Guiding Quality Growth

Making the Right Regulations and Using Innovative Methods

Rockdale County’s Salem Road Corridor

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“Booming Rockdale County rated dead last on the coalition’s audit, mostly because the county’s zoning codes prevent smart-growth projects from being built in the first place. County officials now seem determined to change that and have designated two districts where higher-density, mixed-use developments that also preserve greenspace will not only be allowed but required.”
Why Salem Road?

- 3 square mile area
- 28,000 ADT – 2-ln SR162
- +30 yr. old single-family homes
- Abandoned strip centers
- Typical commercial strip center development and practices
- Corridor is just plain ugly!
Salem Road Corridor Plan

Design Charrette

January 24-25, 2003
Grace Tabernacle
Salem Road Workshop Process
January 24 –25, 2003

- Visual Preference Survey
- Transportation System
- Land Use
- Urban Design
- Master Plans
- Synthesis
Residential Preferences

Want this…  Not this.
Streets and Sidewalks

Want this…

Not this.
Streets and Sidewalks

Want this…

Not this.
Land Use Recommendations

- Plan for a walkable community on Salem Rd.
  - sidewalks connecting s/d’s to businesses
  - public open space and greenway connectivity
  - screened and shared parking lots.
- Identify neighborhood commercial nodes.
- Plan for new houses surrounding golf course while protecting existing natural resources and adjoining existing homes.
- Require open space conservation.
Land Use Recommendations

Detailed Site Plan
Developed from Charrette input
Transportation Recommendations

- Four lanes is enough on Salem Road!
- Need new parallel streets
- Use “Context-Sensitive Design” Standards – balance between safety and mobility utilizing design flexibility to meet needs of the community
- Incorporate multi-modal transportation system; sidewalks, greenspace and trails
Transportation Recommendations
(continued)

- Enhance neighborhood connectivity (through required trail interconnectivity and sidewalks and minimal use of cul-de-sacs)
- Require access management (reduce curb cuts)
- Mesh future transportation investments with land use and zoning districts
- Coordinate and solicit input from Newton Co. (MOU on SR162)
VISION: Transform Salem Road...

..into a Walkable Street
Street Design Standards

SALEM ROAD "BOULEVARD"
Implementation Tools

- Interim Control Ordinance
- Overlay Zoning District with Design Standards
- New zoning districts and zoning map
Implementation Process

2. Incorporate Salem Road study recommendations in new Comprehensive Land Use Plan
3. Adopt Overlay District with Design Standards
4. Adopt new Zoning Districts
5. Rezone property to new Zoning Districts with Overlay (750 parcels)
6. Resume Development Permitting
New Zoning Districts

1. Salem Road Corridor Overlay District
2. Conservation Subdivision District
3. Mixed Use Residential
4. Neighborhood Commercial
5. Mixed Use Development
6. Civic/Institutional
What is an Overlay District?
What is in the Overlay District?

- Procedures
- Street standards
- Access management
- Sidewalks and trails
- Open Space standards
- Environmental standards
- Parking Standards
- Architectural standards
Conservation Subdivision District

Conventional Subdivision

Conservation Subdivision
Conservation Subdivision District

Development Standards

- Single Family Detached Units
- Minimum Open Space: 25%
- Base Density: 2.4 Units /Acre
- Bonus Density for > 25% Open Space
Primary Uses:
- Townhouses
- Duplexes
- Single Family Detached
- Zero Lot Line Residential

Supportive Commercial
(20% of total floor area)
- Convenience Retail
- Restaurant
- Day Care
- Bookstore
- Other Similar Uses
Mixed-Use Residential District

Development Standards
• Residential Density: 8 Units /Acre
• Minimum Open Space: 15%
• Minimum/ Maximum Parking
Neighborhood Commercial District

Primary Uses: Convenience Retail, Banks, Restaurants; Professional Services

Development Standards

• Maximum Density: 12,000 sq. ft. /Acre
• Minimum Lot Size: 1 Acre
• Maximum Building Size:
  – Ground Floor: 7,500 sq. ft.
  – Total: 15,000 sq. ft.
• Maximum Bldg. Length: 150 ft.
• Maximum Front Yard Setback: 40 ft.
Mixed-Use Development District

Permitted Uses:
Retail, Commercial, Services, and Offices
Single Family, Townhouse, and Multifamily Residential,
(Min. 20 % residential floor area)

Development Standards
Base Density: 20,000 sq. ft./ac (14-22 units/ac)
Minimum Open Space: 15%
Maximum Bldg. Size: 25 - 150,000 sq. ft.
Maximum Bldg. Length: 250 ft./ 450 ft.
Maximum Front Yard Setback: 50 ft.
Minimum / Maximum Parking
Civic-Institutional District

Permitted Uses:
Public Buildings, Churches, Medical Offices, Hospitals, Education, Recr.
Supportive Uses (15% of Ground Floor): Restaurant, Flower Shop, Bookstore, etc.

Development Standards
- Base Density: 15,000 sq. ft./ Acre
- Minimum Open Space: 10%
- Maximum Bldg. Length: 150 ft.
- Maximum Front Yard Setback: 40 ft.
- Minimum / Maximum Parking
Density Bonuses

Open Space (minimum 30% open space required)
- 31-40% open space = 5 percent more lots/acre
- 41-50% open space = 10 percent more lots/acre
- Over 50% = 15 percent more lots/acre

Public improvements
- 1 acre use for 1 acre dedicated/improved for streets and multi-use trails
Current Status of SRCO

- Litigation
- BOC sticking by their principles!
- Citizens Advisory Committee (CSD process)
- 5 developments in various stages of permitting process
- Newton Co/Rockdale cooperation
- 2004 LCI application
- Dialogue with GDOT regarding Salem Road
- Corridor standards satisfy objectives of the Metro Atlanta Quality Growth Task Force
- Annexation issues!
- BOC – hard sell with “high density” residential component in MxD (14-22 units/ac)
Questions?