PLAN ON A PAGE
ALBEMARLE PARK

As soon as you enter Albemarle Park you know that you are in a special place. It's not like any other neighborhood in Asheville.

When asked by the City of Asheville to prepare a "Plan on a Page" for Albemarle Park, the neighborhood took this opportunity to gather together to celebrate its amazing architectural, landscape and social history and its great sense of community and to look at the challenges it has and the opportunities and responsibilities we all share, and to create a record that can contribute to the development of the City of Asheville's next Comprehensive Plan. The Albemarle Park-Manor Grounds neighborhood met at The Manor Inn on March 10, 2016 to discuss its vision for the neighborhood and to create a consensus as to its future direction. The following represents Albemarle Park's goals and desires for its future as an important and historic Asheville neighborhood and how it sees itself contributing to the City's future.

WHO WE ARE

A small, historic neighborhood located within walking distance to downtown Asheville. We are an active and engaged neighborhood of homeowners and renters who enjoy time spent together in the park-like setting of historic buildings, winding roads, and naturalized landscape.

1. NEIGHBORHOOD DESCRIPTION

Albemarle Park is both a Local Historic and National Register district who 1897 Gatehouse entrance off Charlotte Street is three-quarters of a mile from Asheville City Hall. Originally a hillside farm at the far edges of the city, it was developed starting in 1897 by Thomas Wadley Raoul (who became one of Asheville's leading citizens and the developer of Biltmore Forest for the Vanderbilts) in collaboration with the renowned Architect Bradford Gilbert and Landscape Architect, Samuel Parsons, Jr. (a founder of the American Society of Landscape Architects and its 2nd president) as a thoughtfully planned residential community whose centerpiece was The Manor Inn, the last surviving wooden inn in Asheville from the late 19th century. Albemarle Park is composed of 42 structures, including all of the original historic buildings, reflecting a rich diversity of the arts and crafts style of architecture on a 32.42-acres bounded by Charlotte Street on the west, Sunset Drive on the east, where Orchard ends at Albemarle Road at the south and along a portion of Canterbury Road between Albemarle Park and Grove Park on the north. As a platted community its boundaries are well defined and comprise the National Register Historic District. The neighborhood's site planning and landscape design has been nationally recognized with a Medallion Award from the American Society of Landscape Architects and it is the only neighborhood in the city with both architectural and landscape design guidelines to manage its historic resources. The majority of the neighborhood is residential with a wonderful mix of both homeowners and renters. The cottages, all which have original names, are sensitively nestled into the steeply sloping side of Sunset Mountain along narrow streets without sidewalks, originally designed for horse and buggies. The structures that are along Charlotte Street including the Gatehouse, the original Clubhouse (currently the Albemarle Office Park) and three houses are home to primarily office uses and one garden shop. The Circle, a City of Asheville park is the locus of neighborhood events and gathering. It is also an important part of an innovative and sensitively design stormwater system of brick, stone swales and natural stream beds that were designed to environmentally and within the aesthetic design of Albemarle Park, manage runoff throughout the neighborhood.

2. NEIGHBORHOOD HISTORY

As soon as you enter Albemarle Park you know that you are in a special place. It's not like any other neighborhood in Asheville.

It's more than an interesting neighborhood of curving streets, towering trees and old houses. It is a nationally recognized landmark in residential design, a rare surviving example of late 19th century "resort park" development as well as richly diverse community of young and old, renters and homeowners and a supportive business community along Charlotte Street.

Made up of 42 primary structures that were carefully sited on the western slope of Sunset Mountain to allow for shared panoramic views, Albemarle Park feels as if it is someplace far outside the city, even though the neighborhood is just east of the Charlotte Street business district and only a 15 minute walk to downtown Asheville.

Albemarle Park is a landmark in residential planning, architecture and landscape design that has been recognized to be of national significance. The tract of land that became Albemarle Park was acquired by William Green Raoul in 1886, originally to house his large family. Raoul, who served as president of both Georgian and Mexican National railroads, was the visionary who conceived of Albemarle Park and who purchased the land from a local farmer named Deaver. However, it was his third son, Thomas Wadley Raoul, trained as an engineer at Georgia State, who was to be the foreman of the project and the one who made the vision a reality.

Albemarle Park is the result of a special collaboration of three prominent men during the 1890s: Thomas Wadley Raoul, who became a prominent Asheville business leader and developer of Biltmore Forest together with Bradford Lee Gilbert, renowned architect, and Samuel Parsons Jr., an important landscape architect, both from New York City.

In 1886, William Green Raoul purchased the 35-acre R.W. Deaver farm with the intention of building a summer place for his family. By 1897, he had decided to develop the property into a "residential park" with an English inn, housekeeping cottages and private residences. With his son Thomas Wadley Raoul, a Georgia Tech trained engineer as foreman, the Albemarle Park Co. was formed and the vision for Albemarle Park began to take shape. Parsons sited the inn and the cottages so that full advantage could be taken of the mountain views working with the steep topography and minimizing

WHAT WE LOVE ABOUT OUR NEIGHBORHOOD

The pedestrian-oriented streets, shade trees, and porches that encourage walking and talking. We spend time together picnicking and playing in The Circle, gathering at our homes, and excursions in the community and surrounding National Forests. We know one another, care about one another, and help one another.

changes to the grades. His planting plan emphasized the special quality of the natural landscape and the importance of "shared viewscapes." Gilbert designed unique homes for the sites of varying architectural styles and excellent craftsmanship.

The Lodge, known also as The Gatehouse, on Charlotte Street was the first building, built in 1897, and served as Thomas Wadley Raoul's residence and office for Albemarle Park. The Manor Inn was the centerpiece and was opened on New Year's Day 1899.

By 1913, 24 significant structures had been built by the Albemarle Park Company: The Lodge in 1897; The Manor Inn, Clover, Columbus, Milfoil, and Shamrock Cottages in 1898; Orchard Cottage in 1899; Clematis Cottage (presently called Laurel) in 1901; Clio and Galax Cottages in 1902; Cherokee Cottage and The Clubhouse in 1903; Rosebank Cottage in 1905; Manzanita (the home of Thomas Wadley Raoul and his family), Crow's Nest, Dahlia, Daffodil, and Larkspur Cottages in 1906; Hollyhock and Marigold Cottages in 1907; Dogwood and Kalmia Cottages in 1910; and Fox Hall and Fox Den by 1913. During this time there were also five other cottages built as private homes by owners of empty lots purchased from Albemarle Park Co. These five were: Alva Glen, Brown Bear, Wildfell, Possum Trot and Breezemont. Renowned Asheville architect, Richard Sharp Smith, designed several of the later cottages including Chestnut Hill, Chipmunk Cottage and Twin Oaks. For almost twenty-five years Thomas Wadley Raoul devoted his energies to overseeing the construction and management of The Manor and Cottages.

After many requests to buy The Manor Inn & Cottages from the Raoul family and then building the Grove Park Inn down the road out of the frustration of being denied that acquisition, E.W. Grove finally purchased Albemarle Park in 1920 to add to his other holdings in the area. After Grove's death in 1927 and the long probating of his will, the cottages became privately owned year-round homes and the one-time residential resort grew into a residential neighborhood. Additional cottages, private residences and accessory buildings continued to be built up into the 1950s.

The Manor Inn continued to operate until 1961 when it was converted into a retirement home. By 1976 The Manor had changed owners again and at this time it became a residential hotel, housed a dance studio, and its junior Olympic sized pool was a widely beloved social and recreational center for many of Asheville's residents. In late 70's, Stone Soup, a worker-owned restaurant that had begun in the Allen Center in 1975, opened and operated out of one of the Manor's dining rooms and its infamous "Peacock Alley" providing one of Asheville's most beloved places to eat, gather and find the NY Times. However, in 1984, after severe winter damage, The Manor Inn was closed and some of the cottages had fallen into disrepair. However a number of new families moved into the neighborhood and began the process of sensitively renovating cottages with their own sweat and with them came new energy to preserve the neighborhood. With the Manor Inn unoccupied it was being eyed for demolition and the surrounding residents feared it would fall prey to arson. The neighborhood residents worked with The Preservation Society of Asheville & Buncombe County to maintain the building. Through those efforts, the Preservation Society was able to secure an option to purchase The Manor in 1989 preventing its demolition.

At the same time the neighborhood had been living through an almost year-long construction project on Cherokee Road by the City of Asheville without access. In frustration with that and the unknown status of The Manor Inn, the neighborhood banded together to create the Albemarle Park-Manor Grounds Association in 1989 and worked to have Albemarle Park designated a local historic district by the City of Asheville. Several properties that are within the national register historic district were cut from the local district designation at that time and we hope to work to have them included in the future. In 1990, the Albemarle Park – Manor Grounds Association, Inc. became a 501c-3 organization "to actively promote and facilitate the identification, preservation and documentation of the architecture, landscape architecture, and social and cultural history of Albemarle Park; to promote public awareness of these significant historic contributions to the development of Western North Carolina and to the history of architecture and landscape architecture in the United States; and to assist efforts to preserve and restore significant features, documents, buildings and objects pertaining to the architecture, landscape architecture, and social and economic history of Albemarle Park, for the benefit of all of the community of Asheville and Buncombe County."

In 1991, The Manor Inn and two cottages, Columbus and Clover, were sold by the Preservation Society to Pam & Jim Turner who restored them in an historically sensitive way, converting The Manor to serve as apartments.

WHAT CHALLENGES US

The proximity to downtown that provides us access to restaurants, wine shops, ice cream, coffee shops, and even a butchery, also brings urban challenges such as speeding vehicles and crime. In the same manner, our historic character brings challenges of aging infrastructure and falling trees.

Today's residents of Albemarle Park are fortunate that the Raoul family valued what they had created and documented it well over their years of stewardship. That information, much of it provided by Jane Raoul Bingham, Thomas Raoul's youngest daughter and well-known civic leader, as well as other sources were used by the Albemarle Park – Manor Grounds Association, Inc. to publish an award-winning book in 1990 detailing the neighborhoods rich architectural, social and landscape history entitled The Manor and Cottages. Publication of that book was funded through grants received from the National Trust, the NC Arts Council, the Marion Stedman Covington Foundation and the Community Foundation of WNC. Funds generated from the sale of over 2,000 books have been used to improve the public areas within Albemarle Park including installation of reproduction historic street signs and planting of trees. A subsequent book, published by Arcadia Press in 2014, is entitled Asheville's Albemarle Park.

The neighborhood worked to create both the architectural and landscape guidelines that help protect Albemarle Park and they have been engaged in looking at issues related to character and quality of Charlotte Street with active participation in creating and advocating the adoption of the Charlotte Street Small Area Plan adopted by the Asheville City Council in 2010.

Albemarle Park is unique among Asheville's local historic districts. Every single one of its significant structures is still intact and relatively unchanged today. Albemarle Park property owners are currently installing historic reproduction street lamps throughout the neighborhood at their own cost. Approximately two-thirds have been installed so far and we hope to have the remaining lamps installed within the next few years. As a local historic district, its property owners are responsible for maintaining the historic integrity and character of the homes and landscape for all of Asheville, its visitors and future generations to enjoy. Albemarle Park was also selected in 1999 as one of North Carolina's most historic and important landscapes by the American Society of Landscape Architects, with designation as one of 350 national Medallion Award sites, locally along with the Biltmore Estate and the Blue Ridge Parkway. The plaque received along with our local historic district designation plaque are prominently displayed and mounted on a large rock in The Circle.

The neighborhood is a sociable group with many community events including an annual Easter egg hunt, neighborhood clean-ups, and a Fourth of July parade. The neighborhood kicks off summer with a kickball game in the park and residents throw porch parties throughout the warm months. They share bowls of chili in the park in the fall and celebrate the holiday season together with a progressive dinner party that always ends with dessert at The Manor Inn.

This is an engaged and tight-knit neighborhood, close to downtown and steeped in the knowledge that those who live there are the privileged stewards of a very important part of Asheville's history.

3. NEIGHBORHOOD VISION

- Maintain our residential neighborhood – our strength, our vision and our challenge
- Maintain our historic integrity
- Maintain a high level and quality of preservation and restoration to maintain this vision
- Keep commercial uses including short-term and vacation rentals out of the neighborhood
- Put utilities underground
- Make Charlotte Street a walkable street and improve pedestrian safety – access to local services, amenities for those who live in the area not tourists
- Utilize compatible traffic calming measures in the district to slow down through traffic
- Use a traffic circle at Edwin and Charlotte to help safe traffic flow – provide gateway to the surrounding historic residential neighborhoods
- Improve in-ground infrastructure
- Improve storm water collection efficiency with neighborhood appropriate upgrades including restoration of brick swale drainage system
- Restore/correct Cherokee Creek flow to its streambed
- Look at improving parking solutions in a neighborhood not designed for cars while still maintaining the historic character

WHAT RESPONSIBILITIES WE TAKE

We have an organized and active 501c3 association that meets regularly to address our challenges and plan for the future. We work closely with the City's Neighborhood Coordinator and Historic Resources Commission. We hold an annual clean-up and take on projects such as cleaning drainage swales, restoring Hillside Walk, planting trees in The Circle, and procuring historic street lighting.

- Encourage appropriate and compatible commercial development along Charlotte Street that provides amenities and services to the surrounding neighborhoods
- Albemarle Park can be a model historic neighborhood in the 21st century
- Promote Tai Chi and other community activities in the park
- Expect support from the City for maintenance and preservation of the historic public fabric and infrastructure
- Provide better education and welcome for new residents, both renters and owners, who move into Albemarle Park
- Bring all of the designated National Register Historic District properties within Albemarle Park into the local historic district
- Continue to be involved, caring full-time residents of all ages – young, old, renter, owner – makes for a diverse, rich community

4. NEIGHBORHOOD STRENGTHS

- Strong and broad sense of community
- 501c3 Association
- The small size and well-defined boundaries of the neighborhood
- We know each other well
- Super rare and distinctive example of a great community – it's buildings and size are unique
- Great location – close to town but camouflaged urban oasis
- National and local historic status
- Nationally recognized landscape
- Historic Tree Preserve
- Historic architecture as well as the city's only historic landscape guidelines to protect our resources
- Preservation of all its historic buildings
- Park-like setting
- Walkable community close to downtown
- The neighborhood is part of a scenic route up Sunset mountain particularly for recreational and its dense areas of native vegetation and natural waterways provide an important wildlife corridor
- Albemarle Park is both an important part of near-Downtown/Central Asheville neighborhoods as well as North Asheville, serving as the bridge between these two neighborhood designations.
- Love the nature we have – animals and plants
- Pro-active in protecting and improving the historic public infrastructure – street signs, lights, cleaning swales, etc. Have raised money to contribute to improving and maintaining public way improvements as a contribution to the City of Asheville.
- Strong sense of our neighborhood history and its innovative design for a steep mountainside setting (neighborhood has been involved in writing two historic books on the area).
- A well-documented architectural, landscape and social history in two publications: *The Manor & Cottages* by Jane & Rich Mathews and *Images of America, Asheville's Albemarle Park* by Stacy A. Merten and Robert O. Sauer
- Care about not only Albemarle Park but the surrounding neighborhoods
- Have been active citizens, involved in public discourse and planning

HOW WE ALIGN WITH CITY GOVERNMENT

We are active citizens. We attend public meetings, perform community outreach, and support the goals of the City Council with special emphasis on walkable communities, historic preservation, sustaining residential communities, open space and habitat protection, storm water planning and design, and effective community engagement.

- A neighborhood of Involved, caring full-time residents of all ages – young, old, renter, owner – makes for a diverse, rich community
- Seven undeveloped land parcels potentially available for future housing stock or naturalized open space/greenway connections

5. NEIGHBORHOOD CHALLENGES

- Speeding on Cherokee and Orchard Roads
- Short-term and vacation rental threat
- Increased storm water issues due to development above Albemarle Park and inadequate city infrastructure
- Historic properties that are part of the Albemarle Park National Register District but which were not included in the local historic designation – their protection is not guaranteed and the potential for future non-compatible development is a threat to this important and intact historic neighborhood and resource.
- Aging trees, particularly along city streets
- Prostitution – history of illegal activities taking place in The Manor parking lot and in the parking lot of the clubhouse (The Albemarle Park Offices).
- Our neighborhood's location is both our strength and our challenge
- Loss of electricity due to trees falling – in our neighborhood as well as from trees falling on distribution lines in adjoining or near neighborhoods.
- Walkability of Charlotte Street
- Ownership, maintenance and restoration of Hillside Walk – City does not consider it a public way though the neighborhood's opinion is that this is a public connection from Charlotte Street into Albemarle Park.

6. NEIGHBORHOOD RESPONSIBILITIES – ALBEMARLE PARK (AP) VERSUS CITY

CITY: Speeding on Cherokee and Orchard Roads City needs to look at traffic calming measures and enforcement of speed limits to protect neighborhood that does not have sidewalks – we need to be able to walk safely along our streets

CITY AND TO SOME DEGREE AP: Short-term and vacation rental threat – City needs to protect in-town neighborhoods and pro-actively enforce its laws and not leave neighbors to do all the local policing; AP needs to be vigilant to these intrusive uses and encourage neighbors to work together to maintain the residential character, be contributing members of the neighborhood and not "strip mine" our local resources for commercial use.

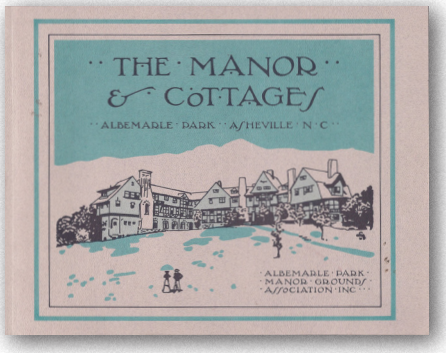
CITY AND TO SOME DEGREE AP: Increased storm water issues due to development above Albemarle Park and inadequate city infrastructure. The City needs to work with AP to find storm water solutions; AP is working to pro-actively provide input on that, identifying the worst problems and potential options; solutions need to have a foundation in the historic storm water designs for the neighborhood. AP residents will work to keep drains near their homes free of debris.

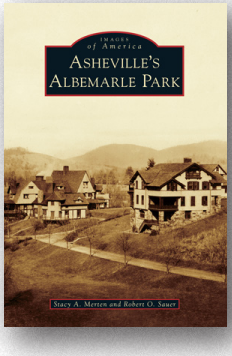
CITY AND AP IN PARTNERSHIP: Historic properties that are part of the Albemarle Park National Register District but which were not included in the local historic designation – their protection is not guaranteed and the potential for future non-compatible development is a threat to this important and intact historic neighborhood and resource. The Albemarle Park neighborhood should engage in discussions with the owners of properties excluded from the local historic district, provide education as to the benefits of inclusion, and encourage them to request to be added to the district in collaboration with City staff. City Council should look to adding these missing links from the National Register District and protect these valuable historic resources and the entry to the neighborhood.

CITY AND AP IN PARTNERSHIP: Aging trees, particularly along city streets The City should look to provide and install appropriate replacements for the street trees that are reaching the end of their life, particularly the Green Ash allée along Cherokee Road and the lost oaks and Norway Spruce in The Circle Park. Albemarle Park residents have been, and will continue to

OUR VISION

To maintain the tight-knit residential and historic character of our community and connect to the broader community via walkable streets, activities for all in The Circle, and continued engagement in community issues.





assist with maintenance of the park, mulching trees planted by the City and cleaning out the swale. Residents are encouraged to re-plant lost or missing trees noted in the historic tree inventory prepared by Dr. Lowell Orbison and Al Kopf, ASLA and as per the Albemarle Park Historic Landscape Guidelines.

CITY AND AP IN PARTNERSHIP: Prostitution – history of illegal activities taking place in The Manor parking lot and in the parking lot of the clubhouse (The Albemarle Park Offices). The City should continue to provide regular police patrols within Albemarle Park particularly monitoring areas of known illegal activity. Residents should continue to be the eyes and ears of their neighborhood watch program and foster a strong relationship with its designated police representative to the neighborhood.

CITY: Loss of electricity due to trees falling – in our neighborhood as well as from trees falling on distribution lines in adjoining or near neighborhoods. The neighborhood highly encourages the City to work with Duke Energy Progress to bury all power lines within Albemarle Park and along Charlotte Street. Individual property owners are beginning to bury their own power lines from their homes to the poles and other residents are encouraged to do the same in hopes of minimizing the number of overhead lines.

CITY AND AP IN PARTNERSHIP: Walkability of Charlotte Street Albemarle Park residents supported this goal as a part of the 2010 Charlotte Street Plan including the reduction of traffic lanes to three, widening of sidewalks, addition of bike lanes, and the reduction of the speed of vehicular traffic. As the City moves forward with the Charlotte Street Innovation Zone improvements, the residents of Albemarle Park ask the City to adopt the Plan recommendations and the neighborhood will continue to be active in the process of planning for these improvements.

CITY: Maintenance and restoration of Hillside Walk – City does not consider it a public way Albemarle Park begs to differ in its opinion as to who is responsible for Hillside Walk. This is a major public way that dates from the time that Albemarle Park was a shared landscape. It provides public access from Charlotte Street into the historic district and in a neighborhood without sidewalks, should be considered an important pedestrian route by the City. Residents have invested private funds in restoration of approximately 50% of Hillside Walk. We ask the City to repair the remaining 50% to create a safe and historically appropriate access into the neighborhood from the Charlotte Street commercial corridor.

AP: Continue to be active citizen participants in public discourse and the establishment of public policy as it relates to and effects Albemarle Park, in particular related to the preservation of its historic resources and the maintaining of the residential character and stability of the neighborhood.

7. ALIGNMENT WITH CITY COUNCIL GOALS

FOCUS AREA 1 – ECONOMIC GROWTH AND SUSTAINABILITY
Goal 2: Invest and leverage investment in Community Infrastructure

In regards to specific "Action Items" listed as City Council goals two under Goal 2 stand out:

- **Action Item:** Evaluate the opportunities to improve ART Services – Albemarle residents would benefit from having bus service that came on a more regular basis (say, every 20 minutes) allowing us to use the bus to get into downtown or to work versus driving
- **Action Item:** Respond to results of Asheville in Motion Plan incorporating Complete Streets and Multi-modal transportation policies – Albemarle residents want improvements made to Charlotte Street to create a safe pedestrian-friendly street with sidewalks wide-enough for two to walk side-by-side, without power poles in the middle and eliminating the plethora of lot-wide curb cuts. We also advocate bike lanes and routes that allow both adults and children to travel by bike to downtown and connecting to other surrounding neighborhood as well as the City's developing greenway system.

In addition, we would recommend the following action items that would improve Albemarle Park's infrastructure:

- We would add under infrastructure the need to find environmentally-sensitive and historically appropriate stormwater solutions to alleviate the problems neighborhoods such as ours face from expanding up-hill residential development that is currently unregulated by stormwater regulations. We ask the City to look at the landmark historic stormwater

OUR MISSION

Actively promote and facilitate the identification, preservation and documentation of the architecture, landscape architecture, and social and cultural history of Albemarle Park; to promote public awareness of these significant historic contributions to the development of Western North Carolina and to the history of architecture and landscape architecture in the United States; and to assist efforts to preserve and restore significant features, documents, buildings and objects pertaining to the architecture, landscape architecture, and social and economic history of Albemarle Park, for the benefit of all of the community of Asheville and Buncombe County.

system in Albemarle Park including the restoration of our original brick swales to model appropriate solutions.

- We ask that streets in Albemarle as well as along Charlotte Street be milled down and repaved using a surface material that is more appropriate within our historic district. In some areas the original brick pavers still exist below the asphalt. Our streets have had years and years of asphalt added to the point where the streets are well above the walks to our homes or, as along Charlotte Street, almost in line with the top of the sidewalk creating a dangerous situation for pedestrians who are in close proximity to the road and fast moving vehicles.
- We would look to the City to take on a concerted effort to replant street trees along older City streets including the historic Green Ash alleé along Cherokee Road, all designated Treasure Trees and Norway Spruce along Kimberly.

Goal 4: Support Staff's continued implementation of operational efficiencies and practices of sustainability

In regards to specific "Action Items" listed as City Council goals two under Goal 4 stand out:

- **Action Item:** Implement environmentally sustainable storm water planning policies – Albemarle Park has a nationally recognized landscape design which includes environmentally sustainable and historically appropriate storm water management planning. However, it was designed to accommodate the natural flow of storm water from Sunset Mountain above using natural stream channels and man-made conveyances in Albemarle Park. The lack of storm water management above our neighborhood has over-loaded a storm water system that has worked for more than 100 years. We ask City assistance to find appropriate solutions to protect our storm water system and to manage runoff above us in an environmentally appropriate and sustainable way.
- **Action Item:** Research possible loose leaf collection models – for many years the City's vacuum system of collecting fall leaves as well as creating a neighborhood based leaf-lot for community compost was a wonderful environmental solution and great community resource. Consideration of distributed community-leaf lots would be a great, albeit old, idea to reinstate.

FOCUS AREA 2: AFFORDABILITY AND ECONOMIC MOBILITY

Goal 1: Expand Asheville's supply of quality, affordable homes for current and future residents

- **Action Item:** Promote affordable housing located close to the CBD, jobs, and transportation – Albemarle Park has a rich diversity of home owners and renters, young and old, representing a broad range of economic backgrounds. In addition, our neighborhood contains seven property parcels that potentially could be used to expand Asheville's housing stock within the context of the historic district guidelines or which could provide naturalized greenway connections. We ask for protection of our neighborhood from the introduction of commercial endeavors, particularly those that cater to tourism. Our neighborhoods variety of housing types provides an important resource to Asheville and we are a neighborhood that is literally defined by this action item – close to the CBD, jobs and transportation. But Albemarle Park's proximity to those resources also makes us attractive to speculative investment that lures tourists to near-downtown neighborhoods for alternative, by no means more affordable, lodging.

FOCUS AREA 3: HIGH QUALITY OF LIFE

Goal 1: Make Asheville one of the safest cities in America based on approved metrics for similarly sized cities

- **Action Item:** Address traffic and pedestrian safety throughout Asheville in partnership with the North Carolina Department of Transportation – As a historic neighborhood comprised of what were originally narrow horse and buggy streets and without sidewalks, concern for pedestrian safety is high. Cut-through traffic, particularly coming down the mountain along Cherokee Road or on Orchard Road heading to Albemarle Road, hit high rates of speed and jeopardize those of us who must use the streets to walk. We ask the city to explore appropriate traffic calming solutions along these streets to slow vehicular traffic and help maintain a safe multi-modal network within the historic district.

Consulting with APMGA members to ensure historic accuracy, the City of Asheville contracted with stone masons, Independent Stoneworks to rebuild our wall at Cherokee & Sunset Drive in 2013.

Goal 4: Continue to develop City Council communications and partnerships with citizens, community leaders, the media and elected officials.

- **Action Item:** Evaluate and implement best practices to improve effective community engagement – Endeavors such as a having a dedicated city staff person as neighborhood Coordinator as well as implementing the Neighborhood Advisory Committee are good starts. Creating a defined procedure for neighborhood feedback and follow-up on issues would be helpful. Particularly where enforcement of city zoning codes and reporting of violations relies on a complaint-based system, keeping neighborhoods well informed and updated on
- **Action Item:** Explore opportunities to implement open data policies – the more informed citizens are, and the more access they have to the things that impact neighborhoods, the better community we will have. Easily being able to find where and what permits have been issued and what violations have been reported are just two of the tools that can assist neighborhoods.

8. ALIGNMENT WITH ASHEVILLE CITY DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2025 GOALS

Albemarle Parks exemplifies Smart Growth Land Use Policies

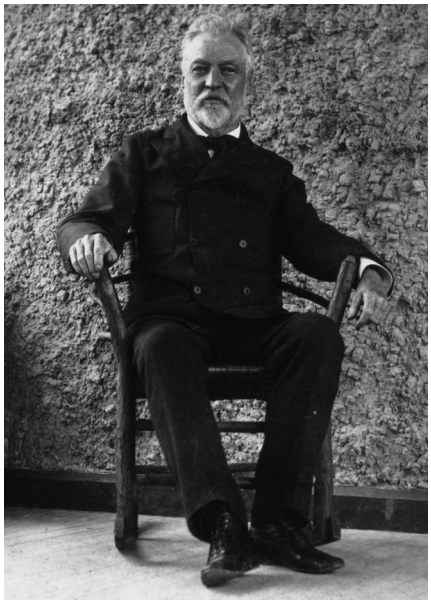
- Developed to nestle homes within the steep mountain hillside, preserving grades, trees and vegetation, this neighborhood has been nationally recognized for its innovative site planning and landscape design. Developed in the late 1800's, this neighborhood has served as the model for a number of new urbanist, smart growth developments throughout the mountains in late 20th and into the 21st century. It provides a diverse mix of housing types, both rental and home ownership, is a dense but livable neighborhood with a small city park and narrow streets and stone walkways that serve to knit this well-defined historic district.

The following goals of Smart Growth are represented by Albemarle Park and maintaining those will help protect this important historic resource.

- Traditional neighborhood development patterns should be recognized and encouraged
- Areas with steep slopes and environmentally sensitive areas should be identified and preserved while allowing alternates to development that protect private property rights
- Existing neighborhoods near Downtown Asheville should be strengthened through infill development, housing rehabilitation, proactive enforcement of zoning and building standards, housing code enforcement
- Strongly encourage improvements that make Asheville a premier walking and biking community, including the use of evaluative and regulatory tools and capital improvements.

Under Affordable Housing Goals and Strategies

- Albemarle Park is supportive of providing affordable housing options for Asheville's residents – at all economic levels and with a diversity of housing types, realizing that one size does not fit all.
- Under Goal III, we particularly support the goal that new housing be compatible with existing neighborhoods and community development patterns, including the use of development incentives, code streamlining efforts (in conjunction with a proactive enforcement by City staff versus primarily relying on complaint-based enforcement), neighborhood design standards, and inclusionary zoning practices.
- We see as important the strategy that "zoning incentives for construction of affordable housing are balanced by careful attention to good site design, construction quality, and good neighborhood compatible housing design."
- Under Goal IV – with the conversion of much needed housing to tourist accommodations, we feel that Council needs to take stock of this goal again and take its purpose to heart to "address the housing problem in a coordinated and comprehensive fashion by allocating available resources to address both the supply and demand side of the affordable housing issues, as well as promoting public education about the extent of the problem".
- The use of strategies such as providing financial and organizational support not only to non-profits, but to affordable housing produced by for-profit developers would be a way to encourage economic development in housing Ashevillians over transients.



In 1886, William Green Raoul purchased the 35-acre R.W. Deaver farm with the intention of building a summer place for his family. By 1897, he had decided to develop the property into a "residential park" with an English inn, housekeeping cottages and private residences.

Open Space, Forest and Wildlife Habitat Protection

As a neighborhood nestled within an urban forest, we believe that the following principles noted in the Comprehensive Plan are important to the protection of our neighborhood's natural environment as well as the great Asheville area.

- Protect urban parks, gardens, and riverways & create greenway networks throughout the city.
- Build livable communities by setting aside open space in the path of growth
- Conserve land for watershed protection, scenic beauty, and close-to-home recreation
- Safeguard the character of communities by preserving historic landmarks and landscapes

Goal I - Protect scenic views and vistas – we support the continued protection of steep slopes through enhancement, and we'd encourage strengthening, of the hillside development regulations and technical standards for development on steep slopes. This together with the strategy to develop specific regulations addressing ridgetop development and land clearing to preserve scenic view and vistas is important to those of us at the bottom of the mountain who are taking the brunt of development above us in the form of horrendous and now regular storm water events that cause flooding and extensive erosion along our natural waterways.

Goal III – identify areas of unique natural heritage, primary scenic vistas, potential wildlife corridors, and areas of critical environmental sensitivity; develop programs for the conservation of these areas – this defines Albemarle Park – give consideration to preservation of our landscape and to working with the neighborhood to put sensitive areas in conservation protection.

- Develop a city-wide landscape and tree-protection ordinance similar to what Albemarle Park pioneered, developed and had adopted by the Historic Resources Commission.

Green Building

- Energy efficiency and smart use of our land and natural resources is important to us all and we encourage City Council to continue to promote all aspects of sustainability.
- Paying for garbage by weight and encouraging recycling by eliminating fees.

Historic Preservation

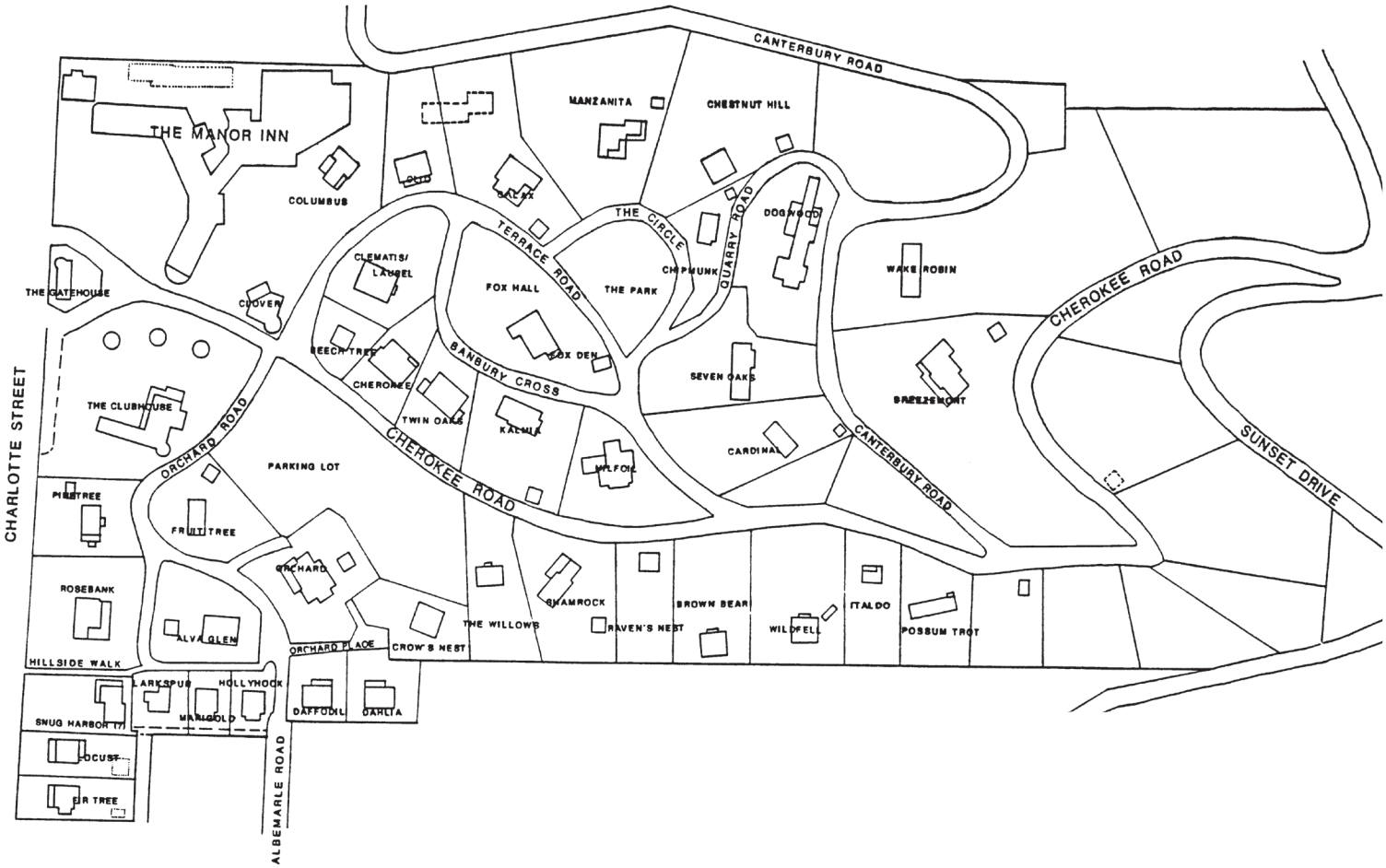
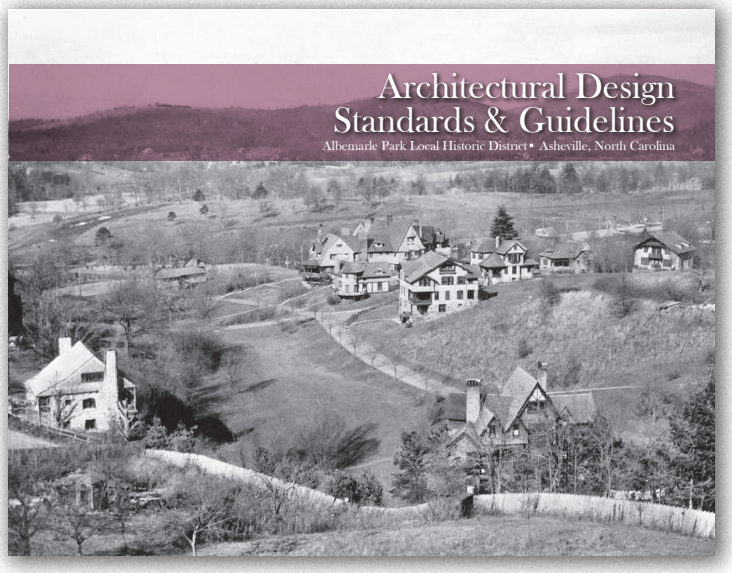
Goal II – Continuing efforts involving preservation, enhancement and management of change within local historic district and properties and the continuing education towards preservation of historic resources in The City of Asheville

- As one of Asheville's four local historic districts and as a nationally recognized district, we wholeheartedly support and need this goal to be supported by Council and indeed, strengthened.
- We encourage Council to ask staff to work with property owners who were politically "cut" from the Albemarle Park local district at inception to consider willingly joining the historic district to preserve their historic resource.
- Education by staff along with support from those already in the district, can help to ultimately preserve an intact historic planning community for the future. These are important structures that serve as the gateway to Albemarle Park. Their adaptive reuse while protecting their historic integrity will bring value to all of Asheville and enrich its cultural history.

Goal III – Encourage neighborhood livability and property values through the restoration and rehabilitation of existing and future historic districts consistent with the Smart Growth initiatives.

- We would encourage protection of Asheville's historic neighborhoods, most of which are close to downtown, to schools, to institutions and local businesses and to jobs. Neighborhoods like Albemarle Park provides homes as well as a rich community, all which contribute to making Asheville a great city.
- We welcome and encourage the rehabilitation of the historic properties that line Charlotte Street and that are part of the Albemarle Park National Register Historic District to house businesses that serve, enrich and are supported by the surrounding residential neighborhoods.

ALBEMARLE PARK: MAP OF THE COTTAGES



ALBEMARLE PARK: OUR GUIDING DOCUMENTS