

The Town of Erwin: CPNI Workshop Follow Up Report

Introduction

In November 2017 the Construction Professionals Network Institute and NCGrowth conducted a two-day workshop in the Town of Erwin, NC. The goal of the workshop was to discuss the revitalization of town assets as well as strategies to promote economic growth and development. Following the workshop, CPNI and NCGrowth wrote a report summarizing the workshop events, findings, and their recommendations for Erwin to achieve its goals. The sections below summarize the 2017 workshop discussions and recommendations, and provide 2022 updates.

Participants:

2017

- Patsy M. Carson, Mayor of Erwin
- Snow Bowden, Town Manager
- Billy Turnage, Town Commissioner
- Gordon Springle, Harnett County Board of Commissioners Chairman
- Nick Dula, Harnett County Economic Developer
- Bill Morris, Harnett County School Board Chairman, Town of Erwin Building Inspector/Code Enforcement Officer
- Carla Blackmon, Erwin Area Chamber of Commerce Administrator
- Shaun Savarese, The Daily Record
- John Wayne Hudson, Fathom Realty
- David Stevens & Ava Westbury, Fidelity Bank
- Bill Schuch, Planning Board Member
- Alan West, Planning Board Member
- Pat Cameron, Planning Board Member
- Michael Jackson, Business owner
- April Westbury
- Preston Blum
- Doug Burns, CPNI, KSQ design – Team Leader
- Mike Bedell, CPNI, Barnhill Construction
- Anne Goodson, CPNI, Barringer Construction
- Emily Hinton, CPNI, Lindsey Architects

- Phil Jones, CPNI, University of NC – Charlotte
- Avery Monroe, CPNI, RMF Engineering, Inc.
- Jim Schenck, CPNI, Conner Gwyn Schenck PLLC
- Carolyn Fryberger, NCGrowth
- Martine Aurelien, NCGrowth

2022

- Snow Bowden, Town Manager
- Michael Jackson, Business owner
- Rebecca Kelly, Planning Board Member (alternate)
- Samantha Wullenwaber, Director of Local Government Services Mid-Carolina Regional Council of Governments
- Teddy Warner, Mid-Carolina COG
- Pat Cameron
- Christian Lockamy, Harnett County Economic Development
- Bruce Naegelen, NC Department of Commerce
- Sheveil Harmon, Erwin Area Chamber of Commerce Administrator
- Doug Burns, CPNI, NCARB – Team Leader
- Avery Monroe, CPNI, RMF Engineering, Inc.
- Jim Schenck, CPNI, Conner Gwyn Schenck PLLC
- Jessica Wilkinson, NCGrowth

Update on assets:

Assets Discussed During 2017 Workshop	2022 Updates
Historic Erwin Mill	A NY developer/firm will close on property in November 2022. Plans are not yet public.
Historic Mill Housing	Many historic mill homes have been fixed up and property values have increased. In 2017, home values were around \$50,00; now many are selling for \$140-\$150,000.
Erwin Elementary School	Historic Erwin Elementary school was in disrepair and torn down.

	The new school has opened and is a substantial and beautiful asset for the town and county!
Gentry Elementary	Adaptive reuse of the old school is in progress. Options discussed for use are sports/performing arts/recreation.
Good Hope Hospital	Since 2017 the hospital has been renovated and added to, and is now up and running.
Recreational Assets	The town still owns minimal land along the river.
US Highway 421 Transportation Corridor	County goals include making this a “medicine-education corridor.” Harnett County has adopted an overlay district for HWY 421. The Town has not yet adopted an overlay district.

Update on recommendations:

2017 Recommendations	2022 Updates
Create a comprehensive master plan	Current 2014 land use plan is outdated and needs to be updated. The Town has contracted to create a comprehensive plan in late 2022. And plans to update the UDO in 2023.
Historical designation for the original mill and mill village	No changes. Current owners of the mill have not gone through this process.
Designation of entire mill property as an overlay district for mixed-use	No changes.
421 transportation corridor	Will be featured in upcoming comprehensive land use plan.
Engage in public-private partnership with Campbell University and Central Carolina Community College	No changes.
Leverage the local non-profit Harnett Community Group	No changes.
Conduct analysis of and site visits to former mill and facilities	No changes. As developer is interested in purchasing the mill property, it may be a good time for the Town to do a site analysis, renderings, and historic review of the Mill. This way the Town can have its own research to inform the developer’s plans. The Town could also engage the public via surveys or meetings to better understand how residents envision the future of the Mill.

Update on next steps:

2017 Next Steps	2022 Updates
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Create task force	No changes.
Focus on projects that are manageable	Many projects are underway, and described in tables above!
Continue partnership with CPNI/NCGrowth	Opportunities to work together on many projects in future like business starter packet, feasibility analysis, economic impact analysis, community engagement.
Lobby and advocate for new school building	Done! The new school has opened.

Other updates from town:

1. Town plans to apply for Rural Transformation Grant to turn depot into town square.
2. Town plans to update the town website and use it as a way to showcase/share local businesses.
3. Town has recently partnered with the Community Economic Recovery and Resiliency Initiative (CERRI) to examine the town's resiliency. The report has recently been completed.
4. Town plans to switch Town Hall signs to LED.
5. Various infill projects are planned throughout the Town
6. Town working to create more committees.
7. Current mill property owners have applied with DEQ for brownfield remediation, with support from the Town. Have spent over \$3million doing environmental cleanup.
8. Town received a Part F Grant to improve a local park-- put lights in multiple fields, \$679,000 of improvements, new splash pad. Will also be resurfacing the entire parking lot soon and installing a second entrance/exist to the Al Woodall Park.
9. The Town has hired a full time position to handle code enforcement.
10. Town is working on a business starter packet that will be on the website in early 2023.

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1. Competing with Lillington and Dunn for economic development opportunities
2. Perception of excessive, contradictory, political UDO regulations
3. No cohesive vision for mill
4. Limited community engagement so far/ unclear vision from community
5. More connectivity desired via sidewalks throughout the town

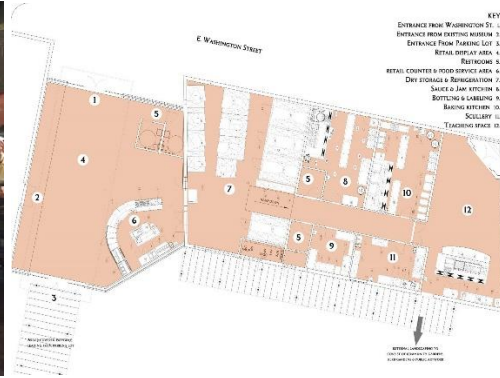
1. **Conduct an architectural survey of the old mill.** This would allow the Town to understand which components of the Mill would be considered historic, and to work with potential developers on designs and plans.
2. **Conduct an asset inventory** as a start to economic development planning to identify town/regional assets and gaps.
3. **Create a visual map showing population growth over time** to illustrate past and future growth, and illustrate need for planning.
4. **Survey residents** to better understand community needs and desires with regard to new development and infill opportunities. Discussions may include visualizing community desires like nightlife, restaurants, coffee and soda shops, public and private education facilities, and business incubators.
5. **With community input, discuss various options for creating a town overlay district and amending zoning uses.**
6. **Create a rendering, feasibility study, and/or economic impact analysis of developing the mill or depot** into something that would fulfill community need (e.g. feasibility study of turning old depot into community center).

7. **Subsidize landscape/beautification goals** via grants/volunteers to lessen burden on local businesses.
8. **Create a committee with the goal of increasing capacity among local planning leaders.** Do this in conjunction with economic development and regional planning organizations.
9. **In partnership with surrounding municipalities, conduct a workshop for information exchange** about growth, regionalism, impact on surrounding communities.
10. **Partner with resource organizations:**
 - a. COG: for board training, code enforcement, planning needs
 - b. UNC-SOG for advice and consult
 - c. DFI for real estate / development prep
 - d. NCGrowth for economic development research and technical assistance
 - e. Lead for NC for capacity boost
 - f. Americorps for capacity boost
11. **Invite Campbell University to planning commission meeting** to discuss their plans for capital improvement/education delivery and how Erwin can play into medical education corridor that is both beneficial for university and town.
12. **Develop a strategy to work with the proposed buyer of the Mill.** The new mill owner can benefit from and should consider undertaking:
 - a. Facility Condition Assessment (this may already have been undertaken to assure “code compliance”)
 - b. Investigate the use of Historic Federal and State Tax Credits, LIHTCs
 - c. Investigate Sect. of the Interior Study Grants as well as other Study Grant Opportunities
 - d. Conduct a Market Assessment-Evaluate Mixed-Use Opportunities
 - e. Overlay District focusing on enhanced Developer Incentives
 - f. Develop “Concept” Master Plan and Concept Images both interior and exterior as part of any rezoning initiative.

Case studies

Colleton County, SC Museum and Commercial Kitchen Space





Run by Colleton County, the Colleton Kitchen’s mission is to provide physical kitchen space, infrastructure, equipment, and training opportunities to support, incubate, and educate present and future local food business entrepreneurs.

Housed in the same building as the Colleton County Museum, a local café, and retail space, the Colleton County Kitchen is an example of local government supporting the entrepreneurial ecosystem while fulfilling community desires for restaurants, cafes, history, and gather spaces.

The Colleton Kitchen includes a sauce and jam kitchen, a labeling machine, a commercial refrigerator, a food processor, multiple professional ovens, stand mixers, exhaust fans, and more for food industry entrepreneurs to use.

Clients include caterers, food trucks, bakers, and more. Some drive as far as 60 miles to use the facility.

Alpha Mill Complex



The Alpha Mill Complex, located in Uptown Charlotte, was a 1900s cotton mill. This complex is made up of three historic buildings and seven new construction apartment buildings that houses different apartments including lofts, flats, and efficiencies.

217 North Graham Street





217 North Graham Street, formerly Camden Cotton Mills, has been rehabilitated into a work space for a local law firm, Sonoma Law. The design of the building incorporates contemporary design while accentuating and celebrating its history.

Atherton Lofts





The Atherton Lofts building was one of the first efforts to reclaim the historic industrial Southend district of Charlotte.

Resource List

<u>Name</u>	<u>Contact</u>	<u>Additional Information</u>
<u>Professional Organizations</u>		
Urban Land Institute	https://uli.org/	
American Institute of Architects	https://www.aia.org/	
American Society of Landscape Architects	https://www.asla.org/	
American Planning Association	https://www.planning.org/	
American Institute of Certified Planners	https://www.planning.org/aicp/	
American Society of Civil Engineers	https://www.asce.org/	
American Council of Engineering Companies of North Carolina	https://www.acecnc.org/	

Name	Contact	Additional Information
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<u>Non-Profit, State, and University Organizations</u>		
North Carolina State Historic Preservation Office	http://www.hpo.ncdcr.gov/	
League of Historic American Theatres	www.lhat.org	
UNCG Center for Community-Engaged Design	https://iarc.uncg.edu/cc-ed/nc-main-street/	
Project for Public Spaces	https://www.pps.org/	A non-profit organization dedicated to helping people create and sustain public spaces that build strong communities. They have extensive web resources as well as examples of successful placemaking projects that can serve as inspiration.
Development Finance Initiative	https://dfi.sog.unc.edu/	DFI partners with local governments to attract private investment for transformative projects by providing specialized finance and development expertise. They are a good organization to engage in transforming sites that are owned by the city. They charge a fee for service and offer pro-bono assistance through classes.
N.C. State University College of Design	Meg Calkins, FASLA mecalkin@ncsu.edu , 919-515-8342	Professor and Head of the Department of Landscape Architecture
UNCC College of Arts & Architecture	Deborah Ryan, ASLA deryan@uncc.edu , 704-687-0123	Professor of Architecture and Urban Design, Director of the Master of Urban Design Program

Name	Contact	Additional Comments
Potential Funding Sources		

Parks and Recreation Trust Fund (PARTF) Grants	https://www.ncparks.gov/more-about-us/parks-recreation-trust-fund/parks-and-recreation-trust-fund	<p>-Funding Cycle: Applications due in May, granted in August</p> <p>-Award Amount: Maximum \$500,000, the applicant must match 50% of the total cost of the project</p> <p>-Project Types Funded: Local governments can apply to acquire land for parks and build recreational facilities for use by the public.</p>
Resourceful Communities	https://www.conservationfund.org/our-work/resourceful-communities/our-approach	<p>Creating New Economies Fund (CNEF) provides small grants for innovative triple bottom line projects. Grants average \$8,000-\$12,000, with a maximum award of \$15,000. Funding has supported a variety of projects, including: eco-tourism, sustainable agriculture, youth leadership development, alternative energy, and more.</p>
EPA Grants for Recreation Economy for Rural Communities	https://www.epa.gov/smartgrowth/recreation-economy-rural-communities	<p>Assistance program to help rural communities revitalize Main Streets through outdoor recreation</p>
American Trails Resource Directory	https://www.americantrails.org/resource-library/directory	<p>Information and resources on all aspects of trail development, education, and outreach</p>
Rural Development Assistance Grant	https://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services	<p>Program assistance is provided in many ways, including direct or guaranteed loans, grants, technical assistance, research, and educational materials.</p>
Department of Transportation (DoT) Planning Grant Initiative	https://connect.ncdot.gov/municipalities/PlanningGrants/Pages/Planning-Grant-Initiative.aspx	<p>Funding Cycle: Call for Proposals in August; Deadline in November; Decisions in February</p> <p>Project Types: Annual matching grant program to encourage municipalities to develop comprehensive bicycle plans and pedestrian plans.</p>

Transportation Alternatives (T.A.) Funds	https://trade.railstotrails.org/index ; State DoT TA Coordinator, Johanna I. Cockburn (919) 707-2601; jicockburn@ncdot.gov	Federal government funds for projects that expand travel choice, strengthen the local economy, improve the quality of life, and protect the environment. Eligible projects include pedestrian and bicycle facilities, safe routes for non-drivers, and historic preservation.
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Name	Contact	Additional Comments
Community Projects		
Z. Smith Reynolds (ZSR) Community Progress Fund	https://www.zsr.org/community-progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Funding Cycle: Letters of Intent accepted starting Oct. 1; Selected proposals receive an invitation to submit a full application in February; Grant decisions made in May - Award Amount: \$20,000 - \$30,000 per year for one or two years -Project Types: Short-term funding for projects with community momentum; primarily for organizations serving people of color that are in areas of N.C. with limited philanthropic resources
Historic Preservation Fund Grants	https://www.nps.gov/preservation-grants/index.html	Provides information on competitive grants related to historic preservation

Name	Contact	Additional Comments
Economic Development		
NC Department of Commerce – Downtown Development and Site Development funds – Main Street Solutions Fund	https://www.nccommerce.com/grants-incentives/downtown-development-funds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Funding Cycle: Announced in May -Award Amount: Up to \$200,000 -Project Types: Economic development planning assistance to designated micropolitan in Tier 2 and 3 counties to activate North Carolina Main Street communities; retaining and

		creating jobs in association with small business
Main Street Solutions Fund	<p>Dan Becker, Main Street Grants Administrator, dan.becker@nccommerce.com, 919-814-4668</p>	<p>-Economic development planning assistance available for Main Street Communities and micropolitans located in Tier 2 and 3 counties</p> <p>-Funding Cycle: Announced in May</p> <p>-Program goals are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide direct financial benefits to small businesses. Spur local investment in association with small business. Retain and create jobs in association with small business. <p>-Awards up to \$200,000 to local government</p>
Economic Development Assistance Program	<p>https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/view-opportunity.html?oppld=306735</p>	<p>-Funding Cycle: Ongoing</p> <p>-Not eligible for non-profits with a 501 (c)(3) status</p> <p>-Requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A feasibility study establishing the presence of a critical mass of support factors, entrepreneurial demand for use, and community support for the facility; A Pro-forma demonstrating financial capacity to operate the facility and reach a positive cash flow within a reasonable period; and A management plan for the operation of the facility that at a minimum address: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Tenant selection policy; -Tenant lease agreement terms; -Business assistance policy (identify sources of assistance); -Tenant records review policy; -Tenant graduation policy; and

		-Management oversight of incubator operations.
Bank of America Community Reinvestment Grant	https://about.bankofamerica.com/en-us/global-impact/charitable-foundation-funding.html#fbid=rITIB8jBKxj	-Provides grants related to the needs of individuals and families and grants related to the needs of the community by addressing economic development and social progress -Applications accepted 6/1/2020-6/26/2020
NCGrowth's Incubator Guide	Jess Wilkinson, Economic Development Manager Jessica_Wilkinson@kenan-flagler.unc.edu 919-843-3282	NCGrowth is developing a comprehensive incubator guide to help communities determine the feasibility of business incubators in their communities. This guide provides case studies, resources, and examples of alternatives to incubators.

Name	Contact	Additional Comments
Real Estate Development		
North Carolina Department of Commerce Building Reuse Program	https://www.nccommerce.com/grants-incentives/building-or-site-funds/building-reuse Hazel Edmond, Building Reuse Program, 919-814-4659, hazel.edmond@nccommerce.com	Available for renovating vacant buildings or renovating and expanding buildings occupied by companies operating in N.C. for at least the last 12 months
Economic Development Partnerships of N.C.	https://edpnc.com/	
UNC's School of Government Guide to Opportunity Zones	https://dfi.sog.unc.edu/projects/opportunity-zones/	