Community participation in urban preservation planning: A case study of the North Central neighborhood in Charleston, SC

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Content

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Abstract
This thesis explores the role of community participation in urban preservation planning processes. A case study of the North Central neighborhood in Charleston, SC is used to investigate this inquiry. This study seeks to explore what residents in North Central value as heritage assets and how this information compares to ongoing preservation planning, interactions with the City and local preservation advocacy organizations, and overall community engagement. Qualitative methods were used for data collection and an analytical framework was developed based in theories of democracy, participatory planning, and values-based heritage. The results indicate that residents of North Central value the built environment and architectural integrity of the neighborhood, however the intangible aspects of heritage resonate most with the community. These include the people, stories, experiences, and memories associated with the neighborhood and its features. While efforts to preserve the neighborhood have increased in recent years, there are still disparities in what is actively being preserved and what residents identify as important heritage assets. The thesis also reveals that a lack of democratic space for participation and a communication deficit serve as limitations to community participation in formal planning processes for preservation. Increased community participation in these processes could influence new development in the neighborhood to better reflect the contemporary needs and values of its residents. It also serves to foster better collaboration among organizations, governmental partners, and residents in order to continue developing inclusive approaches to neighborhood preservation and establishing initiatives in North Central with sustainable outcomes.

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Summary
Charleston, SC is one of the best preserved historic cities in the U.S. It is also one of the fastest growing metropolitan areas in the country. The impacts of rapid growth and urbanization threaten historic neighborhoods on the Charleston peninsula as affordability declines and the neighborhood character changes with new development. Current preservation planning approaches embody collaboration and inclusivity, but community participation in defining the heritage assets and preservation priorities in North Central neighborhood has not been extensive thus far.

The purpose of this thesis is to explore what residents in North Central value as heritage assets and then how this information compares to ongoing preservation planning, interactions with the City and local organizations, and overall community engagement. Surveys of the historic landscape in the city have been limited to those that focus on the quality of the built environment as the main criteria. The inventory of community defined heritage resources established through this study reveals that while residents care about buildings and architecture, the intangible aspects of heritage are those that resonate most with the community. These include the people, stories, experiences, and memories associated with the neighborhood and its features. The biggest fear in North Central is that these intangible heritage assets will be lost due to changing social dynamics. Residents praise current rehabilitation efforts and architectural preservation in North Central, but they also call for increased efforts to preserve the stories and experiences of people, particularly older generations. The preservation advocacy organizations are making targeted efforts to preserve both the intangible and tangible heritage assets of the neighborhood, but this process could benefit from more community involvement. The community recognizes a lack of democratic space for participation in the neighborhood. Communication between the City, organizations, and the residents themselves is cited as another major limitation to participation. Certain segments of the population, especially older, longer-term residents, are often unintentionally excluded from formal processes. The findings could serve as a resource to guide "context-specific," participatory preservation planning processes in historic urban neighborhoods that better reflect the needs and values of residents and result in more initiatives with sustainable outcomes.

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1. Introduction

In recent years, the role of the world's cities and urban areas has become more prominent in global discussions regarding poverty, climate change, planning, and many other facets of sustainable development. This focus is due in part to the migration of the human population to cities. Currently, approximately half of the world's population lives in cities and it is projected that by 2030, over 60% of the global population will live in urban areas (UN, 2015b;World Health Organization, 2015). Urbanization can provide economic, social, and cultural opportunities that contribute to greater quality of life and maintenance of traditional cultural features. However unchecked growth and changes to urban density can "undermine the sense of place, integrity of the urban fabric, and the identity of communities" (UNESCO, 2011, 4). Rapid urbanization and unmanaged growth can lead to fragmentation of social and spatial ties, as well as depreciate the quality of the urban environment and outlying areas. With the projected influx of population to urban areas in the coming years, the need to mitigate these negative effects of urbanization has been woven into the global agenda for sustainable development.

The United Nation's (UN) Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which became effective on 1 January 2016, now include a goal that directly addresses sustainability in cities and urban areas: "Goal 11: Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable" (UN, 2015c, 14). The new SDGs are meant to guide international development for the next 15 years and this inclusion of an explicit commitment to working with local communities and their respective authorities to plan cities and foster sustainable human settlement is an important acknowledgement of the increasing need to address the impacts of urbanization (UN, 2015c). The UN Climate Change Conference took place at the end of 2015, offering another opportunity for major strides to be taken in addressing current and future urban development issues. The Paris Agreement under the *United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change* was adopted at the culmination of the conference on December 12, 2015, emphasizing the need for a global commitment to mitigating and adapting to the effects of climate change (UN, 2015a). The UN Human Settlements Programme, commonly referred to as UN-Habitat, focuses on human settlements and development and will host its third major global conference, Habitat III, in October 2016. Here a New Urban Agenda will be compiled which will set an international strategy for addressing urbanization during the next two decades (Citiscope, 2015). These are some of the first global scale initiatives that acknowledge the need to "create a mutually reinforcing relationship between urbanization and development" and the timing and overlap of the three agendas - climate, sustainable development, and urban settlements - is unprecedented (Citiscope, 2015).

As cities emerge at the forefront of global concerns, so have various international approaches for addressing the negative impacts that can coincide with urban development. In 2005, the Council of Europe (COE) hosted *The Framework Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society,* also known as the Faro Convention. This convention focused on recognizing the need to center human values within a cross-disciplinary approach to cultural heritage, emphasizing the role of heritage as a resource for sustainable development in a society that is undergoing constant change (COE, 2005). The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) recognizes the important role that culture and heritage can play in the process of urbanization. The approach outlined in UNESCO's

2011 voluntary "soft law," *The Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape*, advocates for making development in urban areas a more inclusive process, one that acknowledges community values and diversity in planning for long-term sustainability (van Oers & Roders, 2012; UNESCO, 2011). According to the principles of this recommendation, all communities should be supported in the process of development and adaptation, as well as being provided the tools to retain "the characteristics and values linked to their history, collective memory, and to the environment" (UNESCO, 2011, 4). Most recently, Goal 11 of the newly adopted SDGs specifically references the need to "strengthen efforts to protect and safeguard the world's cultural and natural heritage" and "enhance inclusive and sustainable urbanization and capacity for participatory, integrated and sustainable human settlement planning and management in all countries" (UN, 2015). The concept of preserving existing resources lies at the core of sustainability, therefore active preservation of historical urban culture and community heritage values, and the management of these tangible and intangible resources are embedded in the processes of sustainable development.

1.1 Background

Heritage is not an easily definable concept. Scholars such as Rodney Harrison (2013) have explored the various interpretations of the word, concluding that there really is no set definition. Today the term can be used to describe almost anything including both tangible and intangible features. These features could be buildings and memorials, or cultural practices and oral histories. In an increasingly globalized world, heritage is also said to "operate at a range of different spatial, temporal and institutional scales" (Harrison, 2013, 5). One thing is certain, heritage is both a reflection of history of the past, as well as the creation and perception of history in the present. Preservation planning consists of the processes of defining the values, priorities, and goals for preservation of historic and cultural resources (Mason, 2006; NPS, 2016). The relationship between the historic city, urban development, and planning is complex and has undergone countless changes over time. Heritage resources, once associated with singular monuments and symbolic features of a city's tradition, have taken on a new meaning and purpose throughout the modern urban heritage conservation movement. The movement is characterized by the transition from memorialization of monuments and static representations of the historic city, to a perspective that recognizes the "city as an historical continuum" that undergoes continuous change and that cannot be frozen in time (Bandarin & van Oers, 2012, 15). Within the new heritage approach social interactions, local communities, and cultural tradition have become just as important in the conception of urban heritage as the physical structures, form, and architecture that make up historic cities.

The relationship between the preservation of heritage and urban development has manifested itself differently throughout the world. While there are parallels between its manifestations in different places, it is important to understand this relationship in the national context of the case study for this research. In the United States urban planning and preservation have roots that extend back to the 1800s. At that time urban planners were working to improve the quality of life in rapidly industrializing cities while preservationists were attempting to save sites and monuments that were associated with the founding of the nation. However, it was not until the 1930s that one of the first official intersections of these fields occurred with the establishment of

the Charleston, SC historic district (Ryberg-Webster & Kinahan, 2014). Officials in Charleston linked reclamation of historic neighborhoods to the larger center city planning goals through the use of zoning as a tool to implement a desired historic aesthetic (Silver & Crowley, 1991). This event was one of a few that marked a shift in planning and development in the country. The work of preservationists became embedded in the creation of zoning ordinances, comprehensive plans, design review boards, and other planning processes aimed at maintaining the historic character of America's urban areas. Preservation began to take an active role in shaping urban landscapes rather than remaining static with its concentration on solely protecting individual historic landmarks and heritage museum sites (Ryberg-Webster & Kinahan, 2014).

A new philosophy of preservation began to emerge at a global scale. The transition in the conception of heritage can be traced at an international level by observing the transformation of UNESCO's approach to World Heritage recognition and classification. After the destruction of historic landmarks and important structures during World War II, the protection of heritage resources was recognized as an important issue to address during the postwar reconstruction. Before the establishment of the UNESCO World Heritage List, private individuals and wealthy families from Western Europe, the United Kingdom, and North America dominated the protection of heritage. During the post-World War II era, the goals of urban planners in the United States focused on improving the quality of life in cities. This process included addressing issues of overcrowding, housing shortages, poor living conditions, and the modernization of American cities. The phenomenon became known as urban renewal. Planners relied heavily on demolition and redevelopment, which created tensions between their work and the goals of preservationists. The construction of interstate highways during this era destroyed urban neighborhoods, as well, compounding the loss of historic buildings associated with urban renewal practices. These conflicts sparked national interest in historic preservation. The field of preservation gained a foothold during this period, particularly after the establishment of the National Trust of Historic Preservation (NTHP) in 1949, a non-profit organization that supports preservation activities (Ryber-Webster & Kinahan, 2014). As noted on the website for the NTHP, the founders of the organization considered that its main purpose would be to acquire and maintain historic sites (NTHP, 2016a). Critique of urban renewal techniques and a lack of federal funding for those initiatives contributed to the changes in the relationship between planning and preservation after the mid-twentieth century. The role of preservation in urban development continued to transform with cities across the United States increasingly using preservation activities as a means to improve deteriorating neighborhoods. This mechanism is known as urban revitalization, "the contemporary activity of planning for and developing existing urban areas" (Ryberg-Webster & Kinahan, 2014,120).

In 1966, the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) was established which contributed more formally to the shift in approaches to historic preservation. Before the NHPA was established, historic preservation was still limited to a focus on historic sites and burials that were considered icons for study and appreciation, not an active part of modern life (Ryberg-Webster & Kinahan, 2014, 121). The NHPA broadened the field to encompass "the vastly more complex historic preservation mosaic we know today" (ACHP, 2002). The 1972 World Heritage convention also brought heritage to the forefront of the global agenda; however, the criteria

considered for World Heritage nomination were still limited to monuments, groups of buildings, and sites. At this time, the Convention text reflected professional and "expert" interests, defining heritage as something inactive and removed from everyday life (Harrison, 2013). During the decades straddling the Convention, heritage became professionalized and heavily regulated at the international scale. However, its emergence into the global agenda during the latter half of the twentieth century also sparked a transition from the bureaucratic context to one of public interest in the functions of heritage in contemporary society. Rather than limiting the conceptions of heritage, the recognition of universal value and expressions of heritage from the perspective of the UNESCO World Heritage Convention inspired debate and discussion about the definitions and considerations for heritage designation, challenging the traditional approaches. During the late twentieth century and early twenty-first century, this debate triggered the development of a relative approach to heritage values, in which various groups are free to recognize their own values and the significance of different heritage features (Harrison, 2013). The Burra Charter, introduced in 1979 by the Australia International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS), was also influential in producing a more values-based approach to preservation. According to Mason (2006), this document was particularly innovative due to its recognition of "cultural significance" as opposed to a material focus, as well as its promotion of participatory and equitable processes. The Burra Charter, much like UNESCO's more recent *Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape*, was not an enforced statutory document; however, it offered an ideal framework for addressing the preservation of heritage and has since had profound impact on the approaches to conservation and preservation practices internationally (Mason, 2006, 33). This contemporary understanding of heritage is permeating approaches to urban development globally as a means to achieve more sustainable outcomes for both existing and future local communities.

1.1.1 Preservation and sustainable development

The preservation of historic buildings is intrinsically tied to notions of environmental sustainability. Many older buildings are constructed with craftsmanship and materials that are more energy efficient than newer construction. The use of passive heating and cooling systems contributes to this energy efficiency. Older structures are also commonly found in dense, walkable neighborhoods and are already embedded in existing infrastructure and established public services (Phillips & Stein, 2013, 2; NTHP, 2016b; Widener, 2015, 746). The Preservation Green Lab of the NTHP released a report, *The Greenest Building: Quantifying the Environmental Value of Building Reuse* in 2012, which found that the reuse of existing buildings actually results in lower environmental impacts throughout the life span of a structure compared to new construction after demolition (NTHP, 2016b). The process of preservation in urban areas can often prevent the creation of waste and also discourage sprawl through revitalizing existing structures for both residential and commercial use. Historic buildings sometimes get a poor reputation for low operational efficiency and heat loss through window casings, however there is clear evidence that preserving and retrofitting historic structures is often more efficient and environmentally-friendly than new construction. With the introduction of documents such as the Faro Convention and the *Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape* in the last decade, it is recognized that a preservation-based approach can also promote efficient use of local natural resources through exploring the role of

culture and society in addressing global environmental challenges. An example from the suburbs of Paris embodies the potential influence that heritage preservation can have on a local environment. Institutions developed recently in towns such as Athis-Mons and Fresnes focus on creating connections between different generations and neighborhoods through encouraging citizen participation and knowledge sharing about local transformations. According to Fairclough et al. (2014, 16-17), "the ambition is to make the inhabitants more familiar with their environment, more aware of the architecture, landscape, and history of their town, and therefore to increase citizenship values". The environment is only one aspect of the sustainability paradigm addressed by historic preservation activities in urban areas (Frey, 2007).

Preservation activities are also associated with producing economic benefits. The NTHP champions the Main Street program as a testament to the potential of historic preservation to boost the economy, referencing the generation of $55.7 billion in reinvestment, creation of 109,693 new businesses, and 236,418 building rehabilitations since the creation of the program in 1980 (NTHP, 2016b). The program focuses primarily on aiding communities with reviving historic downtown business and commercial districts (Widener, 2015, 741). There are many challenges that arise when linking historic preservation and community economic development (Phillips & Stein, 2013). In the October 2007 report, the NTHP also differentiates between economic development and *sustainable* economic development. Within this report, the participating parties identified various ways in which preservation is a driver of sustainable economic development, including the production of service based economic growth, affordable housing, enhanced building efficiency, and the creation of high wage jobs (Frey, 2007, 17-18). Although there is extensive research that exists in relation to the economic benefits of material preservation and the rehabilitation of structures, there is much less research available regarding the economic and social values of preservation (Frey, 2007). Olsson (2008) explores the complexity of these various values, including how "use-value" and "non-use value" contribute to the composite "total value" of urban heritage resources, a model of which can be seen in Fig. 1. In other words, many different values, including the undetermined values of future generations, "option value," and intrinsic "existence value," contribute to the overall valuation process for urban heritage (Olsson, 2008).
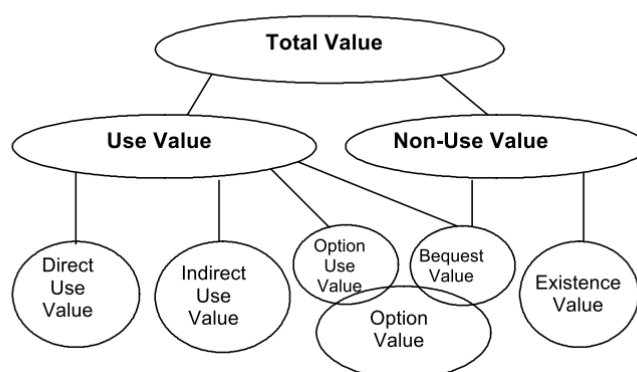

Fig. 1. Total economic value of a heritage resource (Olsson, 2008, 379)

While efforts have increased to better understand the local economic impacts of historic preservation on various communities, there is still a call from practitioners of

historic preservation today arguing for a more prominent role in community development, affordability, and urban revitalization, especially in light of some of the negative social equity impacts associated with historic preservation in the past (Ryber-Webster & Kinahan, 2014, 122).

Social cohesion is another aspect of historic preservation that is being explored as a priority for the role of preservation in sustainable development. The preservation of historic resources is recognized by the NTHP as a crucial part of creating socially connected, equitable communities. There is substantial potential for future community engagement and social interaction among stakeholders related to preservation initiatives. The NTHP has made a commitment to ensure that historic resources "remain a part of the American narrative", recognizing diversity as cornerstones of this priority (NTHP, 2016c). Phillips and Stein (2013) extend the current goals of the NTHP a step further, recognizing that it is the preservation of historic resources more generally, not just those associated with the built environment, that has the potential to guide future urban development within the paradigm of sustainability:

> History, as represented in both cultural resources and the built environment, can serve as a foundation for directing future growth and development of communities. By understanding the history of the physical patterns in the land and built environment, communities can evaluate how to preserve desirable quality of life attributes, as well as opportunities for enhancement. Further, reclaiming history in communities can be a powerful and catalyzing force providing numerous positive impacts. These include building social capital, enhancing community identity and sustaining the environment (Phillips & Stein, 2013, 1-2).

Culture, acknowledged by some scholars as a fourth pillar of sustainability, is also embedded in the twenty-first century approach to historic preservation (Witta et al., 2012). Some compare the contemporary focus on the conservation of natural resources and environmental consciousness to the preservation of historic resources. Just as with the world's natural resources, historic resources are assets for both present and future societies, fulfilling a different set of human needs and wants. Sustainability is about meeting these human needs through supporting local communities, promoting economic opportunity, and maintaining a healthy environment (Ercan, 2010, 833-835). The following are considered basic human needs in the modern city: "economic needs," "social, cultural, environmental and health needs," and "political needs" (Ercan, 2010, 835). Ercan further analyzes these needs in relation to historic preservation. The first category includes the necessity of livability in the home and workplace, as well as overall economic security. The second category recognizes the right that people have to places they value, including their homes and neighborhoods. The third category dovetails with the first two, focusing on the importance of maintaining a public realm where decision-making can take place. Modern approaches to planning require that historic preservation become integrated into an organic approach to future development, one that incorporates adaptation to local circumstances in an attempt to fulfill these urban needs (Widener, 2015; Ercan, 2010).

This change in the approach to the preservation of heritage is particularly relevant in cities as urbanization trends threaten to drastically alter the historic urban landscape. As Ercan (2010) proposes, community participation can create significant improvements in the processes for planning in urban areas. Sustainable development in cities requires meeting the human needs of local communities that are outlined

above. Successful community-based projects for preservation often rely on a contextual approach (Ercan, 2010). Therefore, community involvement and engagement that focuses on improving local capacity are important components of the preservation planning process. Ryberg-Webster and Kinahan (2014) conclude their literature review about American historic preservation and urban neighborhood revitalization with some poignant observations. Those in power in historic preservation cannot be limited to the traditional actors of landmark commissions, government entities, and nonprofit advocates; there are many other actors such as real estate developers, community activists, city planners, municipal leaders, and the residents themselves that have a stake in preservation activities. The authors acknowledge that future research must question the relationship among these actors, investigate how decision-makers participate in preservation, and define what heritage values are included or not included in policy or planning initiatives. In the United States, a largely unanswered question about historic preservation processes is "Who decides?" (Ryberg-Webster & Kinahan, 2014, 131). This question inspired the selection of the conceptual framework for this study.

1.2 Charleston, SC: the research case

Preservation and urban planning have a long history in the United States with the relationship between the two fields becoming increasingly complex throughout the latter half of the twentieth century. As historic preservation gained a more active role in urban development, its impacts became controversial. Historic preservation has a history of public support in the United States and can often lead to economic development, job creation, and increased property values (Howell, 2008). But with these positive impacts come critiques, especially related to equity issues and perceptions of historic preservation as an exclusionary, elitist practice (Ryberg-Webster & Kinahan, 2014).

In recent years, the National Trust of Historic Preservation (NTHP) has established goals to strengthen its positive impact in urban development, focusing more recently on "building sustainable communities" and "promoting diversity of place" (NTHP, 2013). Many historic cities have surveyed their built environment and established lists of historic monuments and important places, however very few have developed inclusive programs that identify a diversified range of features recognizing both the tangible and intangible components that make up "the city's full range of urban heritage values" (Bandarin & van Oers, 2012, 108). As Bandarin and van Oers (2012, 110) assert, the broadened perception of heritage that has emerged during the last few decades has included an increasing complexity in the means through which heritage is identified, preserved, and shared. Heritage and preservation are not fixed concepts, a fact that becomes increasingly evident as urban areas continue to transform. Community engagement tools have been recognized as important mechanisms that "should empower a diverse cross-section of stakeholders to identify key values in their urban areas, develop visions, set goals, and agree on actions to safeguard their heritage and promote sustainable development" (Bandarin & van Oers, 2012, 144). As global sustainable development discourse focuses more intently on urban areas, the need for research that investigates participatory community engagement in defining and preserving urban heritage resources is apparent.

Charleston, SC, located on the Southeastern coast of the United States (Fig. 2.) is a city known for its rich history, cultural heritage, and proximity to natural features.
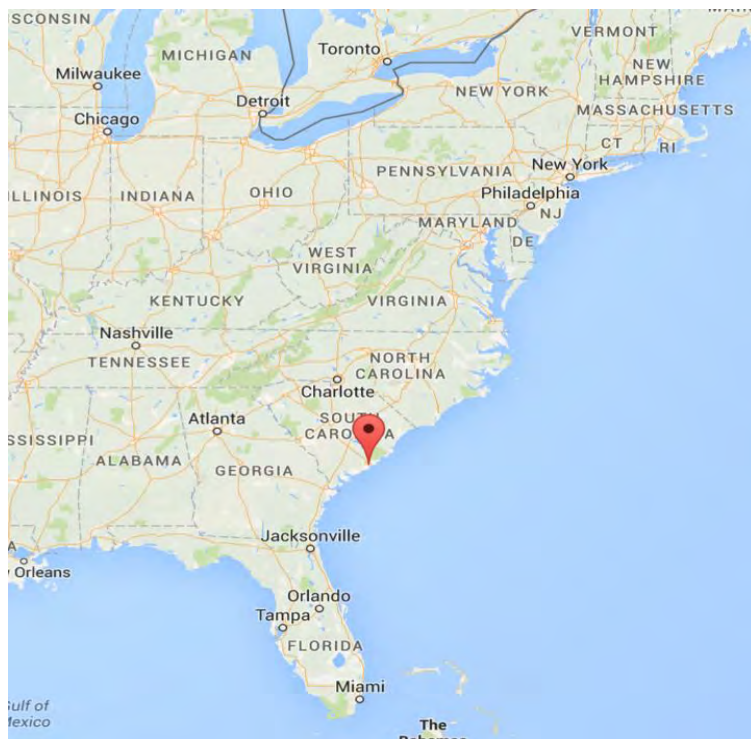
Fig. 2. A map indicating the city of Charleston on the Southeastern coast of the United States (Map data ©2016 Google, INEGI)

Founded in 1670, the colony of Charleston grew into a city that was a prominent force in the development of the nation. From its role as a trading port, major producer of cash crops, and active participant in the slave trade, to its resilience through wars and natural disasters, Charleston is deeply woven within the historical fabric of the United States (The Preservation Plan, 2008). Charleston is recognized for its planning and development approach that focuses on historic preservation and today, the city serves as an example of one of the best preserved, historical cities in the country. This incorporation of preservation into the city fabric, from individual structures to entire neighborhoods and land areas, contributes to the city's appeal as a tourist destination and a desirable place to live (The Charleston Green Plan, 2010). The top three tourist assets of Charleston are history, architecture, and culture, which helped to draw 4.8 million visitors to the city in 2012 according to the city's updated Tourist Management Plan (Tourism Management Plan, 2015). *Travel and Leisure Magazine* reports that Charleston was voted as the number one city in the United States and Canada for three years in a row (Gifford, 2015). However, the very features that make the Charleston area attractive to visitors and residents alike, are also contributing to a changing landscape characterized by development and growth.

1.2.1 Growth in the Charleston Region

Projected growth in the Charleston region poses ongoing challenges for the City and local organizations, particularly the planning of equitable, smart growth for the dense urban area on the Charleston peninsula (Fig. 3.). During the twentieth century, the Charleston region experienced an unprecedented rise in population and experienced subsequent urban growth, which is depicted in Fig. 4.
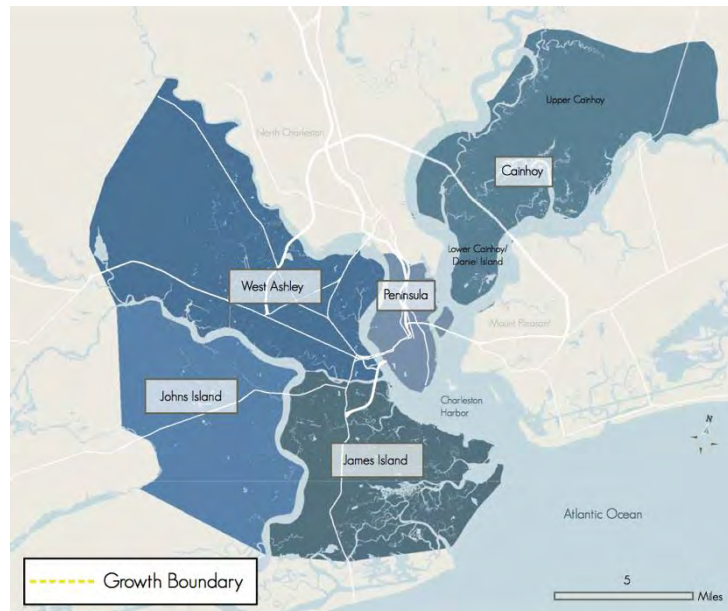
Fig. 3. The city areas of Charleston, note the "Peninsula" (Century V Plan, 2010, 55)
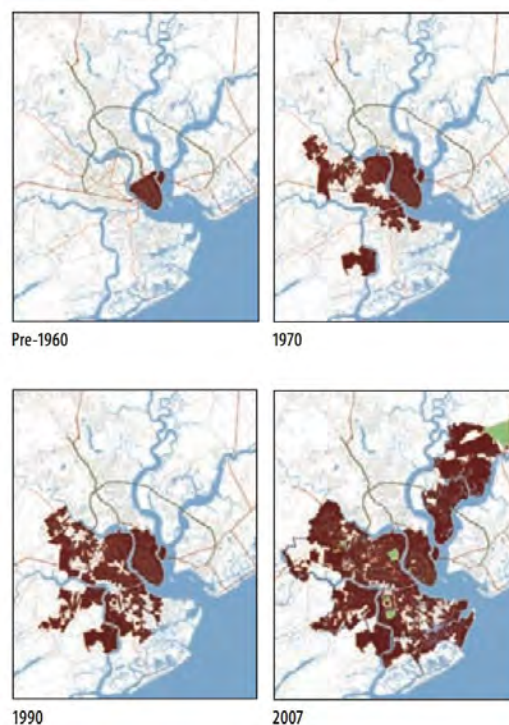
Fig. 4. Urban growth in the Charleston region, 1960 – present (The Preservation Plan, 2008, 7)

According to the most recent U.S. Census data, the region has been identified as one of the fastest growing metropolitan areas in the nation. The City's population has increased approximately 8.2 % between the April 1, 2010 and July 1, 2014 census

estimates (Century V Plan, 2010; US Census, 2010). This urban growth presents many opportunities, however it also creates the need to ensure that this growth does not negatively impact the quality of life that makes the region appealing to new residents, local businesses, and visitors. Another important observation about the nature of this growth is that most of it arises from people moving from other states, not through fluctuations in the area's birth or death rates (Slade, 2015).

The Charleston peninsula, the area's regional urban center, has been largely developed since the 1960s. However, as occurred in many cities after the mid-twentieth century, there was a mass exodus of the population, primarily white people, from the urban center to outlying areas. In 1950, the peninsula's population was approximately 70,174; the population bottomed out in 2010 at 34,636 with much of the region's residents moving to other city areas such as West Ashley (Parker & Slade, 2014). According to data presented in the Charleston 2010 Comprehensive Plan, the population on the peninsula is now stabilizing and set to increase in coming years (Century V Plan, 2010). The booming real estate market is another indicator that the 70-year decline in the peninsula's population has come to an end (Parker, 2014). City officials expect significant growth, estimating that approximately 25,000 new residents are likely to settle in the urban center, particularly in the Upper Peninsula area of the city, over the next few decades (Slade & Parker, 2014).

1.2.2 Effects on Demography and Culture

Throughout these population fluctuations the Charleston peninsula has retained its status as the "economic and cultural engine" of the city and remains the most diverse area in regard to culture and demographics (Century V Plan, 2010, 20). However, economic and demographic shifts are spurring gentrification that is contributing to the transformation of the Charleston urban fabric. The trend is most often associated with displacement of long-time residents and fragmentation of local culture due to a lack of controlled growth (Howell, 2008). Gentrification is a broad, complex phenomenon, however within the scope of this research, the general pattern and subsequent implications will be recognized as a means to contextualize the current situation in Charleston's urban core.

Cities globally are struggling with the generational population shift of more affluent people into deteriorating urban centers. The "white flight" trend that occurred during the period between 1950-1980 in many urban areas in the United States is reversing. The Charleston peninsula has lost more than 55 percent of its African-American population in the last 30 years (Slade & Parker, 2014). The City of Charleston recognizes this reversal and the threat it poses to the peninsula's current economic, cultural, and ethnic diversity. Economic development and the status of the real estate market threaten to transform the landscape and resident population. As quoted by the previous Director of Planning for the City of Charleston, "Charleston is a city where African-American culture and presence is fundamental to what we are as a city, it's very much fundamental to the fabric of the town…If you lose that, you've lost something central to the character of this place" (Slade & Parker, 2014). The area of the peninsula most affected by these shifts in development in recent years is known as the Upper Peninsula, which lies north of US Highway 17, commonly known as the Crosstown highway, that cuts across the peninsula. The neighborhoods located in this area of the peninsula are some of the last refuges in downtown Charleston that can

still claim integrated demographics and housing that is affordable for low- to middle-income residents. However, in recent years these neighborhoods have been increasingly attracting real estate investors, young student renters, and new homeowners seeking the Charleston urban lifestyle. The long-time homeowners in the Upper Peninsula, many of whom are African-American, are now frequently approached by real estate developers offering to buy their properties, pressuring some to consider moving. In response to the pressure on neighborhoods in the Upper Peninsula, the City of Charleston created the Gentrification Task Force in the year 2000. This resulted in a $10 million program that focused on providing more affordable housing for both renters and homebuyers. Despite the efforts of the Task Force, the African-American population on the peninsula continued to plummet and the demographics throughout the Upper Peninsula are becoming increasingly homogenous: young, affluent, and white. It is feared that without a focus on these issues the diversity and historical integrity of these communities and neighborhoods will quickly disappear (Slade & Parker, 2014).

Preservation is a strategy used for planning in Charleston and has been integrated in the approach to urban development in the region since Charleston's founding. Historic preservation and designation of historic districts may not equate with gentrification and urban redevelopment, however preservation-based rehabilitation strategies do tend to attract higher-income residents and increase housing prices. These changes create the potential for displacement of lower- or moderate-income residents, which is a particular threat in cities like Charleston that have a limited low-income housing stock (Zahirovic-Herbert and Chatterjee, 2012, 370). Charleston's Century V Plan (2010, 21) recognizes that "Housing is a fundamental building block of good neighborhoods and cities must foster an environment where people thrive in the context of preservation of old homes and where new homes are built as an extension of culture, lifestyle or civic pride in the community". Ideally, a range of housing options is made available to the residents of different communities within a metropolitan area. The City of Charleston boasts an array of diverse housing stock, however due to the desirability of the housing market in the city, affordability is a major issue. For example, the median sales price for a home in Charleston was approximately $210,000 in 2010; this price is not affordable to residents who earn less than $60,300 annually, the median income for a family of four in Charleston in that same year. This disparity means that homeownership is out of reach for many low-income families and remains a hurdle for many in the moderate-income range, as well (Century V Plan, 2010). It is important that as housing becomes a more prominent issue in the face of population growth, Charleston retain diverse housing, but also ensure that both new uses and new construction maintain the existing character of the neighborhoods throughout the peninsula (Century V Plan, 2010). The very features of the region that draw thousands of new residents each year, foster a thriving tourist industry, and promote economic success, are also the features that become most at risk with unchecked, inequitable development and urban growth.

The North Central neighborhood in Charleston is part of the Upper Peninsula section of the city that has been most affected by urbanization in recent years (Parker & Slade, 2014). This neighborhood serves as the case study site for this research. As the Charleston region continues to experience growth, development pressures threaten historic neighborhoods like North Central. These changes have already occurred in many of the neighborhoods surrounding North Central (Parker & Slade, 2014). The

City, as well as many organizations in the region, has been working toward goals of implementing more inclusive, collaborative planning efforts to promote new approaches for sustainable urbanism. Preservation and the recognition of historical value are pervasive elements of the approach to sustainable development and planning in Charleston (The Century V Plan, 2010; The Preservation Plan, 2008; The Charleston Green Plan, 2010). While community outreach has increased in recent years, public engagement and participation in the process of defining and managing the heritage resources of the North Central neighborhood has not been extensive thus far.

1.3 Problem formulation

The main purpose of this research is to explore the role that citizen participation in planning processes for urban preservation can have within the context of the North Central neighborhood in Charleston, SC. It will investigate how including community in the identification of heritage assets can inform a more holistic values-centered planning approach for sustainable urban development.

It is my hope that this study will further the City of Charleston's goals to promote a participatory approach to neighborhood planning and provide useful information for the planning initiatives in North Central, other Charleston neighborhoods, and historic neighborhoods in urban areas with a similar profile. More broadly, this research aims to contribute to the academic discussion that explores the movement towards a values-oriented, inclusive practice of planning for sustainable urban development that acknowledges the importance of heritage and preservation in fostering sustainable communities during what is now known as the "urban century" (Bandarin & van Oers, 2012).

The main research question that will guide this inquiry is: *How can the values and interests of local citizens be utilized to strengthen the positive impact of historic preservation in urban development and inform a more holistic values-centered approach to planning?*

In order to address this question, the following sub-questions applied to a particular case and will guide the inquiry and analysis process:

- *What features do residents of North Central neighborhood identify as heritage assets?*

- *How does this information compare to current preservation efforts?*

- *How can identification of these community-defined heritage assets be utilized to inform the planning approach in North Central?*

1.4 Disposition

The following section "Conceptual framework" explores a critical approach to traditional planning theory and a review of participation and democracy as important concepts in urban development and planning, as well as in achieving sustainable development goals. In the "Methodology and methods" section, the data collection

and analysis process is described, as well as the methodological approach. The ethical considerations, as well as a review of research reliability and reflexivity are also discussed. The "Contextualizing preservation praxis for the case" section provides a more in depth discussion of the heritage movement and the practice of historic preservation in the United States, highlights examples of research and case studies related to community participation in preservation planning, and provides a detailed overview of the relevant aspects of the case. These include characteristics of the North Central neighborhood and its context in the City of Charleston, the demographics of the North Central community, the approaches to urban planning and historic preservation in the City of Charleston, as well as information about ongoing initiatives and mitigation efforts in the neighborhood related to the impacts of urbanization and growth in the region. The thesis closes with the presentation of the results and an analysis and discussion where I relate the findings to the themes and research questions that inspired this study.

2. Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework for this research is embedded in a critical approach to traditional planning theory, drawing from the concepts of participation and democracy and their importance in urban development and planning, as well as in achieving sustainable development goals. The concept of values-based heritage is also explored in relation to these themes.

2.1 Participation and Democracy in Urban Governance

The movement toward a participatory planning paradigm in recent years mirrors a broader global transition. Both sustainable development and democratic tradition emerged in the same era as relevant frameworks for approaching urban governance (Bell & Morse, 2001; Holden 2011). As sustainability has become a major element in planning and policy so has the participation of local citizens. Scholars identify local resources as a "crucial locus" for the development and practice of democratic and participatory citizenship (Melo & Baiocchi, 2006). Kemp, Parto, and Gibson (2005, 15) focus on the importance of context in finding effective solutions and in designing approaches to governance in different situations; sustainability is about recognizing the role of local context and diversity as "a source of learning and the fuel of evolution". Broader policy circles and institutions are increasingly recognizing the agency of communities within sustainable development, the importance of context and diversity, and the necessity of transparency and public engagement in governance for sustainability (Kemp, Parto, & Gibson, 2005, 16; Eversole, 2012).

2.1.1 Democracy and participatory planning theories

The concept of democracy is contested and while the core elements of democratic tradition remain relatively static, interpretations of contemporary democratic interaction are constantly evolving. The deliberative and agonistic models of democracy attempt to broaden the role of citizens in governance; "Both call for richer understandings of democratic participation and multidimensional views of human interaction that are more sensitive to power and information asymmetries" (Söderbaum & Brown, 2010, 188). Deliberative democracy is largely attributed to the work of John Rawls and Jürgen Habermas. This model recognizes pluralism in the values and beliefs of individuals and groups, promoting deliberation among citizens within existing institutions, as well as in "nonpolitical domains" (Söderbaum & Brown, 2010, 189). The desired outcome of these deliberations is consensus. In contrast, agonism rejects the possibility of "achieving a fully inclusive rational consensus" (Mouffe, 2000, 5). The agonistic approach to democracy focuses on pluralizing dialogue in such a way that welcomes consideration of different perspectives and creates social spaces for discussion and debate as a means to create a more democratically conscious public (Söderbaum & Brown, 2010, 189). One aim of the agonistic approach is to embrace alternative communication methods, such as visual methods or narratives, which allow participants to express their individual values and experiences, as well as collective identities. Agonistic pluralism supports both possibilities for coalition building through shared values and understanding, and the development of methods for "speaking across difference" (Young 1997, as cited in Söderbaum & Brown, 2010, 189). These contemporary variations of democracy are embedded in recent approaches to sustainable urban development practices

representing the "movement toward democratically enlivened cities" (Brown, 2009; Holden, 2011, 312). Deliberative and agonistic theories of democracy are often perceived as conflicting, however some scholars recognize that the two theories sit on a political continuum. For practical applicability in the contemporary urban development realm, the development of hybrids that combine both theoretical models is necessary (Holden, 2011).

Participatory planning, also known as communicative, collaborative, or deliberative planning, emerged in the late twentieth century as a dominant discourse, replacing the model of rationality that defined the modernist era of planning (Fainstein, 2000; Allmendinger & Tewdwr-Jones, 2002; Bond & Thompson-Fawcett, 2007). The rational model justified the objective, expert role of the planner, but as planning theory and cities evolved, so did the roles of those in the development process. The rational planning approach fails to define the complex role of planning and it also has a reputation for producing inequities. Adaptation of the rational model involves promoting inclusive practices that address existing power relationships (Bond & Thompson-Fawcett, 2007). Traditional planning approaches shaped the ways that places are managed, governed, and perceived. Unlike traditional, rational planning, participatory planning theory is organized around the process, not only the end product. While founded on Habermas' concept of inclusive argumentation for creating shared understanding, the transition to participatory themes in urban planning practice has come to embody the core features of both deliberative and agonistic forms of democracy (Söderbaum & Brown, 2010). The importance of inclusive, discursive, and democratic processes is emerging in planning practice, promoting public involvement as a means to address the "democratic deficit" (Healey, 1999, 112; Albrechts, 2002).

Participatory planning has also been heavily criticized, largely for its idealism, which has caused some scholars to question its practical applicability (Allmendinger & Tewdwr-Jones, 2002; Bond & Thompson-Fawcett, 2007). Bond and Thompson-Fawcett (2007) identify two major issues that arise when attempting to achieve truly inclusive participation. The first issue is related to the contextual constraints that inevitably prevent some people from participating in events; "constraints to attendance may be structural, economic, cultural and logistical" and it is impossible to address every limitation (Bond & Thompson-Fawcett, 2007, 451). A second argument put forth by some scholars is that it is not feasible to create a neutral space for communicative discussion. Discussion is always directed and interpreted by facilitators or organizers and there are always power dynamics at play between participants. Some activities that are classified as participatory are not really participatory at all, rather they can justify existing inequalities and diminish individual agency (Bifulco, 2013). As proponents of communicative planning theory, Innes (2004) and Innes & Booher (1999) suggest that it is the recognition of these very power dynamics and active attempts to work through them that constitutes an inclusive participatory approach to planning. The facilitation of this type of space creates a place where "emancipatory knowledge" can be produced (Innes & Booher, 1999, 418). This type of knowledge is recognized as especially important as institutional or rational knowledge might not effectively adapt to and address the world's rapid changes (Innes & Booher, 1999). While scholars have made justified points about the limitations of communicative planning approaches in practice, the theory is still useful as a tool and a means for analysis. Though the ideal might never

be achieved, a process inspired by communicative planning principles and participation ensures that a diverse array of knowledge and perspectives are taken into account in the decision-making process (Healey, 1996; Huxley, 2000; Bond & Thompson-Fawcett, 2007, 452). As Allmendinger & Tewdwr-Jones (2002, 20) conclude, recognition of the critiques of collaborative planning will ultimately strengthen its use for developing a more progressive and democratic approach to planning.

Despite some of its limitations and challenges, participation must be taken seriously. The democratization of the planning process has the potential to produce more sustainable outcomes for local projects that represent the voices and values of citizens (Bifulco, 2013). The core of participatory planning theories lies in providing the opportunity for involvement of a diverse group of actors in decision-making, in the hopes that creating that space will lead to consensus building, social learning, and transformation. The hope of fusing participation to planning is that through the collaboration process, a broader understanding of local context can develop, which will also facilitate a context-specific approach to addressing conflicts (Healey, 1996, 1999; Forester, 1999; Innes, 2004). It is also important to acknowledge the ways in which agonistic pluralism can supplement these idealist goals. As Mouffe (2006, 30) asserts, "consensus is no doubt necessary, but it must be accompanied by dissent". It cannot be assumed that consensus is always possible in planning processes, a fact that is addressed by both the deliberative and agonistic paradigms. However, agonistic pluralism extends farther to recognize the merit in simply creating space for the multiplicity of dialogue. This paradigm accepts that disagreements and exclusion are inevitable and also vitally important to creating a truly democratic platform (Mouffe, 2006). The new wave of participatory planning theory embraces multiplicity and diversity:

> It seeks to escape from the straightjacket of a narrow instrumental rationality in its approaches to how to identify problems in need of strategic attention and how to act on them…It starts from the recognition that we are diverse people living in complex webs of economic and social relations, within which we develop potentially very varied ways of seeing the world, of identifying our interests and values, of reasoning about them, and of thinking about our relations with others (Healey, 1996, 219).

Healey (1999) asserts that the primary goal of collaborative processes in planning is providing space for participation in governance where the qualities of place can be discussed and used to inform initiatives and support adaptation to change. These "place qualities" are identified and defined socially and assigned value by those who experience them (Healey, 1999, 116). However, the determination of this meaning in planning for urban heritage management and preservation is not often rooted in the knowledge of local citizens. Olsson (2008) recognizes the need to develop a better understanding of how local people value their built environment. This need can be extended to include not only the heritage value of the built environment, but also the tangible and intangible heritage value of the urban system more generally. Participatory planning theories call for a reevaluation of the traditional power distribution in decision-making processes and encourage the inclusion of diverse citizen voices (Albrechts, 2002). This shift is particularly relevant for improving the processes in planning for preservation and heritage management in times of urbanization.

2.2 Values-based theory

An important aspect of this process includes exploring the role of memories and collective associations of values to place, as well as the creation of the meaning of place by those who inhabit them. The evolution of the concept of "sense of place" was borne out of the ancient idea of *genius loci*, meaning the guardian or protective spirit of a place (Rykwert, 1989). Today, sense of place is largely removed from this spiritual association and is instead derived from the characteristics of a place, as perceived by those individuals who experience it. These characteristics are based on individual perceptions and then expressed collectively through communities that interact with a place. The identity of a place is therefore created through the continuous process of negotiation among different groups and communities throughout history. Local communities integrate the features of a place into a singular experience through their daily practices and subsequent development of value systems. As Olivier Mongin (2005, see Bandarin & van Oers, 2012) presents, urbanity has long been determined through the intersection of two factors, one of which is the physicality of a place and the other, the collective decision of a community to reside in a certain location, a concept that is commonly understood as citizenship. In this sense, the urban experience and recognition of heritage values are related to democracy; heritage "is one of those rare things that involves *everyone*, and in which everyone may have a legitimate view, an informed opinion, whether on the basis of intellectual context and historical knowledge, or local knowledge and memory" (Schofield, 2014, 10). Hayden (1995) concludes in her analysis of urban landscapes as public history, that people associate places with social and cultural meanings. Recognizing these meanings can connect heritage and history to the contemporary urban experience, however interpretation of these connections can be complicated because the people who make up communities are constantly evolving and changing throughout time and space. Despite this fluidity, the preservation of urban heritage resources is a vital aspect of future urban development. Due to the very nature of sense of place, it is clear that the determination of significance and value must be an inclusive process.

Significance is derived from the everyday lives of people; therefore preservation efforts must consider values and livability at the community level. An example of this approach to heritage can be observed with the Common Ground project, which was founded in 1983 in the United Kingdom. This group focuses on fostering local distinctiveness through defying the exclusionary approaches to preservation practices and demonstrating the merits of creatively approaching heritage through democratic involvement in everyday places. As one of the founders of Common Ground stated, "Careful decisions about places should take a long time, should involve as many as possible; place and decision-making become their own academy of democracy…" (Clifford, 2010, 14). The example of the Dudley Street neighborhood, located just outside of the city of Boston in the United States, represents the benefits of supporting a democratic, grassroots approach to neighborhood revitalization. The Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative (DSNI) was founded in 1984 in response to years of disinvestment and deterioration in the Dudley neighborhood. The initiative was created as a way to reconnect the diverse community through resident-led efforts to foster a vibrant urban place, embodying a similar mission to that of the Common Ground project. As Greg Watson (1999, 4), the Executive Director of the DSNI states, the "local residents are the most reliable source of information with regard to

neighborhood needs and opportunities" and that resident input is a vital aspect of the planning process, for planning professionals may not be aware of certain cultural or historical factors associated with a place and the people who live there. The idea that local, subjective perspectives matter in heritage preservation emerged through the development of the contemporary heritage movement and is more frequently incorporated within preservation planning processes in recent years. The relationship between people and places has been studied extensively, resulting in conclusions that attachments to particular places are a very important part of individual development in society. As Brain (2005, 226) suggests, places, including neighborhoods and broader urban areas, can be understood "not just as things that happen to us, like the weather, or containers or sites of social practice, but as things we do together…Places matter because they are, at one level, ways of organizing things that matter".

The dimensions of heritage have changed drastically within the new heritage movement. The basic dynamics in this process of transition have involved movement from memorialization of specific things to recognition of the everyday experience, from focusing far in the past to integrating the past with contemporary development, and from preservation of material things to recognition of intangible heritage (McClelland et al., 2013, 590). An approach that focuses on values is associated with being more democratic and inclusive because it involves a broader range of actors in the process. These qualities of a values-based approach to preservation of heritage also provide a means to improve community engagement efforts. Community participation in heritage preservation is increasingly acknowledged as an important aspect of the process. (McClelland et al., 2013). Not only does a values-based approach to heritage create more interaction among interested actors in the processes of planning and management of historic resources, this approach facilitates recognition of a multitude of values that better reflect local sustainability agendas through focusing on specific environmental, economic, and social context (McClelland et al., 2013, 594). An example of the types of values that could be associated with heritage or historic resources can be seen in the diagram in Fig. 5.
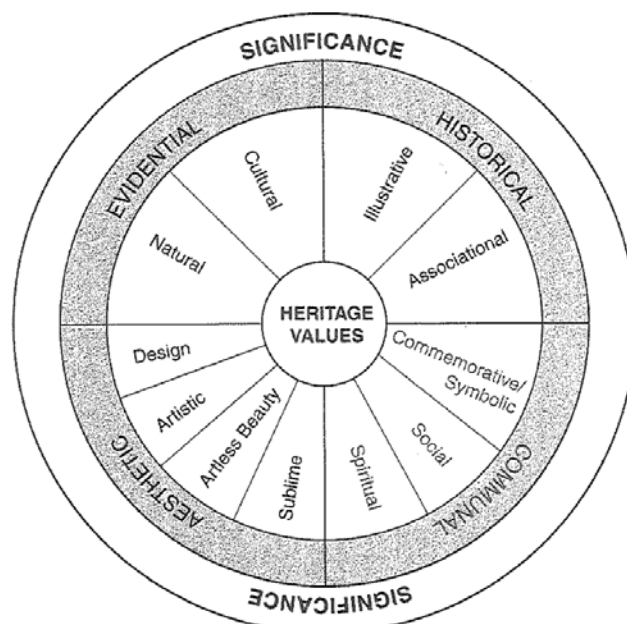

Fig. 5. Diagram indicating the types of values that could be associated with heritage or historic resources according to the English Heritage Conservation Principles (Townend & Whittaker, 2010, 69).

A values-based approach to heritage situates historic preservation at the forefront of addressing urban development challenges. Acknowledgement of situated knowledge is important for inclusive processes related to heritage and preservation because the knowledge that local people and community members develop through their lived experience is more attuned to the connections and interrelationships among different features in comparison to the knowledge developed by professionals working within "their particular silos of expertise" (Eversole, 2012, 34). This observation is especially relevant in relation to preservation, a field that has been highly criticized for its exclusionary practices in the past. Today, preservationists have a responsibility to address preservation in the context of broader cultural forces that are constantly in a state of flux. As Mason (2006) explains,

> By centering a model of preservation on the perceived values of places, as opposed to the observed qualities of fabric, values-centered preservation acknowledges the multiple, valid meanings of a particular place. It acknowledges their multiplicity, their changeability, and the fact that values come from many different sources. …Participation – acknowledged widely as one of the urgent needs in contemporary preservation practice – is part and parcel of the values-centered model for preservation (Mason, 2006, 31).

This approach provides a framework and tools for the preservation field to embrace change and adapt to incorporate the complexity of planning, management, and decision-making for sustainable urban development (Mason, 2006). It is important to note that "all values cannot *all* be protected simultaneously," however the practice of recognizing the multiplicity of values that exist in relation to historic resources is an important means through which a new paradigm for preservation can be shaped (McClelland et al., 2013, 595). According Holden (2011), as participation becomes a more popular goal for decision-making processes, the values of participation and the various processes of inclusion need to be better understood. The intersection of democratic theory and participatory planning theories, as well as the role of a values-based approach, provides a strong base for investigating the relationships between participatory processes, identification of heritage resources, and preservation planning in sustainable urban development. The conceptual framework outlined above contextualizes and supports the research inquiry, guided the selection of methods for data collection, and also provides a means to effectively explore and analyze the results.

3. Methodology and methods

This inquiry is guided by a participatory methodological approach. Scholars have explored the connections between science and society for sustainability, suggesting that an interdisciplinary approach embedded in real societal dynamics helps to support sustainability transitions. Wittmayer and Schäpke (2014) recognize the importance of linking knowledge to action, focusing on the role that process oriented approaches can have in helping to redefine power relationships and creating space for democracy. They argue that the participants in these democratic spaces co-construct their social reality through negotiating social roles and identities, shared futures, and lived experience. Creating these spaces and encouraging participation to promote the integration of different types of knowledge embedded in geographical or cultural settings has become part of development strategies in recent years (Eversole, 2012, 33). Communities, and the people who identify as members of them, are accepted as key agents within participatory processes for sustainable development. In accepting this role, it is important to define what "community" means.

"Community" can include a wide variety of human relationships. Gusfield (1975) suggests that a community can be geographical, such as a neighborhood or city, or be constructed through relations that are not contingent upon location. These types of communities are not mutually exclusive (McMillan & Chavis, 1986, 8). Healey (1996) recognizes the challenges with defining "community" for constructing an inclusive public realm. She suggests that there are two meanings for community in this context. The first is spatially based and refers to the people in a specific place who are affected by what happens in that place. The other is stake based and includes those who are interested or care about what the people in the spatial community are doing in a place. Ultimately, it is important to remember that true communities "are composed of a complex mix of different kinds of social ties, activated in different ways in different patterns of interaction, with historically varying connections to space, place, and territory" (Brain, 2005, 221). For the purposes of this inquiry and specific case, the community is geographically defined as those who self-identify as residents of the North Central neighborhood in Charleston, SC. This definition of "community" and the theme of participation are the main aspects of the methodological design for this research.

The participatory approach to this research allows for flexibility in regards to the methods selected for data collection. While the flexibility and adaptability of participatory research is sometimes cited as a shortcoming, this style of approach provides qualitative information that can better reflect the diversity and complexity of the phenomenon being studied (Clifford, French, & Valentine, 2010; Pretty et al., 1995). As participatory approaches to research gained popularity, a transition occurred from verbal methods to visual ones (Pretty et al., 1995, 77). The methods selected for this research embody both types and are outlined in the sections below. This approach is especially important when working in a neighborhood or community setting. Merging community work with participatory methods is proven to contribute to empowerment, influence policy development and improve implementation, and guide more relevant research inquiries (Guijt & Shah, 1998). As Clifford, French, and Valentine (2010) indicate, the data that participatory methods produce are more likely to be useful and accurate in the process of representing and addressing people's actual needs and interests.

This research utilizes a case study as a comprehensive research strategy to collect the empirical data and contextualize the results. As Yin (2003) claims, single-case study research is ideal when the case is both unique and has the potential to contribute significantly to existing knowledge; the situation in North Central embodies both these qualities. This methodological approach allows the researcher to investigate a contemporary phenomenon and real-life events through a participatory and inclusionary lens. Case study methods also support the use of multiple sources of evidence and varied data collection methods, providing for triangulation of results. While the rigor of case study research and its limitations related to "scientific generalization" have been criticized, the merits of using a case study for this inquiry, including its flexibility and interactive nature, far outweigh its weaknesses (Yin, 2003, 10; Robson, 1993). The specific tools used for data collection in this research are community mapping in focus groups and qualitative interviews.

3.1 Tools

Community mapping in focus groups
Focus groups, originally used as a market research method, have gained popularity in social science research since the mid-1990s. Focus groups consist of an informal group discussion about a certain topic based on a series of questions. The researcher serves as a moderator, facilitating discussion by introducing questions, aiding the flow of discussion, and allowing people to participate fully. A key characteristic of focus groups that is especially relevant to the participatory theme of the methodological approach for this research is the dynamic interaction among participants. This quality sets focus groups or group interviews apart from individual interviews in which the interaction is only between the interviewer and the interviewee (Wilkinson, 2004; Clifford, French, & Valentine, 2010). The interactions in focus groups allow participants to react to the responses of other members of the group, resulting in a "synergistic effect" and "more elaborated accounts than are generated in individual interviews" (Wilkinson, 2004, 180).

Some scholars describe community mapping as "a focus group around a map" and it typically involves a community group participating in dialogue around maps of a specific place, such as a neighborhood (Burns, Purdzynska, & Paz, 2012). Maps are powerful tools; they reflect the human relationship to the world around us, defining knowledge and power. Individuals and institutions with power have largely dominated the activity of mapping, essentially shaping the way people view and understand the world (Aberley, 1993). They have historically been utilized as an instrument in hegemonic power, becoming increasingly available to those with colonial and commercial interests, and less accessible to the citizen base. Community mapping offers a means to counter this exclusionary trend, putting the power of map-making back in the hands of locals (Lydon, 2003).

While still in the early stages of development, community mapping has emerged as a locally derived method for approaching neighborhood planning and empowerment in the United States. The process promotes community learning and planning through engagement and communication. Community mapping provides a means through which communities can actively engage in producing collective representations of what they value in their neighborhoods through identifying and documenting both

tangible and intangible resources. This can create a sense of empowerment for citizens and allows community members to develop identity and ownership within their local area (Fahy & Cinneide, 2009; Lydon, 2003). When using this tool, the importance of interaction and the creation process are given as much weight as the end results. And the applicability of the results to informing the research inquiry is not contingent upon their being representative of a consensus among participants; both similarities and differences in responses are valued as equally relevant. As a participative process, community mapping can strengthen the role of local residents in planning initiatives that are typically approached at the institutional level. Community-based representation of values and resources can provide insight for local initiatives and contribute to democratizing the planning process (Fahy & Cinneide, 2009).

Qualitative interviews with key informants
As Kvale and Brinkmann (2009, 2, original emphasis) claim, "an interview is literally an *inter view*, an inter-change between two persons conversing about a theme of mutual interest". Qualitative interviewing is an active process that seeks to understand the worldview of participants, gaining deeper understanding of their lived experiences. The process of interviewing reveals co-produced knowledge through conversational relations between the interviewer and the interviewee; this knowledge is "contextual, linguistic, narrative, and pragmatic" (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009, 18). While interviewing as a method can be used as the primary means of data collection, interviews lend themselves to a multi-method approach as was designed for this research inquiry. Interviews are flexible and adaptable, aligning well with the participatory, case study approach (Robson, 1993; Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009).

3.2 Research reflexivity and ethical considerations

As a researcher, it is important to orient oneself within the research process. In my role as the researcher for this study, I inevitably influenced the responses from participants and interviewees throughout the data collection process. I made it clear to all participants in this study that I am a master's student in Sustainable Development at Uppsala University. I also explained my association with Historic Charleston Foundation (HCF) during my internship period in 2015, citing this experience as the inspiration for my project. This previous experience in the neighborhood and study area likely had an impact on the way my role was perceived by study participants. However, I would argue that it allowed me to develop a higher level of trust with those who attended the focus groups and participated in my interviews. I touch on reflexivity of the research throughout the text; this section simply acknowledges the overall importance of my role in the research process.

The concept of reliability is linked to a specific research objective: that if another researcher followed the same procedures of an earlier researcher and conducted an identical case study, the second researcher should discover the same findings and come to the same conclusions (Yin, 2003, 37). In other words, to ensure that research is reliable or credible, it is important to provide an "audit" or step by step process by which other researchers can follow the research trajectory. This audit could include raw data, processed data and the products of analysis, the final report, notes about the process, original materials outlining research intentions, and the development of instruments and methods (Robson, 1993, 406). With qualitative research, it is

especially vital that the researchers collecting and analyzing the data take serious note of the potential for bias within these processes. The role of the researcher can be a major asset when investigating complex social phenomenon, but human error and fallibility is also a risk. The researcher has a primary role in all the processes, from defining the research approach and collecting data, to analyzing and interpreting the findings. In order to effectively address credibility for this research, readers are provided, an in-depth review of the case study, detailed descriptions of the methods and procedures, and access to the materials that aided the data collection process including interview guides and activity instructions. Triangulation of the data from the focus groups, interviews, and existing literature also provides a means to strengthen the research validity. The concepts and theories woven into the research approach can help others who are designing studies or working on policy within a similar framework to determine whether the specific research case can be informative for another setting (Robson, 1993; Yin, 2003).

The information shared by participants within this study remains confidential and anonymous. All participants in both the focus groups and interviews agreed to participate on the grounds of informed consent. No demographic information was collected or presented from those who chose not to share certain details. No participant appears in the research materials with their real name; all interviewees and focus group participants are labeled with numbers or professional association. The participants were provided detailed information about the nature of the research inquiry, intentions for using the results, and were also given the opportunity to withdraw from the project at any point in time before publication of the thesis. The participants and all interested parties were also offered access to the research findings and final publication upon completion of the project (Clifford, French, & Valentine, 2010).

Due to the nature of the community mapping and the focus group setting, a specific confidentiality issue arises because the researcher is privy to the information shared, as well as group participants and volunteers. Therefore, participants of the focus groups were asked to keep the discussions and conversations confidential. All participants in the focus groups were reminded to not disclose anything they would not feel comfortable being repeated outside the group setting. Although confidentiality was practiced, no participant in either the focus groups or the interviews was led to believe that their identity could not be traced, especially those with official affiliations; no individual took issue with this fact. The content of the conversation topics was not particularly sensitive, however participants were reminded that if they did not feel comfortable answering a question at any point in time, they could refuse and we would move on to the next question or part of the activity (Clifford, French, & Valentine, 2010). Participants were provided with my contact information and invited to reach out at any time with questions or concerns regarding their involvement in the study, as well as for making suggestions for future use of the results and ways to further include the North Central neighborhood in the research project.

3.3 Data collection process

The specific processes of data collection for this research are presented below. The process is described for each method separately.

Process for community mapping in focus groups

The community discussion and mapping exercise in North Central was carried out in a focus group setting in order to tap into the benefits of the interactional nature of group discussion and collaborative production of visual representations of information. The focus groups were presented as an open opportunity for anyone who identifies as a resident of the North Central neighborhood. This open invitation was used to promote inclusivity and to prevent exclusion of any interested participants. It was promoted through multiple sources including social media, word of mouth among residents and organization leaders that work in the neighborhood, placement of flyers at local businesses, and door-to-door flyer distribution throughout the neighborhood. I also made an announcement at the North Central Neighborhood Association on February 13, 2016, inviting all attendees to the focus groups and also encouraging them to notify friends and neighbors. The choice to keep the focus groups open to any interested participants made it impossible to know exactly how many people would attend until the day of the event. The focus groups were scheduled for February 24, 2016 from 6:00 PM – 8:00PM to ensure that those who work during typical work day hours could attend. Light refreshments were provided for all participants. Participants were asked to notify the researcher about their intention to attend the focus groups so that materials and the format could be prepared in advance, however most participants did not send prior notification of attendance.

There are different ranges for the ideal number of participants in a focus group, but the typical recommendation ranges between four and twelve participants per group. The group of participants can also be formulated in different ways: made up of pre-existing groups of people, brought together specifically for the research, representative of a specific population, or on the basis of shared characteristics or experiences (Wilkinson, 2004, 178). In keeping with the flexibility of the research design, the format of the focus groups was structured so that the discussion and activities would be feasible for a large range of participants. Ideally, the setting for a focus group should be neutral, informal, and easily accessible and while it is not always possible to find the "perfect" location, these factors should be considered in the selection process (Clifford, French, & Valentine, 2010). While the North Central neighborhood does not have a designated community center or official gathering space, a local school, the Sundrops Montessori School at 88 Simons Street, has served as a community meeting space in the past. This location was used for one of the community forums hosted by HCF in fall 2015 and the director of the school was interested in providing the space for future community events in order to become more active within the neighborhood. The school is familiar and known to many members of the community, and it is also centrally located, making it an ideal place to host the focus groups for this study.

The focus groups were organized using a discussion and activity guide and were limited to a two-hour period, as is recommended for group interviews (Clifford, French, & Valentine, 2010). The discussion guide, including questions and the instructions for the community mapping activity, was framed by a set of themes derived from the research problem and approach: participation, community involvement, community values, preservation priorities, challenges in neighborhood planning/initiatives, successes/failures, vision for the future with the past in mind, assets-based approach (Appendix 1). The questions for the focus groups were

intentionally open ended to allow for more candid responses. The main purpose of the focus groups was to gather information about what North Central residents consider to be heritage assets or historic resources in the neighborhood, how they feel about past, present, and proposed preservation initiatives, and community engagement related to these topics. The focus groups consisted of discussions about these topics and a community mapping exercise.

Using the community mapping method as a means to gather information contributes to identifying a rich inventory of heritage assets defined by community members in North Central. Asset mapping as a method also allows for investigation of less tangible parts of place making and community such as culture, narratives, traditions, memories, and values, which are core aspects of this inquiry (Powell, 2010; Strang, 2010; Ryberg-Webster & Kinahan, 2014). Various community mapping tool kits and workshop guides from projects around the world were referenced to inspire the format of the mapping activity for the residents of North Central. I chose to provide a geographic representation of the neighborhood for the basis of the mapping activity. This process involved creating a simple base map of the general area of the North Central neighborhood that indicated streets, highways, green space, and current building footprints using the ArcMap 10.3 GIS program and data from the City of Charleston website. Four maps were printed in black and white at size A2 and affixed to cardboard backing so that they were both large enough and stable enough for a group of people to work around. The location of the Sundrops Montessori School was indicated on the map so that participants could orient themselves in relation to their current location. The official neighborhood boundaries according to the City of Charleston were not indicated on these maps in an attempt to avoid limiting the participant discussions through imposing "political" boundaries. Markers, pens, and "Post-It" notes were provided for participants to use during the activity to indicate items on the base maps (Fig. 6.).
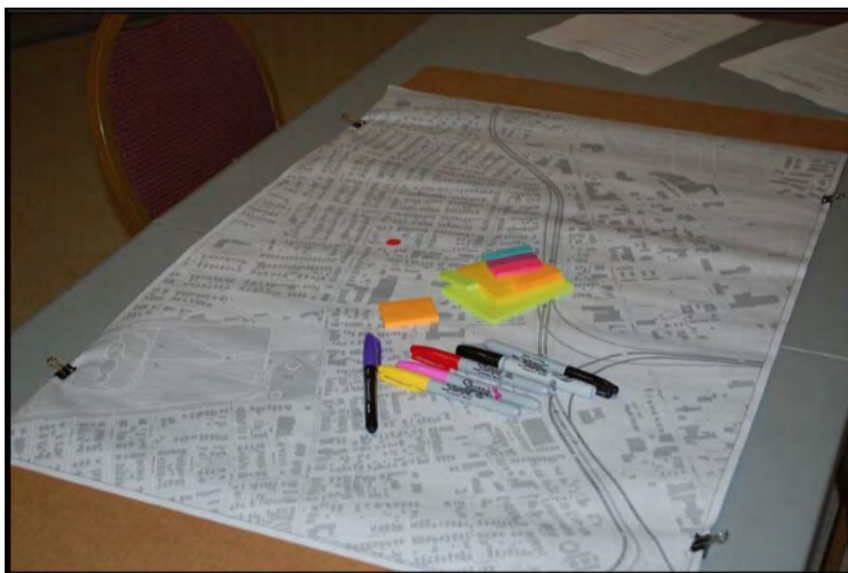
Fig. 6. Table set up and supplies for the focus groups

The mapping activity was designed for use in conjunction with the group discussion, providing a visual tool for the identification of heritage assets and historic resources, as well as for referencing other discussion points (Ragan et al., 2009, 2010; Bonner, 2012; Burns, Purdzynska, & Paz, 2012; Preston City Council, 2015). After the small group work, attendees were encouraged to participate in a

sharing session and larger group discussion with all participants.

The 14 attendees were split into three focus groups. Groups 1 and 2 consisted of five participants and Group 3 consisted of four participants. Participants were encouraged to sit at different tables to form the focus groups, but were still given the choice to sit with whom they wanted to ensure that they were comfortable with the discussion setting. The division of the groups is outlined in Table 1. The numbers indicate participants who filled out demographic information, whereas the "x" indicates a participant who did not provide that information. More information about the individual participant demographics is outlined in Table 2 in the following section, "Participant characteristics".

Group number	Participants
1	4,5,6,7, x
2	1,2,3,10, x
3	8,9, x, x

Table 1. Focus group division by group number and participants for community discussion and mapping activity ("x" indicates a participant who did not submit demographic information)

Due to the nature of the community mapping in focus groups, I chose not to record the discussions and activity. Instead, I recruited volunteer note takers from both undergraduate and master's programs at the College of Charleston, one of the local universities. There was at least one scribe sitting at each group's table to write down important comments and to record the general flow of the conversation. Note takers were provided with note taking instructions and the discussion guide with the questions before the day of the focus groups. I served as the main facilitator of the groups, but note takers were asked to help guide the discussion at the tables if the participants deviated too much from the relevant topics. I also rotated and took notes at all three tables to ensure that I was available for questions and that, as the primary researcher I could get a sense of the conversations within each group and record my observations.

The data from the community mapping in focus groups consists of hand written notes taken by volunteer note takers in addition to my own personal notes. Some of the note takers transcribed their own notes and provided the original, shorthand notes and a more detailed typed version. I also transcribed some of the notes, sent my version to the respective note taker, and received feedback from them regarding the accuracy of my interpretation. I met with most of the note takers after the focus groups to review materials, to hear about their impressions of the discussions, and to address any lingering comments or concerns. These measures ensure that as much information as possible is included in the final interpretation and presentation of the data. The other data collected at the focus groups are the three maps co-produced by participants. The maps were collected and their contents recorded via photograph and a listed inventory of all items indicated by the group participants.

Participant characteristics
There were a total of 14 participants for the focus groups, and all but one participant remained for the entire two hours. All participants were asked to fill out a demographic sheet with basic information and some optional questions. Only 10 of

the 14 participants filled out a form. The information collected from the 10 participants who chose to fill out a form is summarized in Table 2.[1]

Participant ID	Number of years resident of NC	Rent or Own	Age	Gender	Race/Ethnicity	Profession	Motives for moving to NC (optional)	Motives for staying in NC (optional)
1	Off and on entire life, latest 3 years	Own	50	M	Majority	Home builder	Area traffic, central location, and parents grew up in the neighborhood	Improvements of entire area and area traffic
2	20 years		61	M	Minority	Poet		
3	2 years		47	M	Majority	Photographer	Mixed neighborhood, from South Florida and used to mixed communities	Mixed neighbors
4	5 years	Own	34	M	Majority	Builder	Affordability (particularly to renovate home), location on peninsula/convenience to downtown	Location on peninsula, diverse community/friendly neighbors (old and new), changes to area (new businesses/more resources), optimistic future, affordable mortgage (comparatively)
5	15 years	Own	71	M		Interior decorator		
6	10 years	Own	43	M	Majority		Went to college here and always liked and wanted to live downtown	Great family area and my kids go to James Simons
7	63 years	Own	73	F	Minority	Retired teacher	Parents rented first and decided to purchase	Did not stay, moved in 2010, needed to start anew and a new environment was necessary
8	30 years	Own	62	F	Minority	CPN (Charleston Promise Neighborhood)	Owning a home, neighborhood not overcrowded with parking	Beautiful neighborhood, friendly neighbors, shopping area close to neighborhood
9	13 years, 20 years within 2 blocks of current house	Own		F		Consultant	Neighborhood character, neighborhood history, neighborhood diversity	Same and neighbors
10	32 years	Rent	85	M	Minority	Boxing trainer and manager	To create a haven for the youth to participate in boxing	Helping youth and to maintain history of the boxing program

Table 2. Community discussion and mapping activity participant demographic information

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[1] While there have been movements to remove race from legislative vocabulary in Sweden, as well as in other European countries such as Hungary and France, race was included in this demographic information due to its context to the research inquiry (OHCHR, 2013; Rundquist, 2014). Race has played a large role in the societal relations and subsequent development of the Charleston area historically and through present times. Therefore, its existence is important to acknowledge in this study. "Majority" will indicate the largest recognized racial group in the U.S., White, whereas "Minority" will refer to other groups, largely Black or African-American for this project (US Census, 2010).

Some answers were omitted by the participants and therefore not included in the table. Of the 10 participants who provided information, it is clear that there was a diverse mix of people present at the meeting. There was a varied representation of gender, age, race/ethnicity, profession, and number of years as a resident of the neighborhood. There were also wide varieties in the residents' motives for both moving to and staying in the North Central neighborhood. On average, the participants had lived in the neighborhood for 20 years, some as long as 63 years, and others as few as two years. There was also a disparity in the gender of participants represented in the table above, with seven males and three females. The average age of participants was 58 years old, with the oldest participant being 85 years old and the youngest participant being 34 years old. All but one participant who chose to answer the question about whether they rent or own their property indicated that they own their property in the neighborhood; Participant 10 rents his property.

Process for qualitative interviews with key informants
Interviews with key informants were used to gain a more in depth understanding of certain topics and gather complementary information to the data collected during the focus groups. The interview design for this research was semi-structured which means that the conversation topics and main questions were predetermined, with the understanding that new questions or insights could arise during the interview process (Pretty, et al., 1995). During the study period, two different sets of interviews were conducted. The first set of interviews was completed between January 2016 and February 2016 with official representatives from different departments at the City of Charleston, as well as representatives from two local historic preservation advocacy nonprofit organizations. These interviews were conducted in an attempt to expand on the information available in official City and organizational publications and also to ask questions about involvement at the specific case study location. These interviews took place at the offices of the various representatives. The second set of interviews was conducted in March 2016 with residents from the North Central neighborhood. This set of interviews was organized to supplement the information gathered at the focus groups in February and to gather more in-depth data from the residents. These interviews were conducted at locations that were mutually agreed upon by the interviewer and interviewee so as to ensure that the interviewee was comfortable and at ease during the conversation; these locations include a local urban garden, a coffee shop, a restaurant, and places of residence.

Examples of the interview guides can be found in Appendix 2. The same themes that were used to inspire the community discussion guide were used to create the questions for the interview guides. The first set of interviews inquired about organizational, departmental, and governmental involvement with preservation initiatives and community engagement in the North Central neighborhood; the questions focused on the institutional perspective and sought to expand on materials already publicly available such as The Preservation Plan, The Charleston Green Plan, and the City's current comprehensive plan. The questions for the second set of interviews were adapted from the guide for the focus groups to be applicable for a one-on-one interview setting. An informal individual mapping exercise accompanied these interviews as a tool to inform and guide the conversation, to support a participatory approach, and to maintain continuity among methods.

Participant selection

The number of interviews conducted for qualitative research depends on the nature and purpose of the study. Typically 10-15 interviews are recommended for a case study if interviews are the main source for data collection (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009, 113). Their aim is to better understand the individual experiences, perceptions, and positionality in relation to the research inquiry (Clifford, French, & Valentine, 2010). For this research five interviews were conducted with representatives for the institutional and organizational perspective and another five interviews were conducted with residents of the North Central neighborhood. The selection process was iterative and flexible, with various adjustments made throughout. All interviewees in this study are considered key informants.

The selection of the informants for the first set of interviews was based on professional involvement with preservation planning and urban development in the City of Charleston. The first step in the selection process involved identifying the relevant organizations and city departments. I then contacted potential interviewees to make meeting requests; these individuals were selected based on their position and experience. There are two prominent preservation advocacy organizations in Charleston, Historic Charleston Foundation (HCF) and the Preservation Society of Charleston and I reached out to individuals in the Preservation Departments at both organizations. My experience working as an intern with HCF during the summer of 2015 provided me with accessibility to representatives at both of these organizations. Through established contacts at HCF and at the City of Charleston, I was able to identify additional individuals to interview at departments at the City. I contacted representatives at the Housing & Community Development Department and the Planning, Preservation, & Sustainability Department at the City based on their relevancy to the research inquiry. These interviews were conducted on an individual basis except for one, which included two representatives from one organization. During each interview, one of the final questions requested recommendations for additional people to contact, which helped to confirm the selection of interviewees. The selection of informants for the second set of interviews was based on my relationships with residents in the North Central neighborhood that developed during my time working as an intern with HCF, as well as recommendations from participants in the focus groups for this study. There were also some individuals who wanted to attend the focus groups, but were not available on the selected date, and therefore requested to meet and participate in an interview individually.

Participant characteristics

The participants for the first set of qualitative interviews hold management positions in their respective organizations and departments. The affiliations of the interviewees for the first five interviews are outlined in Table 3.

Interviewee ID	Affiliation
1A	Preservation Society of Charleston
2A	
3A	Housing & Community Development Department at the City of Charleston
4A	
5A	Historic Charleston Foundation
6A	Planning, Preservation, & Sustainability Department at the City of Charleston

Table 3. Affiliation of participants in the first set of qualitative interviews with representatives from the City of Charleston and local preservation advocacy organizations

The interviewees from the preservation advocacy nonprofit organizations included two representatives from the Preservation Society of Charleston and one representative from Historic Charleston Foundation. The interviewees from departments at the City of Charleston included two representatives from the Housing & Community Development Department, as well as a representative from the Planning, Preservation, & Sustainability Department.

The participants from the second set of qualitative interviews were residents of the North Central neighborhood. The characteristics of these participants are outlined in Table 4. Any omissions indicate where an interviewee chose not to respond.

Interviewee ID	Number of years resident of NC	Rent or Own	Age	Gender	Race/Ethnicity	Profession	Motives for moving to NC (optional)	Motives for staying in NC (optional)
1B	70 years	Own	79	M	Minority	Tile setter		Peace and quiet
2B	6 years	Own	47	F	Majority	Carpenter	Gut feeling	Friends, family, diversity
3B	15 years	Own	60	M	Majority	Household organizer	Own instead of rent	I like it, urban without crowded feeling, I like the energy of all the young people here
4B	10 years	Own	82	F	Minority	Retired/registered nurse/professor	Parent's homestead	Accessible to healthcare system
5B	55 years	Own	71			Retired	Grew up here	Love it here, moved away and moved back

Table 4. Interviewee characteristics for second set of qualitative interviews with North Central residents

There was a wide range of participants for this set of interviews, mirroring the characteristics of those who participated in the focus groups. The residents who were interviewed had lived in the neighborhood for an average of 31 years, with one having lived there for as few as six years and another having lived there for 70 years. There was an almost even distribution of gender for these interviews with two males, two females, and one individual who chose not to specify. The race/ethnicity and profession of participants was diverse, as were the varying motives for their moving to and staying in the neighborhood. The average age of the residents who participated in the interviews was slightly older than those who attended the focus groups, approximately 68 years old. The youngest interviewee was 47 years old and the oldest was 82 years old. All residents who participated in the interviews own their property in the neighborhood.

While both sets of interviews were recorded, the data preparation differed slightly between the two sets of interviews. The first set of interviews with the representatives from the City and local advocacy organizations were recorded and fully transcribed. These interviews all lasted approximately one hour and followed the interview guide closely with few changes to the content of questions or subject matter. The second set of interviews with the five residents of North Central was less formal and some of the meetings extended over two hours. These interviews were also recorded, but due to the loose and participatory nature of these conversations, full transcriptions were not completed. Rather, while listening through these interviews, I recorded important quotes, comments, and notable themes that arose rather than a word for word transcription of the conversation. In order to address the first sub question for this

research inquiry, I also created an inventory of the heritage assets or historic resources mentioned by each interviewee. The content of the individual mapping activity with each participant is also included in the final data.

Open coding and thematic analysis were used as the methods of analysis for this research. As a method, it is flexible and accessible, providing a means to summarize key features of large amounts of data and to support many levels of interpretation. It is also considered a useful method for studies with a participatory methodology due to the ease of communicating results to a wide audience and its applicability to many different fields and disciplines; these features make it particularly useful as a means of analysis for this study (Robson, 1993). The first step in the coding process consisted of identifying key words, including recurring comments, specific behaviors, events, strategies and practices, conditions, and meanings. Then, general themes that encompassed the codes were identified and linked using networks to better understand the connections between the different themes and to identify patterns and relationships among the data (Robson, 1993). The analysis of the results is found in the "Analysis and discussion" section following a review of the context of the case and detailed presentation of the case site.

4. Contextualizing preservation praxis for the case

When the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) was established in the United States in 1966 an influx of federal funding for preservation initiatives was embedded in a string of federal policies such as the Model Cities Program in 1966, the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974, and the Urban Development Action Grants of 1978. In the 1960s, the Neighborhood Redevelopment Programs supported the rehabilitation of old buildings by local authorities rather than reconstruction (Ryberg-Webster & Kinahan, 2014, 121). Programs like Urban Homesteading and the Neighborhood Housing Services of the 1970s linked preservation-based revitalization with low-income housing (Widener, 2015, 740-741). These policies contributed to movement away from top-down approaches to urban redevelopment to more locally controlled preservation initiatives in which decision-making was transferred to city and neighborhood leaders. Until the 1970s, federal tax code made it more economically viable to demolish existing structures and redevelop the land. This trend changed in 1976 when the federal government established federal tax incentives for historic preservation. The federal rehabilitation tax credits (RTCs) encouraged historic preservation to be used in redevelopment strategies throughout the country and "catapulted preservation and the adaptive reuse of industrial and commercial buildings to the forefront of urban revitalization" (Ryberg-Webster & Kinahan, 2014, 121). After the implementation of these incentives, historic preservation became ingrained in the revitalization process nationally, thus developing a stronger role in urban development and planning processes throughout the country.

4.1 Preservation-based neighborhood revitalization

The use of historic preservation as an approach to revitalization in urban areas began with mixed intentions and therefore, produced varying results. Historic preservation is still used today as a neighborhood revitalization tool; however, tensions exist regarding the use of this strategy due to its potential impacts on low-income and marginalized communities. There is much evidence that historic preservation plays a significant role in local economic development (Mason, 2005). The NTHP claims that it "offers several economic advantages that serve as a catalyst for additional investment in communities" (NTHP, 2016b). Listokin, Listokin, and Lahr (1998, 456) recognize this multiplier effect of the positive economic impacts of historic preservation practices. Not only does research indicate that historic preservation and rehabilitation of existing structures can provide more jobs than new construction, but the preservation of historic resources can also increase economic competitiveness through helping to foster the dynamic environment that attracts skilled workers and small, local businesses. Despite this evidence, it must be acknowledged: "Preservation does not operate within its own isolated sphere, but touches many areas of the local economy, and affects different sectors of community life" (Frey, 2007, 15). Early rehabilitation efforts that incorporated historic preservation techniques during the first half of the twentieth century were often implemented to improve a city's economic status and bring middle-class residents back into center city neighborhoods. This phenomenon of gentrification, the migration of wealthier people into working class areas, can have similar impacts in urban and rural areas alike (Nelson et al., 2010; Walker and Fortmann, 2003). This complex phenomenon is intertwined with the long-term relationship between historic preservation and urban development. The creation of preservation-based revitalization initiatives exhibited the relevance of preservation

to urban revitalization, but the relationship of these early initiatives to low-income communities was rife with conflict. Some examples of such controversial revitalization processes existed in Charleston, SC, Savannah, GA, Providence, RI, and Philadelphia, PA. They embodied the top-down planning model that was indicative of the mid-century period and while both public and private agencies were involved in the planning process, they did not attempt to engage low-income residents, nor prevent their eventual displacement (Ryberg, 2011, 140). As Domer (2009, as cited in Ryberg-Webster & Kinahan, 2014, 125) argues, preservationists struggle with balancing "the integrity of the past with the utilitarian and aesthetic needs of the present and future" and that the standards of preservation result in a constructed "preferred past".

Contemporary criticism of historic preservation revolves around equity issues related to the perceptions of preservation as an elitist activity reserved for the wealthy. Many researchers argue that strict preservation standards require monetary expenditures that low-income homeowners and renters cannot afford; as the value of properties increases, they are often driven out of their neighborhoods. Scholars such as Sohmer and Lang (1998, 429) "favor a context-sensitive historic preservation that accommodates the housing and economic needs of individual neighborhoods". Listokin, Listokin, and Lahr (1998) also acknowledge the potential downside of preservation-based neighborhood revitalization: that it can lead to displacement of area residents. A combination of increasing property values and growth in the retail sector can cause low-income households and local business to leave when rent and property prices become unaffordable. Many neoliberal urban policies, including some that offer incentives for historic preservation, aim to create ideal neighborhoods that are diverse and balanced even if that means lower-income households are forced to relocate. As such, historic preservation has been accused of having a significant role in instigating gentrification processes, limiting affordability, and producing inequitable urban development (Ryberg-Webster & Kinahan, 2014).

Despite the common perception of historic preservation's inequitable impacts, the relationship between historic preservation and urban gentrification processes involving the displacement of low-income individuals has also been heavily questioned. There is a lack of empirical research that analyzes the relationship between preservation and gentrification (Allison 2005; Coulson & Leichenko, 2004; Ryberg-Webster & Kinahan, 2014). The designation of historic districts and the activities associated with historic preservation cannot be equated with gentrification or urban redevelopment, but as Zahirovic-Herbert and Chatterjee (2012, 370) posit, the potential displacement of lower income residents in the face of rising housing prices must be taken into consideration. Critics argue against policies and methods of urban revitalization that trigger gentrification; however, few scholars have worked to develop effective alternatives (Uitermark & Loopmans, 2013). Considering the negative association established between gentrification and preservation-based revitalization techniques during the twentieth century, preservationists made an effort to collaborate with urban planners to provide more flexibility and equality in the preservation of urban neighborhoods. These partnerships include the establishment of neighborhood conservation districts, which focus on preservation of community character in its entirety rather than only acknowledging architectural features, as well as recognition of the role of preservation in fields such as community development and sustainable development. In Austin, TX, for example, efforts to mitigate

gentrification and some of the negative impacts associated with historic preservation policies were established through conducting in-depth analysis of each neighborhood's specific economic and social challenges, understanding these in the context of a complex local history, and implementing solutions and strategies that were appropriate for the community's hopes and needs for the future. Preservation stands to be of use to communities more broadly through supporting local institutions and cultural practices, reusing existing infrastructure, and providing opportunities for affordable housing and financial and technical support for owners of historic properties (Chusid, 2006, 27). The alliance between urban planning and historic preservation "has encouraged a new vision of the desirable urban scene and is forging a permanent heritage for the nation" (Birch & Roby, 1984, 205-206). However, if preservation is to be applied more broadly in relation to urban development, preservation philosophy and methods of implementation must adapt to embrace its role as a powerful force in fulfilling this new urban vision (Listokin, Listokin, & Lahr, 1998).

4.2 New approaches to preservation

While the practice of historic preservation has been associated with both positive and negative impacts in urban areas in the past, new goals were set in recent years by the NTHP to improve the impact of historic preservation in urban development dynamics during the twenty-first century. In October 2007, the NTHP organized a national effort to develop research and policies that support the integration of historic preservation within the broader framework of sustainability. This event brought together experts to discuss the relationship between historic preservation and sustainability principles. The "preservation priorities," as outlined on the NTHP website, were established as part of the recently updated mission to better understand the role of historic preservation in sustainable development. The priorities include: "Building Sustainable Communities," "Promoting Diversity and Place," "Protecting Historic Places on Public Lands," and "Re-imagining Historic Sites" (NTHP, 2013). These priorities focus on promoting the reuse and greening of existing building stock to create more livable, healthy urban places, recognizing the role of America's diverse communities in protecting the places that matter to them, working to increase community capacity through preservation initiatives, advocating for stewardship of historic places on public lands, as well as evolving the NTHP's approach to preserving historic sites throughout the nation. The NTHP claims that the preservation of historic buildings is directly linked to the three pillars of sustainability – economy, society, and the environment (NTHP, 2016b). The new priorities and goals outlined by the NTHP are a prominent step in recognizing the role that preservation stands to have in "reform[ing] the way we develop and redevelop our communities within the framework of 'sustainability' so that we can meet our present needs, *and* leave a system that will support future generations" (Frey, 2007).

4.3 Planning and preservation in Charleston

The City, as well as many organizations in the region, has been working toward goals of implementing more inclusive, collaborative planning efforts to promote new approaches for sustainable urbanism. Preservation and recognition of historical value are embedded in the approach to sustainable development in Charleston. In 2008, A Preservation Plan for Charleston, SC was produced through a partnership between

Historic Charleston Foundation (HCF), a local historic preservation nonprofit organization, the City of Charleston, and participating residents and stakeholders. Rather than focusing efforts on the preservation of specific buildings, this action plan supports a more diverse analysis of urban development needs in Charleston.

While the City of Charleston has taken great strides related to historic preservation and sustainable urban development in recent years, its planning history is marred by many of the top-down approaches to urban development that were typical of the twentieth century (Silver & Crowley, 1991) During that time, the population was in decline and the appeal of the city dwindled. A significant step for the urban revitalization movement took place with the creation of the Society for the Preservation of Historic Dwellings in 1920. The birth of this organization sparked the neighborhood preservation movement that became popular throughout the urban areas in the southern United States (Silver & Crowley, 1991). In the earlier twentieth century, as was common for the historic preservation and heritage fields globally, preservationists in Charleston focused their efforts on individual buildings and monuments. In 1931, the City of Charleston created the first historic district zoning in the country and also established the Board of Architectural Review (BAR) to oversee alterations and new construction in the historic zoned area. The first architectural inventory in the United States, *This Is Charleston*, was published in 1944 and consisted of a citywide survey of Charleston's historic structures (The Preservation Plan, 2008). The founding of HCF in 1948 represented another step in the preservation movement. The organization, and the preservation movement itself, has evolved significantly since then. In the beginning, HCF concentrated solely on historic house restoration. The organization was also the first urban preservationist organization in the southern United States to develop a revolving loan fund to purchase houses for renovation and resale as part of neighborhood improvement goals. These rehabilitations did indeed improve deteriorating housing stock in Charleston neighborhoods such as Ansonborough, however this was also the first time that "the specter of massive displacement of low income residents owing to large scale rehabilitation generated criticism of neighborhood preservation" (Silver & Crowley, 1991, 77). As the movement developed, HCF and other groups working with preservation, including the City itself, continued to learn from the planning mistakes of the past.

The City of Charleston entered the 1970s with an expanded role for residential preservation and a focus that centered on rehabilitation of historic neighborhoods. The 1973 Preliminary Development Plan for the Peninsular Portion of the City of Charleston encouraged neighborhood groups to monitor changes within historic areas and work collaboratively with public officials and city commissions that set controls for many aspects of development. The first preservation plan for the City was written in 1974 as an effort to foster more investment in the City's historic resources, as well as to improve the quality of life in Charleston. The 1974 plan included an extensive survey of the southern portion of the urban center, a recommendation for a structure height ordinance for that area, and allocation of increased power for the BAR (The Preservation Plan, 1974). The increased oversight of the BAR created more regulation of development in the urban core with a particular concentration on aesthetics. All of the recommendations in this plan were aimed at reversing disinvestment in the city (The Preservation Plan, 2008). However, the priorities were very much the architectural integrity and maintenance of the historic built environment in the

affluent, historic city center. This focus dovetailed with the requests for increased citizen involvement in the 1973 development plan. Neighborhood leaders responded to the desire for more citizen input by registering complaints about the contemporary processes of preservation and their limitations (Silver & Crowley, 1991).

4.4 The modern preservation vision for Charleston

Recent approaches to preservation have been borne out of this ever-evolving process that was shaped by the local situation in Charleston, as well as by changes in the historic preservation and heritage movements nationally and internationally. The most recent preservation plan for the city now "envisions stewardship of Charleston's heritage as groundwork for the entire city's growth. This vision requires preservation to engage in multiple disciplines, pioneer new collaborative efforts, and embrace fresh subjects and ideas" (The Preservation Plan, 2008, 9). Historic preservation and heritage management cannot address all issues related to urbanization and the rapid growth in the Charleston region, but it does provide context and inputs for broader development goals. Probably most important within the Preservation Plan (2008, 5) is the statement of a vision for Charleston and "the conviction that local heritage is the best foundation for growth". The vision recognizes the role of heritage resources and preservation in inspiring the City's approach to urban planning and development, both in the past and future. In response to projections of population growth, the City Council's Green Committee published The Charleston Green Plan in 2010 through a participative process between the City and other stakeholders. It represents a comprehensive approach to sustainable growth for Charleston and reiterates the importance of historic preservation in this process.

Charleston's title as one of America's great historic cities comes in part from the existence of significant diversity within the city's neighborhoods and communities. This diversity makes a citywide approach to planning and development complicated. In order to overcome this challenge, the City of Charleston is moving toward a neighborhood-based method of planning that encourages the involvement of communities and participation from Charleston's residents. Revitalization projects have been taken on as an approach to development of the downtown and periphery neighborhoods. The focus on Charleston neighborhoods in city planning was introduced in 2010 within the Century V Plan: The City of Charleston Comprehensive Plan. The 2008 Preservation Plan supported this shift through beginning the process of exploring the history, issues, and opportunities within existing Charleston neighborhoods, and suggesting steps for future planning initiatives.

In Charleston, Area Character Appraisals (ACAs) make up the core of the neighborhood-focused approach to preservation according to the Preservation Plan. ACAs are meant to provide detailed information about not only individual buildings, but also the context that creates the character of a place including the scale of structures, surrounding streetscape, and overall landscape characteristics. There are specific components that can make up an ACA including written and mapped boundaries, a contextual statement of the history and importance of a certain area in relation to Charleston's development, a list of property types and architectural styles of the area, description and graphic depiction of streetscape and landscape features, assessment of overall condition in the area, notes about potential threats to the area's character, description of the design features of an area, notes about relevant zoning,

recommendations regarding historic conservation district designation, list of local landmarks, maps of the area, and a list of sources and results from past surveys. As the Preservation Plan (2008) claims, they are considered a guide for supporting cohesive development. It is also recognized that the process of gathering information for an ACA requires diverse input from study groups, expert knowledge, and archival research, but also on the ground research, and public involvement and participation from the neighborhoods included in the study area (The Preservation Plan, 2008). This process is outlined in Fig. 7. below.

Fig. 7. The proposed development of an Area Character Appraisal (ACA) (The Preservation Plan, 2008, 104).

ACAs are supported within the Century V Plan in relation to future development of existing neighborhoods and as a means to encourage local resident involvement in the planning and preservation processes. The Preservation Plan recommends that ACAs be used to establish more holistic surveys of various neighborhoods to then support petitions for extension of BAR review and designation of local conservation districts to neighborhoods such as North Central and Wagener Terrace in the Upper Peninsula. As of now, there is limited BAR review that covers demolitions in this area of the city; however, the board exercises no other controls on construction or rehabilitation. In other words, developers and individuals maintaining and purchasing properties in historic, residential neighborhoods like North Central, are not faced with the same regulatory limitations that impact urban development projects further down on the peninsula.

The Preservation Plan itself embodied the collaborative approach to planning and preservation that is woven into the City of Charleston's more recent development strategy. The writing process for the Preservation Plan included the collection of approximately 1500 public comments as an initial step. The plan promotes preservation as a tool that is open to all communities and asserts that the presentation of findings and preservation and planning processes must be accessible to citizens and laypeople, as well as those with specific expertise in the field. The plan also promotes public participation in the review process as a means to broaden the focus and incorporate the history of underrepresented groups or places (The Preservation Plan, 2008, 61). The prominent historic preservation organizations in the city, namely HCF and the Preservation Society, have also incorporated participation and inclusivity into their missions and subsequent preservation plans and initiatives in recent years.

The goals of the Preservation Plan align particularly well with HCF's Neighborhood Revitalization Initiative (NRI), which was created in 1995. This initiative embodies the NTHP goals for historic preservation in the United States, working within communities to stabilize neighborhoods that are at risk of both architectural and cultural decline in the face of economic growth and increasing interest from real estate developers (HCF, 2015). The Preservation Society, originally founded as the Preservation Society for Old Dwellings in 1920, always had a commitment to the preservation of the built environment and actually set the stage for neighborhood-based preservation in Charleston. However, the work of these organizations during the early twentieth century also contributed to issues with social equity and displacement associated with preservation that impacted communities throughout the nation. In recent decades, these preservation advocacy organizations put more emphasis on advocacy for preservation of architectural *and* cultural heritage through promoting educational programs, preservation awards programs, and opportunities for involvement that encourage public participation and interest in preservation processes from a wide array of actors (Silver & Crowley, 1991; Preservation Society, 2016). Centralizing resources and organizing efforts of stakeholders are vital goals for the preservation-based neighborhood revitalization recommended in the action plan for Charleston, including partnerships between local preservation organizations, other nonprofit organizations, and the City of Charleston.

As a city with deep foundations in preservation, it is vital that Charleston include preservation in future planning initiatives. However, within this process it is also important to contextualize preservation efforts. Preservation has evolved since its birth as a field; it "has become part of a larger movement to build sustainable communities with a strong sense of their histories and clear visions for the future" (The Preservation Plan, 2008, 30). Many of the City's recent publications including The Downtown Plan, A Preservation Plan for Charleston, SC, The Charleston Green Plan, and The Century V Plan provide insight for gathering the information necessary to approach neighborhood revitalization efforts in the urban center. Participation of all stakeholders, particularly the public, is a recurring theme. This outreach and collaboration must be included in the planning process for preservation and sustainable development as the Charleston cityscape continues to transform.

4.5 North Central neighborhood: the case site

The North Central neighborhood in Charleston is considered part of the Upper Peninsula section of the city. Major street corridors divide the Upper Peninsula into distinctive neighborhoods (Fig. 8.).

1 Wagener Terrace	**4** Meeting Street Manor / Cooper River Court
2 North Central	
3 East Central	**5** Hampton Park Terrace

Fig. 8. The Upper Peninsula Neighborhoods (The Preservation Plan, 2008, 151)

The Upper Peninsula area of the city became home to a diverse group of people including immigrant populations, due to its historically inexpensive lots and access to streetcar service in the 1900s. This diversity remains visible today. North Central neighborhood was originally part of what are called the Maverick Street and Rutledge Avenue Improvements neighborhoods, which were built in the late 1910s. Single- and multi-family craftsman style houses characterize the architecture of the North Central neighborhood and contribute to its residential qualities (Brockington & Associates, 2004). North Central is especially important historically because it was one of the first neighborhoods in the Upper Peninsula that was available to African-American residents after the era of racial segregation ended in the United States in the 1960s. African-Americans quickly became the predominant population in the neighborhood and that cultural legacy is still present. The review of the Upper Peninsula in the Preservation Plan (2008, 151-152) calls for a balance of community development to ensure a mix of residential, commercial, and public functions as well as recognizing the value that exists in the diversity of people and their experiences. As the Charleston region continues to experience growth and the population moves up the peninsula, development pressures threaten historic neighborhoods like North Central. These changes have already occurred in many of the neighborhoods surrounding North Central (Parker & Slade, 2014). Efforts to mitigate the negative effects associated with these changes have also been established. A revitalization project in Charleston's East Side neighborhood that focuses on protecting the built environment, but also the culture of the area is one example. The East Side is heavily impacted by the economic development, real estate demand, and general growth in Charleston that also affects neighborhoods like North Central (Shirley, 2015). Attempts to preserve the character

and cultural heritage of not only the architecture in these neighborhoods, but of the people, traditions, and sense of place, are increasingly recognized as tools for neighborhood preservation in Charleston. A similar project was recently initiated in the North Central neighborhood and is described in the following section.

4.5.1 Neighborhood Revitalization Initiative in North Central

Recently, HCF extended its NRI program to the North Central neighborhood. This program is now known as the North Central Neighborhood Stabilization (HCF, 2016). As a preservation organization, HCF made a commitment to approach the issues outlined above, largely through increased community engagement. HCF chose to make North Central neighborhood its top priority due to its high number of historic homes, the socioeconomic diversity of the community, the infill pressures, and the limited control of the BAR review process in the neighborhood. In North Central, the goal is to prevent the negative effects of rapid urbanization from taking root through supporting preservation of the unique neighborhood culture and human character (czb, 2015). These activities include rehabilitating homes, maintaining both physical and cultural historical integrity, promoting diversity, and improving communication among neighbors and organizations. HCF's work to date has focused on beautification programs and home rehabilitation projects (HCF, 2016). HCF's work area is indicated by the green outline in the map in Fig. 9., while the blue outline indicates the borders of the North Central neighborhood according to the City of Charleston.
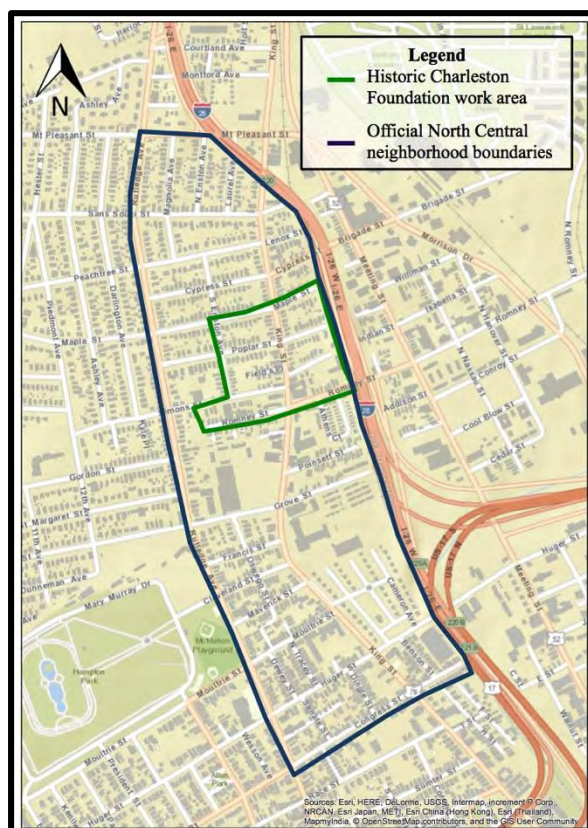

Fig. 9. Map indicating North Central neighborhood
boundaries and HCF's target area

The concentration of HCF's efforts is focused in the area bordered by Romney Street to the south, Maple Street to the north, I-26 to the east, and South Enston Avenue to the west. The North Central neighborhood boundaries are technically Congress Street to the south, Mt. Pleasant Street to the north, I-26 to the east, and Rutledge Avenue to the west.

HCF received a grant from the 1772 Foundation in 2015 and used the funding to hire two consultant groups that conducted a study about how the growth in Charleston is impacting the real estate market and socioeconomic situation in North Central and surrounding areas. As part of this process, the consultant groups aided HCF in the facilitation of two community forums in North Central in July 2015 and September 2015.[2] The community forums included conversations about revitalization efforts in the neighborhood and set the stage for future community participation. During the first community forum, some major themes related to the North Central neighborhood emerged. Residents cited diversity as the most important feature of North Central, commenting on the importance of the "racial and economic mix," "inclusive activities," and the role of people and history in shaping the neighborhood. The "sense of community" and "friendly people" emerged as the second most important features. However, as North Central lies in the heart of the demographic and economic shifts impacting the Charleston peninsula, residents also noted major concerns related to the neighborhood changes. The two biggest concerns are "affordability/displacement" and "blighted properties". The greatest hope for the future of North Central is maintenance of "the single family character of the neighborhood" including keeping the neighborhood "family friendly," maintaining "consistency," creating more "pocket parks and green spaces," creating more "accessibility to grocery stores," and making the neighborhood "a place where people will want to stay and will be able to stay" (Harvey, 2015).

In October 2015, czb, the consultant group that specialized in urban planning, produced a final report of their neighborhood analysis, *Historic Preservation, Affordability, and Livability in Charleston's North Central Neighborhood*. The analysis revealed detailed information about affordability issues and gentrification dynamics in North Central. The study concluded that interventions must occur in order to make it easier for existing residents to remain in the neighborhood and to encourage developers to maintain and build on the historic character of the neighborhood, rather than ignore its unique qualities and culture as new developments emerge. Through the community forums, it became clear that North Central residents are aware that the qualities they like most about their neighborhood are at risk, emphasizing particular concern that diversity and history of the area will be lost in years to come. czb's findings support the fact that North Central is a strongly desired neighborhood; prices in the neighborhood have risen more rapidly since 2009-2010 than the prices in other neighborhoods on the peninsula. Therefore, while most of North Central is still affordable to those families that lie within the area's current median income, market projections indicate that condition will not last long (Fig. 10.)

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[2] I took part in these forums when I worked as an intern at Historic Charleston Foundation during Summer 2015. I helped HCF and the consultant groups to organize the forums and I served as a note taker during the first forum in July.
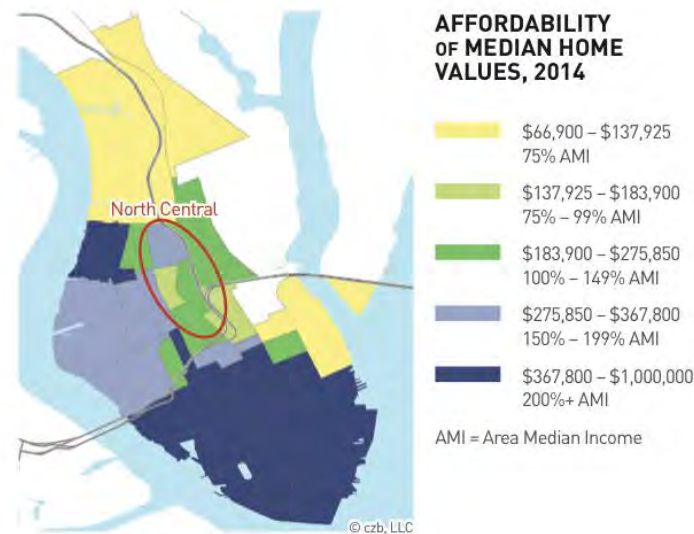
Fig. 10. Affordability of median home values 2014 (czb LLC, 2015)

In this sense, czb exposed the "doubled edged sword" that plagues many urban areas experiencing revitalization: that efforts to improve North Central neighborhood through preservation and other means, will inevitably decrease its affordability (czb, 2015, 10; Phillips & Stein, 2013; Zahirovic-Herbert & Chatterjee, 2012; Ryberg, 2011; Listokin, Listokin, & Lahr, 1998; Sohmer & Lang, 1998).

The report produced by czb also presented actionable recommendations for the involvement of HCF and other organizations, broader policy changes at the city and state levels, and recommendations targeted for the North Central residents themselves. Particularly relevant recommendations to this inquiry include, establishing communication tools to let residents know what is happening in the neighborhood, working with other partners to create a North Central Preservation Alliance to work on policy and program implementation within the neighborhood, developing a historic plaque program specific to the neighborhood, seeking grant funding and other support for an oral history project for North Central, focusing on the role of the North Central Neighborhood Association (NCNA), establishing youth programs, and creating a quality of life committee within the NCNA (czb, 2015).

The only detailed analysis of historical resources in this area of the city is the *Historic Architectural Resources Survey of the Upper Peninsula Charleston, South Carolina*, published by Brockington and Associates, Inc. in 2004. Architectural historian, John Beaty, and investigator, Ralph Bailey, prepared the report for what was formerly the City of Charleston Design, Development, & Preservation Department, now the Planning, Preservation, & Sustainability Department. The report focused on documenting the historic architectural features of the Upper Peninsula, including those in the North Central neighborhood. All of the identified resources were built before 1955 and were recorded with the intention of making recommendations for adding the structures to the Statewide Survey of Historic Places. The classification was largely based on the construction date criteria, as well as by the condition of the structures. While public involvement was initiated at the beginning of the survey, the process was mainly conducted by the hired experts with intentions that it would be used as a tool for future decision-making, "to help the city and its citizens decide on a

course of action that is most advantageous for the whole community" (Brockington & Associates, Inc., 2004, 4).

Community outreach has increased in recent years, especially with HCF's current involvement. However, public engagement and participation in defining both the tangible and intangible heritage resources of the North Central neighborhood has not been extensive thus far. The results from the 2015 forums indicate an interest and commitment from community members to participate in addressing the challenges currently facing North Central and other Charleston neighborhoods in the Upper Peninsula. In order for the recommendations presented above to be addressed it becomes increasingly important to foster dialogue with residents of North Central. In the face of changes currently projected for the neighborhood and the challenges related to affordability and urban growth, identifying the heritage values and historic resources of the current residents of North Central and facilitating conversations about preservation efforts and community engagement serves as a means to contextualize and inform future efforts related to preservation and revitalization in the neighborhood and to empower the residents within the process.

The City of Charleston is currently at a crossroads. With the economic development pressures and expected transformation of the real estate market, there is a citywide call for increased dialogue and cooperation in urban planning and preservation efforts. Emphasis must be placed on the importance of creating and maintaining partnerships among organizations, the City, communities, their residents, and other stakeholders. The need for a layered approach to neighborhood revitalization and planning that will simultaneously support smart growth and preservation is also recognized. As the Preservation Plan (2008, 122) concludes, "Charleston has the potential to stand as a model city in which a partnership between historic preservation and community development revitalizes the community fabric while retaining and engaging a diverse resident base".

5. Results

In this section, the empirical results of the focus group discussions and mapping activity, as well as those from the qualitative interviews are introduced. The results from each method are presented separately. While the interpretation of these results is reserved for the "Analysis and discussion" section, the categorization of the results presented below is influenced by my observations and subjective choices as the researcher. Table 5 outlines the different methods and the categories established for the results from each.

Method	Categories
Community mapping in focus groups	• Neighborhood gathering places • Emphasis on people and youth • Merging new and old • Organizational involvement and community engagement
Qualitative interviews with City and organization representatives	• Current involvement: priorities and challenges • Community engagement • Partnerships and collaboration
Qualitative interviews with North Central residents	• Neighborhood gathering places • "Family atmosphere" and youth • Neighborhood change • Organizational involvement and community engagement

Table 5. Categories for presentation of results for each method

5.1 Results of community mapping in focus groups

The participants of each of the three focus groups co-produced a map of heritage assets and historic resources in the neighborhood. The results from each group's map and discussion are condensed and presented below.

Group 1
Group 1 was the most active with the mapping activity. As can be seen in Fig. 11., the group labeled many different items on their map including a church, schools, the old skating rink, County Hall (Fig. 12.), Ellen Bright Hall (Fig. 13.), the headquarters for a local newspaper called *The Chronicle*, an old fire station, Charleston Boxing Club (Fig. 14.), parks, restaurants, bars, and a grocery store.

Fig. 11. Group 1 Map

Fig. 12. County Hall (now The Palace Apartments)

Fig. 13. Ellen Bright Hall

Fig. 14. The Charleston Boxing Club

The participants provided information about the history of certain lots and building footprints on the map. They also focused on examples of what has been done well recently in regards to preservation, affordable housing, and renewal and reuse of structures. Some proposals for future development were also labeled. In addition to indicating different buildings and places, the participants included notes about memories and experiences at those locations. This group did not indicate any borders for the neighborhood on their map.

Group 2
Group 2 indicated some items on the base map including County Hall, the old skating rink, Ellen Bright Hall, Charleston Boxing Club, the Coca Cola bottling building, and various parks in the area. The Group 2 map can be seen in Fig. 15. below.
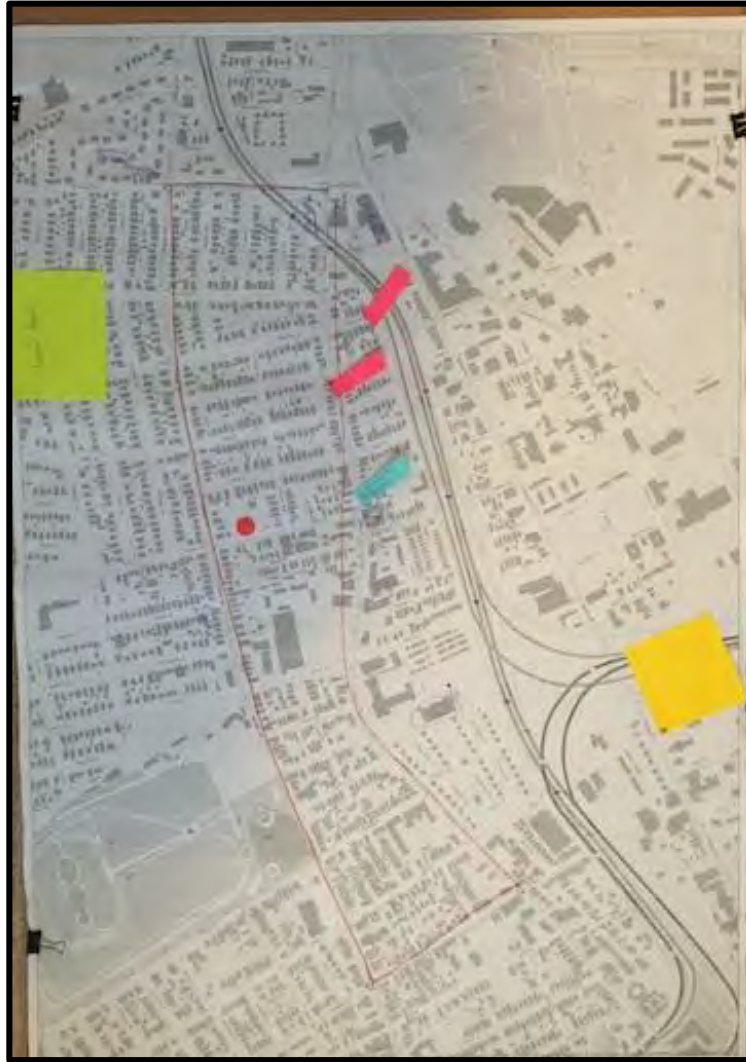
Fig.15. Group 2 Map

Participants in this group labeled their current homes, as well as old family properties. Parks were also given emphasis. The participants in Group 2 outlined the borders of the neighborhood; however, those included on this map do not match the official borders, leaving out a large piece of the neighborhood between King Street and the I-26 highway. There were still items indicated in these spaces outside the drawn borders.

Group 3
Group 3 did not label many places or buildings on the base map. Instead, this group noted general thoughts about the history of the community in North Central. The Group 3 map can be seen in Fig. 16.

Fig. 16. Group 3 Map

The participants also wrote comments about new development, needs in the neighborhood, interactions between neighbors, and how to integrate new changes with the historic features of North Central. While not many specific items were labeled, the participants in this group did record some experiences associated with certain places on the map including memories about playing sports and walking to school. Group 3 also outlined the borders of the neighborhood and their borders matched those of the official neighborhood boundaries. Despite the outlined borders, there were still items and comments placed outside those lines. Table 6 summarizes the contents of the maps for Group 1, Group 2, and Group 3. The quotes indicate what participants wrote on the maps in their own words.

Labeled items and other participant notes		
Group 1	**Group 2**	**Group 3**
• "County Hall – first saw James Brown", "County Hall – James Brown, wrestling" • "Old skate rink", "Skating rink, listening to skates", "Use Union #5 skates" • "Ellen Bright Hall" • "Neighborhood pub…Moes lots of good times" • "The New Moulin Rouge" • "The Faculty Lounge" • "Vivian Moultrie Park" • "Linear park" ◦ "Establish new rail line/path" • " 'The Bottom' [Romney Urban Garden]" • "Rivers Middle School" • "My daughter and son's first day of school" • "Attended first church/still do" • "Charleston Cab Co." • "Old Coke Building" • "Guy's Meats" • "Winn Dixie" • "The Chronicle" • "Hollywood's/old fire station" • "GM Financial" • "Fire station [pretty building]" • "John L. Dart Library [history]" • "Renew mixed use building" • "Good example of nice affordable housing" • "Would like to see better" • "1st house I owned" • "Lived in area for 60 years" • "Interstate cut street names – 2 different names"	• "Old County Hall" • "Old Skating Rink" • "Ellen Bright Hall" • "Park" • "Hester Park" • "Coca Cola Bottling" • "Gordon H.L. Gatch" • "Service Department" • "Kiawah Homes" • notes on the general locations of participant homes	• "Community Center…Green Heart" • "Played basketball" • "Ran track" • "Old Rivers" • "catholic school" • "my school" • "walking from house across the street to school" • "Mosque" • "New businesses serve all residents (like the proposed diner at old skating rink" • "New neighbors and long term residents get to know each other" • "Unity of neighborhood" • "Know your neighbors" • "Turnover in neighborhood…natural changes" • "People make up neighborhood" • "Keep character" • "Need to be included in plans for neighborhood (i.e. Lowline, Enough Pie's kiosk, etc.)" • "Infill development should complement surrounding historic architecture and overall neighborhood character" • "Keep affordable" • "Built community"

Table 6. Inventoried contents of Group 1, Group 2, and Group 3 maps

While each group had a unique approach to the mapping activity, there were some recurring items labeled on the maps. Those that appeared most often were: County Hall, Ellen Bright Hall, Vivian Moultrie Park (Fig. 17.) and other green space, the old skating rink, the Charleston Boxing Club, Rivers Middle School (Fig. 18.), the Coca Cola bottling building, and comments about mixed use and affordable housing.

Fig. 17. Vivian Moultrie Park

Fig. 18. Rivers Middle School (now Charter School for Math and Science)

During the group discussions and mapping activity various themes emerged related to the identification of heritage assets and historic resources, as well as community engagement and preservation efforts more generally within the North Central neighborhood. These are presented below.

Neighborhood gathering places
Most of the specific places and other items labeled on the maps as heritage assets and discussed within the three groups can be generally categorized as neighborhood gathering places. Some of these gathering places include County Hall, the old skating rink, The Boxing Club, Ellen Bright Hall, churches, schools, and outdoor green

spaces. County hall was once a performance hall where older residents remember seeing the iconic American singer, James Brown, perform, as well as watching sports tournaments for wrestling and basketball. This building is now an apartment complex. The participants also have fond memories of the Ellen Bright Hall, a neighborhood party hall, and the old skating rink. Various green spaces throughout the general area of the North Central neighborhood were discussed including Hampton Park (Fig. 19.), the Romney Urban Garden (Fig. 20.), and Vivian Moultrie Park, which according to one of the participants *could use some love.*

Fig. 19. Hampton Park (SCGreatOOutdoors, 2016)

Fig. 20. The Romney Urban Garden

Hampton Park is not technically within the borders of the North Central neighborhood, but many of the residents talked about its importance as a place where people could gather to host picnics, play outside, and participate in other group activities. Some of the older participants in the groups reminisced about how the neighborhood used to be, how everyone used to do things outside with each other and ride their bikes around the neighborhood which helped to foster a better sense of community. Many of the participants commented about how the neighborhood and people are becoming more detached and there is a concern that new residents are not connected to the neighborhood roots.

Group 1 provided the most comprehensive list of neighborhood gathering places on their map and within their discussion. The participants in Group 2 had an in depth discussion about the importance of places like the boxing club to the history and character of North Central. The Charleston Boxing Club is an institution that is still in place in the neighborhood, founded in 1983 by Participant 10. Participants in Group 2 also noted issues related to a loss of support for the organization in more recent years. Participant 1 commented about the potential future of community space using a farmer's market under the I-26 overpass as an example: *If you build it, they will come.* Participants in Group 3 specifically noted a desire and growing need for a community center in the neighborhood. Community space that offers the opportunity to bring residents together for neighborhood events and other gatherings was the most prominent theme in relation to the historic resources recorded and discussed by the participants; it is also recognized as one of the greatest hopes for the future of the neighborhood. Most of the specific items mentioned and mapped by residents as places of historic importance were connected to the interpersonal interactions that occur within these spaces. Additional photos from the North Central neighborhood can be found in Appendix 3.

Emphasis on people and youth

Throughout the conversations about neighborhood gathering places, there was also an emphasis on the importance of people, especially youth, to the character of the community. Some of the participants in Group 1 who are longer-term residents shared stories of their youth living in North Central. Participant 7 and another participant discussed memories of hopping on the train at the Grove Street stop and riding it around even though their parents would get angry with them. Another participant said that the reason everyone had such a sense of community growing up was because the parents would force them to hang out outside with one another; he got to know the area so well that he considered the whole community and its people his home. He said it is very different today. Group 2 spent most of their discussion talking about the boxing club and other youth programming in North Central that has dwindled or lost support in recent years. The Charleston Boxing Club is a youth oriented program that is recognized for helping many children and their families in the past through serving as an outlet for children, keeping them out of trouble, and creating a greater sense of community in the neighborhood. Participant 10, the owner of the boxing club, has a great sense of pride for his work with the youth in the neighborhood. He shared a story about an individual who used to attend the club who now runs a community center in another neighborhood. Another of the owner's past students and an involved resident recognized his importance to the community saying:

> *You can't quantify his impact, but to be around [him], you just see it*
> (Participant 1).

It was also noted that recognition of the impact of the boxing club on the neighborhood, both historical and current, is minimal. Other youth activities such as summer programs and the neighborhood cleanup Weed & Seed program, which used to be run by the long time President of the neighborhood association, were also discussed. The group concluded that the people who invested their lives in North Central and contributed greatly to the community are important assets. As people get older, the stories about their impacts and roles in the neighborhood are lost. Group 3 discussed the importance of knowing their neighbors. One participant shared a story

of how one of her new neighbors called the police when she entered another neighbor's home to water their plants while they were on vacation; they simply did not know who she was even though they lived next door. The participants in this group recognized that *the people are the heart* of the neighborhood, but as elderly residents move on, there is less neighborly interaction and people no longer get to know each other. All groups concluded that the people who shaped North Central are very important to its history, but there is little recognition of these people and the places associated with their contributions. People have become disconnected from one another and there are not many opportunities for bringing together new and old residents.

Merging new with old
Many of the participants discussed the issues they have with the way change is occurring in North Central. The heritage assets of the community are there, as are many of the people who have stories and memories associated with these places, people, and institutions. The challenge noted by all the groups is that as time passes, this history is not being shared. Group 1 discussed the nature of neighborhood change, with elderly people frequently selling their houses and moving away. Group 1 also discussed the benefits of younger people moving into the neighborhood and completing renovations. However, they also note that young people do not necessarily stay in one place for long which can have a negative impact on the historical sense of community. Participants in Group 2 said that it is important to recognize the whole history and support the residents who are in the neighborhood already. The original history needs to be passed on by people recording and documenting the stories of residents, especially the stories of the older generations. Participants in Group 2 noted that the history is starting to disappear, making a clear reference to the older residents sitting around the table. As change occurs in the neighborhood and new people arrive they are missing out on this *whole road of history*. Group 3 discussed the elderly population leaving North Central, which is contributing to continued change in the area. The neighborhood is becoming popular for young people, but fewer families are living there. One participant was concerned with the lack of involvement from newer residents:

> *Take, take, take…what are you putting back in?* (Participant 2)

Members of Group 3 said that these newcomers are actually doing a good job of renovating the older homes they purchase because they are trying to keep the character of the neighborhood. However there are still challenges related to new construction because often times the proposals for new buildings do not fit in with the existing housing environment. Participants in Group 3 are concerned that fewer businesses are coming to the neighborhood because it is so residential and that many of the original businesses are closing. Those new businesses that do establish themselves in North Central do not cater to the needs of the existing residential population. All the groups recognize the changes occurring in the neighborhood, but most of the participants do not necessarily consider the changes to be negative. The common fear is that the significant places, people, and the stories associated with the neighborhood such as those noted in the sections above, will be lost in the process. The lack of focus on this issue is a major challenge for the community.

Organizational involvement and community engagement

Overall, some local organizations are recognized for their current work in the neighborhood including HCF, Preservation Society, and Enough Pie, another local nonprofit that focuses on creative place making. Group 1 was not aware of many community initiatives related to the history or preservation of the neighborhood except for some events at the Romney Urban Garden and some renovation projects. All participants in this group believed that the number of initiatives has dwindled over time. There were many opinions about how to improve community engagement, but all participants agreed that a large barbeque or community gathering would draw people in so that they could learn about how to preserve and protect their community. Some participants noted that people always claim that they want to be involved, but when it comes to doing work or participating, no one shows up. Many of the participants in this group also agreed that people are more individualistic and focus more on themselves rather than the collective good of the neighborhood. Participants in Group 1 also expressed a desire for the city government to be involved, stating that there needs to be another community forum where representatives from the City can have one-on-one interactions with residents to see what people need. A need for improving communication within the community and among its residents was also recognized. Some participants suggested that a community board be created to help oversee and organize preservation efforts. Others noted that communication techniques should include a printed newsletter since many residents, especially elderly residents, are not connected through email or social media. Group 2 focused on the boxing club and other neighborhood programs as tools for community engagement, however it was also recognized that more awareness and financial resources are needed. A participant in Group 2 stated that the previous mayor of the City, Mayor Riley, was much closer with the residents of North Central. Group 2 also discussed the lack of involvement from churches in the neighborhood. In regards to some of the current involvement and organized community events, participants commented that organizations are missing the mark.

> *They talk about a new grill but they don't talk about someone who's been here for 30 years helping the community* (Participant 1).

> *I can talk about this all day, but I don't know what it'll do* (Participant 2).

Most of the comments about these organizations emerged from Group 3. Participants in this group discussed the help that Preservation Society offered in regards to zoning issues and fighting *out of character* development. HCF is associated with the community forums and report they published with the consultant groups. Enough Pie was recognized for their involvement with community events, including some that have taken place at the Romney Urban Garden. The NCNA was also recognized for their attentiveness to problems including abandoned homes and social issues. Participants in Group 3 discussed the Clemson School of Architecture which has a building located in North Central. Participants expressed a desire for some of the faculty and students of the school to attend a neighborhood association meeting because they want the school to give back; the school has seemingly been focusing on the peninsula south of the Crosstown highway, however there are many other buildings in need of rehabilitation, especially in North Central. Participants in Group 3 also discussed the loss of church involvement in the broader community. These fixtures in the neighborhood are no longer as active within the broader community. Participants in Group 3 said that they wished the City worked more with the

neighborhood and that the city plans that are meant to protect the neighborhood are not effectively implemented. Some participants said that it is the responsibility of the City to provide more options and support for affordable housing. A common theme across all of the groups was a desire for more involvement and support from the City of Charleston. Limited communication is a major barrier to community engagement both within the community and through interactions with local organizations and the City. This section summarized and presented the results from the focus groups including the results from both the community mapping exercise and accompanying discussions within each group. The results from the qualitative interviews appear in the next section.

5.2 Results of qualitative interviews with key informants

The results from the two sets of qualitative interviews performed for this research study are presented in the following sections. The results from the first set of interviews with representatives from the City and organizations are outlined first, followed by the results from the interviews with the North Central residents.

5.2.1 City and organization representatives

Current involvement: priorities and challenges
Preservation is still a major priority in Charleston, and now especially in neighborhoods like North Central. Some of the greatest priorities according to those representatives who were interviewed include working to help the existing population remain in the neighborhood, preserving the historic housing stock, supporting cohesive and appropriate new development, and providing education and programming for community and economic development. While there is overlap in the responses, each organization and department is approaching the urban development and preservation issues in Charleston with a slightly different focus. A major goal of the City of Charleston in North Central and similar neighborhoods is to support the strong preservation ethic of Charleston, and support the existing residents. Although there is turnover occurring in the neighborhood, the sale of older homes to new residents prevents many of those structures from going into disrepair. The City is not, however, doing much planning in the North Central neighborhood; it relies largely on preservation organizations like HCF to work with preservation planning in that area. A commercial core revitalization plan could eventually come to fruition for Upper King Street which runs through North Central, but that is not yet underway. The Housing & Community Development Department is focusing efforts on housing rehabilitation and the development of newly constructed houses that fit within the neighborhood character. The department is also working to improve educational outcomes and supporting entrepreneurial or employment opportunities for residents within the community. The current approach of the department in North Central is to focus on Romney Street. The theory is that by improving one street, those projects can serve as a catalyst throughout the neighborhood and encourage others to make similar improvements. Rather than relying only on city funds, partners are brought in to help support these initiatives. Their main goal is to recognize the importance of housing to the life of a community through taking a comprehensive approach to housing and recognizing how each component of urban development is critical to the others. The Preservation Society works to retain the housing stock and provide advice and support for proper zoning in North Central. The organization also educates the

neighborhood and homeowners, serving as a resource for the maintenance and protection of historic houses. A priority in their approach is to support grassroots initiatives and inclusivity. The organization conducts ACAs to draw attention to and explain some of the settlements and development patterns of the lesser-known neighborhoods in Charleston, especially those with less BAR review and limited design and development regulations. The Carolopolis Awards program praises those who practice high quality architectural preservation in neighborhoods like North Central. The representatives from both advocacy groups recognize that preservation provides an opportunity to acknowledge the historical contributions of minority groups, something that has not been done well in the past. Trust building is one of the greatest priorities for the both organizations' work in the North Central neighborhood and others throughout the city.

> *Whenever you venture into a new neighborhood and people don't know who you are and what your motives are, what your mission is, even if you explain it to them, they might not understand and they might not trust you, might think you have ulterior motives* (Interviewee 5A).

Rather than focusing solely on the built environment, HCF is expanding its reach to the broader preservation of community, recognizing the importance of culture to the character of neighborhoods. As part of this mission, HCF committed to helping formulate a large-scale plan. This plan makes room for projects like the Romney Urban Garden and housing rehabilitations on that street, but also attempts to inform the strategy for tackling some of the broader preservation challenges on the Charleston peninsula as a whole. In addition, HCF is working to expand their oral history project so that the unwritten stories of people and neighborhood history are not lost as the region changes.

Some of the greatest challenges for all of these organizations and City departments are the lack of funding and affordability issues. Federal funding from the Department of Housing and Urban Development has been diminished in recent years, which creates economic pressures that make it difficult to support the rehabilitation and preservation programs. There is an urgency to address the economic forces that are taking over the market and putting pressure on residents, but there is also a need for patience when it comes to fostering community involvement. The representatives from the Preservation Society stated that maintaining the preservation ethic is difficult in some of the newer Charleston neighborhoods because most of the history of Charleston is so old that the more recent past is often overlooked. The organization has designated the historical Ward 11, which encompasses part of North Central, as one such area where preservation should be considered a priority. The rate of change in the Charleston area and the rapid growth of the region also impose significant challenges.

> *It's a double-edged sword where we have a very high preservation ethic from a visual quality and built quality standpoint, but it could end up hurting social quality of the neighborhoods as far as encouraging gentrification* (Interviewee 6A).

> *Unfortunately it seems like we are, the preservation community, is reacting to things. Instead of being proactive, we seem to react to the next big development, the next BAR, the next zoning...it's difficult to get out*

ahead. And it's difficult for the City to get out ahead, things are growing at such a rate that the challenge is to intelligently manage that growth (Interviewee 2A).

Unbelievable. I guess that's the best way to describe it…Charleston is the greatest destination to live, work, and play these days, so everybody is coming. That puts all kinds of pressures on the people who live and work here (Interviewee 3A).

Community engagement

North Central residents are generally considered to be very involved in neighborhood issues, however many of these groups find that the most active residents are now younger people who are moving into the neighborhood. The NCNA is considered one of the best channels for involvement in the neighborhood. However, there are always residents who are resistant to getting involved. The neighborhood associations are considered more active than they were 10 years ago, but there is still a core group of people and a few strong leaders who represent the neighborhood. It becomes difficult for elderly or retired residents to participate in these meetings and to stay informed.

> *For community engagement, it's recognizing that there are several methodologies that you have to do or should do if you want to reach the diversity of age in the population because we find that there are college students and there may be an 80 year old woman all interested in understanding what's going on in their neighborhood, but how you reach those people are very different* (Interviewee 4A).

A few of the interviewees mentioned that the Saturday morning meeting times and a small meeting space deter more people from participating in NCNA meetings, as well. The City has made a point in more recent years to include residents and neighborhoods in the process of writing plans, variance requests, and re-zonings, but there is also sentiment that the City falls short when it comes to actually implementing and upholding the plans that are created inclusively. The Romney Urban Garden project and some house rehabilitations that have been done on Romney Street through the partnership between the department of Housing & Community Development and HCF have created a great opportunity for community engagement. These groups cite that the youth involvement in the garden project has made a huge difference; youth represent the future of the neighborhood. It also provides an opportunity for hosting events and gatherings to celebrate the neighborhood and the people who shape it.

> *We've planted some roots there through that garden and I think it's reaped a lot of benefits for us in terms of really getting to know people in the neighborhood and being able to have a way to hear from the neighborhood, get feedback in terms of what they want to see and what they want to do…its ripple effects are much larger than just a singular freedmen's cottage or house that you're preserving…* (Interviewee 5A)

There has been some struggle with including the neighborhood churches in different initiatives. One church is involved in the Romney Urban Garden project, but there are other churches that are located on the street or have property on the street and most have specific reasons for not getting involved. The attempt to collaborate with

churches proved more challenging than originally expected. The Housing & Community Development representatives recognize the importance of going door to door in the neighborhood, street by street. Through taking the time to actually meet and talk with people in the neighborhood, you might engage the one person who will serve as a catalyst and start to make a difference. The amount of information disseminated to the community can be overwhelming, thus making it difficult for people to understand or fully capture what it is that each organization and department offers. All of the groups, particularly the preservation advocacy groups, concentrate on providing people with tools and actionable steps for engagement with initiatives because there needs to be ownership and commitment from the residents themselves for projects and programs to ultimately be successful. Some of these tools include membership activities within the organizations, community events, and guided interaction with elected officials (letter writing, petitions, etc.).

> *…It has to come from the soil of that neighborhood or it won't be sustainable* (Interviewee 5A).

Partnerships and collaboration
There is constant dialogue among the groups and all concluded that in order to be successful, they must collaborate with allies. The City welcomes collaboration from nonprofit and other groups that have the capital and expertise to contribute to various programs. The Housing & Community Development Department provides their partnership with HCF as an example of a success; partnerships with nonprofits contribute to positive results because nonprofits have *tentacles* and they can bring resources together. For example, the Housing & Community Development Department and HCF are trying to create inroads with churches in North Central through supporting new partnerships with groups like the PASTORS Inc. organization that already has established relationships with local church congregations.

> *Sometimes people hear it better when it doesn't come from a local government and that's ok with me…we have the same goal at the end of the day* (Interviewee 4A).

Nonprofit partners and other organizations bring a level of expertise to projects, as well as funding that can enable the City government to actually make a difference for residents. The preservation advocacy groups put emphasis on the importance of partnering with the neighborhoods themselves and working through existing community infrastructure and information channels. Partnerships and collaboration among different parties involved in North Central increases the chances of success for preservation initiatives. By merging organizations that have different missions but similar agendas, the partnerships formed can be effective and long lasting. These partnerships are tested, change, and fluctuate depending on the focus of an issue, but collaboration in some way is always important to these different groups to support both the financial and organizational needs of different projects.

## 5.2.2 North Central residents

During this set of interviews, residents of North Central identified some of the same heritage assets that were discussed by participants at the focus groups, but they also provided additional examples that were not mentioned in the groups. A summary

table of the heritage assets identified in the interviews is outlined below in Table 7. Anything listed in quotes is presented exactly as stated by the interviewee. A discussion about commonalities and major themes from the interviews follows.

Interviewee ID	Identified Heritage Assets

1B	• Churches
	• Little shops on Romney Street
	• Fire department
	• Garden on Romney Street where current Romney Urban Garden is located
	• County Hall
	• Hampton Park
	   o The ball park
	   o The zoo
	• Reverend Dungee
	• "peace and quiet"
	• Houses

2B	• Little shops on Romney Street • Old skating rink • Ellen Bright Hall • Baseball field where the Food Lion Center is currently located • Interconnected families and friends • "For me it's the people and it's the shelter."
3B	• "lots of trees" • Tolerance • The John L. Dart Library • Laundromat • The Park Café • "People have low walls in their yards" • "Black history" • Scale and density
4B	• "Cypress Street club" • Hampton Park athletic fields, baseball • County Hall • Architecture • Trees • "family atmosphere"
5B	• "The Bottom" • "my house" • empty lots before things were built up • "Saul's store" • Church, Reverend Brown • Winn Dixie • La Brasca's Pizza, "the first pizza place" • Little shops on Romney Street ("Mumford's, barber shop, TG &Y, A&P store, Buster Burger, The Moose Club") • Captain Jack's Bakery • Carrie's "juke joint" • Rivers and Burke schools • Parties and gatherings on Romney Street • Youth

Table 7. Identified heritage assets in second set of qualitative interviews with North Central residents

Some of the assets that were mentioned in the interviews are County Hall, Hampton Park, neighborhood churches, the fire station turned Charleston Boxing Club, the old skating rink, "Romney Bottom" (Fig. 21.), neighborhood continuity and character, baseball parks at Hampton Park and in the lot where the current Food Lion shopping center is located (Fig. 22.), the zoo at Hampton Park, an old garden on Romney Street where the new Romney Urban Garden is located, various stores on Romney Street (barber shop, family grocery, bakery, Saul's store, etc.), shops on other neighborhood streets, trees (Fig. 23.), tolerance, low walls, African-American history, neighborhood scale and density, "Cypress Street Club," "family atmosphere," John L. Dart Library (Fig. 24.), neighborhood architecture, houses, and other specific memories of family and friends.
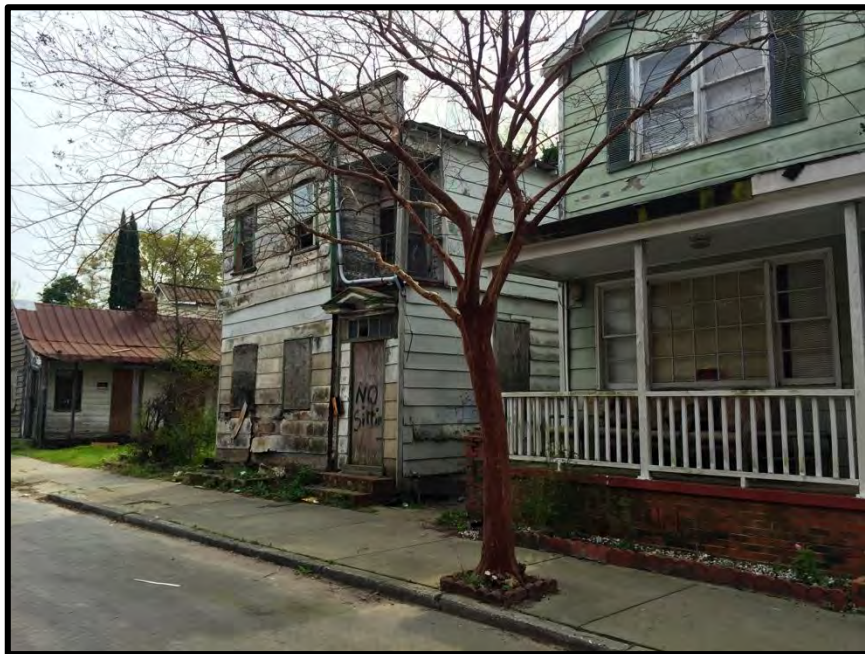
Fig. 21. Romney Street ("Romney Bottom")

Fig. 22. Current Food Lion lot

Fig. 23. Example of neighborhood trees on Maple Street

Fig. 24. John L. Dart Library

Neighborhood gathering places

As in the focus group discussions, most of the heritage assets assets mentioned during the interviews can be categorized as neighborhood gathering places. A large number of the heritage assets that were identified by the interviewees are associated with neighborhood events or specific places including stores, entertainment halls, and parks that were frequented by many residents. Again, emphasis was placed on the interpersonal relationships that were created and fostered in relation to the assets. County Hall was remembered as a popular destination for a few of the residents as both an entertainment hall and a place where sports competitions among students took place. The changes to the building surprised one interviewee when she returned to live in the neighborhood:

> *I'm saying 'What! It's an apartment complex? Unbelievable. And now it just looks so small. But when we were growing up it just looked so big and we were so excited when we were going to be doing something at County Hall* (Interviewee 4B).

Other residents shared stories about local shops in North Central and how they served as meeting points and places to enjoy spending time with friends. Interviewee 5B discussed the lot next to their current house, explaining that it was once a storefront and that they would meet friends over at the store where the shop owner sold bags of candy and cookies for a nickel. Interviewee 5B fondly remembers some of the other neighborhood businesses:

> *There was a little juke joint around there called Carrie's and it was just so good, so good. And where the Ellen Bright is on King, that used to be a bakery, Captain Jack's Bakery. That man would bake and we would go in the mornings, I don't care how cold it was, we'd be out there in a line to get the pastries that he made the day before…all these nice pastries. I'm telling you, everything was just so good around here* (Interviewee 5B).

Churches are considered important features of the neighborhood. They used to serve as meeting places and had a more prominent presence in community development efforts, as well. Today, their activity in relation to larger community initiatives is diminished, with only a couple of neighborhood churches remaining actively involved within North Central as a whole. As one resident explained:

> *Everybody know everybody. On Sunday morning, everybody woke and go to church on Sunday morning. The little children, the mothers, and the fathers. Back then it was different. But now you don't see that no more* (Interviewee 1B).

Green space was also a common discussion point; residents cited neighborhood gardens and Hampton Park as important heritage assets. Both Interviewee 1B and Interviewee 4B talked about the zoo and the baseball diamond in Hampton Park; all of the children used to go over to the park at least once a week. Interviewee 1B also discussed an old garden that used to be located at the current location for the Romney Urban Garden. He said that an older man was the caretaker for the garden, but it eventually disappeared. This was an important memory from his life spent on Romney Street and he was very pleased that the space was recently converted back to a garden area and neighborhood meeting place. Interviewee 2B recognized the need for more places like the garden in the current neighborhood to serve as a common place and meeting ground so that residents do not have to get politically involved and can plan events and gatherings more informally. Common space is considered a heritage asset and also a vital part of the current and future community of North Central.

"Family atmosphere" and youth
The focus on neighborhood gathering space is inherently connected to the interactions among families in the neighborhood; *everyone was family* (Interviewee 1B). Within these interviews, children and youth and the interactions among families were also mentioned frequently as important contributors to the historic character of the neighborhood.

*Everybody, the older people take care of the children and you had
everybody, anybody who was older was your mother and your father, they
could tell you what to do and they'll bring you back home too and tell
your mother what they saw you doing…everybody took care of each other*
(Interviewee 1B).

Some of the older, longer-term residents are disappointed that there are no longer
many children in the neighborhood. Some of their favorite memories of North Central
involve a vibrant community of young children and families. Many of these specific
comments about youth emerged from residents who live on Romney Street, which has
a particularly close-knit community of neighbors.

*It's so different here now. Everybody has grown up and gone. There are
no children per se. Down on the end down there in that apartment house,
there are a couple of kids down there and right here in the blue house,
he's got a couple of grandchildren, but those are all the children here.
But when we were growing up there were kids everywhere. The whole
'Bottom,' everybody had kids…this was the place to be. Back in the day,
this 'Bottom,' this was the place to be* (Interviewee 5B).

There was trust among neighbors and the children were cared for more collectively
within the community than they are today. Residents commented that while some
children still live in the neighborhood, the interaction among families has changed
and it is no longer as lively and engaging. Interviewee 4B noted that there was more
neighborhood stability and people did not move in and out as frequently. Even newer
residents who do not have personal experience with the earlier state of the
neighborhood identify with the older residents and their stories and experiences as
being vital aspects of the neighborhood's history.

*It's completely the people for me. And I would do anything that I could do
to keep the people here* (Interviewee 2B).

There is great pride for the neighborhood, especially for those living on Romney
Street. Family is recognized as an important bond for bringing together new and old
residents largely due to the significance of family life for existing residents.

*Because we're among all these other families, we fit into their quilted
patchwork because they are among other families too* (Interviewee 2B).

Neighborhood change
The changes occurring in the neighborhood were also a major topic of conversation
that was woven throughout each interview. There is an understanding that change is
natural, but a few residents also expressed nostalgia about the way things used to be
in North Central.

*That was an old wooden church and when I was a little boy, the church
was just a little bigger than the house right there, but now…it takes over
three or four houses and one on the other side, that was four houses that
it expanded over* (Interviewee 1B).

> *Before they built this out here, we used to have a big baseball game.*
> *Every afternoon when everybody came home from work….And it was just*
> *so fun to live in this area…but now it's lonesome and it's so farfetched*
> *from when I was growing up and when I was raising my children, it's just*
> *so different because everybody's gone* (Interviewee 5B).

There generally was not animosity toward the new people coming into the neighborhood or to the physical changes in the area. However a common sentiment is that newer residents and those organizations and City departments working with neighborhood revitalization and preservation in North Central have a responsibility to the existing residents. As the neighborhood is changing one resident said,

> *The most important thing to try to save is the old man that used to be a*
> *young man that used to be a boy that rode his bike on this block and as an*
> *old man wants to continue to stay on this block and talk to the other old*
> *men that used to be young men that all learned how to ride their bikes on*
> *this block and still be around. And that's the most important part of*
> *Romney Street and North Central for me because this is the side of North*
> *Central that I know* (Interviewee 2B).

Interviewee 3B suggested that both the density and the scale of the neighborhood need to be *treated carefully* and that the prominent focus should be on the people. He also criticized some of the newer development and the focus of the City on supporting more transient populations rather than existing residents.

> *Because what you want is permanence. I see the type of housing they're*
> *building and it lends itself more to transience and I want*
> *permanence…permanence and sustainability go hand in hand*
> (Interviewee 3B).

Interviewee 3B also mentioned the importance of identifying and preserving African-American history in North Central. He cited the work in other cities related to inventorying and recording marginalized history as examples of how Charleston could better approach the recognition and preservation of the history of underrepresented populations in the area.

> *There are certain unassuming locations for this history and it has not*
> *been identified and catalogued…Other cities have identified this stuff and*
> *made a cultural visualization thing out of it…I think someone needs to do*
> *an inventory* (Interviewee 3B).

Organizational involvement and community engagement
All of the residents who were interviewed commented about some of the work being completed by organizations like HCF and the City, particularly the housing rehabilitations and the urban garden on Romney Street. All interviewees who referenced these projects considered them to be successful and beneficial to the neighborhood.

> *Things have come up a little, [be]cause everything was going, and they*
> *preserved some of the houses, some of the houses are coming*
> *back…bring[ing] it back to life* (Interviewee 1B).

> *HCF…they kind of branched out a bit for their preservation. We're not putting these houses back. There were probably old houses right here, probably three lots. But they were actually involved in that and this is a super cool fun spot at the end of a really cool, I think, very safe street, that we get to call our own and enjoy and that's a huge gift from them to do and not just do the houses. Try to keep the neighborhood a neighborhood* (Interviewee 2B).

Interviewee 2B also praised HCF and the City for attempting to address broader issues, integrating preservation into more large-scale community development goals. HCF has developed relationships with community members and has become an entity that some residents trust. There are not many other organizations that the residents recognized as being active in the neighborhood, although Enough Pie was mentioned by Interviewee 3B for the work they are doing in North Central and other parts of the city. No one organization is considered better than the others and all of the initiatives are still perceived as relatively fragmented. Interviewee 3B also commented about the importance establishing trust; allowing residents to become better informed is an important part of the trust building process.

> *You've got to build trust with people, but that can be a hurdle sometimes* (Interviewee 3B).

> *I think people get confused. Preservation to many people means status quo and they're really two different things. I think once people become better informed, I think that's a positive thing* (Interviewee 3B).

A few of the interviewees noted conflicts or issues related to the NCNA. They praised the association for its work in the neighborhood, but noted that some internal issues and political conflicts exist. These conflicts often arise between newer and older residents, which result in a resistance to change.

> *I just hope that older people can have faith in us younger people and know that we have the energy to do a lot of things, but we have to be the right kind of younger people to have the energy to not just come in and want to take over and not be a part of it* (Interviewee 2B).

> *'Come here' is not going to come here and ruin 'been here'. You have some people who don't like change, don't like new* (Interviewee 4B).

It was also noted by interviewees that lack of accessibility to the NCNA meetings, as well as other meetings hosted by the City and organizations is an ongoing issue. Most interviewees consider it to be the citizens' responsibility to participate and stay informed, but it must be made easier. People do not attend meetings or participate because they often do not know about them. There are also limitations when it comes to transportation.

> *We need to empower people with information…information should be democratic* (Interviewee 3B).

> *A lot of things I don't find out about until later on because I'm always in the house* (Interviewee 5B).

Interviewee 2B noted a lack of involvement from new residents that have moved into new developments such as Fields Place, which helps to perpetuate some of the negative interactions between newer and older residents. In terms of engaging the community, word of mouth is recognized as being the best way to get people interested and involved.

> *You've got to just talk to them and advise them, try to enlighten how things are supposed to be* (Interviewee 1B).

> *You have to be active and you have to have those people that are active in it* [the neighborhood] (Interviewee 2B).

Working in partnership with existing organizations and neighborhood infrastructure was also recognized as a successful approach; this includes working with the churches and existing leadership structures. Block parties and informal neighborhood gatherings are considered good strategies for bringing people together and creating a sense of community which Interviewee 2B says is important *because everybody wants to be part of a family*. Interviewee 5B appreciates that many of the new neighbors that they met are friendly and inviting; this is something they have always valued as part of their experience as a resident of North Central.

> *Our little neighborhood seems to be blooming and if we could just get people that's not going to be mean and just 'Hello', 'Good morning,' my grandma always says, you always tell people good morning. The time of day belongs to a dog. Don't you walk by nobody and not say good morning* (Interviewee 5B).

The interviewees frequently commented about the importance of community space as a catalyst for community engagement. Interviewee 2B observed that a local nonprofit, The Green Heart Project, recently moved into the old Ellen Bright Hall building. She considered that the building could potentially serve the community as a gathering space again and she thinks that leaders of the organization would welcome this collaboration. She also commented about the lack of community space and stated that it would be beneficial if the City could help to create a place in the neighborhood where people could come and sit and interact with one another, something that could serve as a *community starting point* to help initiate and support engagement.

6. Analysis and discussion

The presentation of the data in this section represents interpreted, underlying content within the conceptual framework, theoretical constructs, and the context of earlier research (Cash & Snider, 2014).

6.1 Recognizing community heritage: tangible and intangible

The heritage assets identified by residents of North Central include a broad array of features in the neighborhood. Some of the most common assets that were mentioned in both the interviews and the focus groups are County Hall, Hampton Park, the old skating rink, the John L. Dart library, "Romney Bottom," the Rivers School, various homes, and neighborhood continuity and character.

The architecture and built environment are clearly appreciated as important aspects of North Central's history and character, especially the houses that have been saved from demolition and rehabilitated through institutional partnerships and private owner renovations. The current preservation efforts in the neighborhood, including attempts to maintain context and architectural integrity, are acknowledged and appreciated, but there are still many features of the built environment in North Central that are considered important historical assets to community members, but are not formally recognized within the traditional historic preservation ethic. This exclusion can be due to age, current, use, or previous alterations to structures. One example is County Hall. The building was registered and documented in the 2004 survey of historical architectural resources in the Upper Peninsula; however, despite its important role in the North Central community, especially for older residents, the building was not eligible for historic designation on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) because of previous alterations to the structure. While the surveyors recommended that the building be reconsidered for listing, this recommendation was again based on architectural integrity (Brockington & Associates, 2004). Numerous residents consider County Hall as an important feature to the history of North Central. The alterations do not mean that the building is any less valuable to the residents of the neighborhood. Its current use as an apartment complex and the lack of historic recognition of the building in the neighborhood through both formal designation and other informal means do not reflect the building's community value. This is an example of the disparity between what the community identifies as heritage assets and the focus of active preservation work in the neighborhood.

The 2004 survey also reviewed the NRHP eligibility status for other buildings and areas in the North Central neighborhood and surrounding areas. While some resources such as The Enston Home remain designated historic resources and the firehouse on Huger Street is considered eligible for designation, others such as the North Tracey Historic District and the Dingle Street Historic District, both of which are residential streets that lie within the official North Central boundaries, were not recommended for designation. These decisions were based on architectural integrity, citing "inappropriate alterations" and "low levels of integrity" as reasoning (Brockington & Associates, 2004, 101). Those areas in North Central that are recommended for designation by the surveyors include The Rutledge Avenue Improvement Historic District which lies in the northern section of the official North Central neighborhood and then specific resources within the general area including residential homes and

Hampton Park (Brockington & Associates, 2004). The Preservation Society also includes the historic Ward 11, an area that encompasses much of the neighborhood, as one of the organization's Seven to Save priorities in the city (Preservation Society, 2016). This program is an attempt to preserve at risk architectural and cultural resources. Some of the heritage assets identified by North Central residents are included in the 2004 survey and in formal projects pursued by the City and preservation organizations, but the focus has largely been on architectural or structural integrity, the 50-year minimum age criteria for inclusion on the NRHP, and federal guidelines for determining significance of both architectural and cultural resources. While public participation was encouraged at the beginning of the survey process, the criteria for establishing designation eligibility remained formalized within traditional historic preservation processes. It is important to acknowledge that people develop cultural and social meaning for places and recognition of the historical context of this meaning can create connections to the contemporary urban setting (Hayden, 1995). Many of the heritage assets identified by residents are detached from both the contemporary neighborhood functions and the formal recognition of its history.

Many physical heritage assets were recorded and discussed by residents in both the focus groups and the individual interviews, however the most prominent characteristics of assets identified by the residents are the intangible aspects – the importance of people, memories, feelings, and experiences that are attached to either places and buildings in North Central or that are independent from specific locations altogether. It is clear from the discussions with the residents that while threats to the built environment and architecture of the neighborhood are a concern, the biggest fear is that the stories and experiences of the older generations will be lost due to the changing social dynamics of the neighborhood. It is recognized in other cases and heritage projects that these features are often more difficult to formally define and protect, therefore local residents must be considered a resource and their knowledge utilized in this process (Schofield & Syzmanski, 2010). Their everyday experiences in the neighborhood greatly affect the meaning and significance of the features of North Central in a way that preservation, planning, and community development professionals might not understand (Brain, 2005).

As is common with traditional preservation approaches, the focus in the neighborhood is preserving the built environment and individual structures, which only addresses some aspects of change in the area. However, the preservation advocacy organizations are making targeted efforts to improve and foster the preservation of the intangible features, in addition to continued efforts to preserve the architecture. Intangible and tangible heritage are not mutually exclusive, but it is important to establish methods for the preservation of both (Mason, 2006). HCF, for example, has started pursuing an oral history project and also received recommendations from the consultant groups to expand that initiative (czb, 2015). This research confirms that an oral history project would resonate well with residents in North Central as a preservation practice. Some residents specifically suggested oral history as a method of preservation, while others simply spoke about the importance of remembering the stories and experiences of the older generation in the neighborhood. An expanded initiative could be established by following through on improvements to existing oral history programs, pursuing initiatives that focus more intently on recording African-American history and other marginalized history in North Central, and creating additional programs that utilize

creative methods to recognize the less tangible historical features in the neighborhood. Some methods that have been used in other places include "story trekking", neighborhood transect walks, public art, and walking tours as a means to recognize the complexity of historic landscapes and different associations with sense of place (Harrison, 2010, 91-96; Strang, 2010).

Stories and narratives provide an untraditional type of data for informing and guiding initiatives; "stories are data with soul" (Smith, 2016). This transition is in line with the evolving heritage movement and the relationship between historic preservation and planning (Sohmer & Lang, 1998; McClelland et al., 2013). Narrative can play a significant role in fostering community empowerment and giving local people collective resources to influence change (Rappaport, 1995). Residents of North Central clearly value the built environment in the neighborhood, especially the houses and some central gathering places, but this value is inherently connected to the people, stories and experiences that are associated with them. Smith (2016) reflects on the role of community history and storytelling in development and planning for a neighborhood project based in Philadelphia, PA:

> One way a community can plan the future before the planners do is to understand its past. And in most communities, that past is contained not so much in the brick-and-mortar structures themselves but in the stories behind them – the people who built and lived in them, the institutions they housed and still house today, and the connections the people who know (about) them have with others in the neighborhood (Smith, 2016).

Integrating the preservation of the built environment with the recognition and preservation of the intangible features identified by residents of North Central could provide a more effective means for addressing preservation in the face of rapid changes occurring in North Central and the broader Charleston area.

Through the focus groups and interviews with residents, this study offers a base for a comprehensive inventory of community-defined heritage assets in North Central. This type of inventory for the neighborhood did not exist until now. Incorporating different stakeholders, especially local residents, in the process of determining heritage values has been shown to provide a great deal of insight for preservation initiatives and development of preservation and planning policy (Mason, 2006). The Preservation Plan for Charleston, SC (2008) focuses on ACAs as a foundational method for guiding preservation in Charleston neighborhoods, stating that these inventories broaden the view of preservation from specific buildings to the character of the surrounding community. However, these character features are still defined by architectural integrity as the main assessment of value. The traditional ACA model could be supplemented by focusing more heavily on public participation in developing an inclusive definition of "character" for community preservation that reflects a values-based approach (Mason, 2006; Silka & Eady, 2007). The Preservation Plan (2008) includes a recommendation stating that the template for conducting ACAs should be expanded. Activities that include community identification of heritage resources enhance this template and continue to incorporate the recommended actors such as neighborhood residents, property owners, and representatives from local organizations in the decision-making processes. Expanded heritage inventories could be utilized to guide future development including housing and building rehabilitations, new construction, new businesses entering the neighborhood, community development programs, neighborhood-based initiatives,

and larger development projects such as the proposed linear park, the Lowcountry Lowline, which will run through neighborhoods like North Central along the I-26 corridor. It could also help to prevent what some residents consider to be out of character development such as the example that is displayed in Fig. 25. This image depicts the disparity of a new housing development, Fields Place, to the left in comparison to the older, traditional style house of a long-term resident to the right.
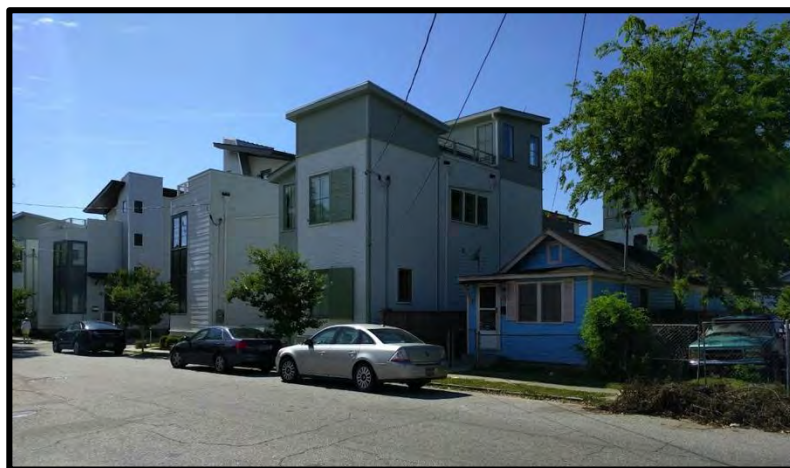
Fig. 25. New housing development "Fields Place" next to a long term resident's house on Simons Street (A. Holly, 2016)

The integration of heritage within the contemporary urban setting is recognized as an important part of a values-based approach (McClelland et al., 2013). The goal of establishing ACAs should also be expedited within the larger agenda now that the extent of neighborhood change in North Central and surrounding areas has been studied and presented in an in-depth report that highlights the need for making decisive choices about how to balance urban change and preservation (czb, 2015).

One of the most difficult issues to address when including a large number of stakeholders in the identification of heritage assets and values is that it is impossible to consider all values at the same time or with the same weight. This dilemma is directly connected to democratic theory, particularly the theory of agonistic pluralism in which the main goal is recognition of multiple values, not a consensus about which are the most important or valid (Holden, 2011; Mouffe, 2006). Based on the interview and focus group responses, North Central residents are very much aware of the limitations to a values-based approach to preservation and the often limited capabilities of institutional involvement due to lack of funding and organizational capacity. Despite these challenges, an expanded approach to identifying historic resources could more effectively address the community concerns and contribute to fulfilling the goals of the City and preservation organizations to foster a more collaborative, inclusive process of heritage recognition and preservation. For example, concentrating on preserving neighborhood gathering places and shared space, one of the most common types of heritage assets identified by residents, would have a broader scale impact for residents than the individual-based rehabilitation projects in North Central. This is not to discount the role that the housing rehabilitations have in supporting existing residents and maintaining historic structures, but by allocating resources for projects like the Romney Urban Garden, a greater number of residents would experience the benefits first hand.

6.2 Addressing the lack of democratic space

Neighborhood gathering spaces and interactions among neighbors emerged as some of the most important themes in discussions with the North Central residents. There is currently a deficit in access to these types of spaces. Residents desire broader room for engagement related to planning and preservation of their neighborhood. Many residents noted that it is the responsibility of the citizens themselves to participate in public meetings and provide insight and feedback for organizations and governmental entities. However, many residents also said that there are not many opportunities to participate, and age, employment, technological proficiency, transportation, and other common limits to participation are an issue when it comes to attending the meetings they do know about. Creating more opportunities for resident involvement is vitally important as the North Central neighborhood continues to experience increased development. Most residents accept the economic-based urban changes and issues with affordability as inevitable, but people do want more inclusion in decision-making processes for mitigating the negative effects of these pressures in North Central. Many residents stated that they want more frequent opportunities for their voices to be heard by the institutions and organizations that have a large role in the implementation or prevention of the projects related to development of the neighborhood. The residents appreciate the partnerships with organizations and the City, but they also criticize the current state of citizen inclusion in formal processes.

Those projects that are considered successful in the neighborhood such as the Romney Urban Garden and housing rehabilitations have also been those that included the most citizen involvement. However, many of the residents are still unaware of the details of these initiatives. Most of the residents who mentioned these projects are also those who live on the street where they are being implemented. Despite the lack of broad scale knowledge of the initiatives in the neighborhood, it is clear that these projects are embedded in the community through investment and commitment from the resident base. The positive reactions to projects that include citizens more wholly within the process of planning, implementation, and maintenance are supported by participatory planning theory. This type of process ensures that residents are given the space to participate and provide their knowledge of local context to initiatives, which does not eliminate conflict, but creates a better framework for addressing the conflicts that may arise (Bifulco, 2013; Healey, 1996). According to those interviewed, the participatory planning approach has produced sustainable outcomes thus far which confirms the merits of citizen participation in the processes for North Central. One of the formal suggestions by residents for expanding their collaboration in decision-making was the creation of a committee of residents to serve on a board for neighborhood preservation. A committee such as this would allow for discussions about shared values and differences that reflect the theories of democracy in practice (Söderbaum & Brown, 2010).

A major issue identified by residents related to participation is that North Central does not have a place that is considered a designated community space for gatherings, meetings, parties, and more informal neighborhood events. Some residents, in both the focus groups and interviews, explicitly mentioned this lack of a community center during the discussions as a limitation to community engagement in the neighborhood. This issue can also be extracted from other comments from residents related to lack of space or limited access to resources to facilitate more community gatherings. While

the NCNA is considered a catalyst for community engagement by some residents and especially by the representatives from the City and preservation organizations, the association still serves as a top down approach to engagement. Residents want an environment for engagement that is neutral and less politically structured. Some residents suggested that the Romney Urban Garden is beginning to approach this need as a less formal space and that it fosters an environment that is reminiscent of the positive community interactions in the past. The disconnection between newer and long-term residents was also cited as a major barrier to engagement and the sharing and preservation of North Central history. North Central residents commented about the need for more interaction with one another. A democratic approach to community engagement involves allowing for mutual experiences and sharing to take place, but there must be somewhere for those interactions to occur. Bridging the gap between generations is an important step in improving relations among residents, as well as with organizations and the City. The major "democratic deficit" in North Central is the lack of space to participate (Healey, 1999, 112). Creating a physical space such as a community center could serve as a catalyst to bring together new and old residents in a setting where people feel welcome and comfortable interacting. It would also provide the opportunity for institutions such as The Charleston Boxing Club and other neighborhood based groups to disseminate information about events, fundraisers, and other opportunities for involvement to a wider array of residents and potential participants.

This research presents a detailed review of how North Central residents perceive their engagement related to preservation and planning in the neighborhood. It also investigates engagement from the perspective of the City and preservation organizations. This insight allows for continued reevaluation of the traditional power distribution associated with top down techniques in preservation planning (Albrechts, 2002; Innes & Booher, 2004). The City of Charleston and preservation advocacy organizations are embodying more inclusive, collaborative approaches to neighborhood involvement in recent years, yet many residents still feel excluded from the formal processes. Some of the goals of participation include citizen empowerment and building community capacity (Chaskin, 2001; Fagotto & Fung, 2006; Chaskin, Khare, & Joseph, 2012). It is important for the City and organizations to foster true participation as they move forward, rather than supporting participation for the sake of calling the process "participatory" (Bifulco, 2013). The traditional dualistic approach to participation needs to be broken down further to embody pluralism and increased interaction among agents of change (Innes & Booher, 2004). Through creating more democratic space for citizen involvement, residents could help to influence the contemporary state of North Central to more effectively reflect the heritage assets that are acknowledged as most important to the neighborhood history and most at risk in the face of neighborhood change: the closeness of the community, youth and family relations, and opportunities for interaction with neighbors.

6.3 Communication: a key component of success

Communication has served as a major factor in determining the success of preservation initiatives in North Central. The City government and preservation organizations consider community engagement and interaction with community members to be one of the most important elements of their preservation efforts in the neighborhood. They concentrate heavily on the dissemination of information and are

aware that multiple methods must be used to reach a wider array of people. The representatives from both the organizations and the City departments highlighted the benefits of using existing channels within community groups and political structures in the neighborhood as a means to inform the public about initiatives and garner participation. Most of the residents, however, said that they do not know about ongoing initiatives occurring in the neighborhood related to preservation and planning. There is a gap between what is being planned and implemented and what residents are experiencing. As noted earlier, those projects or initiatives that were mentioned by residents are also those projects that included high levels of citizen involvement in the planning and implementation processes. Some of the current initiatives are unknown to many of the residents, especially those that are older or less mobile. Accessibility to information in the neighborhood is an issue that needs to be addressed more aggressively.

Engaging older, longer-term residents in the neighborhood is one of the biggest limitations to communication. This demographic is especially important when identifying community-defined heritage assets and preserving the history of a neighborhood, but the elderly are also traditionally vulnerable to the barriers to participation (UNDP, 2010). If organizations, the City, and the neighborhood association are not effectively reaching this group of people, a vital component of the process for preservation initiatives is missing. Residents said that there need to be more inclusive ways for information to be presented to community members, including door-to-door distribution of information and inclusion of neighborhood announcements in paper form. Some of this responsibility lies with the North Central residents and their internal communication channels such as the neighborhood association and some rests with the institutions that are involved in neighborhood initiatives. The Housing & Community Development Department has a robust communication plan that recognizes the need to reach different segments of the population through "on the ground" work. Most residents are aware of the housing rehabilitation and neighborhood improvement programs that originate in this department. Other City departments including Planning, Preservation, & Sustainability, as well as various local organizations could improve their approach to communication. The representatives from these groups that were interviewed do recognize that limitations to participation exist. Public meetings and neighborhood forums are generally announced in an inclusive manner, however according to the residents, updates about current work and prospective initiatives are not widely distributed. Most institutions involved in the neighborhood have a substantial online presence, but without the other modes of communication, certain segments of the population are being excluded from ongoing participation. The residents and preservation organization representatives also criticized the City for producing documents and plans that seem effective for protecting the neighborhood, but that are not fully implemented.

In order to fulfill some of the hopes of institutions in Charleston to promote collaborative, inclusive planning for preservation in the North Central neighborhood, different methods of presenting information and extracting information from residents must be utilized (Fagotto & Fung, 2006). The communication among the different institutions also needs to be improved. Making these adjustments is a continuous part of the participatory planning process (Innes & Booher, 2004). At this point, specific portions of the population are represented in the planning processes, largely newer,

younger residents who are already more likely to participate. The ideal level of inclusion will likely never be achieved; however, it is important to address the clear deficit in information reaching older residents and those residents who do not use the Internet (Innes & Booher, 2004). One of the core groups of people that may have the most to share about neighborhood history is more often than not excluded from contemporary planning processes. Providing communication channels for residents to connect more closely with the City government, local organizations, and to each other should be priorities for future engagement. It is impossible to address every limitation to community participation, but communication is one area that could easily be improved (Bond & Thompson-Fawcett, 2007, 451). There are some measures being taken since the beginning of this study that do address these issues and the task of relationship building between different actors. HCF and representatives from the City of Charleston hosted a public community meeting in partnership with the NCNA on April 21, 2016 to present the findings from the 2015 study, *Historic Preservation, Affordability, and Livability in Charleston's North Central Neighborhood*. This is fulfilling the need addressed by participants in the focus groups for more one-on-one communication opportunities and trust building between residents and City representatives related to preservation and urban development challenges.

It is also important to note the topic of youth in this section. While the importance of children and youth to the history and character of the neighborhood emerged as major topics of conversation and is considered one of the heritage assets identified by residents, there is a disconnect between youth and preservation. This observation is something that was also noted at the organizational level by Interviewee 2A from the Preservation Society. Supporting youth programs could potentially serve as a means to bring together residents in North Central and also fill gaps in educational programming for historic preservation and planning at a wider scale. The preservation advocacy organizations are already pursuing education opportunities in some of the Charleston schools. An increased focus on youth engagement and providing learning opportunities for youth at the neighborhood scale could supplement current efforts and spotlight a demographic that is highly valued in North Central.

6.4 Future implications

While preservation scholars have developed theoretical frameworks for supporting more values-based, participatory preservation practices that support contemporary urban communities, scholars in other fields have given limited attention to the adaptation of the role of preservation in the modern city. UNESCO's *Recommendation on the Historic Landscape* addresses the transition of linking preservation to urban development at a wide scale, calling for governments around the world to survey and map city resources, implement participatory frameworks for determining which values to protect for future generations, and develop means to integrate the historic landscape into a wider framework for development. There is an expressed need in the literature for more case study research that investigates the complex topics of character, heritage, and sense of place in relation to preservation planning and sustainable urban development (Olsson, 2008; Ryberg-Webster & Kinahan, 2014, 131). This research study provides a glimpse into the inner workings of the role of community participation related to these topics for the North Central neighborhood in Charleston, SC.

The creation of a preliminary inventory of community-defined heritage assets provides guidance for how to better focus future initiatives for preservation planning in North Central that will connect more fully to the needs and desires of residents in the neighborhood. The results indicate that an extensive values-based inventory of heritage assets should be established for North Central through a formal expansion of the existing models for neighborhood preservation in Charleston including previous surveys and the ACA approach. The interview and focus group responses confirm what is being done well related to neighborhood preservation efforts, but the results also reveal disparities between citizen interests and current initiatives. This information can be used to foster better collaboration among organizational and governmental partners, as well as among the residents themselves in order to continue developing inclusive approaches to neighborhood preservation and establishing initiatives in North Central with sustainable outcomes.

7. Conclusions

The core tenets of sustainable development are global in nature, however these sweeping goals "must be accompanied by context-specific elaborations" (Kemp, Parto, & Gibson, 2005). There is an increasing need for locally derived strategies for sustainable urban development. As planning efforts focus on participation and inclusion in sustainable urban development, refining tools for participation and identifying the potential for their use in such initiatives becomes increasingly important. This is especially true for the preservation of historic resources, as traditional preservation techniques have a reputation for failing to include local communities in decision-making processes. As preservation becomes intertwined with urban planning, sustainability, and development, it stands to have a lasting impact on the contemporary urban setting. The North Central neighborhood and other similar historic neighborhoods in the Charleston area are increasingly affected by the impacts of rapid growth and urban change. Preserving the historic character of this neighborhood has become a priority of the City and local preservation advocacy organizations. While inclusive, collaborative approaches to planning have increased in recent years, the preservation efforts in North Central have not been contextualized to fully reflect the interests of the community.

This research sought to investigate what residents of North Central identify as heritage assets and to compare this information to current preservation efforts in order to better understand the role of community participation in urban preservation planning processes. Residents identified both tangible and intangible heritage assets, however the primary emphasis was on the people, memories, and experiences that make up the neighborhood character. Many of the physical places or features of the built environment that were included in the inventory are not recognized under the current preservation ethic or in formal inventories of historic neighborhood resources. There are disparities between the needs and values of residents and the current preservation initiatives in the neighborhood. The results from this study indicate that the City of Charleston and local preservation organizations are on the right track to approaching preservation from the perspective of broader urban and community development challenges. The collaborative, participatory approach is working; however, gaps still exist related to recognition of community heritage, democratic space, and communication. Community participation serves to guide preservation planning processes in the neighborhood by confirming what is being done effectively and where future initiatives need to focus. Initiatives such as the individual housing rehabilitations are appreciated by residents and should remain active. However, the City and local organizations should also allocate funding for larger scale projects such as the Romney Urban Garden that serve as communal, shared spaces for the residents of North Central. These same actors should also work to improve programs that focus on the less tangible aspects of neighborhood heritage such as oral histories and other methods to preserve the stories and experiences of residents, especially those of the older generations. Communication techniques must also be refined and expanded in order to facilitate full, unhindered participation from all interested community members. As Mouffe's theory of agonistic pluralism suggests, consensus may not be a possible final goal, or even a desired goal, for every public meeting and community engagement exercise. There is merit in simply creating this democratic space for involvement to both recognize and respect the multitude of values and ideas held by residents in the North Central community.

The efforts to integrate participatory processes in planning and preservation in Charleston have paralleled much of the growth and development pressures impacting the area. As these pressures increase, community participation and democratization of planning processes have a vital role to play in North Central neighborhood, and potentially the city as a whole when it comes to preservation planning in the face of urban change. It serves to more effectively merge the traditional preservation ethic of Charleston with the contemporary needs and heritage values of local people and to guide development of inclusive approaches to neighborhood preservation in order to establish initiatives with sustainable outcomes.

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Appendix 1 – NC event discussion/activity guide

NC Neighborhood Community Discussion and Activity Outline
February 24, 2016, 6:00-8:00 PM
Sundrops Montessori School, 88 Simons Street

My introduction

Community Discussion and Activity

PART I: Introduction
Brainstorm

1. If you had to describe North Central neighborhood to someone who does not live here, how would you describe it? What places, people, things, etc. would you tell them about?

2. What are some of the qualities of the neighborhood that you think best represent North Central's history?

*A neighborhood asset or resource: places, people, things, qualities, etc. that are valuable to you in relation to your history as a resident of North Central

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PART II: Questions Pre-Mapping

Preservation in North Central

1. Discuss some of the projects or initiatives (things people do) related to preserving the history or legacy of North Central.

- What initiatives do you know about?
- What initiatives have been successful? Why?
- What initiatives have been challenging or failed outright? Why?

Community Engagement

2. How is the community engaged or involved in North Central?
- Related specifically to preserving the history, legacy, and integrity of the neighborhood?
- What are good strategies for getting more people involved?

3. How do you feel interactions have been with the City and other organizations related to these topics?
- Which interactions do you know about?
- Do these interactions need to be improved?
- If so, how?

Additional

Is there anything else important you want to share before we continue?

PART III: Group Mapping

1. Which assets of the neighborhood do you feel are important to your history or experiences in North Central?
   - Important to the neighborhood history in general?

2. Which assets of the neighborhood do you feel are important to preserve in the face of the current growth and projected development/changes in Charleston?

3. What do you hope people in the future will see or have access to in the neighborhood?

4. How do you use the assets (things) you're putting on the map?
   - How are they used by others?

PART IV: Questions after mapping in smaller groups

1. Who needs to protect these assets (things) and how?

2. Is there anything that exists within the community to protect them?

PART V: Sharing

PART VI: Reflection in large group

1. What did you like about this discussion?

2. What could have been improved?

3. Would you want to do an exercise like this again? Why or why not?

4. As residents, how would you like to see the maps and the information we discussed used (other than for my thesis project)?
   - Do you have any suggestions for how to present this information to others?

Appendix 2 – Interview Guides

A) Interview with City representative

1. Intro question: How long have you worked with the City? Can you describe your position and what you do for the department? (in a few sentences)
2. Can you give some history of planning in the Upper Peninsula area of the City?
   - What about North Central neighborhood specifically?
3. What would you say are some of the challenges for planning in this area of the City?
4. What are the potentials and/or opportunities for planning in this area of the City?
5. With the projected growth and development pressures in neighborhoods like North Central, how does the City approach preservation of history/heritage?
   - How does the department work with preservation?
   - How does the department determine what is preserved?
6. Can you discuss some of the projects related to preservation in North Central?
   - Which projects have been most successful?
   - Which projects have failed or proved challenging?
   - Why?
7. What are the greatest priorities for planning in North Central? Related specifically to preservation of history/heritage?
8. Is there community involvement from residents in the North Central neighborhood?
9. How does the department engage the community in the planning process?
   - What strategies are used?
10. What are some of the challenges with community engagement?
11. What are some of the goals for future engagement?
12. There are so many groups working with preservation and development issues in this neighborhood/general area of the City – can you talk about existing partnerships and interactions with other organizations, departments within the City?
   - What are some of the goals for partnerships in the future?
13. Is there anything else important that you think should be included in this interview?
14. Is there anyone else you would suggest I speak to?

B) Interview with representatives from the Housing & Community Development Department

1. Intro question: How long have you worked with the Community Development and Housing Department? Can you describe your position and what you do for the department? (in a few sentences)
2. Can you give some history of your department's work in the Upper Peninsula area of the City?
   - What about North Central neighborhood specifically?
3. What would you say are some of the challenges for the department's work in the North Central neighborhood?
4. What are the potentials and/or opportunities for the department's in the North Central neighborhood?
5. Can you discuss some of the projects or initiatives related to preservation in North Central?
   - Which projects have been most successful?
   - Which projects have failed or proved challenging?
   - Why?
6. With the projected growth and development pressures in North Central, how does the department approach preservation of history/heritage?
   - How does the department work with preservation?
   - How does the department determine what is preserved?

7. What are the greatest priorities for your department in North Central? Related specifically to preservation of history/heritage?

8. Is there community involvement from residents in the North Central neighborhood?
9. How does the department engage the community?
- What strategies are used?
10. What are some of the challenges with community engagement?
11. What are some of the goals for future engagement?
12. There are so many groups working with preservation and development issues in this neighborhood/general area of the City – can you talk about existing partnerships and interactions with other organizations, the City?
- What are some of the goals for partnerships in the future?
13. Is there anything else important that you think should be included in this interview?
14. Is there anyone else you would suggest I speak to?

C) Interview with representative from the preservation advocacy organizations (one example)

1. Intro question: How long have you worked with HCF? Can you describe your position/what you do for HCF? (in a few sentences)
2. Can you give some history of HCF's involvement in the Upper Peninsula area of the City?
- What about North Central neighborhood specifically?
3. What would you say are some of the challenges for HCF's work in the North Central neighborhood?
4. What are the potentials and/or opportunities for HCF's work in the North Central neighborhood?
5. With the projected growth and development pressures in North Central and other nearby neighborhoods, how does HCF approach preservation of history/heritage?
- How does HCF determine what should be preserved?
6. Can you discuss some of the projects or initiatives related to preservation in North Central? (like the Neighborhood Revitalization Initiative, Romney street rehabilitations, stabilization plans, etc.)
- Which projects have been most successful?
- Which projects have failed or proved challenging?
- Why?
7. What are the greatest priorities in North Central from the perspective of HCF?
- What does HCF think should be preserved in North Central?
- Why?
8. How do you envision the future of preservation planning in Charleston?
- What do you think has worked in the past?
- What do you think needs to change, if it needs to change?
9. If advocacy or policy is mentioned as the "next step" → After this most recent report, there is a better understanding about what the neighborhood wants. If HCF focuses on being a convener and advocate at the more umbrella level, how will the organization continue to engage the community at the neighborhood level? How will the neighborhood be kept up to date on advocacy/affordability efforts?
10. Is there community involvement from residents in the North Central neighborhood?
11. How does HCF engage the community?
- What strategies are used?
12. What are some of the challenges with community engagement?
13. What are some of the goals for future engagement?
14. There are so many groups working with preservation and development issues in this neighborhood/general area of the City – can you talk about existing partnerships and interactions with other organizations, the City?
- What are some of the goals for partnerships in the future?
15. Is there anything else important that you think should be included in this interview?
16. Is there anyone else you would suggest I speak to?

D) Interview with North Central residents

1. How long have you lived in the North Central neighborhood?
2. Can you give some background or history of your time as a resident of North Central?
3. What are some of the qualities of the neighborhood that you think best represent North Central's history?
4. If you had to describe North Central neighborhood to someone who does not live here, how would you describe it?

    4a. What places, people, things, etc. would you tell them about when describing North Central neighborhood?

5. Which assets of the neighborhood do you feel are important to your history or experiences in North Central? (A neighborhood asset or resource: places, people, things, qualities, etc. that are valuable to you in relation to your history as a resident of North Central)
6. Which assets or resources are important to the neighborhood history?
7. Which assets of the neighborhood do you feel are important to preserve in the face of the current growth and projected development/changes in Charleston?
8. What do you hope people in the future will see or have access to in the neighborhood?
9. How do you use the assets you mentioned?

    9a. How are they used by others?

10. Who needs to protect these assets?

    10a. How do the assets need to be protected?

12. Is there anything that exists within the community to protect them?
13. Can you discuss some of the projects or initiatives (municipal, private, collective or individual) related to preserving the history or legacy of North Central?

    13a. What projects do you know about?

    13b. What projects have been successful? Why?

    13c. What projects have been challenging or failed outright? Why?

14. How is the community engaged or involved in North Central?

    14a. Related specifically to preserving the history, legacy, and integrity of the neighborhood?

    14b. What are good strategies for getting more people involved?

15. How do you feel interactions have been with the City and other organizations related to these topics?

    15a. Which interactions do you know about?

    15b. Do these interactions need to be improved?

    15c. If so, how?

16. Is there anything else important that you think should be included in this interview?
17. Is there anyone else you would suggest I speak to?

Appendix 3 – Additional photos of NC neighborhood

Central Mosque of Charleston
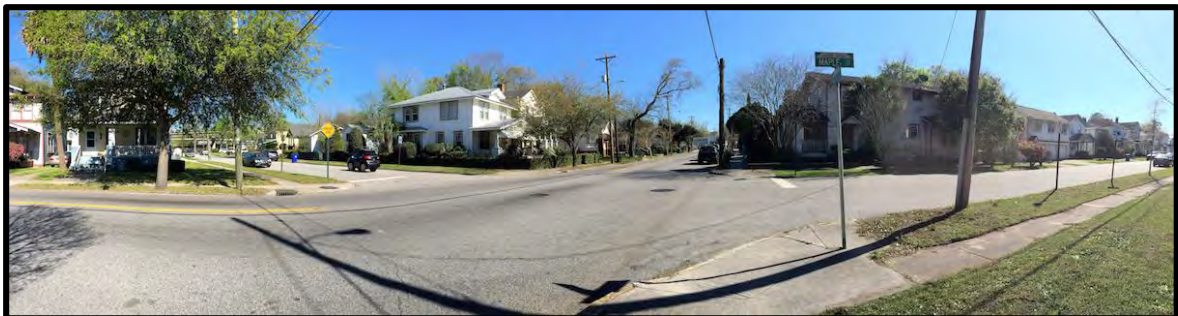
Intersection of Maple and King Streets

Romney Urban Garden (message board and mosaic wall)

P-Nut, The Lowcountry Poet of Charleston (long term North Central resident)

Home Sweet Home

Oh' what a sign, that sign that reads welcome
to Charleston and you enter
And see the skyline and the beautiful trees and
repairs and construction going on
All the time roads being paved, churches being
cleaned from steps to steeple and plenty respect in
the air and people coming from everywhere
The serenity how sweet and neat.
Oh, this City of Charleston in its own way is like
no place else and just about everyone who comes
here is please to they don't want to leave but then
some stay and that's a fact and most of the time the
ones that leaves usually come back why
Charleston is just like that so heavenly up and
down thank God Charleston is my town. (P-Nut The Lowcountry Poet
of Charleston, December 9, 1995)

List of figures

List of tables

List of abbreviations/acronyms

ACA	Area Character Appraisal
BAR	Board of Architectural Review
COE	Council of Europe
DSNI	Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative
GIS	Geographic Information System
HCF	Historic Charleston Foundation
ICOMOS	International Council on Monuments and Sites
NCNA	North Central Neighborhood Association
NHPA	National Historic Preservation Act
NRHP	National Register of Historic Places
NRI	Neighborhood Revitalization Initiative
NTHP	National Trust of Historic Preservation
RTC	Rehabilitation Tax Credits
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
UN	United Nations
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization