Communities and Growth

It's All About Education

Ellen Keys
November 17, 2004
1995: Atlanta’s Environment

- 67% of monitored water don’t meet standards
- Atlantans drive 35 miles per person per day
- For every 1% increase in population, 15-20% increase in land consumption
- Atlanta suffers 60 days of non-attainment for air quality
- Numerous urban heat islands emerge
- Atlanta Regional Commission recommends proceeding with Northern Arc of Outer Perimeter

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“The significant problems we face cannot be solved at the same level of thinking we were at when we created them.”

Albert Einstein
The Georgia Conservancy

- Highly respected nationally
- Experts at “convening”
- Rational and thoughtful
- Not litigious
- Solutions seekers

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Blueprints for Successful Communities

- Greater Atlanta Homebuilders
- Urban Land Institute
- AIA
- ASLA
- ITE
- GA Trust

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Learning about patience and restraint

- Similar goals
- Differing methods
- Willingness to work together
- Consensus around education

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So How Do We Grow Better Communities??

Anton Nelessen
Peter Calthorpe
Chris Leinberger
Randal Arendt
David Crockett
Walter Kulash
So What?

- Environmentalists talking to developers
- Planners talking to architects
- Architects talking to landscape architects
- Neighborhoods talking to homebuilders
- Transportation engineers talking to everyone

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Successful Community Principles

- Work together to produce a high quality of life
- Create regional strategies
- Understand the effect of the built environment on the natural environment
- Promote efficient use of existing infrastructure
- Incorporate integrated land uses
- Provide transportation options

- Designed to be safe, healthy, economically strong and environmentally sound
- Incorporate integrated land uses
- Provide transportation options
“Change is debilitating when done to us, but exhilarating when done by us.”

Rosabeth Moss Kanter
The Community Design Workshop

- Covington
- Home Park
- Senoia
- Lakewood
- Athens

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Changing Vernacular

- VMT
- TND
- TOD
- LOS
- Density
- Mixed-use
- Urban Growth Boundary
- Visual Preference Survey
- Transit Supportive
- Conservation Subdivision
- TDR
- Life Cycle Housing
- Park-once Environment
- Walkable Community
- Activity Centers
- Smart Growth

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Not Without Controversy

- Social Engineering
- Dumb Growth
- Slow Growth
- Density and schools

“Coming together is a beginning; keeping together is progress; working together is success.”

Henry Ford

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Learning and Talking

- Atlanta Chamber Initiatives
- Livable Centers Initiative
- Broadening Blueprints
- Downtown Duluth
- Midtown
- Downtown Redevelopment
- Open Space Protection

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It’s About Education…

and It’s About People

- Human beings innately know what feels right
- The people who live there know best what should happen
- The more diverse the stakeholders, the better
- You must have a leader
- Patience, optimism and a willingness to learn are essential

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“It is not the strongest of the species that survive, nor the most intelligent, but the one most responsive to change.”

Charles Darwin

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A Personal Reflection

- Do our current trends represent good stewardship of the land?
- Do they lead to a clean and healthy environment for all who live there?
- Do they make family life easier?
- Do they create greater civic participation?
- Do they make wise use of fiscal resources?
- Do they foster appreciation for multi-cultural diversity?
- Do they break down isolation of people by race, income, age and culture?
- Do they advance the common good?

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