

Historical & Infill Development

Delaware by Design

Mobile Workshop Series

Brought to you by the Delaware Chapter of the American Planning Association, the Delaware State Housing Authority, and the Delaware Office of State Planning Coordination

Housing Demand Changes

- By 2025, US population will exceed 250 million people, roughly 67 million more than in 2000 (US Census).
- According to Arthur C. Nelson, *presidential professor and director of metropolitan research at the University of Utah in Salt Lake City*
 - There will be a surplus of between 3 million and 22 million homes on large lots -- built on one-sixth of an acre or more -- by 2025.
 - by 2025, the demand for attached and small-lot housing will exceed the current supply by 35 million units (71 percent), while the demand for large-lot housing will actually fall short of the current supply.
 - Most homebuyers will demand housing with some aspect of Smart Growth, e.g., walkable, near work, ...

Housing Demand Influences

- As baby boomers become empty nesters and retirees, they are drawn to compact, walkable neighborhoods. So are single adults and married couples without children.
- In 2025, 73% of households will be without children, **substantially** higher than 52% of households without children in 1960.
- Between 2000 and 2025, roughly 2 million people will turn 65 compared to 500,000 in 2005 (Nelson, 2006).
- Higher energy costs.

Good Design

- America's best communities share good design features. These may include:
 - Discernible center
 - Noticeable boundaries
 - Parks & open space
 - Variety of housing types
 - Public & commercial activities close by
 - Connected street grid
 - Reduced building set backs
 - Street parking over large parking lots
 - Community buildings
 - Public transportation
 - Quality architecture
 - Strong sense of community among residents

Benefits of Good Design

- **Economic** – Towns with higher density employment & residential centers attract more young educated workers because of nearby amenities.
- **Environmental** – Planned, compact growth, uses 20 to 45 percent less land than overspill development (Burchell, 1995).
- **Physiological** – Research showed over 50% of Americans would walk and bike more than driving if given the opportunity (Smart Growth, 2003).
- **Infrastructure** – Well-designed, with higher densities show a 47% decrease in infrastructure costs.

Historical Development

- Town planning as a field of study has been around for about 100 years.
- But the early cities of Mesopotamia and Egypt were all planned and laid out on a grid with major boulevards and residential alleys.
- Early Roman cities **had** a grid pattern with high density residential housing.
- Even many early American cities were planned when it came to their design. Examples include:
 - New Haven, CN in 1638, the 1st planned city
 - Annapolis, MD
 - **Washington D.C.**
 - Savannah, GA

Infill Development

- Infill development typically occurs in a built up area, at a site that maybe blighted or a site that could add to the sense of community.
- Infill is often used as a growth management or smart growth practice.
- Positives: 1) Reduces the cost of infrastructure due to location, and 2) Does not require the development of open space.
- Infill projects must be careful that their design matches the surrounding environment.

Things to Consider

- Could you live here – why or why not?
- What do you like or dislike about places we visit?
- What improvements could be made?

Christina Care - Smyrna

- Smyrna was first established in 1716, known as Duck Creek. Approximately 6000 residents.
- Feb. 2005 – Officials announced the construction of a 100,000 sq ft medical arts pavilion, in an effort to revitalize downtown.
- \$20 million infill project located on Main Street, across from the Smyrna Opera House.
- Features a café and pharmacy located inside.



Christiana Care – Smyrna Data Sheet

- **Uses:** Medical Office Complex (medical mall concept)
- **Previous use:** get from Smyrna, was a former industrial / manufacturing site as I recall
- **Site Area:** get from Smyrna, contact Janet Vinc at 653-3486
- **Building Size:** get from Smyrna
- **Parking Spaces:** get from Smyrna

Washington House Condos

- As a local inn and restaurant, Washington House opened in 1838.
- In 1972, it was reopened as the Stone Balloon Tavern which featured artists like Bruce Springsteen & Metallica. Closed in Dec 2005.
- Proposal to City Council for infill development of 85 condos. Bitter battle with Council. Ultimately, approved for 54 units.



Washington House Condos Data Sheet

- **Use:** Residential & Commercial
- **Previous Use:** Commercial-Stone Balloon & Parking lot
- **Total Number of Units:** 54 units
- **Total Acres:**
- **Gross Density:**
- **Net Density:**
- **Parking Spaces:**

Wawaset Park

- Located in western Wilmington. Once was horse track and later a fair grounds and auto track.
- DuPont Co. bought the property in 1917. Developed a range of housing types to meet the needs of it's growing corporate staff.
- Wawaset's design was influenced by Fredrick Law Olmsted and features a variety of architectural styles.



Wawaset Park Data Sheet

- **Use:** Residential
- **Previous Use:** State Fair Grounds; Race Track
- **Total Number of Units:**
- **Total Acres:**
- **Gross Density:**
- **Net Density:**
- **Percent Open Space:**

Market Street, Wilmington

- Wilmington's Central Business District originally was lower Market Street.
- 2007 – The Lower Market Street Design District (LOMA) was formed. Collection of new developers & existing businesses to redevelop lower Market Street.
- Purpose: To connect creativity and commerce and actively seek creative retail and people to live and work in the same place.



Market Street, Wilmington Data Sheet

- **Use:** Residential
- **Previous Use:** Vacant agricultural
- **Total Number of Units:**
- **Total Acres:**
- **Gross Density:**
- **Net Density:**

Questions or Comments

- Did this tour make any difference in your thinking about how to integrate new development into existing communities? If yes, how? If not, why not?
- Do you think we need to encourage the types of housing/communities you saw today, if so, how can we do this?
- Would you recommend this tour to others?