



# Historic Aycock Neighborhood News



Winter 2015

Volume 8, Issue 1

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## Putting Summit Avenue on the Front Burner



[Summit Avenue - Ctrl + Click to follow link to video](#)

By: David Wharton

Big changes are coming soon to the northeast edge of downtown that borders the Aycock neighborhood.

In 2015 the Stephen Tanger Center for the Performing Arts will break ground on the corner of Summit Avenue and Lindsay Street. The Tanger Center will replace War Memorial Auditorium, which was located at the Coliseum complex, as the premier performing arts venue in Greensboro.

Across the street from the Tanger Center, the \$10 million LeBauer Park is scheduled to open in 2016. It will feature a performance pavilion and lawn that can accommodate up to 2,000 people, a children's play area, outdoor "reading rooms;" an interactive water feature plaza, a market area, and a dog park.

And the Downtown Greenway is coming to the edge of our neighborhood along Murrow Boulevard and Fisher Avenue. That section of the Greenway is currently in the design phase.



**Historic Aycock  
Neighborhood News**  
Greensboro, NC

A Publication of  
**Charles B. Aycock  
Neighborhood Association**

Linda J. Fusco, Editor

**Contributors**  
David Wharton  
Vickie Maness  
Gary Silverstein  
Nancy Lee Adamson  
Allison Rose  
Mindy Zachary  
Carl Myatt  
Benjamin Briggs

[Newsletter@HistoricAycock.org](mailto:Newsletter@HistoricAycock.org)

**Summit Avenue – Cont. on Page 2**

**Summit Avenue – Cont. from Page 1**

All of these projects will be great assets to our neighborhood, since they are within easy walking distance -- the farthest of them is less than half a mile down Summit Avenue from the Aycock neighborhood.

But the walk from here to there, though short, is not inviting. The pedestrian environment on Summit is distinctly unpleasant. Crosswalks are lacking at most intersections in the neighborhood, fast traffic often makes crossing Summit difficult, and there are almost no identifying features of our historic district there.

The current state of affairs exists despite the fact that the neighborhood worked very hard to plan strategic improvements to Summit that include landscaped medians, crosswalks, decorative lighting, and neighborhood landmarks. Hundreds of volunteer hours -- and thousands of dollars of our MSD funds -- went into the Strategic Plan for the Aycock Neighborhood, which the city council adopted in 2003. More neighborhood work, and more MSD funds, went into the Summit Avenue Corridor Plan, which was also adopted as planning policy by the city council in 2006. In 2008, the citizens of Greensboro approved a \$7.6 million bond to implement the improvements we agreed on.

Yet now, in 2015, those plans have not even reached the design phase.

The Great Recession played a big part in delaying the sale of those bonds. But with exciting new developments appearing so quickly in our corner of the center city, it makes sense to take the Summit Avenue Corridor Plan off the back burner and integrate it with those projects.

And our City Council district representative Jamal Fox has expressed a strong interest in moving quickly on the Summit Corridor plan, and in revitalizing the Summit/Bessemer area. That's great news. The neighborhood Board of Directors is also eager to move the plan forward quickly. But City Council will not act unless they hear from us.

The Board will be sending out more information in the new year, including how and when to contact the Council. If you support getting Summit back on track, stay tuned. You'll be hearing from me, and from them, soon.

**Editor's Note: Video was produced and narrated by David Wharton.**

## Add “Save Money” to Your New Year’s Resolutions

By Vickie Maness, Kay Heating and Air Conditioning



Statistics show that every year 40-45% of adults will make one or more resolutions for the New Year. While a lot of people who make New Year's resolutions do break them, research shows that making resolutions is useful. People who explicitly make resolutions are 10 times more likely to attain their goals than people who don't do so. Be one of the ones who attain their goals in 2015.

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We know that after the holidays saving money is an important and often necessary goal for many of us. At Kay Heating and Air we have some easy, no-cost tips to help you attain this New Year's resolution.

- Change your air conditioning filter monthly. A dirty air filter causes your heating & cooling system to work harder and longer. A clean air filter will keep your system working as efficiently as possible, ensuring your utility costs remain as low as possible.
- Turn down the temperature control thermostat on your water heater to 120 degrees F. For each 10 degrees F reduction in water temperature, you can save about 3-5% in home energy costs. Although most water heater thermostats are set at 140 degrees F, most households have plenty of hot water when set to 120. Reducing your water temperature can also extend the life of your water heater and pipes by slowing mineral buildup and corrosion.
- Turn off lights when leaving a room. Turning off just one 60-watt incandescent bulb can save about \$15 per year. (Of course, replacing your incandescent bulbs with CFLs or LEDs will cut your lighting electric bill by up to 85 %!)
- While brushing your teeth, stop running the water. Although running water does not use energy however, heating the water does so avoid wasting hot water in particular.
- Turn off power strips or unplug appliances - especially when leaving for vacation. Most appliances when plugged in still draw power when turned off - this is called phantom power. So, stop the ghosts from costing you money when you're away!
- Close the blinds to block direct sunlight in the summer and keep the cold out during winter nights. These measures help to stabilize the temperature indoors and reduce the burden on your home heating and cooling systems, which typically use about 50% of the energy in your home.
- When you are asleep or out of the house, turn your thermostat back 10°–15° for eight hours and save around 10% a year on your heating and cooling bills. A programmable thermostat can make it easy to set back your temperature.



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## Close the Open Window in Your Home

By Gary Silverstein, Energy Reduction Specialists of NC

What would you do if you noticed an open window in your home in the middle of winter?

You would probably close it. You would be motivated by the desire to keep your home comfortable, keeping your warm conditioned air inside and the cold winter air out.

We all go through great effort and expense to be warm and comfortable in these chilly winter months, and the idea of letting large amounts of unconditioned air inside our homes is unthinkable.

In fact, most homes have enough small cracks and crevices which cumulatively can be equivalent to a 3-foot-by-3-foot hole (or open window). These holes are constantly drafting expensive heated air into attics, crawlspaces and to the outside while drawing cold air into living spaces. Because most of these cracks and crevices are small openings spread throughout the structure, they can be very difficult to find. You may not even know they are there.

So where are these holes? Whether you live in a 1,000-square-foot starter home or a 10,000-square-foot mansion, each structure has its own unique issues. Yet most homes also have similarities. Time and time again leaks appear in the same places in different houses. Just as a computer technician learns how to resolve computer viruses, and a car mechanic similarly recognizes how to get your car running, an experienced home weatherization technician can locate your leaks and knows how to fix them.

A good place to start is in the ceiling of the top level of your conditioned area. Hot air rises and will escape into the attic above. The attic tends to draw air into it in the same manner a chimney pulls smoke up its flue. The ceiling that separates

the conditioned area from attic space contains lighting, fans, smoke detectors, HVAC supplies and returns, and an attic access. Each is a penetration through the ceiling into the attic, and each represents a place where warm air is leaving your living space. All these places should be identified and sealed.

Next, examine your fireplace. A chimney acts as an active conduit for your conditioned air to flow to the outside. There are several strategies for fixing this superhighway of escaping air, including installing top-mounted dampers and chimney balloons. The potential carbon monoxide issues make the safe repair of the fireplace of primary importance — you don't want to create a health hazard for yourself or a future homeowner. Please consult a professional.

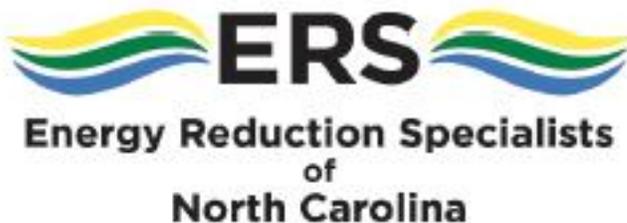
Your crawlspace is the third area you should check. Holes between the crawlspace and the first floor are a source of unwanted, often dank, unconditioned air entering your living area. Bathrooms are often the cause of many of the largest crawlspace holes. Locate the plumbing from below and seal all associated air gaps. Heating and air-conditioning equipment can also create holes through the crawlspace. It is best to have a weatherization professional or an HVAC contractor seal these.

Keep in mind that this is a sampling of typical home leaks, not a comprehensive list. A certified weatherization contractor, trained to identify and create the most effective energy reduction strategy, is the best choice to make the greatest improvement in your house. Your home will be cozier with fewer temperature disparities from room to room. There is a handsome payback from your reduced utility bills. And you will be pitching in to improve our environment.

**Gary Silverstein is owner of Energy Reduction Specialists of NC, Inc. He can be reached at [gary@ersofnc.com](mailto:gary@ersofnc.com) or 336 643-9199.**

## Schedule your home energy assessment before temperatures drop

We can make every room in your home  
more comfortable, lower your utility bills  
and create healthier indoor air quality



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“You rock! Gary and  
his crew helped transform  
our 1910 home into a  
comfortable, more energy  
efficient one. Thanks for  
all the hard work!”

David & Jinni  
Greensboro



## Leftwich Pedestrian Tunnel Gets Some New Plantings

By Nancy Lee Adamson, Pollinator Conservation Specialist

The Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation & USDA NRCS East National Technology Support Center

Come this spring, keep your eyes open for some sweet spots of color at each end of the newly painted tunnel. We had three goals in mind: 1) bright colors and blooming plants full of beauty to complement the joyous murals, 2) lots of native plants to celebrate and enhance the natural beauty of this region and provide host plants, and/or nectar and pollen for pollinators, and 3) where light was abundant, edible plants to help people connect and engage with the gardens.

Both entrances have dry soils, so we may need your help to water plants the first growing season. Planting in fall lets the plants settle in, grow roots, and get ready for the dry of summer without too much help from us since winter and spring usually have plenty of moisture.

On the south side, we took advantage of the sun to grow fruit. An apricot flowers in February! An Asian persimmon will eventually produce apple size bright orange fruits just in time for Halloween. The first to bear edible fruit will be a Nanking cherry. We're also planting passion vines, host to Gulf fritillary butterflies. Along with fruit, we planted colorful, drought tolerant native plants that produce nectar and pollen throughout the growing season. These include native honeysuckle, which will feed hummingbirds from clusters of brilliant red tubular flowers all summer. A silverbell, which will bloom in very early spring, was added on each side of the south entrance. Other flowers on the south (sunny) side include lyre-leaved sage, wild blue indigo, blue-eyed grass, wild bergamot, blazing star, coreopsis, black-eyed Susan, and asters.



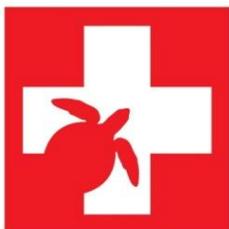
**Bumble Bee on Silverbells**

On the north (shady) side, a sweet bay magnolia and redbud on each side of the path will be trimmed to show off the gorgeous murals. Below them, a lot of different low-growing shade tolerant and relatively drought tolerant natives, along with miniature bulbs (iris, crocus, and daffodils) will bloom at different times: foam flower, dwarf crested iris, Jacob's ladder, beardtongue, wild geranium, and many others. Some less conspicuous flowers include pussy-toes, a host plant for the American painted lady butterfly caterpillar, so keep your eyes open to see her lay eggs, or her little babies munching on the leaves.

With a mixture of extremely heavy mulch, pure sand, very heavy clay, and shade, it's hard to know what will do well over time. We'll post a plant list once everything settles in. Please take photos of wildlife visiting the flowers to share with the neighborhood. If you have questions about the plants or about wildlife, please contact Nancy Adamson at [anancylee@yahoo.com](mailto:anancylee@yahoo.com).

Plants came from several wholesale nurseries in NC (Cure Nursery and Red Root Natives that specialize in native plants, and Gant Nursery), Gethsemane Nursery here in Greensboro that gave a big discount on the native honeysuckle, Edible Landscaping (that gave us discounts on some of the fruit trees and shipping), and members of the Triad Native Plant Society who donated plants, including Lynda Waldrep, Mike Vaughan, and Nancy Adamson (who also donated her time), local artist Mark Dixon, and Nancy's mom Margie Adamson. James Goldsmith also donated his time to pick up and deliver some plants.

**Editor's Note:** Nancy Adamson is an ecologist specializing in native bees. The community is very fortunate to have such a devoted neighbor willing to donate her time and expertise to help us plant the tunnel area. Please look for bees enjoying the plantings in the area, and take photos or videos of the garden showing connections between the native plants, pollinators, and other wildlife. Forward your emails/videos to [anancylee@yahoo.com](mailto:anancylee@yahoo.com) to be featured in upcoming newsletters.



### A Turtle's Emergency Room

By Allison Rose

We have hospitals, but what about sea turtles? When they get injured, is there an ambulance to be called to take them to the hospital? The answer is yes. All over the nation, there are hospitals specifically for sea turtles: The Turtle Hospital in Marathon, the Florida Keys, Sea Turtle Rescue at The South Carolina Aquarium, the New England Aquarium's Rehabilitation Faculty

and the one closest to home, The Karen Beasley Sea Turtle Rescue and Rehabilitation Center on Topsail Island, as well as many more. If there are this many hospitals, about how many turtles wash up on beaches hurt? Well, in the 2014 beaching season, New England alone found 1,048 turtles either dead or in a state of cold shock as of December 7<sup>th</sup>. That's a 5.24% increase from an average season of 200 turtles.

But there is good news for all those turtles. Sea turtle hospitals are finding all these turtles, as well as aquariums, and lending a helping hand. Their help is making a huge impact. Most of the unfortunate turtles that have gotten beached are making a comeback and are back in the ocean. These hospitals help by conditioning the turtles for the ocean with saltwater tanks, doing surgery to remove plastic from the systems of turtles, and monitoring health of all patients. By the time those patients get back to their home, the wide blue ocean, they are as well taken care of as any human.

For more information, visit:

<http://www.seaturtlehospital.org/> (Karen Beasley)

<http://scaquarium.org/strp/> (SC Aquarium)

<http://www.marinelife.org/> (Florida Hospital)



## Know Your Historic District Guidelines



By Mindy Zachary

The Charles B. Aycock Neighborhood Association covers the area from the railroad tracks to Bessemer to Lindsey, and then Murrow back to the tracks. Within this boundary are the locally-designated *Charles B. Aycock Historic District* (the same boundary as our Municipal Service District), and the slightly different *Summit Avenue Historic*, which is how we are listed on National Register of Historic Places.

There are many reasons folks choose to live in historic districts, but the overriding reason has to do with the historic character of a neighborhood – the beautiful old houses and tree-lined streets. As property owners within our local historic district, we have a huge responsibility to maintain our properties in a manner that honors the architectural integrity of our neighborhood.

There are important economic reasons to do so, not the least of which is the fact that property values increase faster in historic districts than in similar neighborhoods without this designation. And values do not tend to fluctuate in historic districts as much as they might elsewhere. There tend to be more homeowners who stay put longer and fewer renters, which also helps stabilize property values.

By far the best tool we have to ensure that our neighborhood retains its architectural integrity is the City of Greensboro's *Historic Preservation Commission*. This commission reviews Certificate of Appropriateness (akin to a building application) applications that are submitted by property owners who wish to make changes to the exteriors of their properties that require a COA. Any changes or additions to properties, or demolition requests, must meet the **Historic District Guidelines**, to which property owners in all three of Greensboro's historic districts must comply.

Often, new homeowners are unfamiliar with this requirement. And even long-term residents occasionally forget about them. In order to avoid difficulties and potential penalties, every one of us should periodically review the guidelines. Sometimes we don't consider that what we are doing – say, putting up a fence or making repairs or removing trees – must meet specific requirements as set out in the guidelines, and that we usually must secure Certificates of Appropriateness before commencing work. Sometimes this may be done by City staff, but for large projects the HPC must approve COA applications. There are a number of items that do not require a COA but it is our responsibility to know when we must apply for one. This is not intended to make life more difficult for homeowners. It is a way to safeguard our historic neighborhood from 'misguided improvements' that may detract from property values, and to ensure that our neighborhood's historic character remains intact.

Please click this link <http://www.greensboro-nc.gov/modules/showdocument.aspx?documentid=5380> to view the manual. This comprehensive guide should answer any questions you may have. You may also contact our friend, Mike Cowhig, who is a Preservation Planner with the City, for any needed clarification. Mike Cowhig can be reached at 336-373-2755 or by email at [Mike.Cowhig@greensboro-nc.gov](mailto:Mike.Cowhig@greensboro-nc.gov).

## A Generational Divide: Changing Times Require Changing Ideas When It Comes to Energy Costs

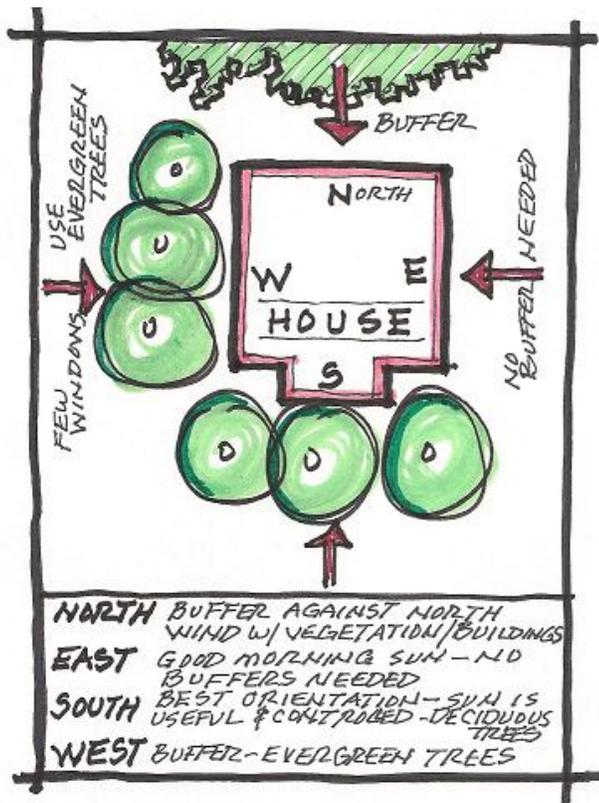
By Carl Myatt

A Mississippi grandpa thought his farmhouse should breathe, but his Greensboro *grandson* says his urban house should not. Who is right?

Actually, both are. There are common connections to each philosophy. Grandpa's house was built of wood, inside & outside, because of the forest product. Exterior walls had gaps everywhere; even the cedar shake roof had gaps until it rained and swelled the gaps closed. Fireplaces kept you toasty warm in winter, and trees around the house kept you cool in summer.

*Grandson's* house breaths only when he wants it to. It has no gaps or holes, and the house air is controlled. There is an insulation barrier encapsulating the house, all openings are sealed, and windows and doors keep out the elements. When *Grandson* wants the house to "breathe", he turns on the *Energy Recovery Ventilator* system, which pushes out the bad air and brings in fresh air.

The big difference in the two approaches has to do with energy costs. While Grandpa's cost was relatively low, Grandson has to keep Duke Energy & Piedmont Gas stock returns high. Therefore, Grandson saves energy every way he can. To make Grandpa "turn-over-in-his grave", *Grandson* offers the following tips:



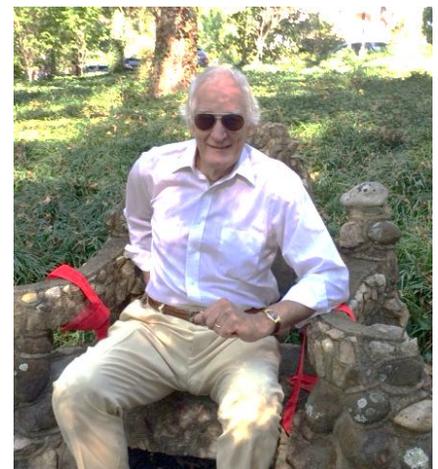
1. Use your site to advantage. Open your house to the south and protect it from the west. The other two orientations are optional. Plant deciduous trees south & evergreen trees west. This keeps the hot west sun out and lets the seasonal sun orientation into the house from the south.

2. Make your house really, really tight. Insulate attic, walls, and crawl spaces well. Yes, crawl spaces - under the house is a space; so insulate it. AND....caulk or insulate cracks & joints.

3. Use LED or fluorescent bulbs throughout. Incandescent bulbs give off excessive heat and are not efficient.

4. Keep in mind that every energy-saving decision you make affects your whole house design, and you will be able to keep your energy bills low and Duke Energy wondering why.

There.....Grandpa just rolled over in his grave, but Grandson is toasty warm (or comfortable cool) and spending under \$60 each month for utility bills for his 2600 square foot home in Fisher Park. Don't worry, Grandpa; Grandson does have a huge magnolia tree on the west side of his house like you did!



**Editor's Note:** Guest writer Carl Myatt is an Architect who lives in Fisher Park. Mr. Myatt specializes in Energy Design and Preservation.



## What Is a Preservation Easement and Why Do You Need One?

By Benjamin Briggs, Executive Director  
Preservation Greensboro Incorporated

The Preservation Greensboro Development Fund (the Fund) established its first easement in 1989 with the purchase of the Daniel P. Foust House in Whitsett. In the early 1990s, the Fund continued its preservation program through acquisition and placement of an easement on the Bumpass-Troy House in College Hill. Today, the Fund protects 10 historic properties across Guilford County with preservation easements.

### WHAT IS A PRESERVATION EASEMENT?

A Preservation Easement is a legal agreement between a property owner and a qualified easement-holding organization that protects a significant historic or cultural resource in perpetuity. Preservation easements are recognized as the strongest and only perpetual protection available for historic properties. The donation of a preservation easement is a commitment to the permanent protection of a significant historic property.

A preservation easement generally protects all open-air elevations of a structure. By donating an easement, the owner agrees to maintain the building and follow specific guidelines if they wish to make changes to the outside of the property. They further agree to obtain the approval of the easement-holding organization before making alterations to the property. Because the easement lasts in perpetuity, it binds future owners of the property as well.

The easement-holding organization, which legally enforces compliance with the easement, must be a qualified historic preservation organization and must have the resources and the commitment to manage and enforce the easements. Landmarks Illinois monitors each of its easement properties on an annual basis and when necessary takes steps to ensure compliance with the easement.

### PRESERVATION EASEMENTS AND CHARITABLE DONATION DEDUCTIONS

Recognizing that the story of America's heritage is largely told through its architectural legacy, in 1980, Congress passed legislation to provide a Federal income tax deduction to owners of historic properties who donate preservation easements to qualified organizations. Eligible owners are those with structures that contribute to locally designated, or National Register listed historic districts or properties individually listed in the National Register of Historic Places. Congress reaffirmed the preservation easement program in 2006.

Owners who donate a preservation easement to a qualifying nonprofit organization may be eligible for a charitable donation income tax deduction based upon an independent appraisal of the value of the easement. The determination of the allowable tax deduction is solely within the purview of the Internal Revenue Service. Prospective donors are encouraged to seek professional advice to determine the tax and legal consequences of a donation.

### [CONTACT PRESERVATION GREENSBORO FOR MORE INFORMATION](#)

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