

A Vision for the Future of the Community of Green Level, NC

“Visioning” is a process in which community members discuss their desires for the future of their community. A “Vision Statement” is the end product of that process. This document describes a set of values and hopes for the future of the community of Green Level.

In May and June of 2003, a series of three community visioning workshops were held in the rural community of Green Level. During these workshops, community members identified locations and issues that were important to them and then developed vision statements to address these issues. Because Green Level is an unincorporated community there is not a boundary where the community “officially stops and starts.” During the workshops, the discussions focused on, but were not limited to, the land areas around Green Level Road West, Green Level Church Road, White Oak Church Road, and Green Hope School Road.

As development pressures continue to increase from Cary and the Triangle region, this vision attempts to address community concerns resulting from this anticipated change. It strives to capture the values and concerns of the community and serve as a guide as we look to the future.

Vision Statements

Development

Recognizing that some amount of development in Green level is inevitable as Cary expands, future development should accommodate existing landowners’ and residents’ interests.

Landowners who wish to sell their land for development should expect fair market value. *

The community’s interests, while respecting individual landowners’ property rights, should help guide development.

Development in Green Level should occur in a controlled and cautious manner.

The vision for development in Green Level needs to consider the goals of all categories in the vision statement (farmland/rural areas, historic districts & landmarks, parks & open space, property rights, traffic, and watershed & environment).

The community desires to be kept informed about options, opportunities, and programs to achieve the community’s interests. This includes examples where development has occurred in a manner that maintained rural character and quality of life. *

Farmland/Rural Areas

Our vision for the future of Green Level includes the preservation of its rural character.

Property taxes need to remain affordable so that a rural lifestyle can be maintained.

Programs & opportunities should be identified to help preserve Green Level's existing rural character.

Historic Districts and Landmarks

Landmarks and historic buildings are important to the community of Green Level.

Several historic structures and landscapes within the current Green Level Historic District were identified as important to the community.

Concerned parties should work with landowners, if landowners so desire, to preserve, develop, or redevelop their land in a manner that respects the character of historic Green Level. *

Parks & Open Space

Future designated open space and parks in Green Level should be left in their natural state, with the intent of preserving wildlife habitat.

Local input and involvement during the planning process is critical to the success of new parks and open space.

Consider the use of local non-profit trusts and conservancies as well as public agencies to conserve and manage the land when appropriate. **

Any open space designation should be mindful of the community's space/concerns.

Property Rights

Landowners remaining on the land should have minimal restrictions on how they live on their property.

There should be no forced annexation by the Town of Cary.

There should be no "taking" of land for community interest.

Existing uses and conditions of property should be grandfathered upon the issuance of new rules and ordinances. *

Traffic

The primary function of the roads should be to accommodate local traffic. There should be no additional thoroughfares or rerouting of existing roads without community input early in the planning process.

Traffic should flow efficiently into and out of Green Level, with easy access to NC 55, US 64, and I-540 Outer Loop. *

Roads, if being improved or widened, should be constructed to better manage and control bicycle use.

Traffic volume and speed should be controlled to improve safety.

Preserve Watershed & Environment

We would like to protect the wildlife, air quality, and water quality in Green Level.

Development patterns should strive to minimize further fragmentation of habitat/natural areas. *

Stream corridors should be protected/restored as a means of protecting wildlife, air quality, and water quality. *

Reaching Agreement as a Community

Over the course of this community visioning project there was a total of 105 community members who participated. At the third and final visioning workshop, where general consensus was reached, there were 32 community members present. While it was agreed upon that this vision represents the community's values and interests, there were a few of cases where an individual had an objection, concern, or additional comment on a specific statement within the vision. These objections, concerns, or comments are documented in the Rural Landscape Preservation Project's final report.

* One individual had an objection, concern, or additional comment about this statement.

** Two individuals had an objection, concern, or additional comment about this statement.

Where do we go from here?

This vision should be used as a set of principles to guide the future of the Green Level Community. The Vision Statement should be included as a part of the Town of Cary's update of the 1996 Land Use Plan (the Southwest Area Plan, beginning Fall 2003). The Southwest Area Plan should reflect the values and goals of the vision. This vision should be the beginning (not the end) of the ongoing conversation among Green Level community members as well as between Green Level community members and the Town of Cary. The next step is to determine what actions are necessary to bring about this desired vision. It is the responsibility of both the community members of Green Level to stay actively involved in this process and the Town of Cary to provide opportunities for the Green Level community to participate in this ongoing process.

Vision Summary: Looking Back From 2023

In the year 2023, the Green Level community has retained much of its rural character. Public involvement by area residents has ensured that development occurred in a controlled and cautious manner that respected the rural heritage and historical architecture of the community. Most members of the community have chosen to remain in Green Level because it is a peaceful, enjoyable place to live. Property taxes have stayed affordable so that a rural lifestyle can be maintained. Some landowners have realized fair economic return through the sale of all or some of their land. Others have realized fair economic returns by combining development plans with voluntary preservation strategies, conserving open space, historic rural landscapes, and natural parks for the enjoyment and well-being of the community. Great sensitivity has been shown to preserving property owner rights, both of those developing property and of those remaining in the community.

Because development has been appropriately located, Green Level retains considerable areas of woodlands and fields. Many of these are preserved through the efforts of a local land trust. Development patterns have minimized fragmentation of natural areas and wildlife habitat. Stream corridors have been protected or restored, which has maintained the quality of the Jordan Lake water supply. Through community initiatives, the Green Level Historic District remains an important cultural resource, and new construction within the District is appropriate to the historic architecture. Traffic flows efficiently in and out of Green Level while the majority of traffic within Green Level is local. Attractive “traffic calming” measures have been implemented on local roads.

Since 2003, Green Level residents have remained engaged in implementing a vision for their community. Through their active involvement with Town of Cary and other entities, Green Level landowners and residents have successfully managed the changes of the last twenty years to retain a distinctive, independent, and historic community and create a special place in western Wake County.