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## HJC Policy and Poli. Ed. Newsletter - 8/6/21

1 message

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**Jimmy Vasiliou** <jsvasiliou@gmail.com>

Fri, Aug 6, 2021 at 10:21 AM

To: Housing Rights Education Group &lt;housing-rights-education-group@googlegroups.com&gt;

Hello All,

As the days of summer wane, Charlotte City Council and Mecklenburg County Commission meeting schedules are starting again with their usual regularity. City Council held a strategy session earlier this week to discuss a non-discrimination ordinance. The County Commission, meanwhile, discussed tax subsidies for the Eastland Mall redevelopment project.

At the national level, the main story was the expiration of the CDC's eviction moratorium. The Biden administration and Congressional representatives pointed fingers at who should receive the blame before finally deciding on the states as a scapegoat. Either way, intense pressure from housing groups forced the Biden administration to extend the moratorium but only in COVID-19 "hotspots" across the country that are at high-risk due to rising cases of the delta variant. Mecklenburg County has been designated as one of high transmission rate counties in North Carolina that can still continue to use CDC affidavits in order to stave off evictions. I am attaching a COVID Transmission Tracker from folks at NC Legal Aid which breaks down this information.

Of course, the local ongoing policy battle still continues over the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) and the 2040 Policy Map (also known as "place type mapping"). Currently, the City is prioritizing Place Types since it seeks to adopt a final version of the 2040 Policy Map by February 2022. This policy map will inform the UDO and decide which zoning districts are where. The date of adoption for the UDO that the City has in mind is July 2022. As of right now, we are currently working with the Charlotte Community Benefits Coalition (CBC) to develop a policy for the UDO that will incorporate a community benefits/public benefits table based on the Asheville model of hotel development. We want to make this an overlay district with much more broad application rather than limiting it to one type of development. We'd like for this to be part of all Place Types, if possible. Please take the survey for the 2040 Policy Map [here](#).

Also, the City is currently taking applications for the Charlotte's NEighborhood STabilization Commission (Charlotte's NEST) and the Equitable Development Commission. The City is closing the application process on 8/13/2021 and they will vote on appointment picks at their August 23rd meeting (if everything goes to schedule). We are helping the CBC push to have membership from their coalition on these commissions since these commissions were the ideas of the CBC. We'd also like for folks in the Housing Justice Coalition to consider applying for these positions. If you wish to apply, please visit the link [here](#) and go to Charlotte's NEST Commission and Charlotte Equitable Development Commission to learn more.

### Community Updates

- The Howie Acres community will be celebrating 75 years as a neighborhood on **Saturday, August 28th at 11:00 AM until 5:00 PM**. We plan to set up a table and talk to folks about the Housing Justice Coalition as well as provide information and resources.
- Housing Justice Now, a housing justice organization based out of Winston-Salem, NC, is holding weekly eviction defense trainings at **6:00 PM every Thursday**. The information for their conference call is as follows - Zoom ID: 829 4360 0589 Passcode: 545662
- The next HJC Policy and Political Education Meeting will be on **Tuesday, August 17th at 6:00 PM**
- The next HJC general meeting will be on **Wednesday, August 25th at 6:00 PM**.

### The Week of 7/26-7/30/21

No major meetings for City Council or County Commission during the week. Summer schedule for both entities

**The Week of 8/2-8/6/2021****Charlotte City Council Strategy Session - Monday, August 2nd****Full Agenda** [Here](#)**Full Video of Meeting** [Here](#)[City Council closes in on nondiscrimination ordinance to protect LGBTQ residents - QCity Metro, 8/6/21](#)

The City Council's strategy session discussed the new non-discrimination ordinance. City Attorney Patrick Baker gave a presentation on the ordinance which you can find [here](#). The draft of the non-discrimination ordinance can be found [here](#).

The City will vote on the non-discrimination ordinance at their August 9th meeting.

**Charlotte Workforce and Business Development Committee Meeting - Monday, August 2nd****Full Agenda** [Here](#)**Full Video of Meeting** [Here](#)

This committee meeting was centered around the workforce consultation done by Ernst & Young around three corridors: Freedom Road/West Blvd., Beatties Ford Road and the Sugar Creek corridor. The presentation from Ernst & Young (or, EY) is [here](#).

The major takeaway from this presentation is that the City is aiming to enhance the federal Opportunity Zones (OZs) and the local Corridors of Opportunity programs in order to facilitate workforce development and training. The work by EY includes a lot of Census data from 2018 but does not have recent Census information from the 2020 Census. However, Councilmember Tariq Bokhari (chair of the Workforce and Business Development Committee) noted that the 2020 Census information could be plugged into current work.

Each of the corridors have targets for employment and real estate opportunities. The EY presentation suggested that the main industries to grow in these corridors are as follows: Manufacturing, Logistics and Distribution, Health Care, Technology/Administrative Support Services. For the real estate portion, there are suggestions for each corridor and what "real estate opportunities" that are conducive to workforce development are available. These are on pages 10, 11 and 12 of the presentation.

During the presentation, Mayor Vi Lyles asked if this presentation was just another item that was moving away from work of OZs and Corridors of Opportunity. She said she had been involved in a lot of jobs programs and wanted to know what the City could do with existing employers. City Staff said that this presentation and the consulting work of EY was meant to enhance already existing policies of OZs and Corridors of Opportunity. Fran West, Assistant Director of the City of Charlotte's Economic Development Department, said that they are looking at solutions with current employers and their challenges especially given how COVID has upended employment and there is now a "labor shortage."

Emily Cantrell of the Economic Development team said that the work of this is much more acute and targeted for specific areas. Councilmember Bokhari compared the work of City of Charlotte as typically "macro" policies and compared them to a "bazooka" whereas this approach to specific geographies is a "sniper rifle." Mayor Lyles said that they needed to begin the work of jobs training and talking to people on the ground who are unemployed. Said that the City does not need to silo economic development and the private sector needs to step in.

The next steps for the EY consultation team are to hold conversations with key stakeholders, develop implementation within HIRE Charlotte framework and identify pilot projects that will create momentum and inform implementation.

**What does all of this mean:** Councilmember Bokhari said this would be the "gas" that informs the [Strategic Employment Plan](#) which will work in tandem with the implementation process for the Charlotte Future 2040 Comprehensive Plan. There is a hiring component to all of the EY data and recommendations but it seems like it will be contingent on the real estate component. For the three corridors mentioned, only the Freedom/West Blvd. corridor has the large economic driver of the airport that will dictate how things develop. For Beattie's Ford, it seems like the focus is to place fulfillment distribution centers along Sunset Drive and I-85. For Sugar Creek, the plan seems to be mixed-use development near the Lockwood area with office space conducive to health care and administrative assistant jobs along Sugar Creek. All of this potential development can take advantage of public incentives offered by OZs and Corridors of Opportunity. The City's strategy seems to be a targeted focus on incentivizing the industries mentioned earlier but questions of wages and working conditions are largely left out of the conversation.

The Committee gave a quick presentation on the HIRE Charlotte framework and its timeline for implementation before adjourning. You can view the presentation [here](#).

## Mecklenburg County Board of County Commissioners Meeting - Wednesday, August 4th

**Full Agenda** [Here](#)

**Full Video of Meeting** [Here](#)

[Public money headed to Eastland Mall, a future hub for Charlotte FC and Tepper Sports - \*Charlotte Observer\*, 8/4/2021](#)

The big story related to housing from the Mecklenburg BOCC meeting was the approval of an interlocal agreement between the County and the City of Charlotte to commit a little over \$7 million for public improvements. The only no vote was from Commissioner Pat Cotham who took issue with language around the agreement being in perpetuity. County Manager Dena Diorio will still need to execute a formal contract which specifies the use for the soccer fields associated with Charlotte FC. The presentation for what will be at Eastland is [here](#).

A couple of County Commissioners were displeased with the way they were left out of the economic development discussions yet they ended up voting for the interlocal agreement anyway. Pity parties over access won't spoil Tepper and Crosland Southeast getting their money, I guess.

In 2020, we fought against the Eastland rezoning and warned against the potential impacts it would have on gentrification. There are many in East Charlotte who worry about its effects but we were told that we were outnumbered by the community conversations with positive reactions from East Charlotteans. However, these meetings were evenly divided between those who wanted a "catalyst" and others who could see the writing on the wall. In those discussions, the City told residents worried about gentrification that the Aging in Place program would be available for those who could qualify to stay in their home. Well, wouldn't you know, [that program is now only available for those who utilized it in 2019 and 2020](#). Aging in Place doesn't seem to be the long term fix after all. This project, ultimately, has studios that *start* at \$1,100.00.

Another big story from the Mecklenburg County Commissioners meeting was the submission of applications to change the name of three roads adjacent to the development of the Mecklenburg County Northeast Community Center at the former Northpark Mall. These submittals were sent in by members of the Howie Acres community and, if approved at the September 8th meeting, the roads will be named Stitt Road, George Evans Drive and Zion-Torrance Road. Stitt and George Evans Drive being named after significant community members while Zion-Torrance being named after Zion Primitive Baptist Church. The presentation for the renaming can be found [here](#).

### In the News

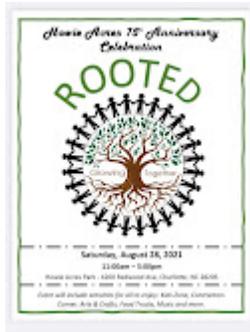
- [Plans for new street names honor legacy of Black home ownership in Charlotte community - \*Charlotte Observer\*, 8/5/2021](#)
- [An eviction crisis looms for Charlotte - \*Axios Charlotte\*, 7/26/2021](#) (this article was written before the limited eviction moratorium was put in place based on COVID transmission rates but I think it provides a lot of good data and perspective)
- [What to know about the new eviction moratorium and rental assistance - \*QC Nerve\*, 8/5/21](#)

### Back to Class (Political Education)

[Alternative Institutions or Dual Power? by Noel Ignatiev, \*PM Press\* 2019](#)

The author explains the concept of "dual power" as it was articulated by Vladimir Lenin in revolutionary Russia in 1917 and tries to draw a distinction between dual power, the counter-power against existing institutions and the old society, and alternative institutions, institutions like libraries, alternative newspapers, unions and co-ops that exist within capitalist society. For the author, alternative institutions aren't the end but *can be* the means that lead to a new society. While I have minor quibbles with some points and proclamations from the author, I think there are good lessons about the distinction between alternative institutions and what dual power actually is.





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