

# ***Guidelines & Protocols for the Definition of Family Stakeholders' Process***

## **Goal & Objectives of the Stakeholders' Process**

The goal of the process is to build consensus on a definition of family in the form of a recommendation that could possibly be used as a template for a zoning text amendment. This recommendation would be considered by the City of Charlotte elected officials for the purpose of identifying family units located in single-family zoned districts. The recommendation will address the following objectives:

1. Identify the core family unit
2. Provide guidelines as to the number of members that can be located in a residential dwelling.
3. Satisfactorily address any secondary impact that may be associated with a large number of individuals living in a residence.

## **Decision Process**

The final product of the process will be a recommendation report that will be presented to elected officials. A text amendment may be developed as an outcome of the report. The deadline for the development of this product is April, 2006. The product will be produced by a stakeholders' group (Group) through a consensus process.

### **1. An Understanding of Consensus**

The Group will measure their level of agreement by consensus and Group decisions will be made only with consensus of all members represented at the meeting. Consensus is reached when all members present can agree that this is the best outcome or proposal being made. Participants may be asked to agree or not object to a proposal that is not their preferred ideal (consensus does not mean everyone gets everything they want), but they recognize that it is a fair decision considering the many participating interests. Consensus is the methodology that allows collaborative problem solving to work. This methodology prevents the majority from assuming control of the decision making process and allows for the building of trust and the sharing of information, especially under conditions of conflict. Consensus does not mean that everyone will be equally happy with the outcome, but all do accept that the decision is the best that could be made given the circumstances. In its most basic definition, consensus means that the members present could agree with a proposal.

Consensus requires the sharing of information, which leads to mutual education, which in turn, provides the basis for crafting workable and acceptable alternatives. Consensus promotes joint thinking of a diverse group and leads to creative solutions. Also, because parties participate in the deliberation, they

understand the reasoning behind recommendations and are willing to support them.

The City of Charlotte staff will facilitate the stakeholder process and will be responsible for bringing the discussions to closure, identifying consensus and moving forward with the decision making process in a timely manner. The goal of the process is to make decisions through an iterative discussion and to use an approach that will be flexible and specific to the situation.

2. Determining Consensus

For most decisions made by the Group, the facilitator will test for consensus after appropriate discussion by stating the proposal and asking each Group member if this is acceptable. An affirmative response will be indicated by Group members raising their hands. At this point in the process, a Group member may indicate a conditional consensus (conditional on something else happening later). The condition is tabled until it is discussed later in the process and the Group member's vote is counted toward consensus. Group members who do not agree must offer an approach that would enable them to agree. This approach will be tested for consensus. If the Group decides that additional facts and information are needed for a Group member to come to consensus this must be stated and the information needed specified. The proposal will be tabled until relative information is made available to the Group at which time the proposal will be modified as necessary and tested for consensus.

3. Consequences of Not Reaching Consensus

In the event that consensus cannot be reached, the facilitator will appoint a Coordinating Committee (Committee) to develop and recommend a resolution. These are ad-hoc committees made up of select Group members for the purpose of trying to resolve a specific issue, process or member conflict. Members of these Committees will be selected by the facilitator as needed and will typically include the disputants plus others (including select staff members) who can bring expertise as well as the objectivity and appropriate representation to deal with a specific conflict. The Committee will meet as necessary apart from the regularly scheduled Group meetings to discuss the issue and work toward resolution. Once a resolution has been developed, the Committee will report back to the Group to test for consensus. The Committee will disband when the issue is resolved. A Coordinating Committee will not be recommended by the facilitator unless and until it is determined that all other reasonable efforts have been made to resolve the conflict. If the Coordinating Committee is unsuccessful at reaching a resolution, then the Group will clearly define the specific nature of the disagreement and defer the decision to the staff panel (Panel) defined below. The Panel will report back to the Group with their final resolution and the process will move forward. The process for reaching consensus is summarized below:

1. Consensus Reached – No further action required.

2. Conditional Consensus Reached – The condition is tabled until it is addressed in later discussions and the proposal on the table is determined to be in consensus.
3. Consensus Not Reached
  - a. Alternative proposal must be offered and tested for consensus by the Group.
  - b. If consensus is still not reached by the Group, the facilitator will ask whether additional facts and information are needed to reach consensus. If the Group determines this to be the case, discussion will be tabled until this information is made available to the Group. The proposal will be modified as necessary based on this additional information and consensus will be tested.
  - c. If consensus is still not reached, the facilitator may elect to appoint a Coordinating Committee. The Committee will meet apart from the regularly scheduled meetings in an attempt to reach a compromise and report back to the Group. This compromise will be tested for consensus.
  - d. If consensus is still not reached, the matter will be deferred to the staff panel, which will make the final decision.

## **Stakeholder Group Members**

Stakeholders represent different groups and/pr organizations within the City of Charlotte jurisdiction that have a stake or interest in the final product. It is extremely important that Group members attend all meetings. If a member wishes to appoint an alternate to the Group in the event they may be absent from meetings, they may do so with approval from the facilitator. The alternate must be kept informed of decisions made by the Group and preferably the alternate should attend as many meetings as possible to observe Group activities and decisions. If a Group member or their alternate is not present at a meeting, they forfeit their opportunity to have input on any decisions made at that meeting. Once a decision is reached and consensus verified, the matter will not be revisited unless approved by the facilitator. The following is a list of stakeholders and staff members:

<b><u>Last</u></b>	<b><u>First</u></b>	<b><u>Representing</u></b>	<b><u>Email Address</u></b>
Baer	Maddy		<a href="mailto:gardenbaer@hotmail.com">gardenbaer@hotmail.com</a>
Barnhardt	Elizabeth	Rebic	<a href="mailto:barnhardt@rebic.com">barnhardt@rebic.com</a>
Brown	John	Chamber of Commerce	<a href="mailto:jbrown@charlotte.com">jbrown@charlotte.com</a>
Chan	Dr. John	Asian Chamber of Commerce	<a href="mailto:johnc217@aol.com">johnc217@aol.com</a>
Cortez	Joey	McDowell Farms	<a href="mailto:jaadtwo@aol.com">jaadtwo@aol.com</a>
Greene	Francene		<a href="mailto:mizsewnsew@hotmail.com">mizsewnsew@hotmail.com</a>
Gunn	Henry		<a href="mailto:gunn127@earthlink.net">gunn127@earthlink.net</a>
Hagler-Gray	Terrie		<a href="mailto:thgray@ci.charlotte.nc.us">thgray@ci.charlotte.nc.us</a>
Langedin	Diane		<a href="mailto:dlangedin809@yahoo.com">dlangedin809@yahoo.com</a>
		DSS Youth and Family	
Lester	Catherine	Servivces	<a href="mailto:lestecl@co.mecklenburg.nc.us">lestecl@co.mecklenburg.nc.us</a>
Matzura	Joey		<a href="mailto:joematz@earthlink.net">joematz@earthlink.net</a>
Neilson	Krista		<a href="mailto:kneilson@ci.charlotte.nc.us">kneilson@ci.charlotte.nc.us</a>
Pomlinson	Alisha		<a href="mailto:sharonforest@gmail.com">sharonforest@gmail.com</a>
Roberts	Jim	Windsor Park	<a href="mailto:jim@eastcharlotte.com">jim@eastcharlotte.com</a>
Still	Jamie		<a href="mailto:jstilley@charlotteobserver.com">jstilley@charlotteobserver.com</a>
Stroud	Elizabeth		<a href="mailto:lizstroud@acninc.net">lizstroud@acninc.net</a>
Wagner	Julie		<a href="mailto:jwagner@signsbytomorrow.com">jwagner@signsbytomorrow.com</a>
Welch	Jeanie	Beckton Park	<a href="mailto:jmwelch@email.uncc.edu">jmwelch@email.uncc.edu</a>
Young	Katrina		<a href="mailto:kjyoung@ci.charlotte.nc.us">kjyoung@ci.charlotte.nc.us</a>

Stakeholders will be supported by staff. Staff will be tasked with providing facts and information to the stakeholders to facilitate decision making and are encouraged to attend as many meetings of the Group as possible. In the event that a member of this staff panel has a concern regarding a decision made by the Group or the general nature of the stakeholders' process, they are to consult with the facilitator who will take the necessary actions to resolve any issues. Staff members are encouraged to participate in discussions during the stakeholder meetings; however, they will not have a "vote" in the consensus process. In the event that the stakeholders' group is unable to reach consensus, this staff panel will be charged with resolving the issue to enable the Group to continue to move forward. Although it is not the desired or expected outcome of the process, this staff panel may have a separate recommendation to elected officials at the conclusion of the stakeholders' process. If this is the case, both the staff panel and stakeholders' group recommendations will be provided to elected officials for their consideration. The

facilitator will be responsible for calling meetings of this Panel as necessary. In general, staff will not meet unless there are specific issues that need to be addressed. Staff will be copied on all Group meeting agendas and minutes. As previously discussed, staff will be charged with making decisions to allow the stakeholders' process to move forward should the stakeholders fail to reach consensus on an important issue.

- Neighborhood Development
- Charlotte Mecklenburg Planning Commission

### **Stakeholder Group Meetings**

Meetings will be held on the as follows:

December 12, 2005, January 9, January 23, February 13, February 27, March 13, March 27 and April 10, 2006. Meetings will begin at 5:30 pm am and conclude by 8:00 p.m. Special meetings may be called as necessary following approval by the Group. All meetings are open to the public. The facilitator will be responsible for developing and distributing all meeting agendas within a minimum of five (5) days prior to each scheduled meeting. The facilitator will also be responsible for producing meeting minutes that will be distributed to the Group at the same time as the agenda for the next meeting. The minutes will be voted on at the opening of each meeting. Corrections to meeting minutes will be made before the next scheduled meeting.

## **Stakeholder Group Meeting Ground Rules**

In order to have the most efficient and effective process possible, Group members will follow the following basic ground rules:

1. Treat each other, the organizations represented in the Group and the Group itself with respect at all times and put personal differences aside in the interest of the success of the Group.
2. Stick to the topics on the meeting agenda; be concise and not repetitive.
3. Work as team players and share all relevant information. Focus on honesty with tactfulness. Avoid surprises. Encourage candid, frank discussions.
4. Ask if you do not understand.
5. Openly express any disagreement or concern with all Group members.
6. Offer mutually beneficial solutions. Actively strive to see other's points of view.
7. Follow through on commitments.
8. Share information discussed in the meetings with the organizations/constituents that you represent and bring back to the Group the opinions and actions of these constituents as appropriate.
9. Encourage free thinking and share relevant information with the Group.
10. Speak one at a time in meetings as recognized by the facilitator.
11. Everyone will participate but no one will dominate.
12. Agree that it is OK to disagree and disagree without being disagreeable.
13. Make your statements and responses concise and to the point. Attempt to honor a three-minute time rule on all your comments during Group meetings.
14. Support and actively engage in the Group decision process.
15. Do your home work. Read and review materials provided and be familiar with the subject being discussed.

## **Definition of Family Recommendation Development Process**

The development of the definition of family recommendation will occur in six (6) phases as described below. A timeline for completion of the process is provided in Attachment 1.

### **Phase I: Introductions and Current Conditions**

**Objective:** To identify and introduce the stakeholders that will draft a recommendation to the City of Charlotte of Zoning Ordinance that defines a family unit.

**Discussion:** Research and evaluate the current definition of family. There appears to be some primary and secondary impacts to neighborhoods based on the current definition of family and the use permitted in single family zoned districts.

**Time Frame:** Begin November, 2005 -Complete April, 2006

**Resources:** Stakeholders Group, City, Staff

**Final Product:** Written report that will be presented to the Stakeholders' Group.

### **Phase II: Family Definition Goals and Objectives**

**Objective:** To establish criteria to assess whether the definition of family is adequate to protect single family residential neighborhoods from negative primary and secondary impacts associated with large extended family units and compare the current and future use identified in Phase I to these criteria for identification problems/concerns and their sources.

**Discussion:** To determine if the definition of family is the problem for single family residential neighborhoods or are there other issues that have not yet been identified that are creating the negative and primary and secondary impacts in the area.

**Time Frame:** Begin December, 2005 – Complete February, 2006

**Resources:** Stakeholders Group, City Staff

**Final Product:** Written report that will be presented to the Group

### **Phase III: Family Definition**

**Objective:** To define the family unit.

**Discussion:** During this phase, language from other jurisdictions will be shared as well as the current language to serve as the foundation for the development of the recommendation. The goals of this Phase are to:

1. Identify the problems associated with the current definition of a family unit and
2. Suggest ways in which to solve these problems.

The goal of the Group will be to reach consensus on the specific definition of family.

**Time Frame:** Begin December, 2005– Complete February, 2006

**Resources:** Stakeholders' Group, City Staff

**Final Product:** Consensus reached and family unit identified by stakeholders' group.

### **Phase IV: Recommendation Language**

**Objective:** To identify and agree on language to be used for the recommendation.

Discussion: The stakeholders' group will be used to identify the specific language to be used when drafting the definition of family recommendation.

Time Frame: Begin February, 2006 – Complete March, 2006

Resources: Stakeholders' Group, City Staff

Final Product: Consensus reached and language identified by stakeholders' group.

#### **Phase V: Draft Recommendation**

Objective: To develop a recommendation for consideration by elected officials that has been agreed upon by stakeholders and to ensure that elected officials remain informed regarding the process and have opportunities for input.

Discussion: The stakeholders' group will be used to develop the recommendation..

Elected officials will be kept informed through a series of staff communications at key points in the process.

- January, 2006 – Written communication to elected officials indicating the stakeholders, identify time frame and process milestones.

Time Frame: Begin November 1, 2005 – Complete April, 2006

Resources: Stakeholders' Group, City Staff

Final Product: Draft recommendation

#### **Phase VI: Final Recommendation**

Discussion: Elected officials will be presented a recommendation for the definition of family

- March, 2006 – Staff presentation to elected officials regarding the definition of family goals established by the stakeholders' group. (Dinner meeting)

Time Frame: Begin March, 2006 – Complete April, 2006

Resources: City Staff

Final Product: Stakeholders recommendation

#### **Note:**

***If the stakeholders recommendation does not require a text amendment - this will be the last phase of the process.***

#### **Phase VII: Submit to Council**

Objective: To receive public comment if necessary concerning a text amendment and ultimate council approval.

Discussion: The public comment process will comply with the requirements as part of the adoption of a text amendment. The proposed text amendment developed in Phase V will be made available to the public via a website.

- April, 2006 – Stakeholder presentation to elected officials of text amendment.

Time Frame: Begin April 2006 – Complete, July 2006

Resources: City Staff

Final Product: Adopted text amendment

## Attachment 1

### *Family Definition Text Amendment Timeline*

Phases	2005			2006		
	Dec	Jan		Feb	Mar	April
<b>Mail letters to Interested Parties</b>	1					
<b>I. Process Introduction/Stakeholder Objectives</b>	12					
<b>II. Goals and Objectives</b>		9				
<b>III. Family Definition</b>		23				
<b>IV. Recommendation Language</b>				13	27	
<b>V. Draft Recommendation</b>				27	13	
<b>VI. Final Text Amendment</b>						10
<b>VII. File Text Amendment</b>						17

## **Attachment 2 Planned Meeting Topics**

**December 12 (Process Introduction and Current Conditions):** Introduction of Stakeholders & Staff Panel; Review Issue, Discussion of Process Guidelines; Discussion of Objectives, Review of Current Efforts to Identify Definition of Family and Objectives.

**January 9 (Family Definition Goal and Objectives):** Brainstorm on what family definition should look like

**January 23 (Family Definition):** Stakeholder Deliberation of Definition of Family

**February 13 (Recommendation Language):** Staff Recommendation & Stakeholder Deliberation of Language Recommendation

**February 27 (Recommendation Language):** Stakeholder Deliberation of Recommendation Language

**March 13 (DRAFT Recommendation):** DRAFT Recommendation & Discussion

**March 27 (DRAFT Recommendation):** Finalize language for Recommendation

**Note:**

*If the stakeholders recommendation does not require a text amendment - this will be the last phase of the process.*

**April 10 (Text Amendment Ordinance):** Final Text Amendment & Discussion