

The Outlook

Reporting the news for the Alexander City & Lake Martin area



Camp Hill planning almost complete

By Kelly Caldwell

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The planning stage for the future of Camp Hill is near completion and now according to key people involved in the planning, action needs to be taken.

"All the planning in the world will not do any good if actions are not taken to implement those plans," Dr. Chester Carroll, mayor of Camp Hill, said. "We have had a lot of people participate in the planning of our future and that is what we need. It shows the people of Camp Hill we care about what happens in this community and are willing to help make Camp Hill prosper."

Since Carroll took office in October, one of his main goals has been to develop a strategic plan for the community. The town enlisted help from several outside sources including Alabama Power, Alabama Cooperative Extension Service and Auburn University's Economic Development Center.

"It has been overwhelming the response the residents have to our ideas," Mike Easterwood of the Economic Development Institute at Auburn University said. "The community is genuinely concerned with what happens in Camp Hill and that is key. We have developed plans for communities twice this size and have not had community response we have had here."

Thursday, concerned residents and business owners in Camp Hill gathered at Lyman Ward Military Academy to discuss the overall summary developed by the outside parties.

"Basically what we have done is take the ideas from the community, given our insight and developed a summary of goals," Easterwood said. "We have been the facilitators of this process not the originators of ideas."

While some of the goals will take years to reach, several will be able to be implemented right away.

"It's not everyday that you have a major corridor open in your town," Easterwood said. "U.S. Highway 280 is near completion and the time to act on opportunities associated with that is now."

The town hopes to establish an industrial development board as well as figure out the appropriate planning policy and development procedures for the new corridor.

Another goal for the community is to improve the quality of life.

"We want this to be a village community where the people of the town can get the basic necessities here," Carroll said. "Right now we can't do that. We want to improve the overall quality of life here and that is something that can begin right away."