Clemson looks to beautify streets

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BY GREG OLIVER
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CLEMSON — What Clemson has done to beautify College Avenue it now wants to extend to the side streets of that thoroughfare as well as the Calhoun District.

Landscape architectural experts from Seamon Whiteside + Associates of Greenville have met with city officials, business and property owners to discuss plans and take input.

> **'We will** ... develop concepts based on what we've heard from the community.'
>
> **Chris Watson**
> Director of landscape architecture for Seamon Whiteside + Associates

"We're building off the success of College Avenue by parlaying it into the side streets," said Chris Watson, director of landscape architecture for Seamon. "Some areas already have pavers, benches, crosswalks and such, and these are the elements we're going to continue on the side streets downtown."

While working to "continue the look and feel" of downtown Clemson, Watson said the streetscape project that will take place over three summers, starting in 2011, is based on the workshop held this week at City Hall.

"We will refine our design based on the charette and develop concepts

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based on what we've heard from the community." Watson said.

Zone 1, from Keith Street to S.C. Highway 93; Zone 2, from Keith Street to Tiger Boulevard; and Zone 3, the Calhoun District, make up the streetscape project.

Ideas for Zone 1 included additional parking, bike lanes, greenspace, landscaping, accommodations for skateboards and Segways as well as signage, angled parking and consolidating utilities. Zone 2 concerns included bicycle safety, parking, pedestrian circulation, a way to slow down vehicular traffic, as well as livable streets, working with property owners and placement of speed pumps on Keowee Trail.

Watson said another suggestion is to develop a more efficient trash pickup system.

A public recycling area, with a compactor beside each of the units, is something Watson said is popular in many cities.

"There's a lot of rollout carts right now and the goal is to come up with some creative ideas and show them to the business owners," Watson said.

Also discussed was improving the apperance of utility poles, defining where commercial areas end and residential areas begin and identifying as many pedestrian zones as possible along the side streets.

community once it's completed."

Ken Revis-Wagner, who owns and manages Nick's Tavern and Deli, said he is satisfied by the designs proposed for Zone 1.

"I think everyone in Zone 1 has pretty much the same concerns, with the biggest one being trash," he said. "Our front window and door is on Sloan Street and there's lots of trash because the businesses that face College Avenue take their trash out their back door, which is our front door."

Suggestions for the historic Calhoun District included decorative lighting; a distinct logo, banners, creation of an identify and public space, a bike path system, a CAT bus stop with a plaza/shelter, protection of sacred, historical trees as well as a historical marker, a kiosk to serve as a visual connection to the rail station, a four-way stop and alignment and extension of the sidewalk to Cochran.

Longtime Calhoun resident Dot Yandle said she is enthusiastic about the streetscape project.

"There's been a lot of input from the city down to the historic area, and I think a lot has been solicited as well as offered," Yandle said, suggesting that Calhoun improvements be "an ongoing thing."

"The fact we are doing just one basic square block is not enough because we have other areas on Calhoun, and the fact we also have newer and younger families moving in bodes well for the future," she said.

"Most people are interested in this project because they either own property or have a business and that's good," said Clemson City Council member J.C. Cook. "They're saying 'it's fine' and 'that will do nothing but help my property' and that's what we wanted to hear. I'm excited about what the final plans will look like and this is going to be a great asset to our

...week for a reunion.

Volunteers from Witness to War, a nonprofit Web site that collects and puts combat stories of World War II vets online, will be joining the group to gather their tales.

The project was started eight years ago by Atlanta businessman Tom Beaty, who got the idea visiting a graveyard.

He noted the graves of vets, just listing their