

OVERTOWN REDEVELOPMENT AREA DESIGN CHARRETTE

The Citizen's Vision



THE LYRIC THEATRE is a symbol for the community representing the potential for all things possible in the revitalization of Overtown. The recent grand re-opening of the restored Lyric Theatre showcases the essence of the preservation of Overtown's history. The Lyric Theatre is not through growing. The above drawing shows a proposed expansion to the theatre that will signal the "Harlem Renaissance of the South" and increase the potential for a variety of entertainment uses such as a new "Lyric Cafe" along N.E. 2nd Avenue.

HISTORY OF THE OVERTOWN CITIZEN'S VISION

Many attempts have been made to revitalize Overtown. There have been many studies and plans developed over the years. There have been many promises made. It is fairly obvious that not much has changed in Overtown. Most people agree that the area needs improvement. What has changed is that this time the entire *community* was asked to participate in and create a *Citizen's Vision for Overtown*.

In 1998, many concerned community leaders began the process of developing the idea of working together with property owners, residents, and government to build consensus on the future of development in Overtown. This group spent over a year organizing community support and fundraising leading up to a week long design "charrette". A charrette is the coming together of residents with town planners and urban designers in a series of community meetings to develop a unified vision for the growth and development of an area.

During the week of July 16, 1999, a design charrette was conducted. The charrette opened with a "Kick-off" session held at the newly renovated Lyric Theatre. The wet paint dried just in time to host this first *unofficial* opening of the Theatre.

Everyone was invited to attend the charrette. Participants were asked things like: what does your neighborhood need? Is it a park, a daycare facility, housing, better streets or a drugstore? If so, where should these go? What should these things look like?

THE MISSION STATEMENT - THE OVERTOWN CHARRETTE

The mission of the Overtown Design Charrette is to engage the entire Overtown community in creating a unified vision for the residential and commercial renaissance of Overtown. The vision aims to restore Overtown as a destination and to higher levels of self-sufficiency and economic and social viability.

This vision aims to:

- Empower current residents and business owners in Overtown to participate in and benefit from the renewal process;
- Elevate Overtown to new levels of economic and social viability and quality of life; and
- Make Overtown a national model for "grassroot" urban revitalization.

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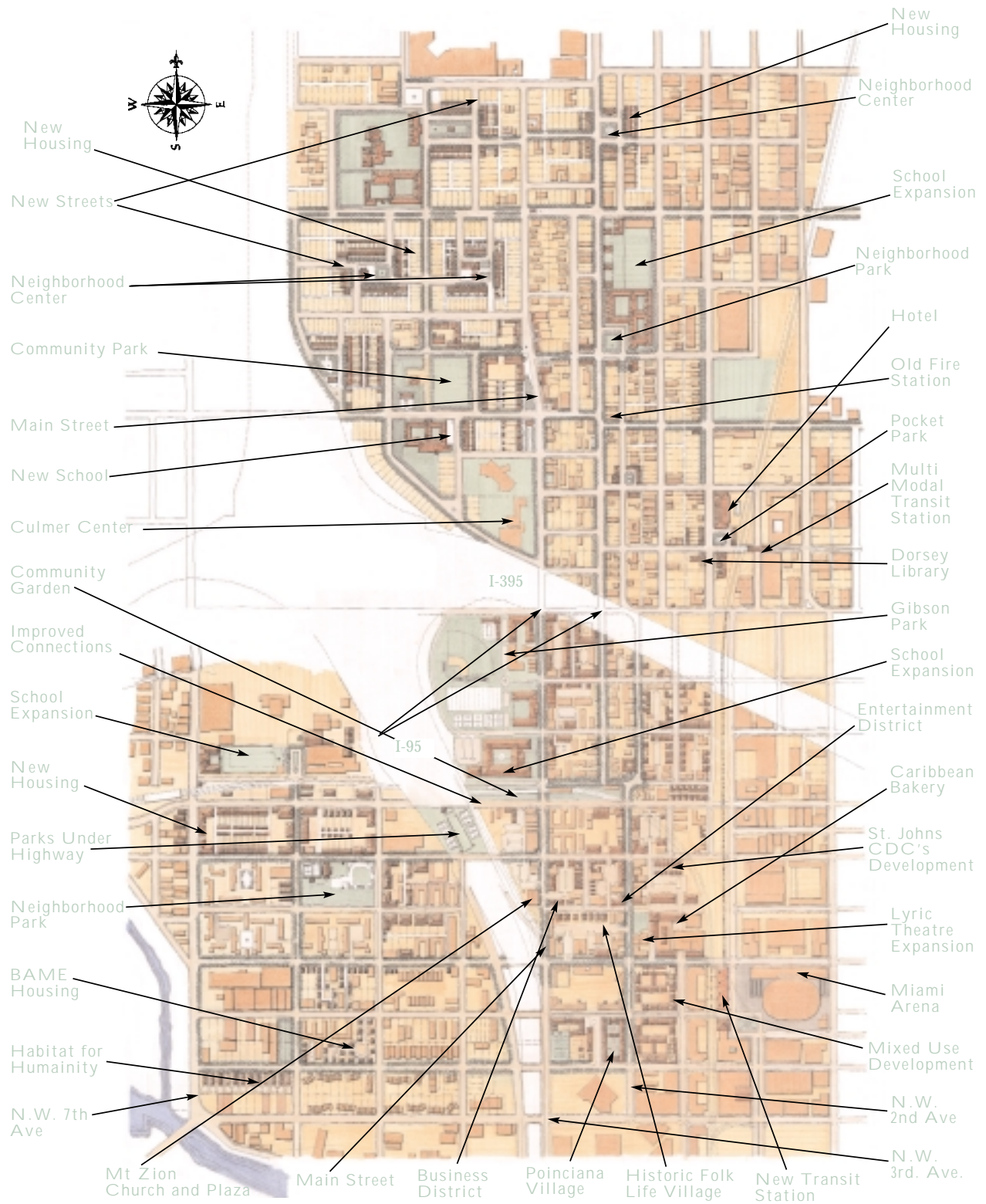
The event continued until July 23rd, 1999, at the historic Dorsey House where the design team rendered the Citizen's Vision in images, diagrams and words.

CITIZENS CHOOSE THEIR FUTURE

During the charrette many local participants expressed the need for immediate action. They want to raise their community's ambition to a higher level. This Citizen's Vision is a tool for an historic turnaround, if City officials and Citizens work together as a united group. Great ideas of what could be done have been drawn up. Coherent ideas for replacing the

current chaos have emerged from working together on this project. These are attainable visions, not just pretty pictures. The physical place that could grow during the next generation would be a national model of inspiration, practicality and wonder.

WHAT'S IN THE VISION?



The Citizen's Ideas for Renaissance.

ATTRACTING BUSINESS AND ENTERTAINMENT DEVELOPMENT



Before



After

Facade programs can have a dramatic effect on the look and feel of a community and can help to promote economic development and activity. The Barkley Building on N.E. 2nd Avenue comes to life with shops on the ground floor and space above that can be used for a residence for the shopkeeper, apartments, or office space.



Before



After

Restoration of the Cola Nip building has its roots deeply set in Overtown's community and memory. The reconstruction of this building should be included in historic preservation plans for the area. The ground floor is ideal to house commercial uses with loft-type apartments upstairs, as proposed by the citizens.



Lyric Theater Expansion



Artists such as the legendary Aretha Franklin were among the many to perform in the Lyric Theatre. With this historic venue restored, she and others are welcome to perform again.



- 1) 27 Single family units w/ outbuildings
- 2) 25,000 SF of retail/office
- 3) 120 parking spaces
- 4) 10,000 SF Hall
- 5) Lyric Cafe'

New Development:
Different alternatives



- 1) 25,000 SF Bakery
- 2) Liner Retail
- 3) +/- 400 space Garage
- 4) MixedUse Office/Retail
- 5) 10,000 SF Hall

New Development:
Different alternatives



- 1) 25,000 SF Bakery
- 2) Liner Retail
- 3) +/- 300 Space Garage
- 4) Mixed-Use Office/Retail
- 5) 10,000 SF Hall

New Development includes the Lyric Theater expansion, the Caribbean Bakery and St. John's CDC mixed-use project. These are just some of the proposals suggested by the citizens for a business and entertainment renaissance in Overtown.

HOUSING



New Housing



Restoring Housing Opportunities in Commercial Buildings



Infill and Public Housing Redevelopment Opportunities

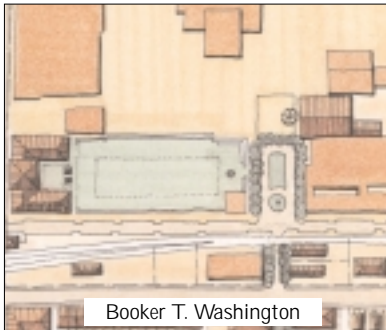


Restoration of Historic Housing Stock

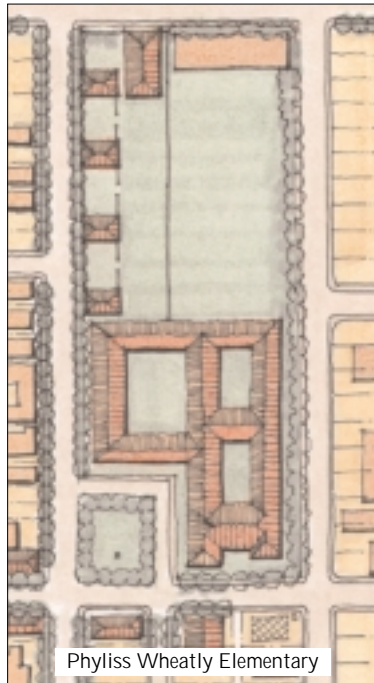
Housing For Everyone

Overtown has a very rich history of housing types. The charrette team was asked to provide several examples of housing types that would fit within their community, satisfy the needs of existing residents and attract new ones. In other words, a diverse mix or range of housing affordable to everyone. Residents asked that new housing be designed to include a front porch where social gatherings take place.

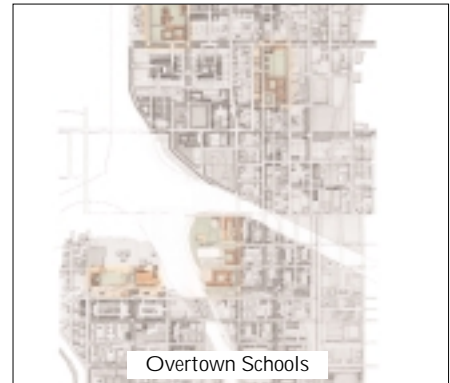
SCHOOLS



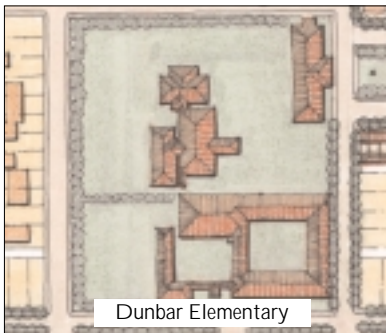
Booker T. Washington



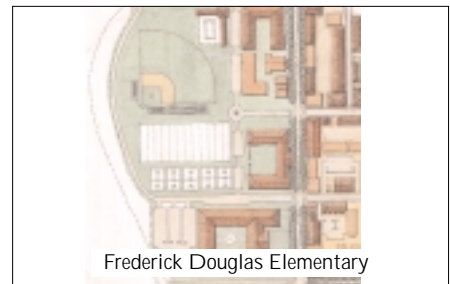
Phyllis Wheatly Elementary



Overtown Schools



Dunbar Elementary



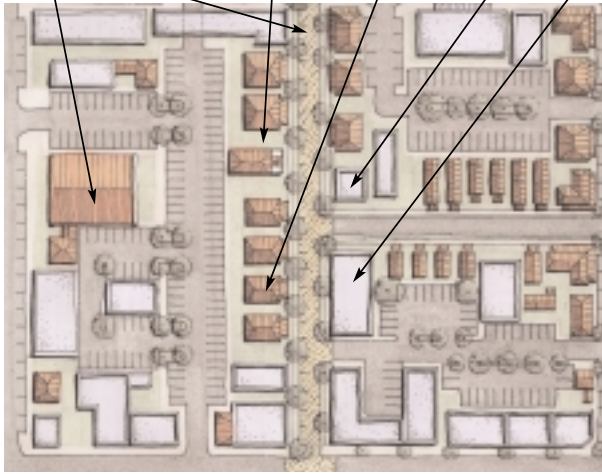
Frederick Douglas Elementary

Schools are an important part of the community

Improvement plans for neighborhood schools are drawn up by the community. Booker T. Washington High School returns to Overtown. For over two decades there has been no community High School in Overtown. As each school grows and improves it becomes a greater part of the community fabric.

CREATING JOBS

Greater Bethel A.M.E. Church 9th Street Mall Dorsey House New Housing Ward House Cola Nip Building



The Folk Life Village



Restoring 2nd And 3rd Avenue-A New Address for Business And Entertainment

Job creation for Overtown Residents is seen as a priority for residents. Businesses that meet the needs of the community are encouraged. The Historic Folk Life Village and the 2nd and 3rd Avenue Corridors can become job centers. The Community Redevelopment Agency and Empowerment Zone must assist with the business development. Overtown's designation as a "Florida Main Street" is one immediate result of the charrette.

RECONCILING ZONING



Before/Allowed

Ninth Street looking east towards Biscayne Tower and Biscayne View apartments. Current zoning for this street and others allow the continuation of tall buildings and even communication towers. This is not the citizen's vision for Overtown.



After

The same view with zoning brought into line with the magnitude and scale suggested by the Citizen's Vision for Overtown's redevelopment. The City must revise its zoning code to ensure the citizen's vision is realized.



Before



After

MIAMI ARENA

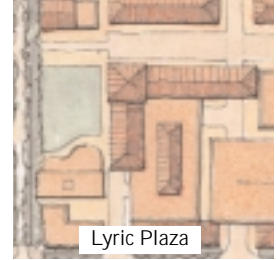
No longer a venue for Miami Heat games, the Miami Arena exists as a large void in the fabric of Overtown which needs to be treated as an important and immediate redevelopment project to stabilize the area. One vision is to wrap the arena with buildings to reactivate the area. Hmmmm.... Another idea... The site as a new home for the Florida Marlins. An urban baseball stadium - ala Jacob's Field in Cleveland and Camden Yards in Baltimore - wrapped with buildings and carefully knitted back into the fabric of Overtown. This would be a wonderful addition to the community and contribute to the renaissance for the entire area.

COMMUNITY IDENTITY



A celebration of culture and community identity can be realized with street lighting and entrance markers announcing the arrival into a special place.

COMMUNITY PARKS



CELEBRATE THE ENTRANCES TO OVERTOWN



N.W. 3rd Avenue and 8th Street

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20th Street and 22nd Avenue

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LEAVE A WORTHY LEGACY

This is an interesting time in the history of South Florida and Overtown, perhaps even comparable in some ways to the 1920's when Florida was being rapidly settled. To lure people to the unsettled territory, developers went out of their way to create beauty and a sense of history. In the process, talented designers left marvelous gifts to future generations in Addison Mizner's Boca Raton, George Merrick's Coral Gables, and John Nolen's West Palm Beach. Overtown had its own history, a great community with a bustling Main Street, churches, black owned stores and shotgun houses. Now, at the turn of the millennium, Florida communities are resuming work on this legacy. It is time for Overtown to mature past the "anything goes" mentality which has gripped the community for so long. Imagine what your grandchildren might see in this place. Get involved in your community today!



Before



After

The Ward Rooming House



Before



After

Mixed use building N.W. 3rd Avenue



Mixed use building N.W. 3rd Avenue

The Miami Herald
Friday, July 16, 1999
Opinion Page

OVERTOWN OVERHAUL

Residents Invited to Design Charrette

If goals are clear, Eastward Ho! can help realize them.

So much has been done to Overtown, little of which has been to its benefit, that it is imperative that residents take part in doing something for Overtown. The neighborhood's future's in play, and residents must be in on the planning.

This weekend a design charrette, part of the Eastward Ho! Initiative, will tackle Overtown's lack of housing, business and infrastructure. A charrette is a formal brainstorming session where residents work with designers, town planners and government officials to design a new Overtown.

It may sound like the unfulfilled, pie-in-the-sky promises that its declining population has heard for decades. But if residents hold government agencies and property owners and themselves accountable, they can break the cycle of broken vows.

Overtown, a deteriorated neighborhood positioned on downtown Miami's northern

fringe, is ripe for change. It lies in a federally designated "empowerment zone" designed to encourage economic development there; the city of Miami has declared it an arts and entertainment district, and some production facilities are already showing enough faith to locate there.

The city this week appointed former Miami International Airport Director Richard Judy to head its Community Redevelopment Agency, so far an agency of scant accomplishment. Mr. Judy must seize the opportunity.

The Overtown Advisory Board, Eastward Ho! (which encourages redevelopment in interior neighborhoods rather than westward sprawl) and other agencies have been working since January to organize this charrette. Eastward Ho! staffers says that their initiative is the glue that can match the residents' vision to the resources to accomplish it.

HOW THIS MASTER PLAN WAS CREATED



Step One - Kick-Off Meeting - Members of the community and elected officials gather at the Lyric Theater to learn about the charrette process.



Step Two - Charrette Day - With maps of Overtown, community members gather at the Mt. Zion Church and work in groups with urban design professionals to share and draw their ideas for the revitalization of Overtown.



Why are these people smiling? They have stopped by the Dorsey House to observe the design team at work and know the future of their community is bright.

Step Three - Citizen Presentations - A citizen spokesperson presents the groups main ideas developed during the days work. These ideas become the basis of the Citizen's Vision. The design team then works to consolidate all the common ideas into one vision - the Citizen's.

Special Thanks to the Charrette Sponsors

Florida Department of Community Affairs
 John D. & Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation
 Citizens for a Better South Florida
 Hilda Tejera Family
 National Audubon Society
 South Florida Community Urban Resources & Department of Agriculture
 Fannie Mae
 Sun Trust Bank
 Espirito Santo Bank
 Nations Bank
 Miami Community Redevelopment Agency
 South Florida Water Management District
 Miami Downtown Development Authority
 Overtown Advisory Board
 Charrette Steering Committee
 Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council
 South Florida Regional Planning Council
 City of Miami
 Mt. Zion Church
 St. John CDC
 The Black Archives
 and the residents of Overtown



Step Four - Documenting the Vision - The design team spent an entire week at the Dorsey Housing following the charrette, refining the citizen's ideas and developing the Citizen's Vision and the drawings included in this document.

The Mission Statement Continued From Page 1. With community involvement the Overtown Charrette will identify the infrastructure and resources necessary to achieve this vision by promoting employment opportunities and economic growth as well as a clean, safe, attractive environment for residents, businesses, and tourists. To this end, the Charrette will seek out knowledge, wisdom, and opinions of Overtown residents, past and present; Overtown organizations; Overtown churches; Overtown business owners; and other individuals and/or organizations that have an interest in the community. The Charrette will build on past learning experiences and incorporate existing planning studies into a holistic strategy for implementation. This vision will be the guiding force for all future Overtown redevelopment.

Overtown Charrette Committee - May 12, 1999