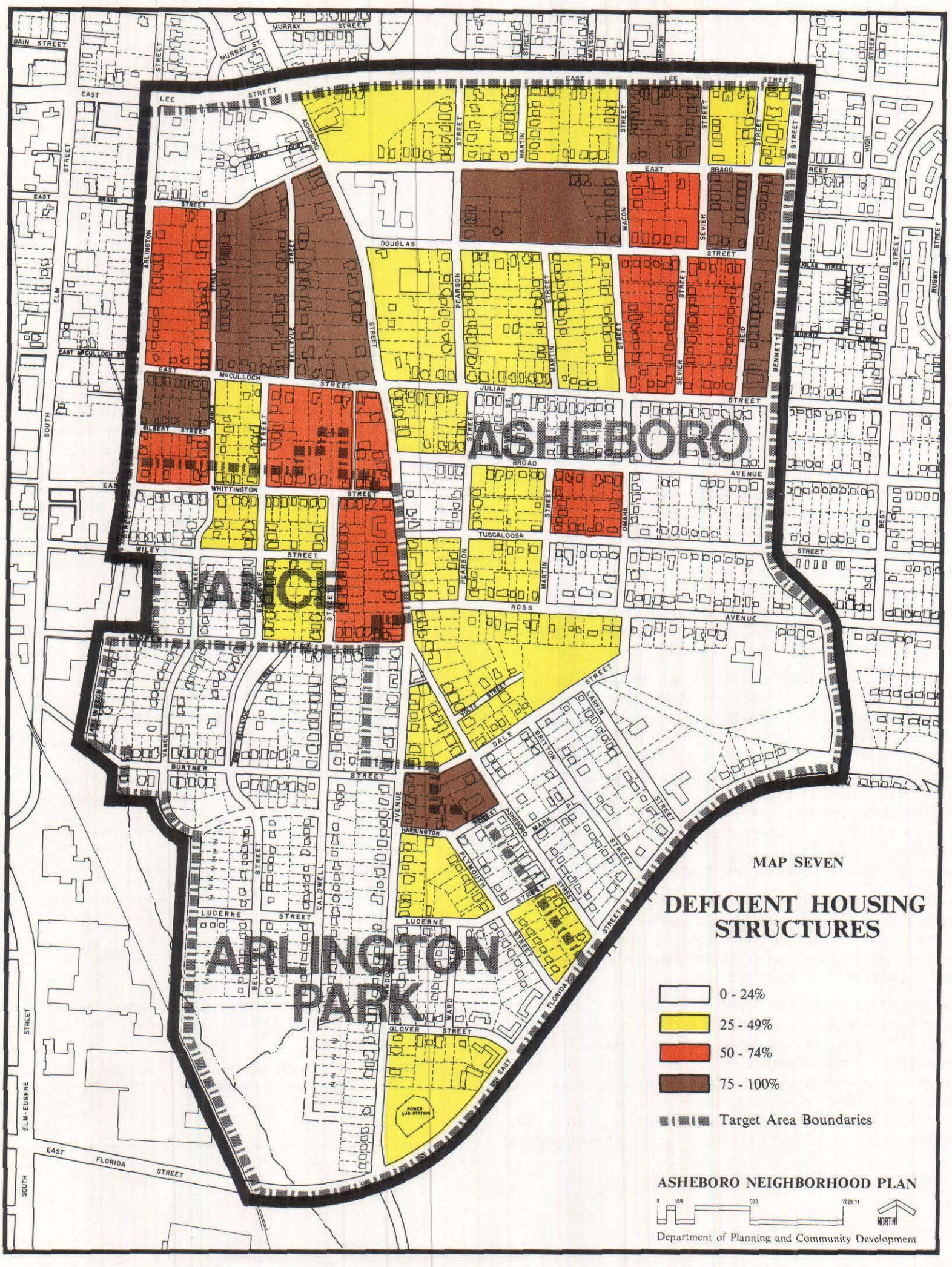
The Vance Target Area, the Arlington Park Target Area, and the Asheboro Target Area south of Julian Street contain a core of basically sound housing. The Vance area in particular has undergone major improvement in the last several years, and was undertaken under the Community Development Program to stop blight from spreading south into the Arlington Park area. Over a third of the homes in the Vance area have been rehabilitated thus far through the City's housing rehabilitation program.

The neighborhood section north of Gilbert and McCulloch Streets contains a large number of dilapidated structures. In this area conditions cannot be expected to improve noticeably even after offering housing rehabilitation assistance and thorough code enforcement. Much of the housing is too far gone to make housing rehabilitation or repair an economically workable alternative. Many neighborhood residents and city staff have recognized the need for major actions to relieve the depressed living conditions found in this area. Alternative plans discussed for this area ranged from complete clearance and relocation of residents to selective clearance and reuse of vacated properties.

Table Three
HOUSING CONDITIONS

	Asheboro Street Target Area		Vance Target Area		Arlington Park Target Area		Total Neighborhood	
	Structures	%	Structures	%	Structures	%	Structures	%
Sound	176	25%	18	15%	163	63%	357	33%
Minor Deficiencies	244	35%	61	49%	69	26%	374	34%
Major Deficiencies	224	32%	39	31%	26	10%	289	27%
Dilapidated	61	8%	6	5%	3	1%	70	6%
	705	100%	124	100%	261	100%	1,090	100%

Source: Greensboro Housing Information System, July, 1979.
Department of Planning and Community Development


ASHEBORO
VAIL
ARLINGTON PARK
MAP SEVEN
DEFICIENT HOUSING STRUCTURES
0 - 24%
25 - 49%
50 - 74%
75 - 100%
Target Area Boundaries
ASHEBORO NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN
NORTH
Department of Planning and Community Development

Generally, it was felt that clearance of groups of structures in this particular area would be necessary in order to provide suitable sites for new residential development. An exception to this strategy might be the houses along the west side of Asheboro Street between McCulloch and Bragg Streets.

This almost intact block of homes offers perhaps the best opportunity for a rehabilitation and preservation project which could stimulate neighborhood interest and investment, while providing an important visual boost to the Asheboro Street corridor. Although these houses are in poor condition, their size and original construction make them good candidates for rehabilitation and reuse. Since most of these buildings have been divided into numerous small apartments, it would be advisable and beneficial to reduce the number of units to lessen the overcrowded conditions which exist.

Several smaller clusters of deteriorated housing exist in the northeast section of the neighborhood. Housing in these areas, along Macon and Reid Streets, is very small, close together, and originally poorly designed and constructed. Conditions on Macon Street have deteriorated to the point that rehabilitation is not feasible or practical because of housing closeness, size, and marketability. One possibility discussed with neighborhood residents for a section of Reid Street is to remove alternating housing units to relieve the overcrowded conditions. Units remaining could then be rehabilitated with adequate off-street parking and landscaping added.

Outside of these specific areas housing conditions vary greatly within most blocks. Scattered, deteriorated houses are a constant problem to the neighborhood. Especially in blocks of predominantly good housing, these "bad apples" are a cause of numerous complaints to the City.

In the Asheboro neighborhood as in most other old neighborhoods there is a problem with many houses having been either subdivided into apartments or demolished and replaced by small apartment buildings. In both cases, problems have been created. Many of the older subdivided houses have been poorly maintained and have inadequate parking. Some of the newer apartment buildings are on lots which are too small, have inadequate and unpaved parking lots, or no parking. Many of these units are sparely designed with no consideration for the surrounding neighborhood characteristics. Table Four compares the housing conditions of single-family versus multi-family structures. While around 30 percent of the single-family structures in the neighborhood were found to have major deficiencies or were dilapidated, almost 50 percent of the multi-family structures fall into these categories. An important objective of the neighborhood plan should be to prevent any further development of small individual apartment buildings which do not provide the design and amenities needed to be compatible and beneficial to the neighborhood.

Table Four

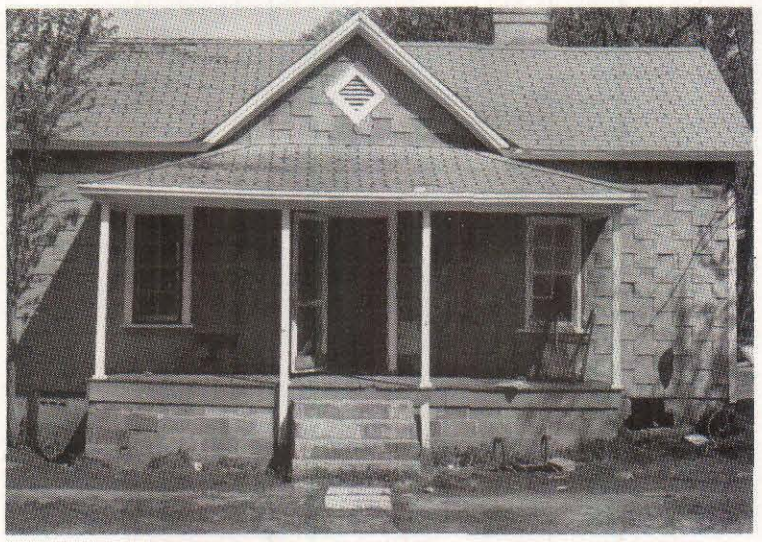
HOUSING CONDITION COMPARISON

SINGLE FAMILY VERSUS MULTI-FAMILY STRUCTURES*

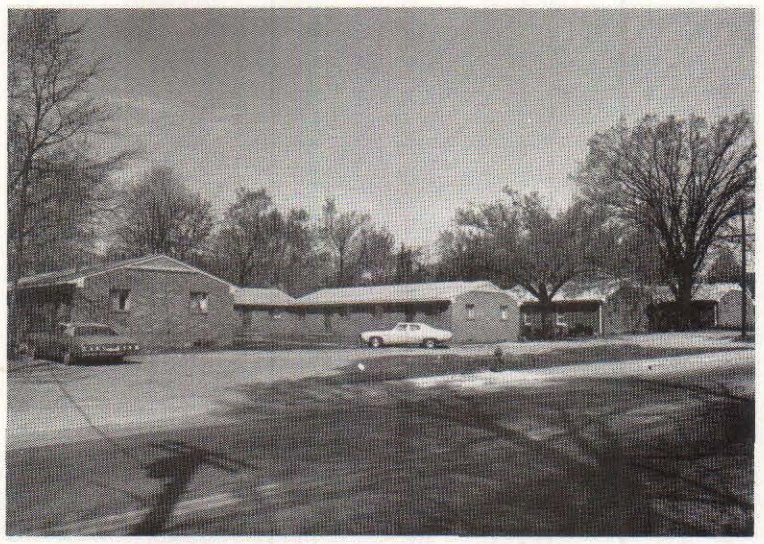
	Single Family Structures		Multi-Family Structures	
	No.	**%**	**No.**	**%**
Sound	328	34%	29	24%
Minor Deficiencies	342	35%	32	27%
Major Deficiencies	238	25%	51	42%
Dilapidated	62	6%	8	7%
TOTAL	970	100%	120	100%

*Figures are for entire neighborhood, including Asheboro, Vance and Arlington Park C.D. Target Areas.

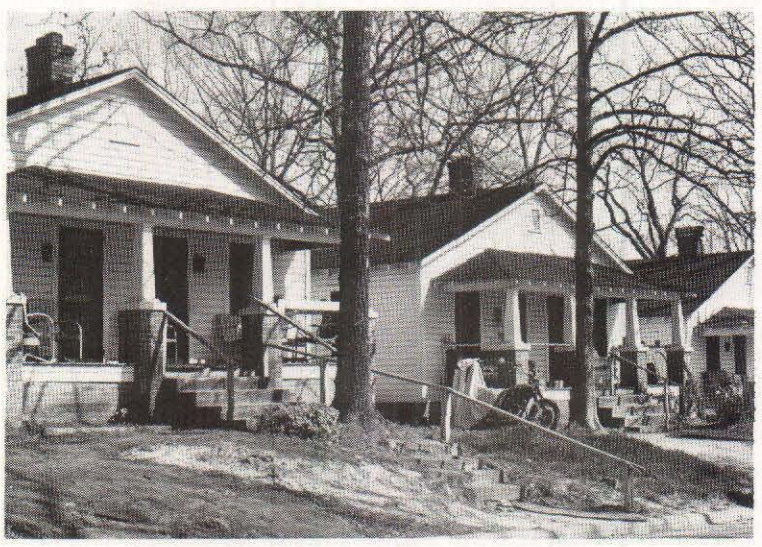
Source: Greensboro Housing Information System, July 1979. *Department of Planning and Community Development.*



Dilapidated house on Macon Street.



Barracks-style apartments on Asheboro Street.



Dense housing structures on Reid Street.

A primary question which must be addressed by this plan is what future use would be made of those areas in which widespread clearance of housing is proposed. In the northwestern section between McCulloch and Bragg Streets, clearance would most likely leave several large areas of vacant land. Reuse of this land would be a key to the overall success of the revitalization program. However, this area has a poor public image and prospective developers may not be willing to invest their monies in a new high quality development here. Means of attracting private investment for these sections were discussed with residents and local businessmen. Ideas ranged from a demonstration project to show the City's commitment to the neighborhood to the formulation of development packages which could be implemented by a private developer, a non-profit entity, or a combination of public and private sponsorship.

Not only should these areas be put back into productive use, but priority should be given to providing housing for those persons who have been displaced by the clearance of housing in the area. Lower income families are finding it more and more difficult to locate suitable housing in today's tight housing market. The private market housing which is available to them does not often provide a suitable living environment, since the rent they can afford is the reason they live in poorly maintained housing to begin with. Providing well-designed new housing within the neighborhood which lower income families can afford is an objective which should receive first priority.

1.

2.

3.

Different styles and periods of housing along Pearson Street. 1.) Italianate, circa late 1800's. 2.) Late Victorian, circa 1900. 3.) Farmhouse, circa 1890 and bungalow (background), circa 1915.

The Asheboro neighborhood is as well endowed with housing of good architectural design as any neighborhood in Greensboro. Having developed during a period when craftsmanship and architectural design of houses were at a peak, the neighborhood has retained much of its original character and charm. Up and down Asheboro, Pearson, Bragg, and Whittington Streets to name just a few, a pedestrian can view good examples of Queen Anne, late Victorian, and Colonial Revival architecture. Interspersed among the large homes are many well designed but small bungalows and chalet style houses. These are all well constructed dwellings which can provide suitable housing for many years to come.

Although lower in priority than was expressed in the College Hill neighborhood planning process, residents expressed a desire to retain the high quality of the neighborhood's architecture. This can most effectively be implemented by careful and sensitive rehabilitation and building maintenance techniques. To take it a step further, sections of particularly good design, such as along Asheboro Street between McCulloch and Bragg Streets, could be treated more closely as a restoration project with emphasis placed on returning the structures to their original appearance. Those specific areas which exhibit special architectural merit should be identified and special precautions developed to ensure the sensitive preservation of the housing structures.

Commercial Opportunities

One of the benefits of living in Greensboro's older, inner-city neighborhoods, in the past, was the closeness to a neighborhood shopping area. These small centers usually provided a variety of day-to-day services such as groceries, laundry, barber and beauty shops, and a.drug store. They were also usually within walking distance and made little provision for automobile parking. Over the years many of these centers have vanished, while others still exist but with different businesses which no longer exclusively serve neighborhood needs. A few still provide the convenience shopping for which they were built.

The Asheboro neighborhood contains two commercial areas. One is an older center at the Asheboro Street and Randolph Avenue intersection. The other is a newer development on Asheboro Street at Douglas Street. In addition, the neighborhood contains several scattered businesses on Lee, Asheboro, and McCulloch Streets.

The store on McCulloch Street at Vance Street has been a source of continuing concern and complaints by neighborhood residents. Many would like to see it removed because of its perceived adverse impact on the area, primarily because of loitering and the sale of alcoholic beverages. Persons who frequent this store also use the city park across McCulloch Street as a place to congregate, thus making the park unusable for local children. The store is also a nonconforming use in a residential zoning district.

McCulloch Street store.

Commercial development on Asheboro Street at Randolph Avenue.

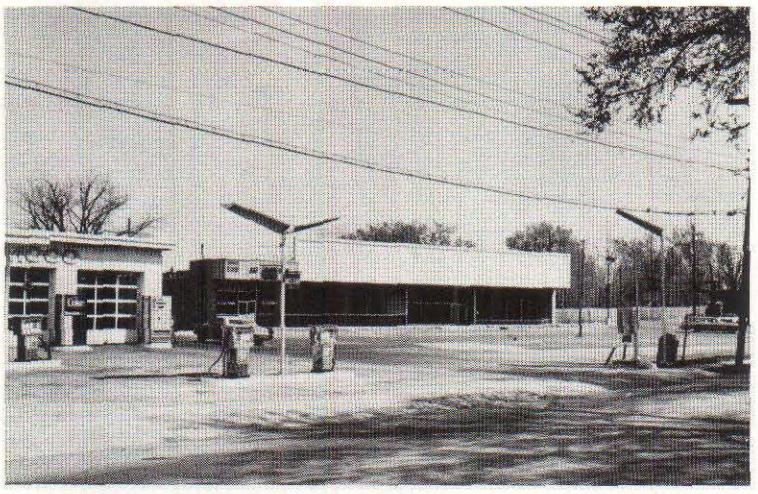
The commercial center on Asheboro Street at the Randolph Avenue intersection is the oldest remaining business center in the neighborhood. Having developed in the early 1900s, it was along with the downtown business area, one of only a few shopping areas nearby where one could go for a variety of goods and services. The center includes three main buildings on the west side of Asheboro Street with each building subdivided into several stores. A service station across Asheboro Street completes the commercial center.

Although the buildings have not changed substantially since their earlier days, the uses have changed considerably. Today, small grocery and variety stores occupy these buildings, along with a dry cleaner, lounge, and several other uses.

Neighborhood residents frequently voiced concerns about the condition of this commercial area. Many residents would like to patronize some of the shops in the center. However, most are afraid to do so, feeling unsafe and threatened by the loitering which occurs around the lounge and several other stores. Several actions were suggested by residents to improve conditions in the area:

- Acquire and relocate if necessary those businesses which are deemed not to be serving neighborhood needs.
- Increase police surveillance.
- Remove vacant buildings on Andrew Street behind the commercial area and close the alley which also runs behind the area.

It must be realized, however, that relocating businesses and increasing police patrol are only temporary solutions since other businesses could move in which are just as detrimental to the neighborhood as those which were removed. Indeed, long term stability may be possible only when overall neighborhood conditions begin to improve or with removal of the commercial center.



Vacant commercial building and service station on Asheboro Street at Douglas Street.

The second commercial area is located on the east side of Asheboro Street between Douglas and Julian Streets. The principal building here is a vacant former grocery store. Over the last several years the grocery store has opened and closed twice. Although recently damaged by a fire, the building is believed to be in sound structural condition. A laundromat occupies one end of this building. Two service stations and a quick-food restaurant are also located nearby. The only house remaining in this block has been renovated for use as an office.

Many residents indicated they would like to see a grocery store return to this center. However, the economic marketability of the location and the condition of surrounding developments, particularly across Asheboro Street, could discourage this type of use from returning. Of immediate concern is the fear that the building may be occupied by an unsuitable use which would not provide a neighborhood service.

To bring back major commercial uses would require patience and hard work on the part of building owners, residents, and the City. But before commercial uses return, substantial improvement would need to be visible in the residential sector. Once there is evidence of the public and private commitment to neighborhood conservation, then the rejuvenation of the commercial areas may be possible, if the private market determines there is economic justification here for commercial uses.

There will, undoubtedly, be pressures from individual property owners to expand the commercial zoning pattern, particularly along Asheboro Street. The neighborhood has expressed a desire to prevent Asheboro Street from becoming another commercial strip similar to High Point Road and Randleman Road. The neighborhood zoning plan should allow room for development of neighborhood commercial uses but should not overzone for commercial uses and thus open the door to non-neighborhood oriented businesses.

Recreation

Throughout the planning process, recreational facilities were a major concern to area residents. Not only were there suggestions for additional new park facilities, but there was considerable concern about conditions and maintenance of the five existing park sites.

MAP EIGHT identifies the existing City park facilities in the neighborhood. Each site is described below:

Douglas Park — This neighborhood park was revamped in 1978 with Community Development funds. The park has a basketball court, play apparatus, a picnic shelter and benches. Much of the park is wooded, providing an attractive greenspace within a dense urban neighborhood.

McCulloch Street Tot Lot — This site was originally developed as a tot lot for area children. The only facilities are small play apparatus for young children. Area teenagers and adults frequently gather in the park, however, making it unsuitable for small children. Much of the loitering can be attributed to the store adjacent to the park.

Tuscaloosa Street Tot Lot — Similar in design to the McCulloch Street site, this play area is in much better condition. However, residents say it is not frequently used, mainly due to its location on a busy street and the lack of adult supervision.

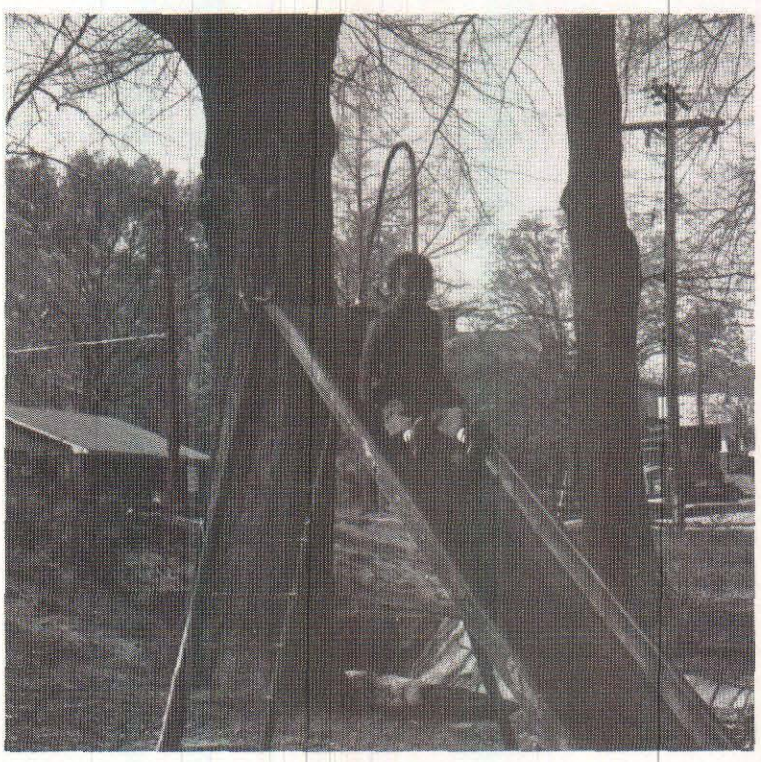
Arlington Park — This drainage area between East and West Bellevue Streets was upgraded recently. The park is used extensively by area youths, more as a gathering place than as a recreation area. This site cannot support much, if any, additional recreation equipment because of its small size and steep topography.

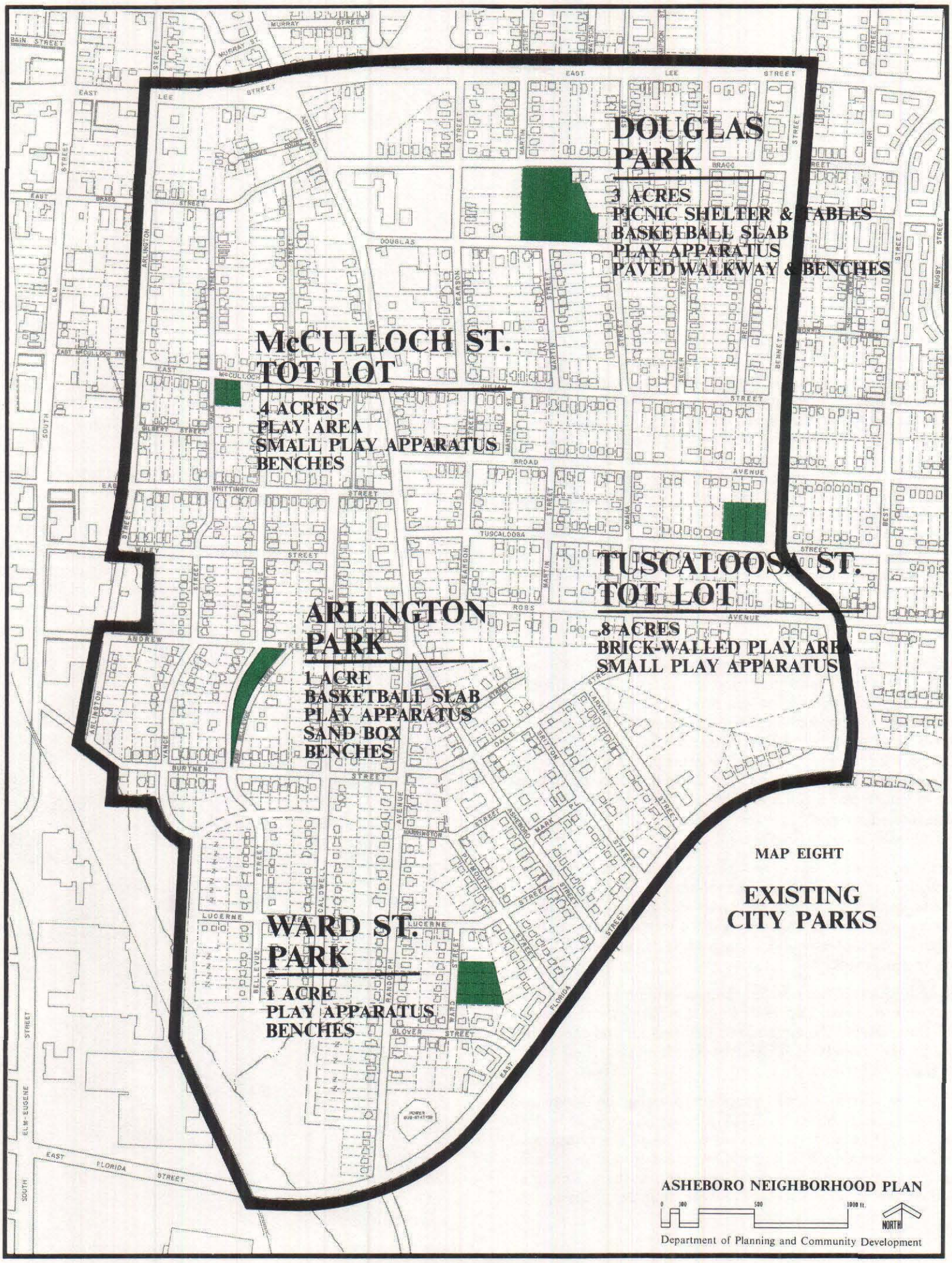
Ward Street Park — This small site is being leased by the City as a temporary park facility. It is steeply sloped and can contain only a few play facilities.

Many concerns were raised over the conditions within the existing parks in the neighborhood. Residents are concerned that the McCulloch Street Tot Lot and Arlington Park are not providing their intended functions as recreation areas. Some residents requested adult supervision at each neighborhood park. However, this service could not be provided by the City but could be something a neighborhood organization could pursue.

There was also considerable discussion about a new neighborhood park to provide more facilities for the younger children in the area. Several possible locations were discussed with the most consideration given to a site on Dale Street. The City owns a parcel of land which fronts on Dale Street, and this site could be expanded to accommodate a new park.

Many residents and city planners recognize the need for larger recreation facilities in the area. However, there is widespread agreement that the social problems which are adversely affecting the existing parks must be eased before any new facilities would be useful.




DOUGLAS PARK
3 ACRES
PICNIC SHELTER & TABLES
BASKETBALL SLAB
PLAY APPARATUS
PAVED WALKWAY & BENCHES
McCULLOCH ST. TOT LOT
.4 ACRES
PLAY AREA
SMALL PLAY APPARATUS
BENCHES
TUSCALOOSA ST. TOT LOT
.8 ACRES
BRICK-WALLED PLAY AREA
SMALL PLAY APPARATUS
ARLINGTON PARK
1 ACRE
BASKETBALL SLAB
PLAY APPARATUS
SAND BOX
BENCHES
WARD ST. PARK
1 ACRE
PLAY APPARATUS
BENCHES
MAP EIGHT
EXISTING CITY PARKS
ASHEBORO NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN
0 300 500 1000 ft.
NORTH
Department of Planning and Community Development

Streets and Traffic

For many years the future design of the thoroughfare system in the Asheboro neighborhood has been uncertain. The City Thoroughfare Plan which was approved in 1977 showed that Asheboro Street would be relocated, following Andrew and Arlington Streets, bringing traffic from the south into the center city. When this planning process began, city planners quickly recognized that this could have a serious and detrimental impact on the neighborhood. As planned, this thoroughfare would have cut a swath through the middle of a sound residential area, removing homes and disrupting the local street system. It also would have played down the significance of the existing Asheboro Street alignment, an urban corridor with historical significance dating back to the mid-1800s.

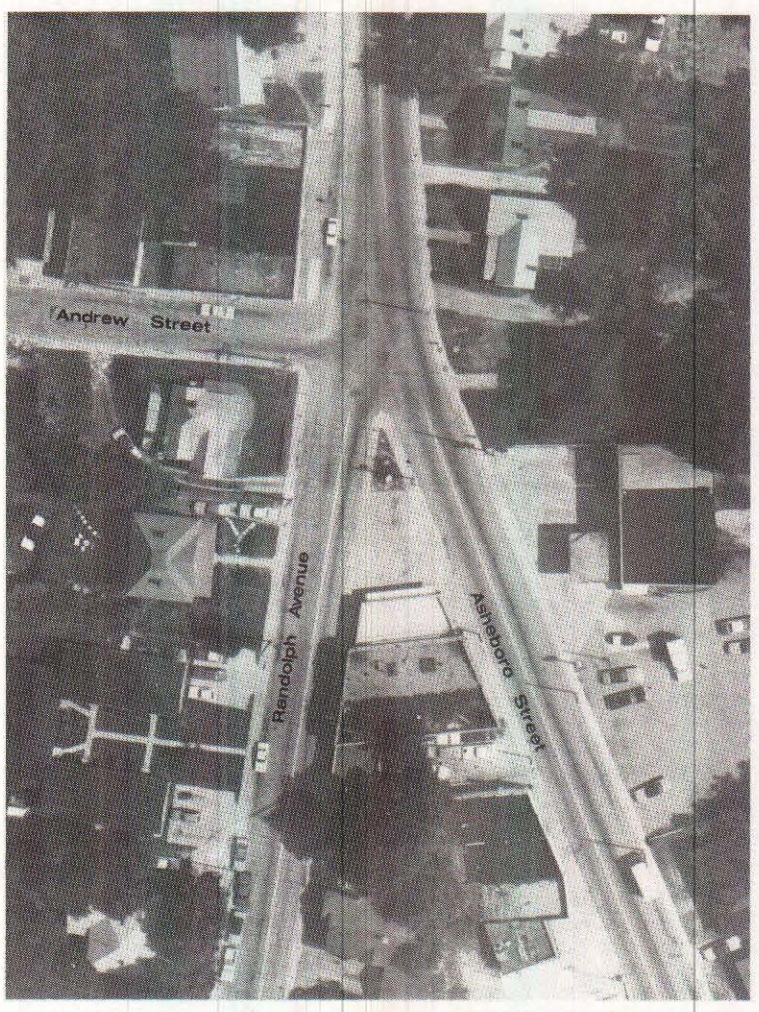
After considerable discussions with the City's Traffic and Transportation Department and the State Department of Transportation, agreement was reached to propose a change to the City's Thoroughfare Plan. The revised plan proposal shows Asheboro Street following its existing alignment all the way into the center city. Although identifying Asheboro Street as a major thoroughfare, the Plan does not mean that widening of the street is imminent. In fact, City officials have no plans to widen Asheboro Street in the near future, unless traffic volumes increase unexpectedly.

Many complaints have been received about the congested conditions at the Asheboro, Randolph, Andrew intersection. Traffic can enter and exit the intersection from four different directions. However, unlike a typical 4-way intersection, Randolph Avenue intersects at a sharp angle causing many unsafe traffic movements.

Some of the problems within the intersection are not related to the street design but result from cars parking and blocking the travel lanes. Congestion and loitering around the lounge and grocery store north of Andrew Street adds to these traffic problems.

There are several alternatives for improving the design and safety of this intersection. They all depend on what is done with the adjacent commercial uses. If all of the commercial buildings remain, then a limited solution would be to make Andrew Street one-way westbound and to turn Randolph Avenue back into Asheboro Street slightly, utilizing the remaining public right-of-way for a new turning lane. However, if some or all of the commercial buildings were to be removed, then a more satisfactory intersection could be designed.

Other street conditions were discussed. The proposed Bragg Boulevard was often mentioned. This thoroughfare has been planned for some time but State funding has not been available. Some improvement is needed or the existing street will become unusable and dangerous. Other street needs have been incorporated into the normal street repair program.



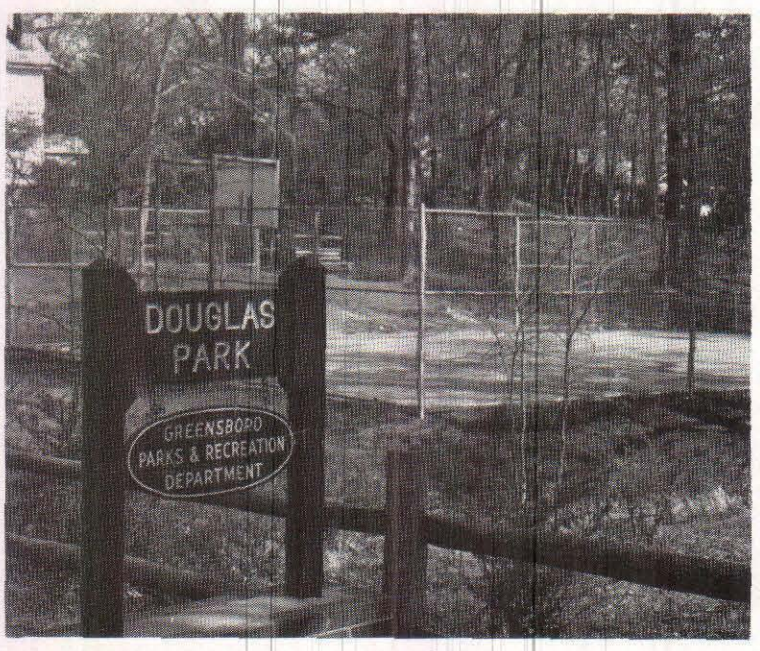
Aerial photograph of Asheboro Street — Randolph Avenue intersection.


16,950 VPD
14,600 VPD
10,390 VPD
5,900 VPD
5,300 VPD
5,400 VPD
6,900 VPD
MAP NINE
NEIGHBORHOOD STREET SYSTEM
Major Thoroughfares
Future Street Locations
Future Street Closure
Neighborhood Streets
Congested Intersection
0,000 VPD- Average Vehicles Per Day (Summer 1979 Count)
ASHEBORO NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN
Department of Planning and Community Development

Community Services

Several other services or facilities were discussed at the neighborhood meetings. These ranged from concerns over services the city already provides to needs within the neighborhood which are not being met. Some of the more often mentioned concerns are summarized below:

COMMUNITY BUILDING — Some type of building available for use by neighborhood groups as a meeting hall was requested by several persons. Others requested more of a recreation center type of building specifically for the Asheboro neighborhood. Requests for this type of building come from many neighborhoods in the city each year. There is no doubt that a community building would be a nice facility to have. However, the city has not provided them for individual neighborhoods because of the high cost of developing and operating such facilities, the many recreation centers here, and the availability of facilities such as churches.



Increased street lighting and new sidewalks have already been installed around Douglas Park.

TRANSPORTATION FOR THE ELDERLY — The Asheboro neighborhood contains a high percentage of elderly households. A request was made for a better transportation service to get the elderly to shopping and medical services. The GATE transportation service has been operating for several years for this purpose. Regular bus service is also available in the neighborhood. Any additional transportation service would have to be operated by a citizens group, church, or other community organization.

YOUTH EMPLOYMENT — Some of the neighborhood's problems result from many local youths not being employed. With nothing to occupy their time, they end up on the street corner. Many residents felt the need to develop programs that would offer an employment opportunity to local youths. One particular program which was suggested would use area youths to maintain lots owned by absentee property owners and those elderly who were not able to maintain their property.

STREET LIGHTING — Several sections of the neighborhood do not have adequate street lighting and deficient areas were pointed out by residents. City staff have also looked at the possibility of increasing the intensity of lighting in high use areas such as along Asheboro Street and around Douglas and Arlington Parks. Some of these improvements are already underway.

SIDEWALKS — Many sidewalks in the neighborhood need repair or replacement. Residents also requested several additional sidewalks to connect already built sections. Specific sidewalk needs will be assessed in light of any planned new community facilities such as parks or commercial areas and the need for adequate pedestrian circulation throughout the neighborhood.

Alternative A MINIMUM TARGET AREA PROGRAM	Alternative B *MINIMUM TARGET AREA PROGRAM PLUS*	Alternative C MINIMUM TARGET AREA PROGRAM AND ALTERNATIVE B PROGRAMS PLUS
Housing Rehabilitation loans and grants Limited City purchase, rehabilitation and resale, or resale subject to purchaser rehabilitation Spot clearance of dilapidated housing Minimum housing code enforcement Water and sewer improvements Street improvements Sidewalk improvements Human service programs such as: Day Care Fellowship Luncheon Applied Youth Development Head Start.	Additional Acquisitions for New Housing Sites Commercial Area Revitalization New Neighborhood Park Facilities Redesign of the Asheboro and Randolph Intersection, and Bragg Street.	Increased City Acquisitions Restoration of Architectural Styles and Details on Selected Structures Possible Historic Designation of Significant Structures or Blocks Formulation of Development Packages and Financial Leveraging to Stimulate Private Investment

Analysis of Alternative Actions

A neighborhood workshop, extending over three days, was held at St. Matthews Church in late 1980. The purpose of these meetings was to discuss possible actions and plans and to recommend a concept plan for the Asheboro neighborhood. The workshop was held over a three day period so that as many persons as possible would have the opportunity to attend at least one session. Meetings were held in the morning, afternoon, and evening.

The workshop agenda included a review of neighborhood concerns during the first day's sessions, discussion of neighborhood objectives during the second day, and presentation and discussion of alternative plans and policies during the final day's sessions. The workshop was not as well attended as the City would have hoped. Nevertheless, many useful discussions occurred and most residents left with a better understanding of their neighborhood's problems and opportunities.

As mentioned, the purpose of the workshop was to develop a conceptual plan for the neighborhood. The discussions on alternative strategies which could be followed then became the crucial part of the workshop. Residents were presented with three alternative strategies. Each described in general terms a level of public participation in neighborhood recovery.

Alternative "A" was the minimum level of public participation recommended in the Asheboro neighborhood. It is the basic program implemented in all Community Development Target Areas in the City. The program would deal primarily with housing improvement, utility improvements, and human services. While providing a variety of services to the neighborhood, it would not cover all of the concerns expressed by local residents, namely improvement to the commercial areas, development of new high quality housing, and additional recreation facilities.

Alternative "B" described a strategy of increased public participation. All of the programs described in Alternative "A" would be included in this strategy. In addition, the City could take an active role in rejuvenating the commercial sector of the neighborhood. Although not detailing the actual policies to be followed, residents and staff discussed the possibility of restoring the commercial area at Asheboro and Douglas Streets as a neighborhood commercial center. Alternative "B" also would increase the number of housing acquisitions west of Asheboro Street and north of McCulloch Street. This could be done to provide adequately sized sites to attract new housing development. Other programs under this alternative would be improvements to park facilities and the local street system.

Alternative "C" further intensified the level of public involvement. Much of the program would be similar to Alternative "B". However, at this level the City would have to become much more involved in neighborhood restoration through the purchase of numerous houses. At this level, areas might be designated where the housing would be historically preserved, preserving the architectural style and detailing of structures. Small area development projects could be packaged and implemented through coordinated public-private efforts. These "mini-projects" could deal with not only housing rehabilitation but also new housing developments, commercial areas, and community services.

Too few people attended the workshop to reach any clear cut decision or preference on which strategy or combination of strategies would be most beneficial to the neighborhood and economically feasible. Residents were generally supportive of increasing the level of acquisitions to remove the major concentrations of deficient housing and to provide suitable sites for new development. They also supported the concepts of upgrading the commercial areas with neighborhood oriented businesses and providing a new neighborhood park in the southern section. There was agreement that the minimum target area program would not provide an adequate solution to neighborhood problems and that a combination of Alternatives "B" and "C" was probably the best approach.

FINAL PLAN SELECTION

Although the City had hoped to settle on a concept plan at the October neighborhood workshop, several unresolved questions and a small turnout of residents prompted an additional period of study and refinement of program recommendations. Over the ensuing months, questions regarding the commercial uses at the Asheboro and Randolph intersection and reuse of the areas in the northwest quadrant of the neighborhood were further studied.

In March 1981, the City again held a neighborhood meeting in hopes of obtaining agreement on a set of recommendations for neighborhood revitalization. This time resident turnout was better and general agreement was reached on the recommendations which appear in this neighborhood plan.

Concept Plan

Asheboro is an important urban neighborhood for many reasons. Historically, it was the City's first truly residential neighborhood. Architecturally, it still retains some of the best examples of 19th and early 20th century architecture to be found in Greensboro. From a housing standpoint, it is an irreplaceable resource which the City cannot afford to lose. Certainly, new developments can never again capture the charm and human scale found on many of the streets in this neighborhood. Affordable and efficient living are its strongest assets, with shopping, employment, and cultural opportunities close at hand.

But as important and longstanding as its assets are, it is a neighborhood more threatened than many other areas in the City. Its homes and physical infrastructure have been in place for over half a century, have been in decline for many years, and are in need of concentrated attention and assistance. Left to change without clear guidance, the neighborhood is likely to deteriorate even further and become an undesirable and unattractive place to live. Total clearance, if it reached that point of blight, would be astronomically expensive and socially disruptive.

For these needs the Asheboro plan has two primary goals. First, **to halt the deterioration of the physical structure of the neighborhood,** and secondly, **to provide an atmosphere which will encourage the level of private investment necessary to achieve its long-term upgrading and stability.** For while government programs currently available and described on the following pages can provide a short range stimulus to neighborhood improvement, it will, in the long run, be up to individual property owners, developers, and residents to commit the neighborhood to recovery and long term stability.

The following plans and recommendations provide a framework for future neighborhood decisions. Most of the plans are general in nature and leave room for change and refinement as programs develop. Some change is inevitable due in large part to the length of time needed to carry out the full revitalization program. But as long as the integrity and usefulness of the neighborhood is preserved and enhanced, the goals of this plan will have been achieved.

Neighborhood Edges

Preservation of the residential character on the edges of the Asheboro neighborhood is critical to its long term stability. Deterioration often begins in these boundary areas as a result of the encroachment of non-residential uses and the effects of nearby dilapidated or unstable housing areas. Along the north and west boundaries of the Asheboro neighborhood, this problem is evident.

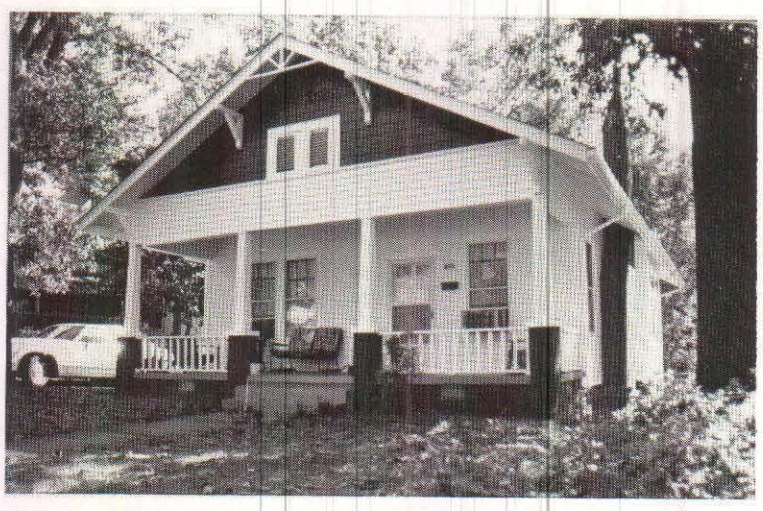
Arlington Street, the western boundary of the neighborhood, has been the dividing line between the South Elm Street industrial corridor and the residential neighborhood since the early 1900s. Over the years it has remained an effective land use boundary with the only exceptions being several lots south of Wiley Street. However, housing conditions along this boundary have deteriorated in part because of the unattractiveness of the industrial uses which back up to the residential area.

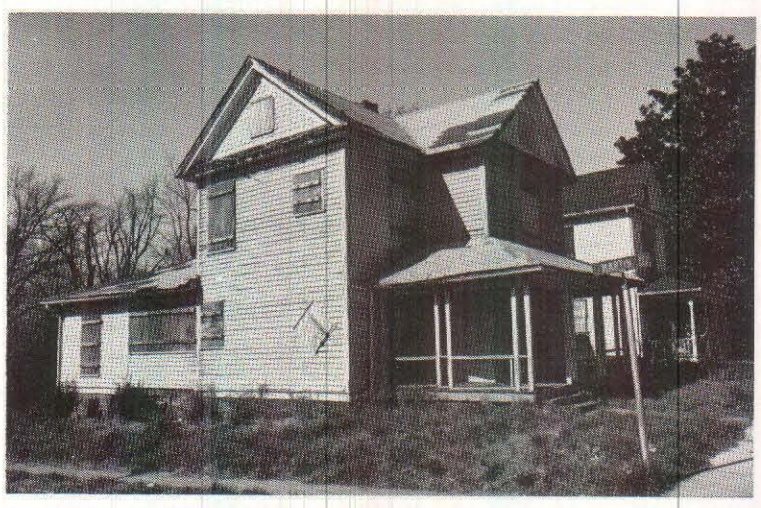
Arlington Street should continue to function as the western boundary of the residential area. More effective screening along the west side of Arlington Street could improve the visual appearance and lessen the impact of the industrial uses.

The northern edge of the neighborhood, along Lee Street, has also experienced land use changes and property deterioration over the years. The land use changes have occurred in the northwestern corner of the neighborhood as a result of an extension of the downtown business district development pattern. Further extension of commercial uses south of the proposed Bragg Boulevard should be discouraged. However, the small residential pocket along Brooks court, would be suitable for commercial or institutional reuse.

Asheboro Street, coming out of the downtown area, is the major entry point into the neighborhood. Vacant buildings and lots and poorly maintained housing impair the entrance image of the community at this point. A key element of the neighborhood plan is the encouragement of property improvement, housing rehabilitation, and new development of vacant parcels along this gateway into the neighborhood.

The eastern and southern boundaries of the neighborhood are well defined by major streets, and no change is recommended in land uses along either boundary. Although a cluster of deteriorated housing exists on the east side of Bennett Street, the fact that no neighborhood homes face Bennett Street mitigates this potential problem.





Acquisition of dilapidated housing structures (left) and an active housing rehabilitation program (right) are key ingredients of the Asheboro neighborhood revitalization program.

Residential Development

Asheboro is predominantly a residential neighborhood and conservation of the existing housing stock is the single most important element of the overall revitalization program. Although there were 359 housing structures in the neighborhood with at least major structural deficiences according to the 1979 housing survey, many of these are clustered in several locations. For the most part Asheboro's homes are well built, sturdy structures which are in need of mainly repairs and continued maintenance.

Except for those areas which are designated for major reuse, the following concepts are proposed for the conservation of the existing housing stock:

- Conservation of housing through application of the City's rehabilitation loan and grant programs and comprehensive code enforcement
- Encouragement of an increase in homeownership in the neighborhood
- Prevention of the demolition of single-family homes where possible
- Discouragement of poorly designed apartment buildings on original single-family lots
- Acquisition of scattered dilapidated properties which are a blighting influence on nearby better maintained homes.
- Utilization of vacant lots in the neighborhood for new housing construction
- Utilization of special design guidelines to ensure that new construction and rehabilitation work are compatible with the surrounding homes and streetscape, within significant streetscape areas

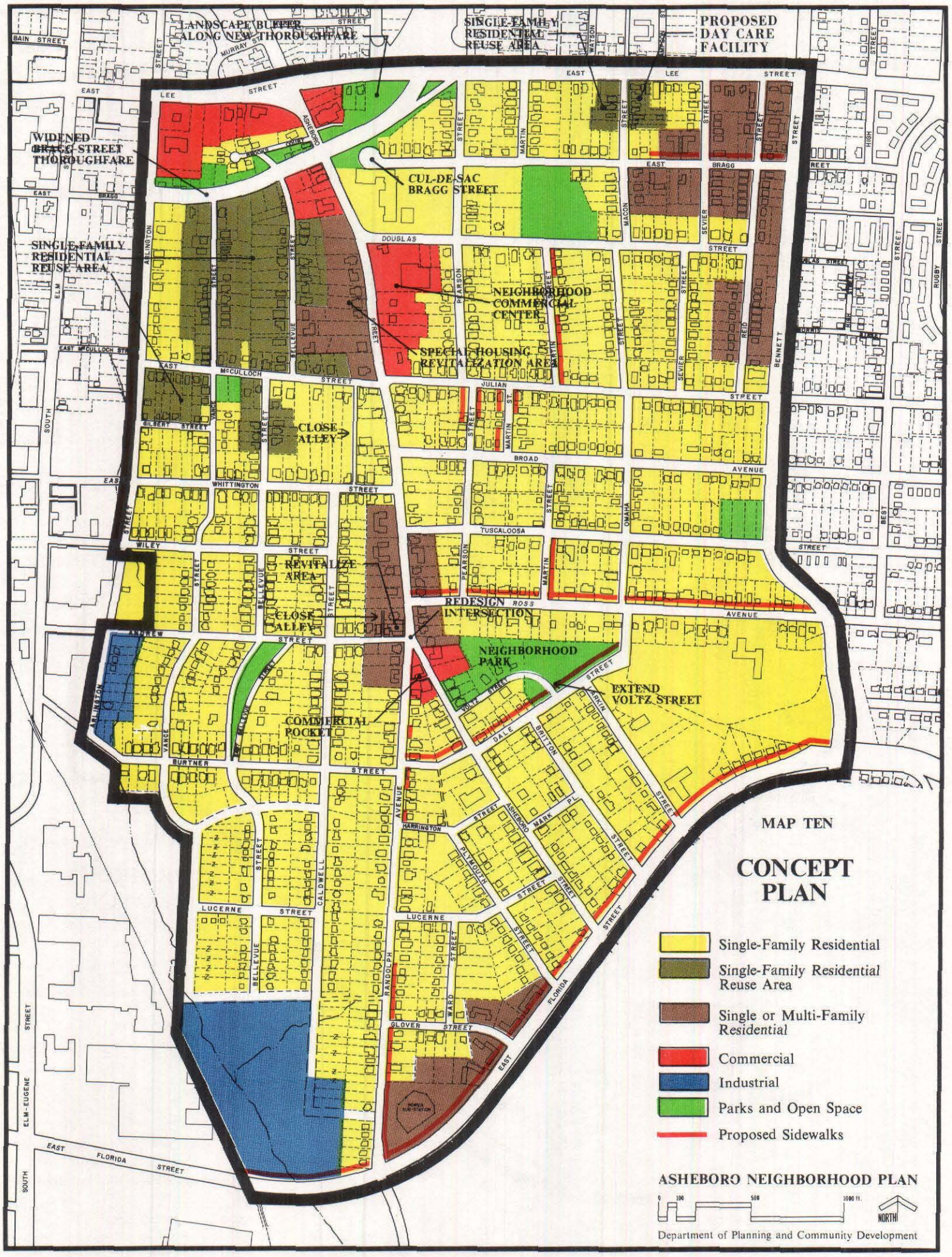
Several areas of multi-family residential zoning are recommended for rezoning to a single-family category, as shown on **MAP ELEVEN**. Four areas of multi-family zoning which are already fully developed for apartments are proposed to remain as currently zoned.

Major reuse areas have been identified in two sections of the neighborhood. One, located along Macon Street, is a relatively small area which did contain closely spaced and dilapidated small residences. Demolition of these units is already completed, and a new privately operated day care facility has been proposed for this site. The other reuse area, in the northwestern corner of the neighborhood, covers almost 15 acres of mostly dilapidated housing and vacant property. Within this area, housing types vary considerably, from small, poorly constructed and maintained housing to larger structures, most of which have been converted into two or more rental units. Most of the structures in this area are more than 50 years old, and exterior surveys indicate that maintenance has been minimal for several decades. Acquisition of most of the housing in this area is proposed. Some few structures may be candidates for rehabilitation. However, most will likely need to be demolished. Once sections are cleared, they could be offered for resale and new housing construction.

The northern edge of this major reuse area is Bragg Street. Bragg Street is now in very poor condition. A key element of the reuse strategy is the reconstruction of Bragg Street to provide better access and a more attractive site for new development. When fully constructed, Bragg Street will also provide a good barrier between business uses to the north and the residential neighborhood to the south.

Another opportunity area is a group of seven large and very old residences located on the west side of Asheboro Street between Bragg and McCulloch Streets. In their current condition, they are a visible blight in the community. However, they are viewed as a key to successful neighborhood revitalization because of their location at one of the entrances into the neighborhood. Rehabilitation of these homes is recommended with either single-family, multi-family or mixed uses possible. If restored, this important group of houses could act as a catalyst to further neighborhood revitalization.

While much of the neighborhood was developed later in the century, a portion of the earlier turn-of-the-century neighborhood is still relatively intact. Following Asheboro Street and including portions of Pearson, Julian and Broad Streets, this area deserves special treatment. Within this area, as shown on **MAP TWELVE,** any new construction and substantial rehabilitation should be designed to harmonize with the character and quality of the surrounding buildings. Local historic district designation would be one means to accomplish this strategy. However, the impetus for such designation should come from neighborhood residents themselves, as it has in other communities.


LANDSCAPE BUFFER ALONG NEW THOROUGHFARE
SINGLE-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL REUSE AREA
PROPOSED DAY CARE FACILITY
WIDENED BRAGG STREET THOROUGHFARE
CUL-DE-SAC BRAGG STREET
SINGLE-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL REUSE AREA
NEIGHBORHOOD COMMERCIAL CENTER
SPECIAL HOUSING REVITALIZATION AREA
CLOSE ALLEY
REVITALIZE AREA
CLOSE ALLEY
REDESIGN ROSS INTERSECTION
NEIGHBORHOOD PARK
EXTEND VOLTZ STREET
COMMERCIAL POCKET
MAP TEN
CONCEPT PLAN
Single-Family Residential
Single-Family Residential Reuse Area
Single or Multi-Family Residential
Commercial
Industrial
Parks and Open Space
Proposed Sidewalks
ASHEBORO NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN
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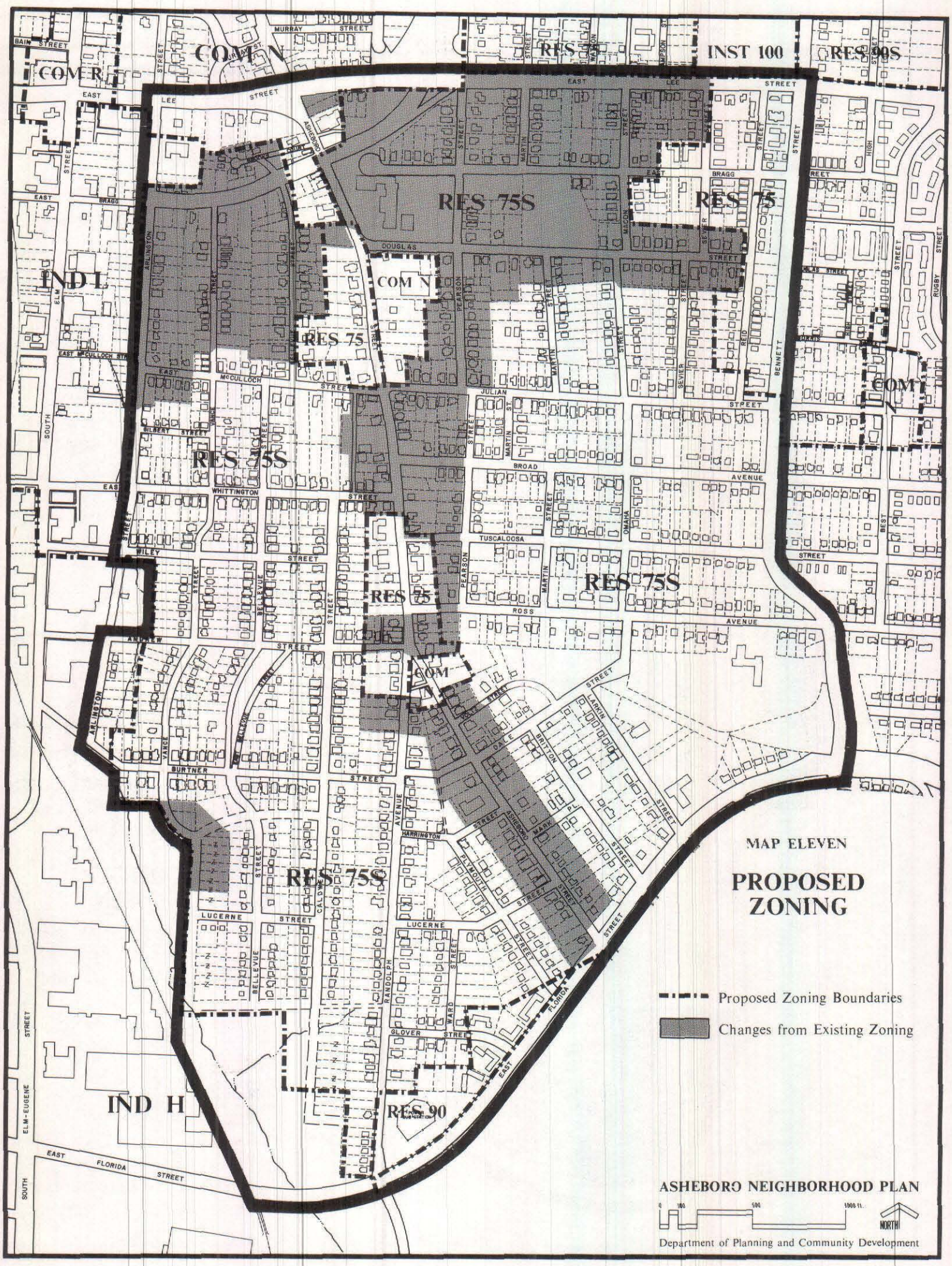
NORTH
Department of Planning and Community Development


COM N
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IND H
RES 90
MAP ELEVEN
PROPOSED ZONING
Proposed Zoning Boundaries
Changes from Existing Zoning
ASHEBORO NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN
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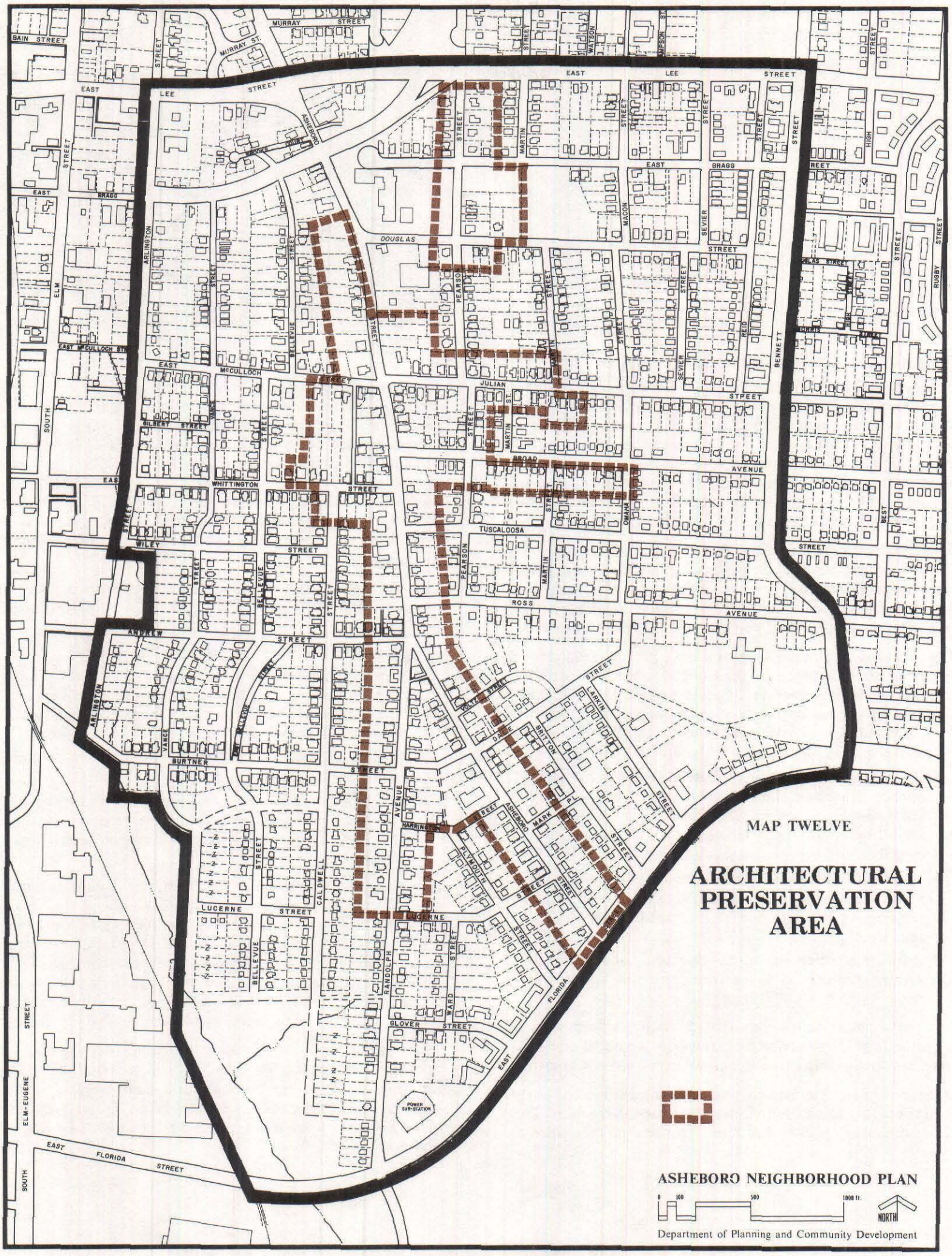
Department of Planning and Community Development


MAP TWELVE
ARCHITECTURAL PRESERVATION AREA
ASHEBORO NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN
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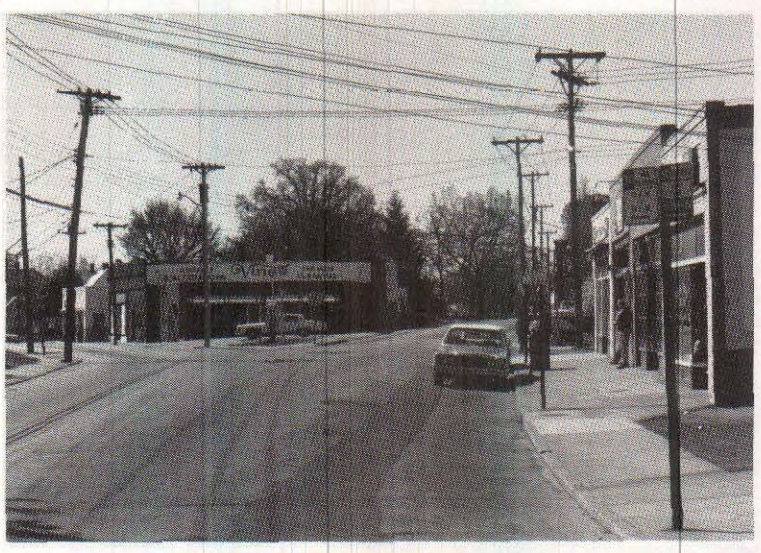
Department of Planning and Community Development



Commercial area at Asheboro Street and Randolph Avenue looking south.

Neighborhood Shopping Opportunities

Throughout this planning process, it was evident that revitalization of the properties fronting on Asheboro Street was a key to neighborhood recovery. Improvement of residential properties along Asheboro Street has already been discussed. However, the neighborhood's business sector is also located almost exclusively along Asheboro Street, and improvement of these commercial areas is equally important to neighborhood revitalization.

Two commercial areas on Asheboro Street are recommended for conservation and improvement, and one new commercial tract is recommended for the intersection of Bragg and Asheboro Streets. Together these areas provide ample opportunity for development of neighborhood oriented businesses.

The existing commercially zoned area on the east side of Asheboro Street between Douglas and Julian Streets is recommended for development as the main neighborhood shopping center. This site has good access, visibility, and adequate size to support increased commercial activity. Specific recommendations to upgrade this center include:

- Reuse of the vacant grocery store building on the north end of the block. Ideally, another mid-size grocery store should be sought. If this proves infeasible, the building could be divided into several smaller, neighborhood serving businesses.
- Redesign and repair of the parking lot surrounding the grocery store, service station and restaurant. This parking area is deteriorated and needs repaving and landscaping.
- Additional screening along rear and side yards to screen commercial areas from adjacent residential uses.

A cohesive center design with unified building exteriors, parking areas, signs, and pedestrian amenities would be advisable but admittedly difficult with the various owners involved.

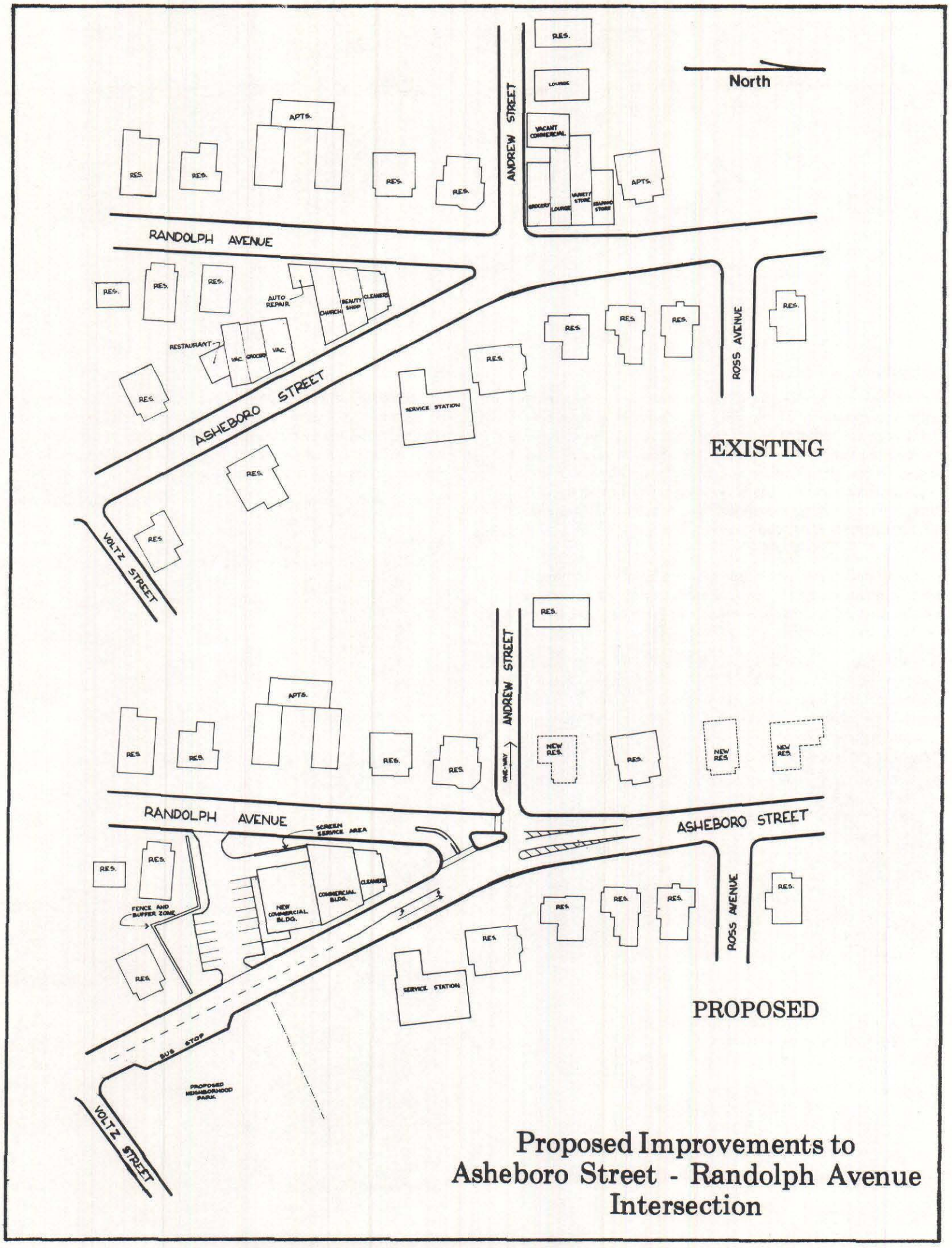
The second neighborhood commercial center is located at the Asheboro, Randolph, and Andrew Streets intersection. This old commercial pocket has been the source of numerous neighborhood complaints. Many of the buildings are in poor condition, there is no parking, and loitering is a continuing problem. This commercial area has existed within the surrounding residential uses for many years and this relationship will carry through to any revitalization efforts. For the commercial area to be upgraded, surrounding residential properties would need improvement, and conversely, if the residential area is to be stabilized, the commercial area must be revitalized to provide safe and convenient neighborhood shopping.

The attached drawing depicts the changes proposed for this commercial area. The following actions are recommended:

- Acquisition and removal of the businesses north of Andrew Street and residential reuse of the site.
- Acquisition of most of the businesses between Randolph Avenue and Asheboro Street, removal of buildings deemed unsalvageable, and encouragement of new commercial development on vacated sites.
- Additional screening between commercial uses and residences to the south.
- Development of amenities within or near the commercial area, perhaps along the street frontage of the proposed neighborhood park at Asheboro and Voltz Streets.

In conjunction with the change in commercial uses, the intersection is recommended for redesign as shown on the accompanying drawing to provide safer vehicular and pedestrian movements. Major features of the redesign include changing Andrew Street to one-way westbound and construction of several traffic islands to separate traffic turning onto and out of Randolph Avenue. All street changes would be accomplished within existing rights-of way.

There are also several scattered commercial uses existing in the neighborhood. The store on McCulloch Street is proposed for removal due to its poor structural condition and adverse impact on adjoining residential properties. Other businesses along Lee Street are non-conforming uses and their gradual phase-out is anticipated.

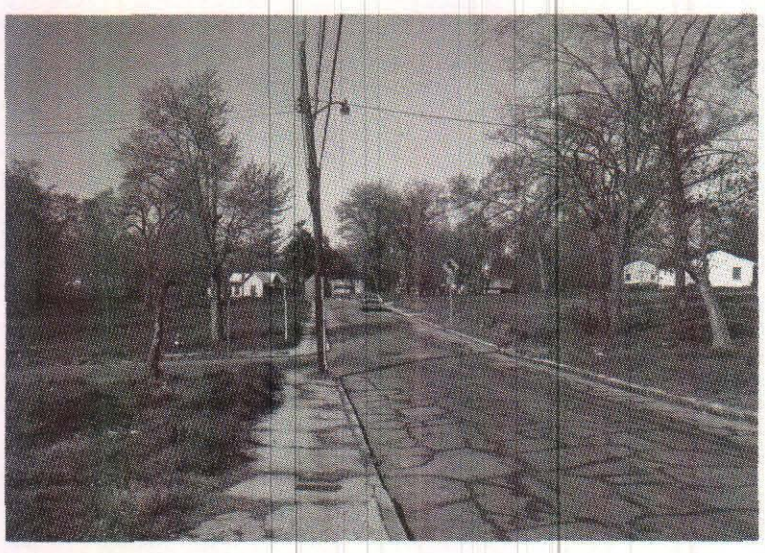


Proposed Improvements to Asheboro Street - Randolph Avenue Intersection

Streets

Several changes in the neighborhood street system have been previously mentioned, including the redesign of the Asheboro, Randolph, and Andrew Street intersection and the extension of Voltz Street to Dale Street. In addition, Bragg Street should be realigned and improved to replace the deteriorated street which currently exists. The future construction of the Bragg Street thoroughfare would also require the termination of Bragg Street at Asheboro Street as shown on the Concept Plan.

Many of the streets in Asheboro are already scheduled for resurfacing, and by the end of the revitalization program, most of the neighborhood's streets will have been resurfaced.



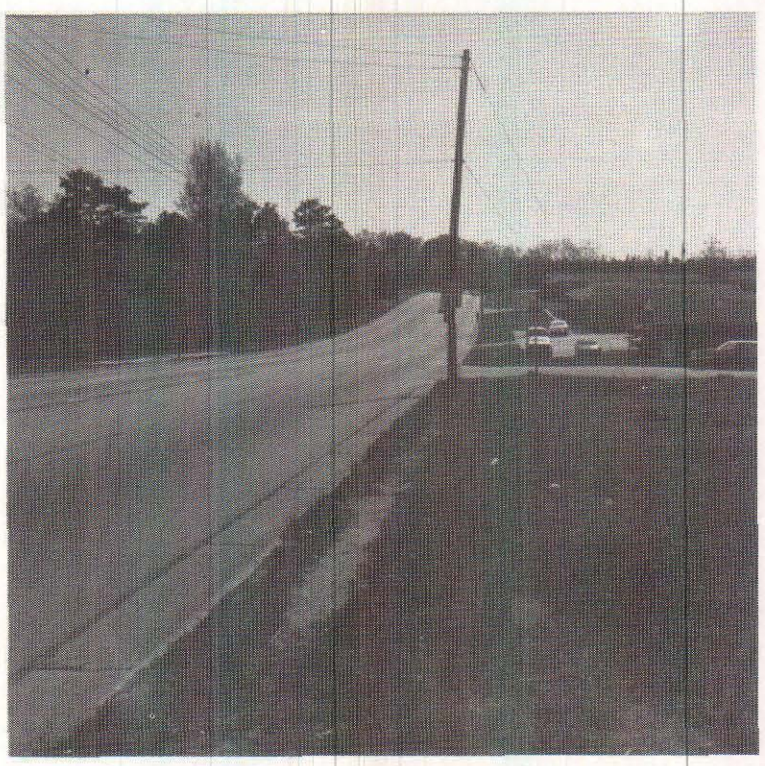
Bragg Street.

Sidewalks

Asheboro has an extensively developed sidewalk system which is beginning to show its age. Many of the sidewalks have buckled and cracked. A major revamping of the existing sidewalk system is proposed. In some locations gaps in the system are proposed to be completed.

Several new sidewalk locations are recommended as shown on **MAP TEN.** Major additions to the sidewalk system are proposed on:

- The north side of Florida Street, running the entire length of the neighborhood
- Dale Street, in conjunction with the proposed new neighborhood park
- Ross Avenue
- Bragg Street
- Randolph Avenue
- Arlington Street



Worn paths indicate the need for new sidewalks along the north side of Florida Street.

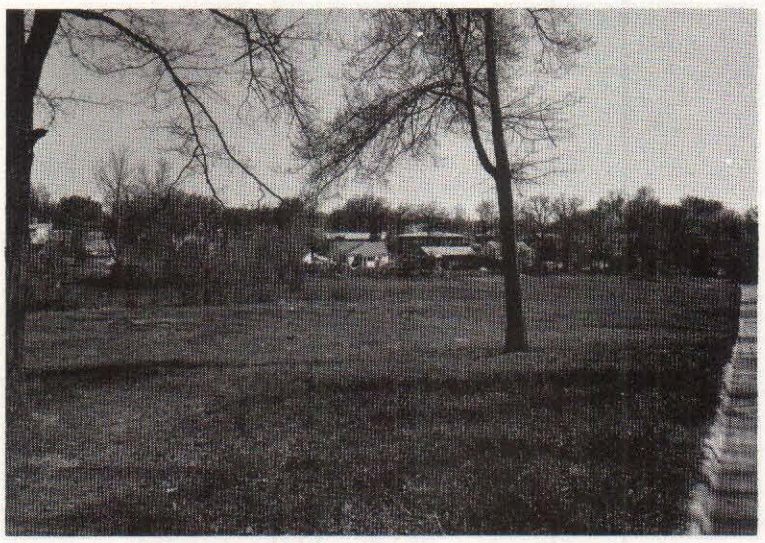
Parks

Of all the neighborhood features, parks are the most often talked about. Considerable concern was expressed by Asheboro residents over the undesirable conditions which exist in or influence several of the neighborhood's recreation areas. Removal of the store on McCulloch Street and objectionable uses at the Asheboro, Andrew Street intersection should ease the loitering problems around the McCulloch Street Tot Lot and Arlington Park. Neighborhood residents, though, must also take partial responsibility for policing and maintaining the area's parks and facilities.

A new neighborhood park is recommended for development between Ross Avenue and Dale Street. Slightly over 4 acres in size, the park would have frontage on Asheboro, Voltz, and Dale Streets. One important reason for extending the park up to Asheboro Street is to allow better surveillance of the area. In addition, Voltz Street is proposed to be extended through to Dale Street to provide better circulation around the facility.

Actual facilities and equipment to be installed, if the park is built, is a matter to be determined at a later time. However, the topography of the site suggests that much of the park could be devoted to passive recreation, such as walking trails and picnic areas.

The possibility of moving several of the residences currently within the park site should also be explored.



Site of proposed park at Dale Street.

Utilities

Water, sewer, and storm sewer systems are in need of repair or replacement in several locations. This is because of the age of many of the lines and inadequate sizes to meet current requirements. Although replacement could be undertaken when breakage occurs, repair and maintenance would occur more frequently in the future and costs could be higher.

Replacement of utility lines should be undertaken simultaneously with the other neighborhood improvement activities and in advance of street resurfacing.

Street Lighting

A comprehensive evaluation of the street light system has been undertaken in response to numerous resident concerns over inadequate street lighting. As a result, over 50 new street lights have been installed on the neighborhood's streets.

In addition to installing new street lights where gaps now exist, the city has recommended the installation of higher intensity light fixtures in areas of heavy pedestrian activity, including around Douglas and Arlington Parks and along Asheboro Street and Randolph Avenue.

Strategies

In previous sections of this report, major problems and issues existing in the Asheboro neighborhood have been identified. The Concept Plan describes the long range goals for neighborhood revitalization. The process of achieving these goals requires the simultaneous initiation of many different activities. Some are strictly city responsibilities such as utility line and street improvements. Others require more extensive coordination between individual property owners, the business community, and other sponsors of neighborhood revitalization.

What is important at this stage is general agreement on the goal of revitalization, the range of activities to be undertaken, and how the various activities will fit together into an effective revitalization effort. During the process itself of conserving and renewing the neighborhood, certain activities will undoubtedly be more successful than others while the opportunity for new activities will arise.

All of the normal target area activities are already underway in the neighborhood. However, the major actions as described in the Concept Plan section are yet to be initiated and indeed must first be approved by the City Council.

A tentative ten year plan is projected for completion of Target Area activities, beginning with the initiation of activities in 1979. However, the plan and all activities are dependent upon the continued availability of Community Development or similar funds. Near the end of this period, a reassessment and resetting of objectives should take place. This procedure is recommended because of the size and complexity of problems in this area and the still uncertain responsiveness of private owners and investors to revitalization of the community. An annual program would be presented to City Council describing the public programs which would occur during the year. The following are the major elements of the Asheboro neighborhood revitalization program:

Adoption of the Concept Plan

The adoption of this Neighborhood Plan as a guide for public and private actions is an important first step. The Plan presents objectives and strategies for revitalizing the Asheboro neighborhood. While providing a general framework for activities, it should not be viewed as limiting the programs or approaches which can be used to meet the objectives of the Plan.

Continuation of Target Area Programs

Three existing Community Development Target Areas make up the entire Asheboro neighborhood. The Vance Target Area, having been designated the longest (since 1977), has evidenced the most concentrated work to date. Around 30 percent of the homes in the Vance area have been rehabilitated and most of the infrastructure system has been updated. The Asheboro and Arlington Park Target Areas are just getting underway. Still, many housing rehabilitations are occurring in these areas along with sidewalk, street, and utility line improvements.

All three Target Area programs are recommended for continuation. The Vance Target Area is scheduled for completion in 1982-83. With continued, adequate funding, Arlington Park Target Area could be completed in 1985. The Asheboro Target Area is tentatively scheduled for completion in 1988-89, again depending on the availability of Federal funds. Activities which are a part of each Target Area strategy include housing rehabilitation, acquisition, code enforcement, and infrastructure improvements.

Timing of Major Activities

The Implementation Schedule identifies the approximate timing of key elements of the revitalization program. It is intended to serve only as a guide for future actions. Circumstances such as the availability of adequate funding may dictate reordering in the scheduling of certain activities, while the elimination of Federal funds could cause the abandonment of major parts of the plan.

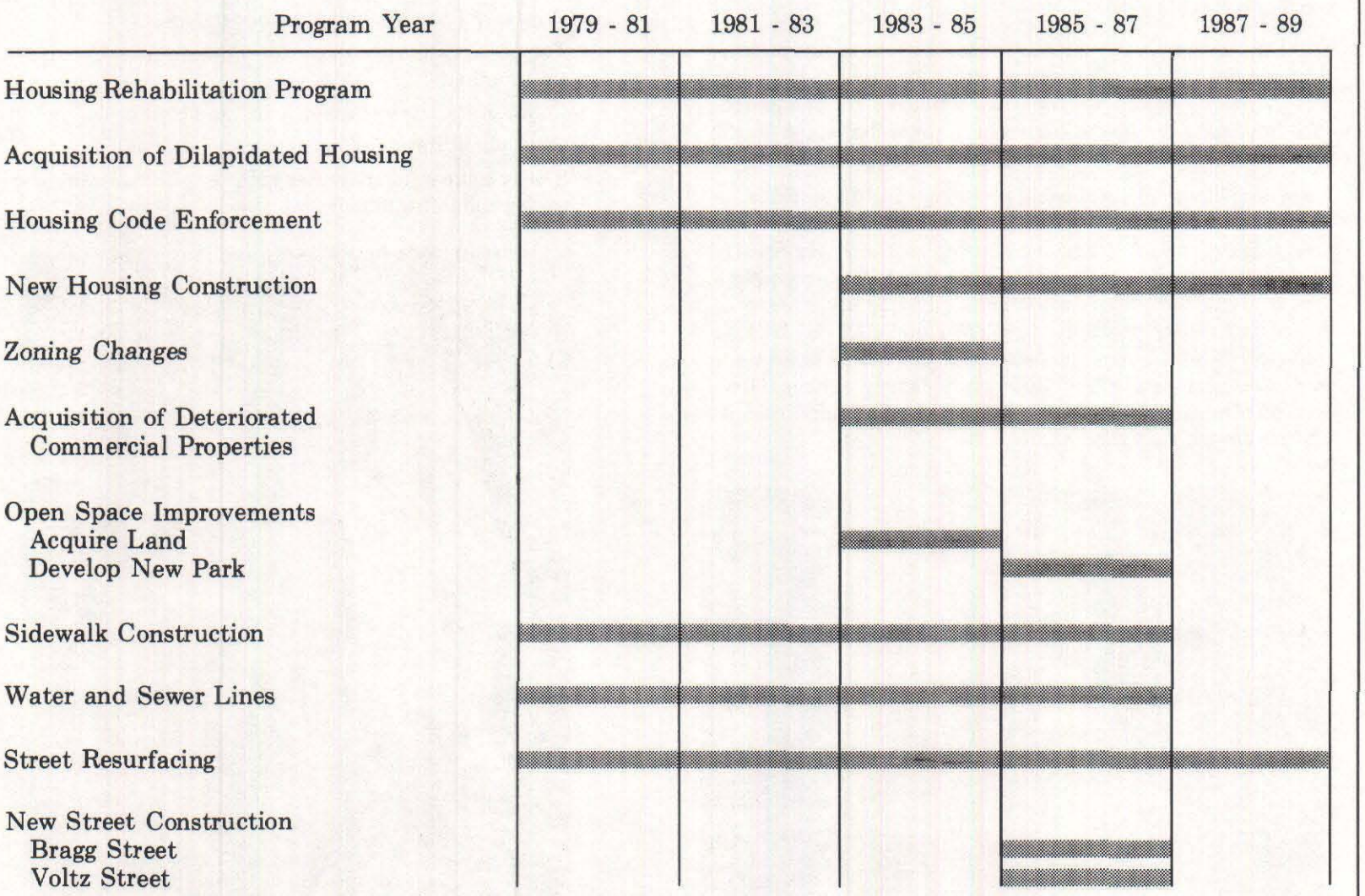
Neighborhood Initiatives

Early in the planning process, it became evident that any amount of City participation in neighborhood recovery would be short-lived without a similar level of commitment from the neighborhood. While public sponsored activities which remove some of the visible eyesores are a major step, other assistance must come from the residents and property owners themselves.

Perhaps the most important step in neighborhood recovery is the establishment of a strong and active neighborhood organization or group of organizations working towards the common goals of neighborhood stability and revitalization. A strong group of residents and property owners who would undertake improvement projects on their own initiative would be a significant benefit to the neighborhood's image and, consequently, private investment in improvement activities.

Asheboro Neighborhood Revitalization Program

Implementation Schedule

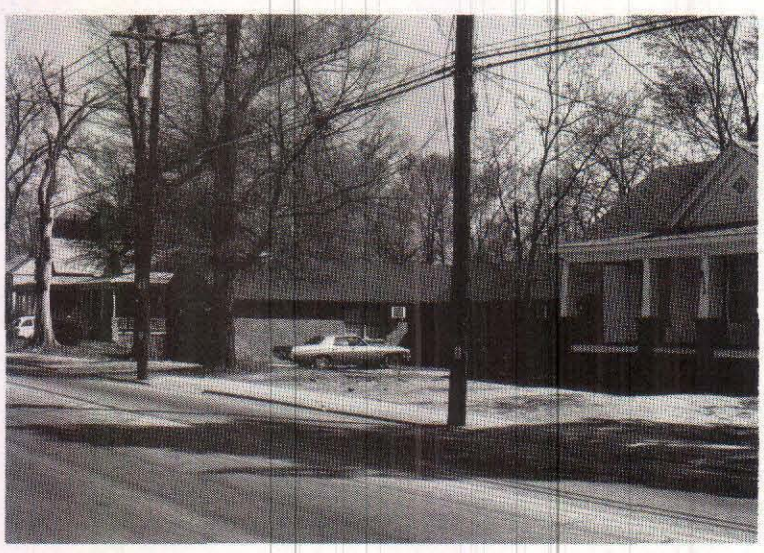


Housing Activities

The housing strategy developed for the Asheboro neighborhood is directed towards the prevention of further massive deterioration in the housing stock and the return of already deteriorated but salvagable housing to a long term sound condition. In addition, several areas are recommended for new housing development.

To help prevent further massive deterioration, a comprehensive housing code enforcement effort is underway in the neighborhood. Before Target Area activities are completed, each housing structure will have been inspected and brought up to at least minimum housing code standards.

A key ingredient of the housing strategy is the discontinuance of two existing trends: continued housing conversions, and construction of higher density housing in the lower density single-family sections of the neighborhood. To accomplish this, a major rezoning is recommended to be undertaken in the revitalization program. As shown on **MAP ELEVEN,** areas which have already experienced substantial apartment development would retain their multi-family zoning. However, all other areas would be rezoned to single-family residential use recognizing their current use.



Newer apartment developments are often incompatible with the adjoining single-family homes.

Housing rehabilitation is the major thrust of the overall revitalization program. Much of the neighborhood can be improved through the voluntary rehabilitation of private residences. Specific means of accomplishing housing rehabilitation include:

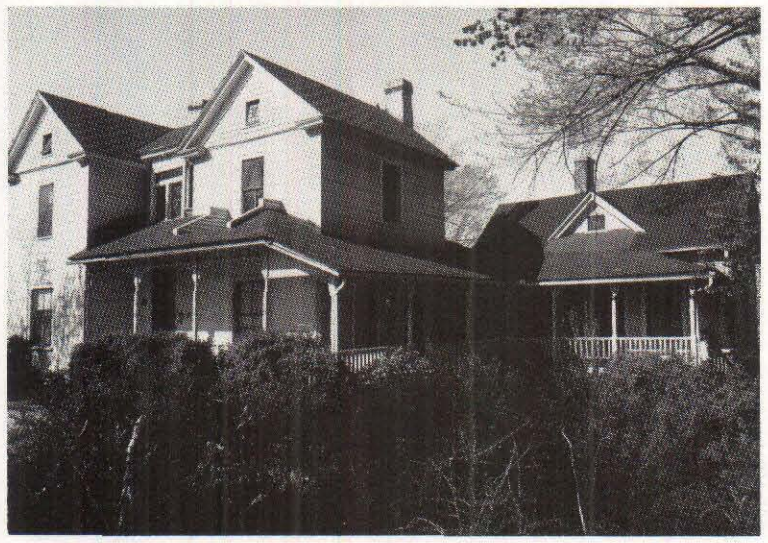
- Privately financed home improvements
- Technical assistance to property owners on rehabilitation methods
- Community Development loans and grants
- City rehabilitation of a few houses and resale
- Sale of some aquired houses with the purchaser undertaking rehabilitation

However, these strategies are effective primarily with owner-occupied housing units. Rental property owners have, in the past, been reluctant to participate in available rehabilitation programs and are ineligible for participation in some programs altogether. The participation of rental property owners in neighborhood improvement is imperative in this neighborhood, which is made up of more rental properties than owner occupied properties.

The deterioration of rental properties is particularly evident along Asheboro Street because of its visibility and prominence in the neighborhood. Many structures have been divided into apartments and are not in good structural condition. Except for several blocks between Julian Street and Ross Avenue, however, the older housing is basically intact. Should these old homes be lost, it is doubtful new construction would duplicate their size and design quality. Along Asheboro Street, the recommended strategy is to preserve the existing housing structures to the maximum extent feasible. When funds are available and there is a reasonable chance of rehabilitation and/or resale, city purchase of endangered structures is also recommended.

The major reuse area in the northwestern section of the neighborhood presents difficult problems because of its size and degree of deterioration. The Concept Plan recommends clearance of most of this area followed by new housing construction. It is anticipated that acquisition and clearance would take many years. Until a majority of the area is cleared, resale of property for new construction should be delayed. This delay is to allow the assembly of large development tracts. This strategy is recommended, instead of the normal process of selling individual lots, to take advantage of the economies and benefits of larger scale development, such as diversified financing mechanisms, higher quality design, and coordinated marketing.

The City can take an active role in the redevelopment of this reuse area through the assembly and marketing of development packages. In this way the City will be stimulating new development by absorbing the costs of relocating existing residents and demolition of dilapidated structures. The Concept Plan recommends single-family residential reuse in this area as a first priority. If other development plans are submitted showing higher density residential or mixed use development, they should be evaluated in the context of surrounding development trends at that time and the long range impact on neighborhood quality.



Asheboro Street.

Bellevue Street.

Neighborhood Shopping Improvements

While residential rehabilitation is usually in the forefront of neighborhood revitalization, improvements in the commercial sector more often follow the upgrading of other elements of the community. Nevertheless, a strong and stable business community can be an important asset to neighborhood revitalization.

The two recommended commercial centers on Asheboro Street (at Douglas Street and at Randolph Avenue) have different functions and potentials and each should be viewed with these specific functions in mind. The center at Douglas Street has the potential to become the main neighborhood commercial center. The existing vacant building and surrounding commercial property are well located to provide needed neighborhood shopping. The viability of this center is dependent first and foremost on sound market economics. Private investors must take the initiative, although special programs such as Urban Development Action Grants could be explored for market gap assistance.

The second commercial pocket at the Asheboro-Randolph intersection is much smaller and can serve only a limited function. The objective here is to remove those buildings which are deemed unsalvageable and which are causing neighborhood problems, while still retaining enough commercial property to provide needed neighborhood convenience shopping. Between Randolph Avenue and Asheboro Street, the potential exists to assemble a site suitable for new commercial development along with the revitalization of an existing building. Again, the final decision concerning the viability of this site for commercial use is up to private enterprise. The City could provide some incentive by partially absorbing acquisition and site development costs and coordinating any other programs, such as Small Business Administration loans or other public assistance.

Community Development funded sidewalk improvements underway in the neighborhood.

Parks and Open Space Development

As stated earlier, the problems in several of the neighborhood's existing parks are directly related to nearby commercial areas and the loitering that results from these areas. Removal of most of the problem-causing commercial areas should lessen the problems in these parks.

A new neighborhood park is recommended for development between Ross Avenue and Dale Street. The portion of the site facing Dale Street is already city-owned property. The remainder of the site would have to be acquired, and the residents thereon relocated to other suitable housing. Acquisition of these properties would not be scheduled to begin for several years. The delay is to allow time for the removal of the commercial uses on Asheboro Street which have caused problems in other nearby parks. Development of the new park could occur late in the neighborhood program.

Infrastructure Improvements

A comprehensive street, sidewalk, and utility repair and replacement program is proposed for the neighborhood. This program would modernize an inadequate and outdated system, prevent breakage and disruptive repairs in the near future, and provide needed additions or changes to the systems.

Recommended improvements include:

- Replacement of inadequate water and sewer lines
- Resurfacing of most of the neighborhood's streets
- Repair of sidewalks and installation of approximately 12,000 feet of new sidewalk
- Reconstruction of Bragg Street and the Asheboro-Randolph intersection
- Addition of over 50 new street lights and higher intensity street lighting along Asheboro Street and around the neighborhood parks.

Summary

The process of restoring a neighborhood as large and complex as the Asheboro neighborhood is a long-term, difficult, and costly undertaking. While a major commitment to conservation must certainly come from City government, an equal or greater commitment must come from individual property owners, residents, area businesses, and all involved citizens and groups.

The concepts and strategies described previously detail the policies and programs recommended for the City to follow over the ensuing years. Many of the plans can be incorporated into the City's Community Development Target Area Program, which is already operating throughout the neighborhood. Other plans must be coordinated through various departments or agencies. At the same time, suggested actions have been put forth to guide private efforts towards neighborhood revitalization.

Implementation of the objectives contained in this plan is the next important step. This will involve the careful consideration of many different types of programs and funding sources, since it is doubtful that the Community Development Program, alone, can supply sufficient funding to carry out the complete revitalization program. Continuation of the Federally funded Community Development Program or a similar program, however, is vital to the undertaking of much of this plan. Without this funding source, the plan would need to be scaled down drastically. Whatever the funding source, this plan can provide the guidance and direction necessary to achieve the desired results of neighborhood stability and recovery.

Credits

Photographic Credits

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Providing valuable assistance and expertise to this effort were the following:

City of Greensboro
Department of Traffic and Transportation
Department of Parks and Recreation
Department of Public Works

Greensboro Redevelopment Commission

Special thanks are extended to the following neighborhood residents and interested citizens, whose contribution of time and knowledge to this neighborhood plan is gratefully acknowledged.

Hubert Robinson
Wendell H. Carr
Frank Feeney
W. T. Feeney
W. M. Black
Mr. and Mrs. Roy Dover
Emma J. Marcus
Rev. Mary E. Blue
Mr. Carlton Maynard
Mrs. Mamie Jackson
Rev. W. J. Jackson
Mrs. Lizzie Williams
Charles Holley
Dester Armstrong
Mrs. Lynette Parks
Ruth W. Biggs
Esther M. Graves
Sandy Ingram
Bill Cooper
Jodolphus Parks
Nettie Coad
Margaret Goldston
Toussaint Whitfield
Rev. and Mrs. W. A. Surgeon
Mrs. Alta Raines
Rev. Joseph Evans
Raymond Young
Mrs. Wessye T. Brown
Joe B. Dembo
Jerne Diaz
Edgar Hayes
Clarence Richardson
S. T. McCallum
Alvis A. Lee
D. C. Frate, Jr.
Mildred Caldwell
Anna Brower
Marcellous Watts
Hattie Sims
Pauline Morton
Katie Craig
Wilbert Thompson
Herbert Smith
Clarence Moore
John Hamilton, Jr.
Rev. Charles Crenshaw
Mary B. Troxler
Sadie Goode
Charles E. Andersen
Mary E. Black
Rosa Lee Young
Mabel M. McCoy
Carrie Shaw
Emily Shamberger
Bertha M. Lowe
Irene Pleasant
Walter C. Banks
Cladie Mae Dark
Helen Hayes
Lounette Rollins
Arneda Whitis
Nathaniel Tonkins
Mrs. Lilla Powell
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Mamie P. Moore
Libby Lofton
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Mrs. Lillie Triplin
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