



HIGH WAY

University of Georgia school of environmental design and alliance for quality growth

woodbine

charrette
2001

UGA students help Woodbine leaders visualize a new look

The charrette in Woodbine approached community revitalization through an innovative housing strategy. The team was treated to a series of extremely interactive sessions with local residents and decision makers. We found that the combination of a weakened economy, declining affordable housing stock, abandoned buildings and proliferating paved surfaces made the solutions for Woodbine more complicated. However, the very consistent town form, a strong community spirit, successful community events, terrific natural resources and beautiful vegetation made the task of recommending change an easy one.

Woodbine Charrette

Faculty:

Jack Crowley,
Dean School of Environmental
Design, UGA

Pratt Cassity,
Public Service Associate,
School of Environmental
Design, UGA

Liz Kramer, Public Service
Assistant, Institute of Ecology,
UGA

Hank Methvin, Assistant
Professor, School of
Environmental Design, UGA

Students:

- Vanessa Bernstein - MLA**
- Mel Copeland - BLA**
- Fred Kristen - BLA**
- Sarah Leeper - BLA**
- Fawn Mann - BLA**
- Matt Sussman - MLA**

There are two very good models for collaboration that exist locally. The programs and community support that are related to the Ralph Bunche Center are inspiring. This Center is your model for moving forward in the human resource arena.

The Riverwalk ISTEA project and the successful Crawfish Festival serve as models for promotion, project realization and follow through. We saw these successes as the trailblazer for more intensive and equally rewarding projects to follow.

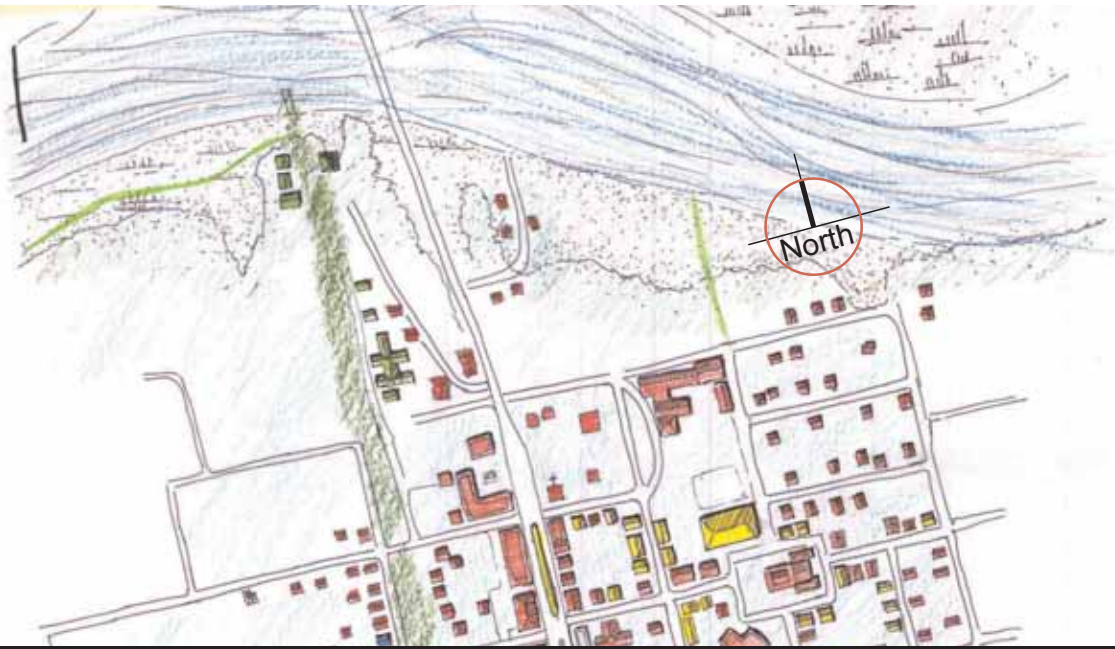
Citizens participating in public forum and local events:

Juanita Johnson,
Helen Allen,
Joel Williams,
Larry Freund,
Laura Freund,
Marion Cummings,
Audrey Cummings,
Peggy Anderson,
Denise Dalton,
Darren Harper,
Clark Heath,
Janet Heath,
James Johnson,
Mayor W. Burford Clarke
Jerry Lloyd,
Habitat for Humanity volunteers.

The information gathering phase of the charrette started with a housing community feedback session and is summarized below:

What you told us that was bad about Woodbine	...And what you liked	...And what you see as opportunities	...And what you want
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No growth • Complacent • Shrinking • Stagnant • Dead • More open mindedness • Get rid of sand gnats • Better people orientation • Eyesores • Trucks • Woodbine gets ignored • Too many trucks • Cycle of no return • Apartments bring trouble • Too many vacancies • Speculative abandonment • New zoning changes were not explained • Apathy in last election • Perception of planning and zoning • Communication issues • Black and white worlds very different • Youth out migration • No youth activities • Land ownership issues, especially those related to pulp and paper issues • Taxes have risen too fast • Lack of reputation defeats new businesses • Too much parking (paved surfaces at new courthouse) • Boat launch problems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No growth • Bedroom community to the larger more crowded towns nearby • Rural feel • Home • Peaceful • Comfortable • Country • Welcoming • Paradise • Nice and close to EVERY-THING • Riverwalk is great...needs extending • Courtesy among races • Family connections • Family values • Environmental character • Slower pace • Fishing, fishing, fishing! • Leisure time • Relaxing • Cookouts • Family events • Crawfish festival • Beautiful and clean river • Unspoiled environment • No factories • Skiing • A safe place to walk • Ralph Bunche Center • Houses with hoses • Courthouse • Bryan-Lang Historical Library 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Waterfront Community • Sea Island partnership for a better Woodbine • Drastic new changes "when the bridge opens" • New white collar jobs related to the base and the pulp industry • Signage, promotion and tourism • Courthouse activity to support downtown businesses • New Off ramp at I-95 • Vacant land developed as parks (especially next to Episcopal Church) • New greenspace plan • Ralph Bunche Center • Schools reused in other parts of town 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Needs new (any) restaurants • Need merchants association • Need a welcome center and gift shop • A downtown that feels like a village center • A place to eat breakfast • A gathering spot, recreation center • Condos • A place to check email and get coffee • Smaller neighborhood schools • More workforce housing that is compatible with coastal architecture • Enforcement of new zoning regulations • Canoeing and kayak outfitter

Introduction



d e v e l o p m e n t p l a n

when projects are phased over time, it becomes more manageable.



- ~ LEGEND ~
- EXISTING [Red square]
 - PHASE I [Yellow square]
 - PHASE II [Blue square]
 - PHASE III [Purple square]
 - PHASE IV [Green square]

DEVELOPMENT PLAN
for the city of Woodbine, GA

The improvement plan for Woodbine and Highway 17 is an intimidating process when seen as a whole. However when the projects are phased over time, it becomes more manageable. The charrette team feels that the improvements will augment many of the existing projects that are already underway in the city.

Community collaboration, detailed work plans and aggressive funding strategies will move the "fix" along a steady path toward success.

In light of the difficulty of making sweeping immediate changes, we have recommended a phased

As time goes on the entire package of community improvements will prove to be a strong economic engine for small town success. The problems that many people have identified did not occur over night; likewise the solutions to those problems will not occur quickly. Most community failures result from multiple factors and extenuating circumstances.

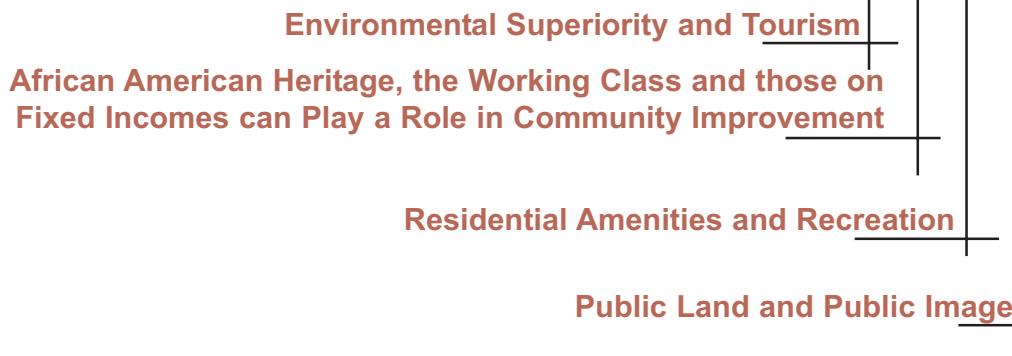
Therefore, there is rarely a "one size fits all" solution.



approach to solving problems. Each phase builds upon the last and will accelerate the complete improvement of the physical, economic and sociological issues confronting Woodbine.

LEGEND

EXISTING
PHASE I
PHASE II
PHASE III
PHASE IV



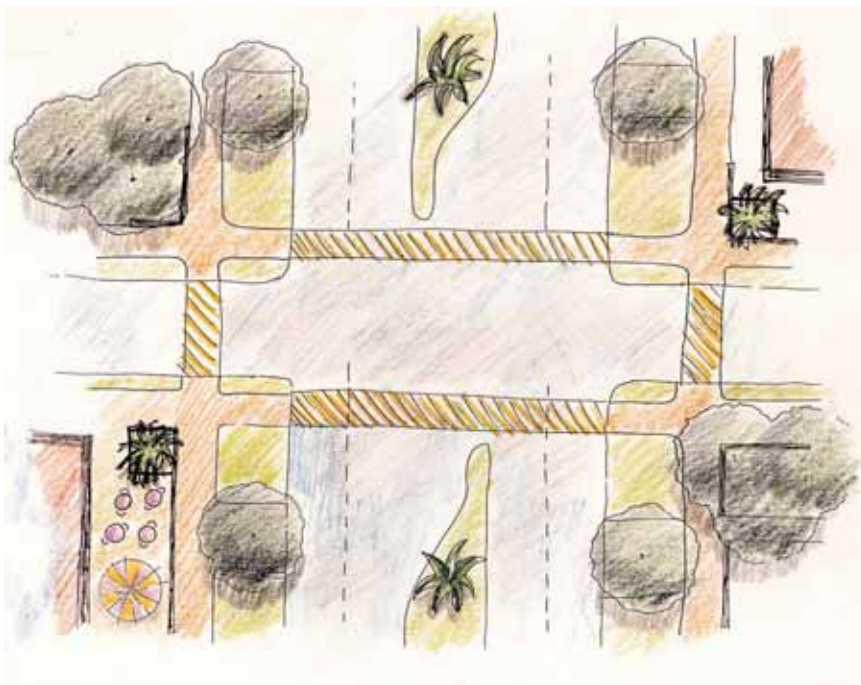
development plan



public land + public image

Phase one
Public Land and Public Image

Courthouse Zone
Improvements and US 17
Enhancements



- **Streetscape improvements** will unify and make the downtown feel more inviting; they include: street trees, median enhancement, on street parking and clear crosswalk definition.
- **More foot traffic** from city hall to courthouse should result in making Woodbine feel less linear and more like a traditional (grid pattern) downtown.
- **Directional signs** used at crosswalks will identify buildings and points of interest down each street to direct citizens to government offices.
- **Reduce** speed limit on US 17 to 35 mph for pedestrians.



4TH STREET

- EXTEND RIVER WALK AT THE END OF GEORGIA AVE.

- LINE STREET W/ PALMS

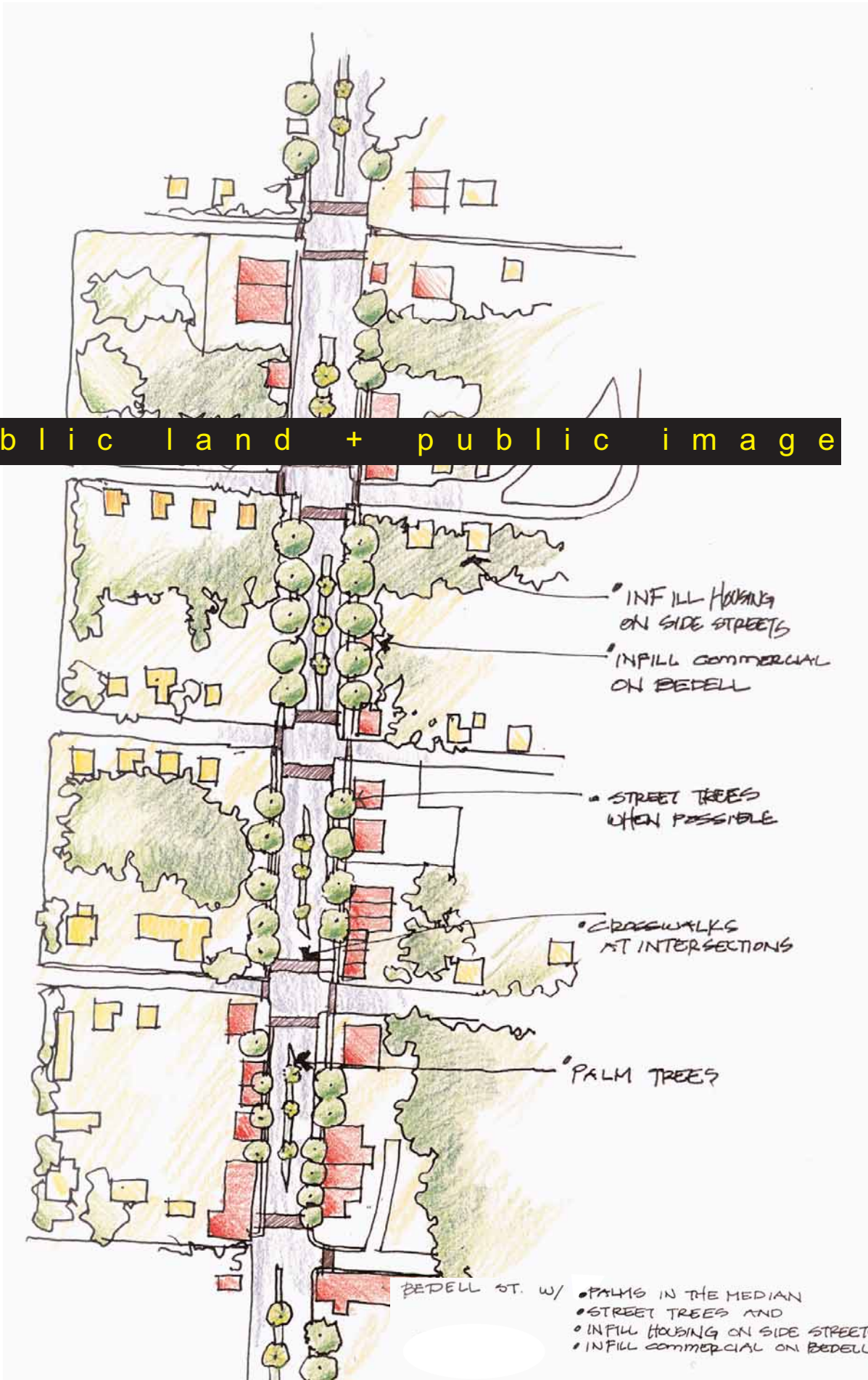
- WIDEN 4TH AT MOUTH TO COURT HOUSE

- OVER TIME IN FILL W/ GOV. BUILDINGS AROUND SQUARE TO REINFORCE THE EDGES AND FOCUS ATTN. TO THE OLD + NEW COURT HOUSES

North

*New County Health Department not shown.

public land + public image





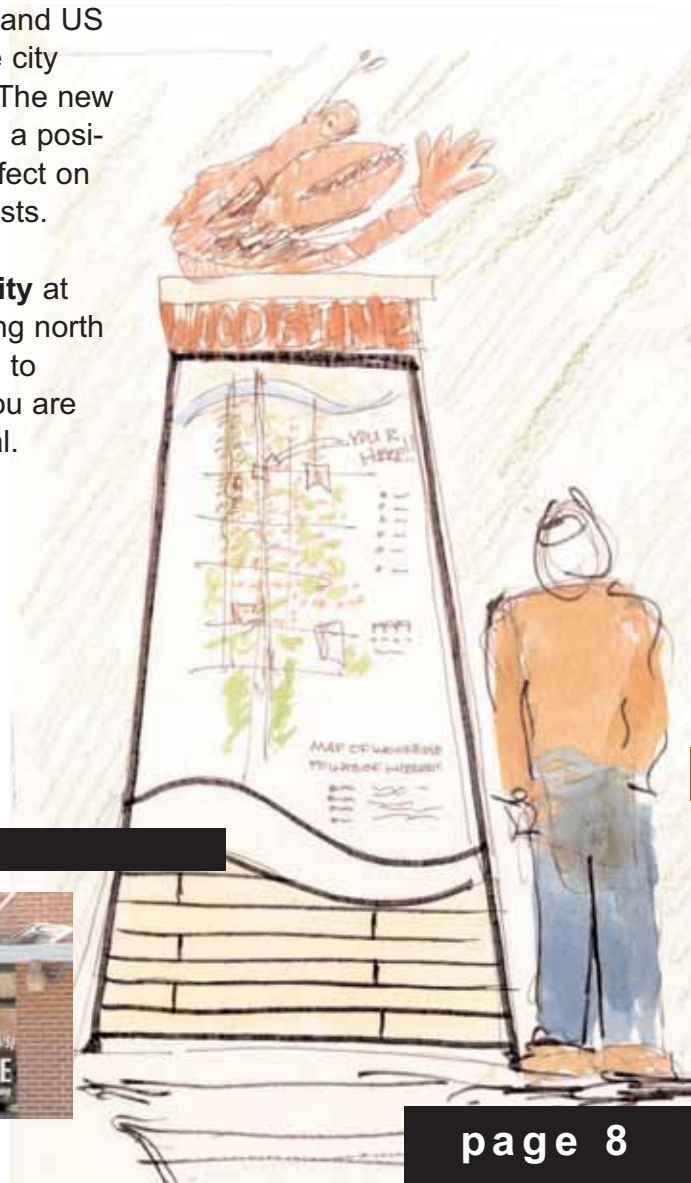
Tree line street from north/south to mark entrance to town.



- **Large scale improvements** and upgrading of intersection of 4th and US 17 will result in the city having a "center." The new centering will have a positive sociological effect on residents and tourists.



- Give **strong identity** at first median heading north and heading south to "announce" that you are somewhere special.



church pavillion



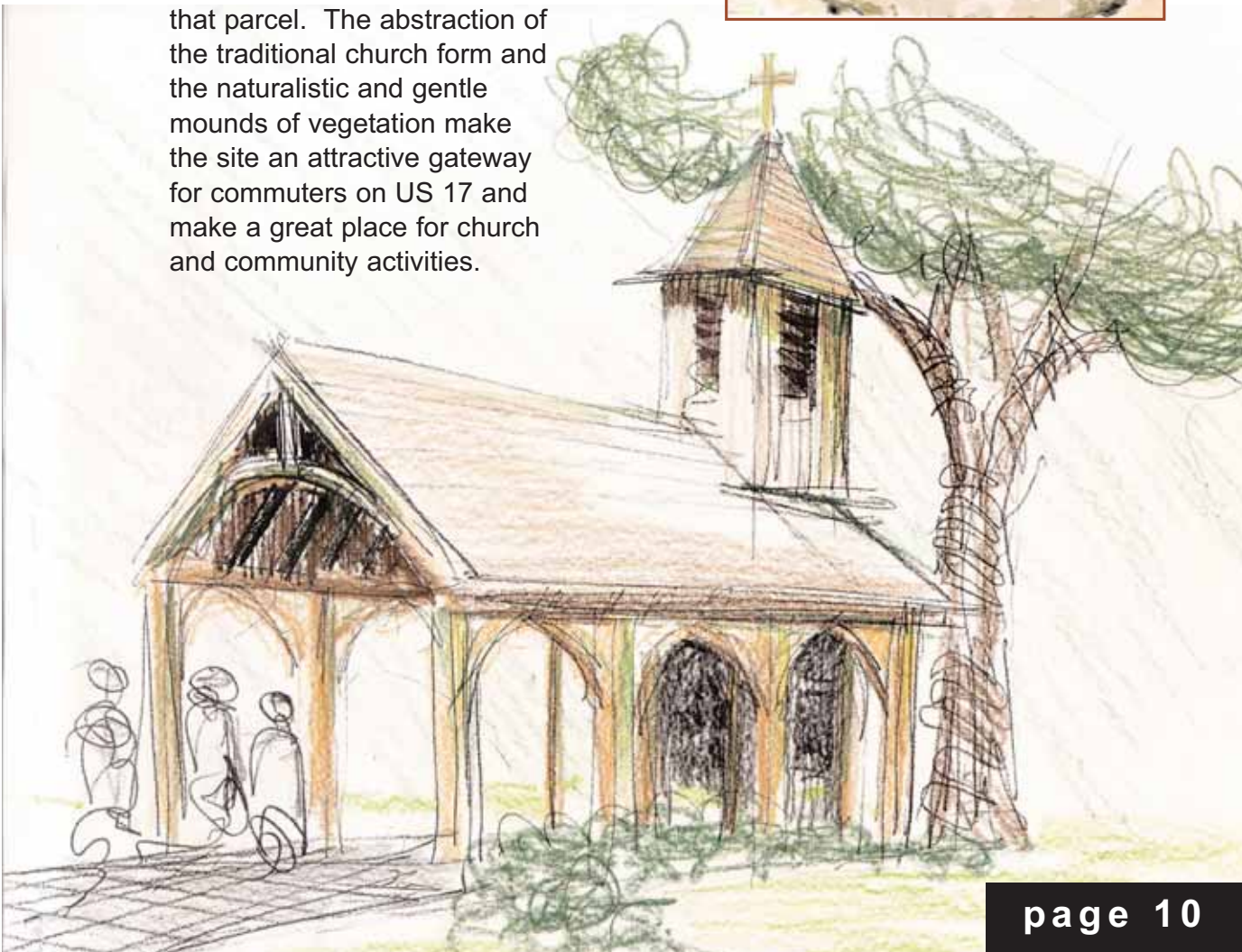
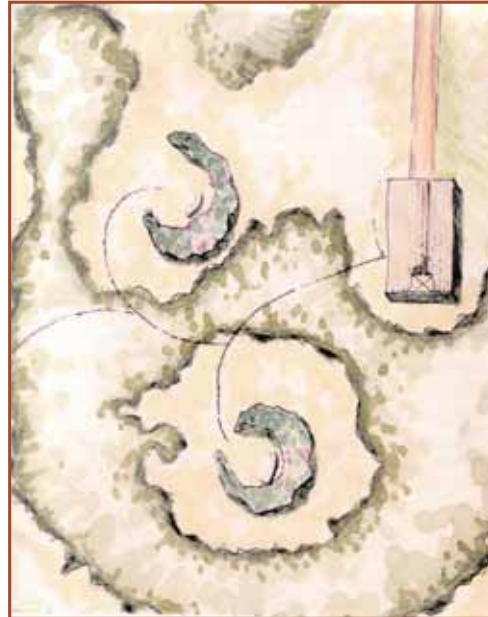
Woodbine 2001
7/10

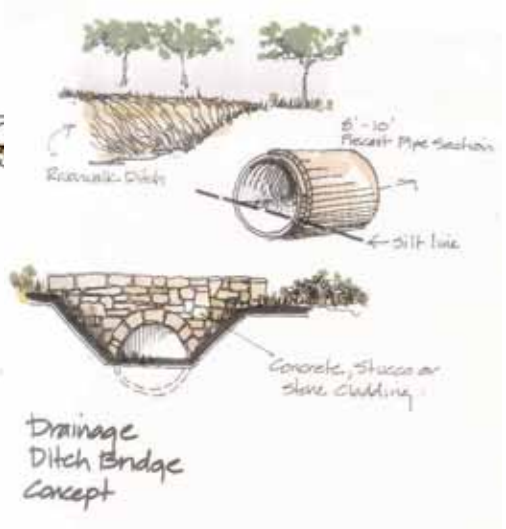
E. Kaurin

Church Pavillion

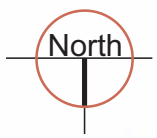
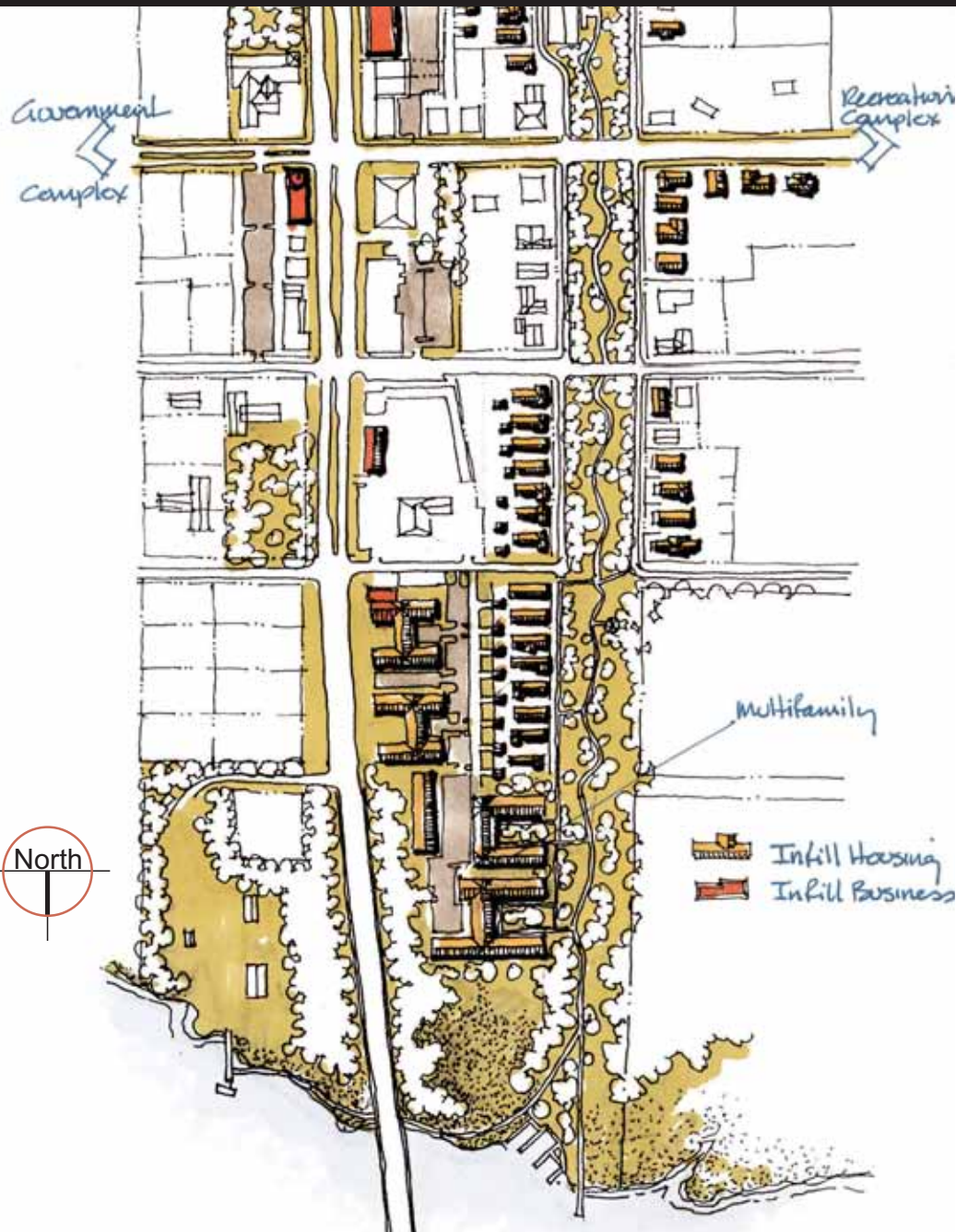
**How Institutions can
enhance the city and the
corridor.**

St. Marks Episcopal Church has been a supporter of Woodbine's traditions and spirit. As a demonstration project that will illustrate compatible design and community enhancement, the church congregation might consider a new pavillion and park next to their sanctuary. Fred Kristen worked with local residents during the charrette to develop a concept for improvement to that parcel. The abstraction of the traditional church form and the naturalistic and gentle mounds of vegetation make the site an attractive gateway for commuters on US 17 and make a great place for church and community activities.





residential amenities + recreation





Phase two

Residential Amenities and Recreation

Lettuce Packing Shed and Riverwalk

- The Riverwalk Park should be extended south to Liza Rudolph Road to tie city and county residents together.
- Addition of workforce and retiree infill housing along side streets, in rehabilitated historic buildings and new duplex larger buildings along the Riverwalk Park.
- Rehabilitate the old lettuce packing shed as a farmer's market or community youth center and connect to ball fields and other parks in town.

The city owns the railbed beyond 17th street city limits about 2 miles into county to Liza Rudolph Road where still exists a one room church that was the African American school. Children walked the tracks to attend the school early in the century until 1950's when Ralph Bunche School was opened as the first county-operated school for Black students. This walking/biking nature path could tie into the Ralph Bunche neighborhood and into the paved parkway planned now to 11th street. This could be used for expansion of historical interpretation theme already established on Riverwalk Park to represent the contributions of the African-American community. Also, this might tie into further biking path south toward Kingsland paralleling US 17.)





community improvements

THEATER

- Community Theater
- Burger "Joint" someday
- Youth Center
- Entertainment



METAL BUILDING FRAME
INSIDE OF HISTORIC BRICK
SHELL

December 2001



Phase three

African American Heritage, the Working Class and those on Fixed Incomes can Play a Role in Community Improvement

Ralph Bunche Center

- Rehabilitation of the building, bring up to code and make landscape improvements
- Plant street trees along the approach from 17 along 15th Street
- Play up historic significance of the high school and the community perhaps a small museum exhibit to illustrate the role of the school in Woodbine's development.
- Additional workforce housing from Habitat for Humanity should enhance the area and create a village like setting.
- The addition of community gardens in rear of center will make for a more active and vibrant area.

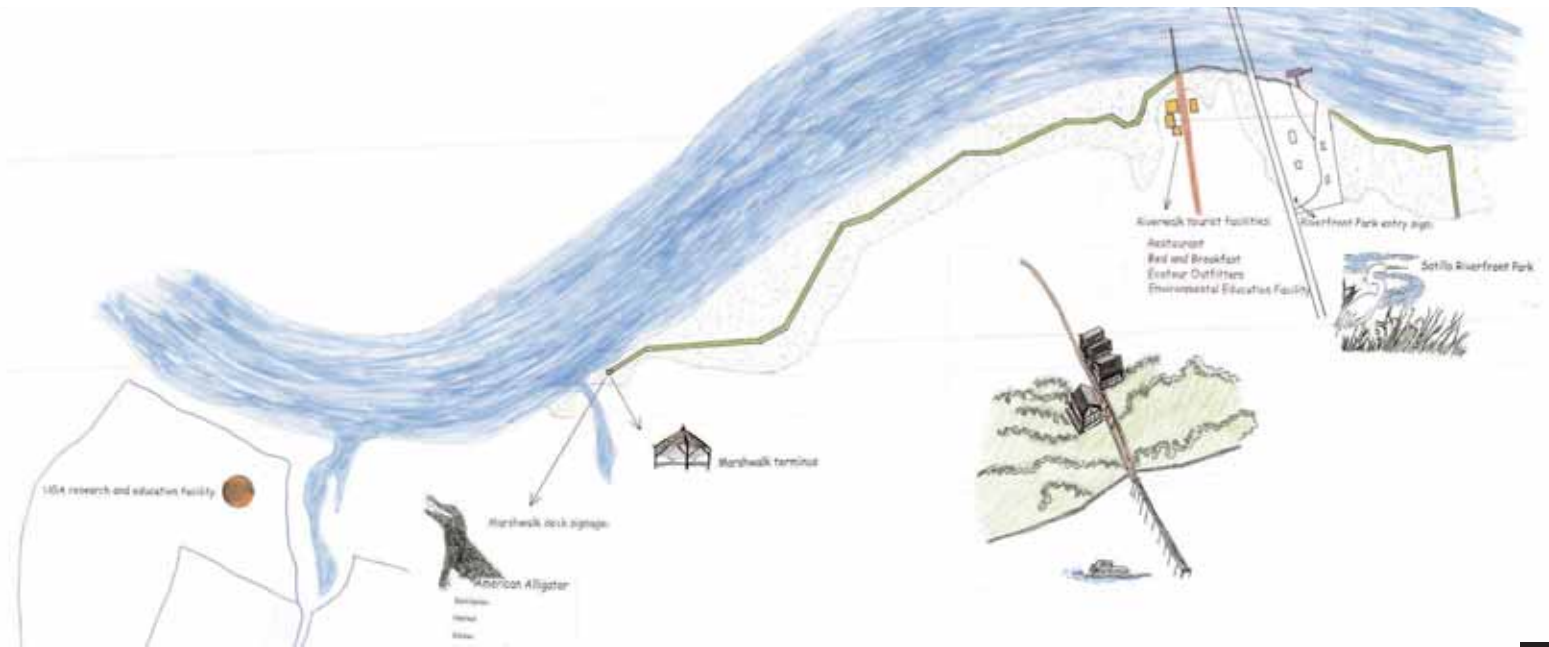
This could be a joint project for seniors and head start children.

This would serve as a model elderly-youth partnership program.

GEORGIA GIRL

- Hamburgers apparently legendary
- Drive-In Architecture not worth saving - demolition & clearance is recommended
- Purchase the Sign for future restoration ("historic") or re-use if another "burger stand" opens





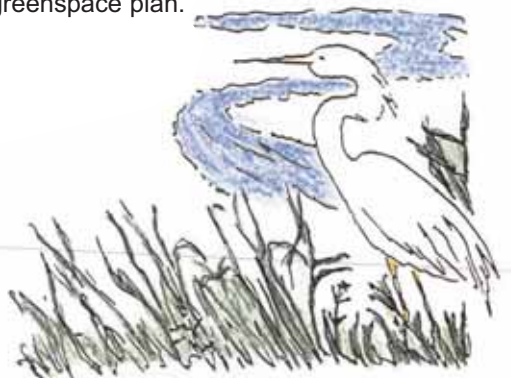
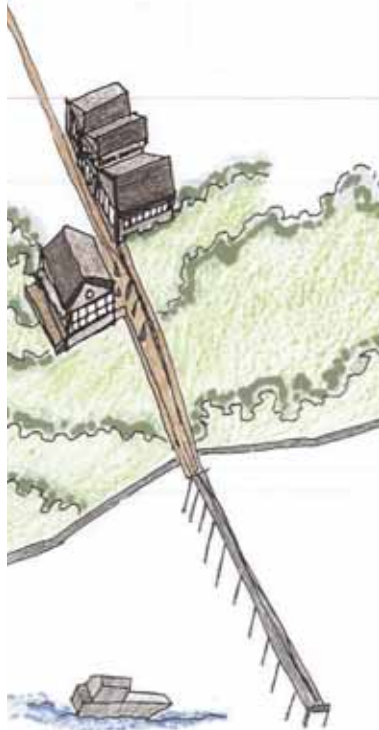
Environmental Superiority



Phase four Environmental Superiority and Tourism

Riverfront

- The extension of the boardwalk up the Satilla River, ending in an educational facility or kiosk to teach the importance of the clean Satilla's eco-system should begin the fourth phase. This would increase bird watching opportunities and make the Riverwalk more of an eco-tourist destination.
- The addition of a water transportation system would provide a way for tourists to move between new development on the other side of the river and for workers at Sea Island.

- Increasing the number of eco-tourists and new residents will provide a market for a small B&B, small restaurants and an outfitter overlooking the river.
- An opportunity will exist in the crawfish farm area's role as a wetland mitigation zone. UGA's Institute of Ecology can assist in interpreting the area for schools and tourists. Additionally, they will help educate the public on the benefits and options available as you begin to implement the City's greenspace plan.



-  Phase 1: Marshwalk expansion and signage
-  Phase 2: Dock extension and water taxi service
-  Phase 3: Riverwalk tourist facilities
-  Phase 4: UGA research and education facility

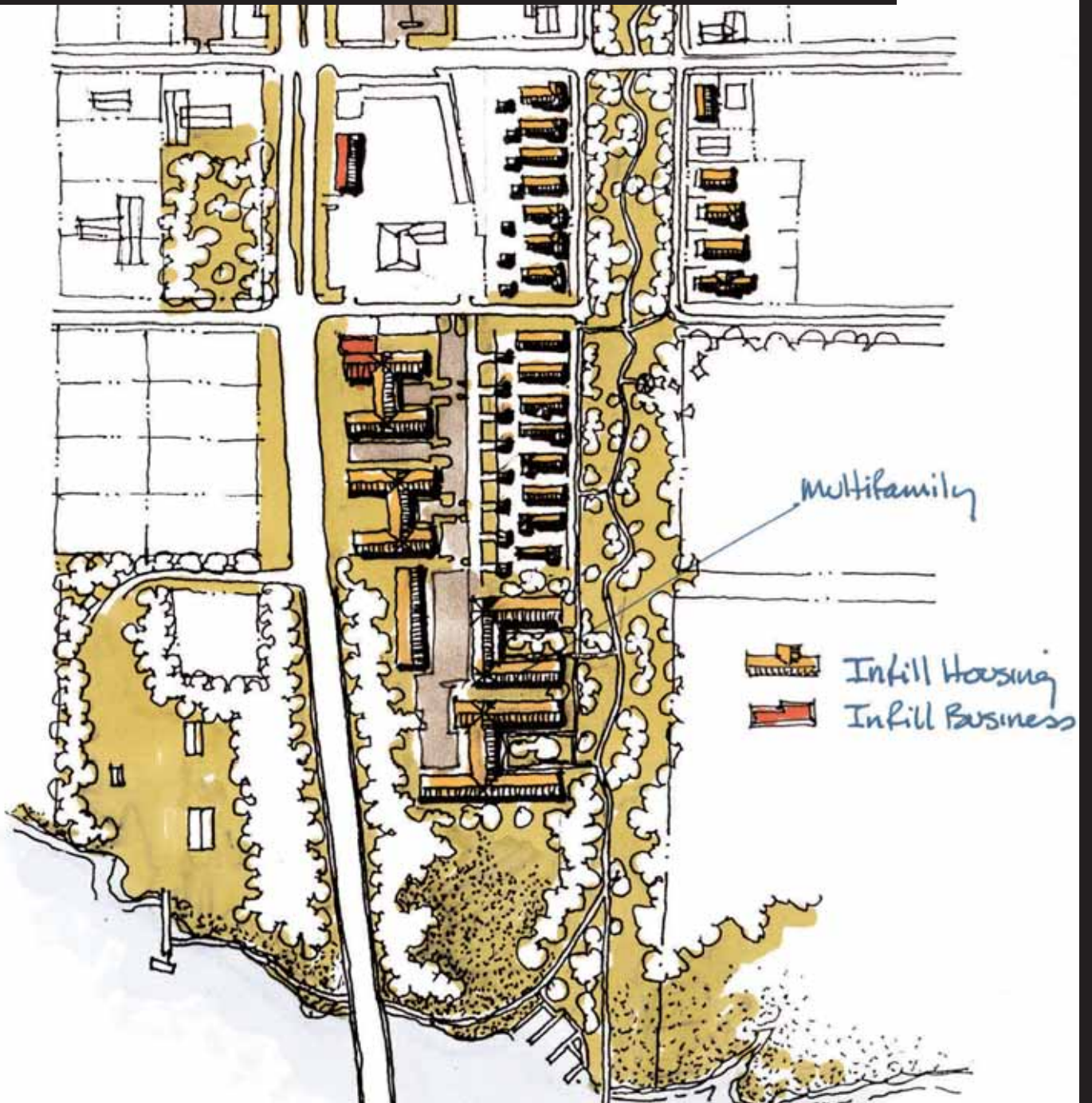
As the four phases of community projects proceed, a larger policy solution should be pursued. This new policy for excellence is based on the provision of adequate housing for lower and middle income residents. This process depends on the collaboration of the city and county governments, black, white and Hispanic residents, corporate players - especially the Sea Island Company, and regional planning agencies. Greatness and innovation will surely result when these groups come together to develop a new way of looking at Woodbine's future as a "support village" for the larger upper income development that will most likely occur along the Satilla River. The following strategy might describe the process.



Government
Complex

Recreation
Complex

Housing Strategy



Woodbine's Revitalization: A Housing Strategy

Creating a model community for the development of 21st century workforce housing.

The creation of a public-private (government-corporate) model for upgrading existing housing to meet the needs of all the families in Woodbine and to build new housing in creative forms should be a priority. The new approach would propel both the economic vitality and quality of life in Woodbine and increase the success of the corporate functions in and around the city.



In the report Workforce Housing in Georgia, produced by UGA's Housing and Demographics Research Center in September 2001, these issues were identified for rural Georgia:

1. There is limited housing choice in rural Georgia and a significant proportion of Georgia's rural workforce is dissatisfied with their housing situation.
2. Housing construction is virtually non-existent in nearly one-half of Georgia's counties. The near absence of housing construction activity contributes to both the lack of choice and to aging of existing stick-built housing stock.
3. Economic development in rural Georgia is suffering because of the inadequate supply and mix of workforce housing.
4. If workforce-housing needs are not addressed, the lack of housing choice combined with an aging housing stock and inadequate infrastructure will virtually preclude many counties from realizing their economic development potential.
5. Existing market incentives alone are insufficient to attract private sector housing builders and developers. In addition, existing publicly financed housing incentives are too limited to adequately address the State's workforce-housing needs.
6. Greater understanding and local leadership is needed at the local level to address workforce housing

Step 1

would create affordable housing units for Camden government workers to live in Woodbine, for workers at Sea Island, Kings Bay, Brunswick, Kingsland and St. Marys. This would serve the retail, service and blue-collar industrial sectors. Corporate support is necessary. Corporate entities would buy-in to the program because they seek to have adequate and attractive housing for their workers. Safe, affordable and efficient housing has statistically improved

the retention and loyalty of good workers. Employees with an improved quality of life performs better on their jobs. The housing solution would be varied: Single family detached bungalows on side streets, town houses and loft space along Highway 17 in infill buildings that enhance the look and repeat traditional downtown development patterns. Additionally creative infill, such as railroad workers cottages and American foursquare inspired duplexes along the Riverwalk parkland.

2 Steps for success


Step two

would add housing for persons on fixed incomes and provide reduced rates for artists. The introduction of artist retreat studios on long or short-term lease situations would add a new dimension to Woodbine's housing strategy and economic development. The approach would be to make Woodbine a Georgia version of the art communities in Fairhope, Alabama, Taos, New Mexico, Asheville and other eastern North Carolina towns or the tri-city area of Tennessee. Arts festivals and artist-in-residence programs in cooperation with art schools in the state would enhance the community's new role as an artist's enclave.

A typical scenario in this creative approach to housing might look like this:

The Sea Island Corporation could invest in Woodbine in a similar way that Disney invested in central Florida by creating Celebration. However this time the investment would be a more socially responsible effort by addressing workforce housing issues rather than upper income housing and services. Additionally, this experiment would not have to start from scratch. It can build upon the cultural patterns already present in Woodbine. It would be an ideal community within a very real city. 75% of the first housing units might be targeted at Sea Island employees. An innovative system of water taxis would take workers to their job sites. The taxis could leave on a regular schedule from the Woodbine boat launch/Riverwalk area. In addition to providing transportation for workers, the taxi system could also be used as part of Woodbine's eco-tourism development program.





*The Woodbine story
is written along the
river, the highway
and on the land.*

Its people are the resource that ties it all together. The charrette team found that a dynamic combination of historic resources, dedicated citizens, corporate mentorship, enlightened city officials and a strong sense of belonging to the land will surely lead to successful revitalization efforts. The careful evaluation of our visions for what could happen in Woodbine, as seen through the drawings and sketches, will move you closer to making the right choices for community improvement.

housing strategies

The University of Georgia's School of Environmental Design has been using the charrette process to help communities for many decades. Through interaction between our vigorous, fresh and highly capable students, the spirit of place that exudes from Georgia towns and the gentle guidance and experience from committed faculty, we have been able to produce a vision for communities. The process has many proponents and has gained special favor in a new era of contemporary town planning, new urbanism, neo-traditionalism and just plain, hometown, good old fashioned concern for where you live.

The charrette is one of the tools communities use to improve their fate. When accidental failure is the norm, many places have discovered that the charrette is a way to plan for success. Many organizations now have guides for planning charrettes for everything, from ecological restoration to neighborhood revitalization. It is easy to see that the charrette is applicable to corridor planning. In fact, it may be one of the most effective tools for making roadways more attractive and more responsive to the needs of the cities and counties they go through.

US 17 and the special places it connects is a perfect fit for charrette planning. The three charrettes that were conducted in February 2002 in Woodbine, Brunswick and Richmond Hill, Georgia and the charrette that was conducted in the previous year in Darien prove that point. The following instructions for conducting charrettes, determining community needs and finding the right team should help when it is time for other communities to host their own charrette.

The Public Service and Outreach Office, the staff and students of the School of Environmental Design and the Georgia Alliance for Quality Growth stand committed to helping US 17 become the pipeline of success it once was, without losing the character that makes it a Drive through Georgia's Past.

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