

**Please Join Us For Upstate Forever's
Annual Meeting at the Hopkins Farm
A Spectacular 600-Acre Tract With Over A Mile
of Frontage Along the Reedy River and Site of the
Battle of the Great Canebrake
Saturday, November 10, 2001
Noon: BBQ Lunch 1 p.m.: Annual Meeting
2-4 p.m.: Tour of Property
Please call or e-mail us to reserve your place!**

UPSTATE UPDATE NUMBER 27

November 6, 2001

1. Bid and Boogie Fundraiser A Huge Success!

We are pleased to report that our Second Annual “Bid and Boogie” Fundraiser on October 23 was a great success, raising over \$15,000 for *Upstate Forever*—more than twice as much as last year! ☺ ☺ Almost 200 people turned out to enjoy the music of the Cloudlanders, to feast on the sumptuous food provided by Johann’s Restaurant, and to put their bids in on many terrific items. Heartfelt thanks to our sponsors—the Furman Company, Prudential C. Dan Joyner, Neal, Prince Architects, Wachovia, and Courtney Shives—and to all of the wonderful businesses and individuals who contributed the fantastic auction items. And many thanks to all of the *Upstate Forever* members who were there!

2. Upstate Forever Writes and Speaks Out About Smart Growth in Spartanburg County!

The Spartanburg Herald-Journal hosted a Smart Growth Forum on October 25 at Spartanburg Technical College. *Upstate Forever* Executive Director Brad Wyche joined Frank Nutt, a member of Spartanburg County Council, James Talley, Mayor of Spartanburg, Dr. Ron Romine of the University of South Carolina at Spartanburg, and Donna London with the Storm Thurmond Institute for a wide-ranging discussion of growth and land

use issues facing Spartanburg County. For two hours the panel fielded questions from Herald-Journal editor Mike Smith and an audience of approximately 80 people. It was a great opportunity to discuss and debate these critical issues.

Prior to the forum, the Herald-Journal published the following editorial that Brad wrote about growth in Spartanburg County:

THE FUTURE OF SPARTANBURG COUNTY: WHICH WAY TO GO?

“Yogi Berra said, ‘When you come to a fork in the road, take it.’

“Spartanburg County has arrived at the fork in the road to its destiny. Its population now exceeds 250,000 and continues to increase at the rate of about 7 people per day.

“Land in the county is being developed at the rate of over 10 acres per day, which is the equivalent of a brand new WestGate Mall every 6 days. It is the highest rate of land development in South Carolina!

“Farmland in Spartanburg County is being lost at the rate of about 100 acres per month.

“But one thing is for certain: The county is going to continue to grow and develop. We cannot and should not build a wall around Spartanburg County and say “no more people, no more business.” The fact is that by the year 2015, there will be 39,000 more county residents, who will need 14,000 more homes, drive 26,000 more cars, and discharge 5.6 million more gallons per day of wastewater. The great challenge facing Spartanburg County is where all of these new residents will live and work and how their needs will be met.

“One fork in the road will continue the county on its current path of rapid development, minimal land use controls, and little coordination among service providers (sewer, water, roads and schools). At the end of this road is a place that will look very much like Atlanta.

“There are powerful pressures in the county that will push hard in that direction. One is institutional, characterized by the mind-boggling number of government entities and agencies that provide services in Spartanburg County: 14 cities and towns, 7 school districts, 7 water districts, 7 sewer districts, and 45 fire districts, plus of course the county itself. A road here, a sewer line there, a new school out in the countryside—the cumulative impact of these decisions is a major factor in determining the nature and direction of growth in the county, yet these decisions are typically made with little or no coordination among the various entities. Case in point: the new Dorman High School.

“Another pressure comes from the many property owners and developers who strongly oppose efforts to plan for and manage the county’s growth. The view that “it’s my property and no one has the right to tell me what I can and cannot do with it!” is widely held in Spartanburg County. It is why there has been a lot of talk, but no action at all, on the issue of zoning in the county. But it is interesting to see how this attitude changes when someone proposes an offensive use or activity nearby. As one Upstate resident said, “I used to be against zoning but when it affects me and family, it’s time to change.” He’s right. In an area that is growing and changing as rapidly as Spartanburg County, zoning has become an essential tool to providing a high quality of life for everyone.

“Strong and well respected voices are being heard in Spartanburg County for changing direction and taking the other fork in the road. Among these are business leaders who recognize the link between managing growth and economic development. They pay attention when Jim Rozier, the Berkeley County Supervisor, attributes most of his county’s spectacular economic success to the fact that they have countywide zoning. They listen when the skilled workers they are recruiting say that the place is now just as important as the company and that they are looking for communities with thriving downtowns, bicycle and walking trails, attractive roads and landscapes, and clean air and water.

“Other voices strongly advocate for the protection of the county’s natural and historic resources. They welcome growth, but not at the price of massive clearcuts, polluted streams, treeless parking lots, and littered roads and fields. They are urging elected officials to provide a dedicated source of revenue to acquire, or protect through conservation easements, many of the county’s special places before it is too late.

“We need a vigorous debate in Spartanburg County about which fork in the road to take, and the Growth Forum which this newspaper is sponsoring on October 25 is a positive step in that direction. I hope that all interested citizens will attend and express their views about the future of this wonderful county.”

3. *Upstate Forever Seeks To Keep Streams In The Daylight!*

Katie Chamberlain, Director of Natural Resource Protection for *Upstate Forever*, wrote the following editorial in The Greenville News on October 18, 2001 about an ill-advised proposal by the City of Greenville’s Parks Department to bury a stream at one of its parks:

OUR STREAMS SHOULD BE RESTORED, NOT BURIED

“The City of Greenville wants to bury about 200 feet of the beautiful stream in Rotary Park in a five-foot wide culvert. Upstate Forever, Friends of the Reedy River, and several concerned citizens can’t believe the City is serious. After all, the City recently spent over \$75,000 for several consultants to evaluate, and recommend ways to revitalize, the Serrine-Haynie neighborhood, which has a number of small streams just like the one in Rotary Park. One of their principal recommendations to the City was: “Do not put any of these streams in a pipe.”

“Upstate Forever hasn’t said simply “don’t do it.” We have presented a better way to do it—a way that meets the City’s objective of improving the park but avoids destroying any part of the stream. It involves restoring the stream by smoothing out the banks and stabilizing them with shrubs and trees, constructing a loop trail for walking and jogging around the stream, and reconfiguring the playground equipment to provide additional open space. The net additional cost is estimated at \$35,000, but this could be reduced by using volunteers to do some of the work. What a great opportunity for neighborhood children to help with planting the trees and shrubs and to learn about stream ecology!

“Other cities are spending substantial sums to actually remove culverts and bring streams back to life—they are called “daylighting” projects. An outstanding study by the Rocky Mountain Institute, Daylighting: New Life for Buried Streams (2000), discusses the many

benefits of these projects. Here are just a few of them: (1) relieving choke points and flooding problems; (2) increasing hydraulic capacity; (3) reducing runoff velocities as a result of natural channel meanderings; (4) improving water quality by exposing water to air, sunlight, vegetation and soil, all of which help to transform, bind up or otherwise neutralize pollutants; (5) recreating aquatic habitat; (6) providing recreational amenities, such as a place for children to play or a streamside bench where people can relax; (7) serving as an “outdoor laboratory” for local schools; (8) reconnecting people to nature; and (9) beautifying neighborhoods—“perhaps serving as a focal point of a new park.”

“The stream at Rotary Park is already providing these benefits. Why would we ever want to do anything to lose them!

“A study published in Science last April shows that small headwater streams, such as the one at Rotary Park, are extraordinarily effective in keeping pollutants from reaching larger waterways. The authors conclude: “Restoration and preservation of small stream ecosystems should be the central focus of management strategies to ensure maximum nitrogen processing in watersheds, which in turn will improve the quality of water delivered to downstream lakes, estuaries and oceans.”

“The stream at Rotary Park flows into the Reedy River which in turn ends up at Lake Greenwood, the site of massive algal blooms caused by excessive nitrogen and phosphorous contamination. Addressing this problem at the lake is an enormous challenge—we need all the help we can get, including what nature provides at no charge.

“This controversy is not just about the 200 feet of stream at Rotary Park. It raises the fundamental issue of our community’s attitudes and policies about streams and rivers in general. I hope citizens will let City Council know that our waterways are important resources to be protected and restored, not buried.”

4. The Kind-Gilchrest-Boehlert Amendment to the Farm Bill Fails But There’s Still Hope!

In our last Upstate Update, we asked for your help in urging Congress to pass an amendment to the Farm Bill known as the “Kind-Gilchrest-Boehlert Amendment,” H.R. 2375. This amendment represents what is

probably the best opportunity that we will have in the next 10 years to support voluntary, incentive-based farmland conservation programs, improve water quality and enhance wildlife habitat. It will:

- Preserve farmland by providing \$500 million per year, which can be matched by states, for conservation easements
- Provide \$500 million per year for protecting wildlife habitat
- Provide \$2 billion per year for agricultural non-point source pollution abatement
- Preserve 250,000 acres of wetlands per year through the Wetlands Reserve Program
- Provide \$100 million per year for urban and community forestry projects
- Provide funding for farmers' markets and regional food systems.

Unfortunately, on October 11, the House of Representatives narrowly defeated, by a vote of 226-200, the Kind-Gilchrist-Boehlert Amendment. But there is still hope in the Senate! Both the Chairman (Senator Harkin) and the ranking member (Senator Lugar) of the Senate Agriculture Committee believe that the time has come to change the direction of farm policy by spending less on commodities and substantially more on natural resource protection. This view, however, is not shared by several members of the committee so it is important that conservation-minded citizens keep the pressure on and urge their senators to support the amendment.

South Carolina's two senators are Fritz Hollings, 125 Senate Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20510, 202-224-6121 and Strom Thurmond, 217 Russell Senate Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20510, 202-224-5972. Please write and call them today. Thank you for your support!

5. Planning Directors Hired In Anderson County and Pickens Counties.

We are pleased to report Anderson and Pickens Counties have hired two of the best in the business to serve as their Directors of Planning. In Anderson County, Jeff Ricketson, the former Director of Planning, had a change of heart about working in the private sector and decided to return to the position. Jeff played a key role in drafting and implementing the

county's community-based zoning initiative (see his article in our January, 2001 newsletter) and in spearheading major changes in the county's planning ordinances. Welcome back, Jeff!

Pickens County has hired Mark Bassett as its new Director of Planning. Mark has a master's degree in city and regional planning from Clemson, worked for six years as an associate planner with the Greenville County Planning Commission, and most recently served as assistant city administrator and finance director for Simpsonville. He is already hard at work on revising the Pickens County Development Standards Ordinance. With Mark's experience and expertise in land use planning, Pickens County is in good hands. Congratulations, Mark!

6. *Quote of the Week.*

“This is the future.”

Governor Jim Hodges at the opening of Santee Cooper's “green power” project which uses methane gas produced by a landfill to generate electricity. Charleston Post and Courier, October 26, 2001