

Carolina Planning

Summer 2008 Volume 33 Issue 1



Emerging Issues in Housing

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From the Editors 2

Articles

The Heritage of a Life: Robert Stipe, 1928-2007 3

Milton Heath, Myrick Howard, Weiming Lu, and Josie and Fred Stipe with the Carolina Planning Editors

Celebrating the 50th Anniversary of the Center for Urban and Regional Studies 8

Anne Patrone

ReImagining the Land: Alternative Futures for Brownscape Redevelopment 45

Kristen Ford

North Carolina's Aero/Space Economy: Current Performance and Future Potential...Revisited..... 51

Matt Harris

2007 Masters Project and Ph.D. Dissertation Titles 57

Student Connection 59

Jess Brandes, UNC; Brian DuPont, ASU; Melissa Norton, UNC

Book Reviews 62

Trey Akers and Jess Brandes

Features

Exploring Myths about Manufactured Housing: The Truth(s) Behind One of America's Least Understood Financial Markets 13

Adam Rust

Inclusionary Housing Initiatives in North Carolina: A Case Studies Approach 25

Dyan Arkin, AICP; Roger Bardsley, AICP; Denise Boswell, Ph.D.; Joe Heard, AICP; Rodger Lentz, AICP; Cindy Reid, Esq.; Erin Trebisacci; and Roger Waldon, FAICP

Should North Carolina Cities and Counties be Required to Have a Housing Element?..... 32

Candace Stowell, AICP

Critiquing the Critique: Analyzing a Report on the Housing Credit Program 37

Mark Shelburne

Opportunities and Challenges of the North Carolina Planning Crisis: Why Housing Affordability and Regional Equity are Critical to Success 42

Chris Estes

*Carolina Planning is a student-run publication of the Department of City and Regional Planning,
The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill*

From the Editors

Over this past year, the subprime mortgage debacle has certainly forced housing affordability to the center of national attention. While extensive press coverage, probing Congressional inquiries, and massive write-downs by financial institutions mired in the credit crunch have served to highlight one aspect of affordable housing—homeownership—other important housing issues have been quietly emerging under the radar. This edition of *Carolina Planning* attempts to shed light on these very issues that are affecting communities large and small across the state, region, and nation as a whole. Five articles featured in this issue each focus on various aspects of emerging housing concerns in order to capture the immediate attention of the planning community.

In his article on manufactured housing, Adam Rust confronts eight myths associated with this often-eschewed housing type, its industry, and its financing, presenting it as a potential solution to meet affordable housing needs. In Rachel Campbell's cover art, a detail of a mobile home panorama seen in eastern North Carolina, we found an awareness of subtlety and dignity mirroring Rust's own coverage. Both acquaint us with the realities of what for many is the only viable path to homeownership.

As part of our ongoing series of contributions from the North Carolina chapter of the American Planning Association, a collaborative group of planners from around the state offers a view of inclusionary housing policies and practices that have successfully promoted affordable housing in four different North Carolina municipalities. These cities and towns are literally pushing planning into new territory in this state, enacting policies for which there is much support but no legislative precedent.

Candace Stowell discusses what is lacking in this state to equip every locality to provide adequate housing choice for its citizens. Examples from other states show what is possible, while the pioneering efforts detailed in the aforementioned article may smooth the political path.

The subject of Mark Shelburne's critique is a recent report questioning an aspect of the Low Income Housing Tax Credit, which is the main driver of affordable rental housing in this country. He explores several discrepancies and seeks to clarify potential misrepresentations within the report, which, as they stand, question the efficacy of this program.

Rounding out our feature articles, Chris Estes, Executive Director of the North Carolina Housing Coalition, calls attention to the looming planning crisis facing this state and draws upon a regional equity approach as a way to tackle the burgeoning need for affordable housing here in North Carolina.

On a different note, this issue brings together a va-

riety of voices to bid goodbye to an old friend, a faithful advocate, an influential colleague, and a devoted companion found in Robert Stipe, who passed away this past September. We also celebrate the golden anniversary of the Center for Urban and Regional Studies with a piece covering its now fifty-year history and the progression of its research.

In keeping with tradition, we also feature the Best Master's Project of 2007—this time awarded jointly to Kristen Ford and Matt Harris. A new section has been added to the *Journal* this year—the Student Connection—with the goal of better connecting the broader readership with the three academic planning programs in this state.

Finally, faithful readers may note that this issue is bulkier than those in the past. Reducing our publication schedule from twice a year to just once has allowed us to include more elements in each issue. As always, we encourage our readers to take advantage of this opportunity and submit articles and opinion pieces for inclusion in future issues. Details about our next issue can be found in the Call for Papers on page 64.

Thank you for your readership and continued support of the *Carolina Planning Journal*.

Editors:

Wendy Baucom and Barbara Elwood Schalmo

Carolina Planning is published with generous financial support from:

- The John A. Parker Trust Fund
- The Department of City and Regional Planning at UNC-Chapel Hill
- The North Carolina Chapter of the American Planning Association

Carolina Planning welcomes comments, suggestions, and submissions. Please contact us at: carolinapanning@unc.edu



Cover art: Rachel Campbell of Durham, NC
Untitled, 2008

Cover design: Barbara Elwood Schalmo

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