

District I Community Meeting  
5/30/06  
McDonald Hughes Center

1. Call to Order and purpose of meeting – Councilman Howard stated that this meeting was to express the reason behind the city council’s effort to make the Central West school available for commercial property. Harrison Taylor got the city and the BOE to sign a legal document in 2004 to rebuild not remodel Westlawn at this site and now the city has released the BOE from this agreement to rebuild Westlawn at another site if they wish.
2. Bill Snowden went through a Power Point presentation of why this site is so important to the development of West Tuscaloosa amidst the “Perfect Storm” of development in Tuscaloosa at this time. This “Perfect Storm” is comprised of 5 strategies of growth in west TCL:
  - A) Northern TCL - \$150 Million downtown area plus \$50 million to Riverwalk area.
  - B) Western TCL – Capitol park to west end park of Riverwalk and exit 68 business corridor on Malasham parkway
  - C) Eastern TCL - \$125 million midtown, 8000 new UA students
  - D) Southern TCL – Hope 6 revitalization of McKenzie Ct housing project, \$35 million
  - E) The city is considering commercial/residential incentives. BS thinks that people would move back if they had property available at the right price.The total new investment in TCL in the next few years is ~ \$300 million in a 3-4 mile radius.

Mr. Jimmy Lawson (radio host) was introduced as the facilitator for the Q&A session. He stated that this area will improve along with the new fire station that will be put in at the intersection of Greensboro and 15<sup>th</sup> St which is just up the road. He stated that west TCL has been “systematically ignored for the last 30-35 years”.

Q: Are funds available for residential improvements?  
A: Hope 6 funds, block grant developments (BS)

Q: Will there be infrastructure for stores and malls if placed here?  
A: BH said lets get the property available for development first then we can talk and see what we want

Q: What will happen to Westlawn site? Educational facilities combine here for a wholesome atmosphere. We do not want a mall (applause) How about making old Westlawn an alternative school? We have a list of ideas for a mall in a different place on the west side.

Q: Will there be an effort to insure minority business owners in business corridor?

A: Developer will determine along with market place what goes in at location.

Q: You've said west TCL has lost 2,000 in population. We need housing like apt complexes but the city is just tearing down buildings all the time.

Q: What about the land near Palmore Park for development?

A: City can't make people purchase and build it can only help make it available. HT the city is looking into divesting properties they own at this time.

Q: Is a mall better than a school for growth?

A: BS this is 26 acres of property with visibility only .35 miles from the interstate.

Q: Better schools, what about better teachers?

HT we need bank, grocery store, restaurant, PO. He was up in Memphis TN recruiting 5 star hotel to TCL and developers said this and property by Stillman are best pieces of property available on west side.

Westlawn is off beaten track it will get boarded up and used by drug dealers.

Q: We have business now on Westside. What's in it for black community? Developer will benefit but \$ needs to go back into the black community which is hurting and in pain at this time.

A: HT we can have both. Lets shop in our own neighborhood. The mall would be a beacon of light. (You) don't want it but we need it. Tax \$ for community. When CVS was built Rite Aid followed same with Shell and Exxon, Family Dollar and Dollar General. 22,000 people live in west TCL. First time buyer plan can't find homes in West TCL.

Q: I want the school to stay for my children and grandchildren to attend.

Q: If the Westside is economically strong, why don't businesses come here already? Stop selling our souls for a dollar!

Q: Why don't you put a mall in Woodland Forest?

Q: How about a plan that benefits us both educationally and commercially?

Q: Is there a worry that Woodland Forest is becoming too black?

A: BH Woodland Forest wants a shopping center, let's get one first.

Reverend James said we can't please everyone, lets weave joy together into the fabric of our community. If we want to be a community, let's find out what's best for the community.

Q: Where will Central Elementary go? We will have to relocate and our children have already been divided with the western cluster restructuring of K-2 and 3-5 elementary schools.

Q: Malasham parkway was too wet for a school now its too good for a mall?