

H O U R G L A S S



F O U N D A T I O N

## **Can Lancaster Learn to Charleston?**

An Hourglass Foundation Public Forum  
Franklin & Marshall College  
March 20, 2001

Featured Speaker:  
***The Honorable Joseph P. Riley, Jr.***  
Mayor of Charleston, South Carolina



Mayor Joseph P. Riley, Jr.

Charleston, South Carolina, is widely recognized as one of the most livable cities in America. Under the leadership of Mayor Joseph P. Riley, Jr., this southern city has experienced unprecedented growth and economic development; heightened its commitment to racial harmony and progress; achieved a substantial decrease in crime; revitalized its historic downtown business district; built a beautiful waterfront park; developed nationally acclaimed, affordable housing; and increased its support of the arts.

Mayor Joseph P. Riley, Jr., is widely recognized as one of the most visionary and highly effective governmental leaders in America. First elected Mayor of Charleston, South Carolina, in December 1975, Mayor Riley is serving an unprecedented seventh term.

Mayor Riley is a founder of the Mayor's Institute for City Design and has provided critical urban design support to over two hundred fifty Mayors across America. He has served as President of the U.S. Conference of Mayors. He was given the Outstanding Mayor Award by the National Urban Coalition, the Distinguished Citizen Award by the National Association of Realtors, and the Thomas Jefferson Award from the American Institute of Architects for Public Architecture for "his exceptional leadership and Jeffersonian vision in redefining the promise and, ultimately, the future of our nation and its cities."

The Hourglass Foundation invited Mayor Riley to Lancaster to share with the Lancaster community the story of Charleston's remarkable success and to provide insights into how we might affect a similar renaissance here in our own city of Lancaster. The following is a transcript of the Mayor's presentation. We hope you will find it interesting and inspirational.

***The Board of Directors of The Hourglass Foundation***

On behalf of the entire Hourglass organization, I welcome you here tonight. My name is Donald Roseman, and I am the President of the Board. You have been seeing two screens before you: our Mission and our Strategy, which is working toward a shared vision for the future of our community. There are many plans and activities throughout our county intended to produce positive change. Many of these are focused presently on the city, a revitalization if you would. In this vein, we are presenting tonight's forum. As always, our invitation list includes elected officials, elected, appointed and employed leaders from every sector of our community. I would like to acknowledge at least one County Commissioner. I believe I saw Ron Ford here this evening, welcome to the County. Also with us tonight is Mayor Charles Smithgall, standing at the back of the room. Thank you very much for attending.

Before we arrived here at F&M, we took our speaker on a walking tour of the Downtown. Presenting our plans and visions were Mr. Jim Pickard, Chairman of the Convention Center Authority, Mr. Jack Howell, Director of the Lancaster Alliance and Mr. Randy Harris, Executive Director of the Lancaster Historic Preservation Trust. I want to thank all of them for their support and cooperation this afternoon.

Missing this meeting are several representatives from the School District of Lancaster. Unfortunately, their regularly scheduled board meeting is conflicting with this evening's date. That also explains why I'm up here opening this meeting. As our chairman, Mr. Art Mann, is their President. Our Vice-President, Mr. Sid Marland is here this evening and our Secretary, and I am sure he's greeted most of you, Mr. John Jarvis.

Can Lancaster learn to Charleston? Our board member, Jim Corrigan and his talented team at Agnew and Corrigan created this theme phrase, and I want to make sure you understand that. Our Treasurer, whose inspiration saw a connection that made this evening possible. It's with great pleasure that I ask Tom Johnson to come to the podium to introduce our evening's speaker.

**Tom Johnson:**

Thank you Don, and I welcome all you Lancastrians. I can assure you, you're in for a wonderful treat this evening as we hear from Mayor Joseph P. Riley, Jr. from Charleston, South Carolina. I am sure, like myself, many of you have visited Charleston, and we've seen many of the great attributes of that city that are very similar to our own city; with a successful hotel and convention center downtown, it seemed fairly logical at this point and time, that we the Hourglass, sponsor a forum from one of the nation's leading experts who has made it happen in Charleston, South Carolina.

Mayor Joseph P. Riley, Jr. of Charleston, South Carolina is widely considered as one of the most visionary and highly effective government leaders of America. He is currently serving an unprecedented seventh term as Mayor of Charleston, and under his leadership, Charleston has experienced a remarkable revitalization of its downtown business district. Mayor Riley has led a city government with a record of innovation in public safety, housing, arts and culture, children's issues, the creation of parks and open space and economic revitalization and development. Charleston, like Lancaster, is

blessed with a wealth of historic structures that have been transformed into businesses, offices, restaurants, and stores and probably, most importantly, homes. Mayor Riley is a graduate of the Citadel in Charleston and also the University of South Carolina School of Law. He has also served six years as a Representative to the government in the State of South Carolina. Probably, most proudly though, Mayor Riley and his wife are the parents of two wonderful sons. One who is living in Atlanta, Georgia, and soon is going to bring him a daughter-in-law, and another one who is currently attending the University of South Carolina School of Law. So won't you join me in giving a warm welcome to the Mayor of Charleston, South Carolina, Joseph Riley?

**Mayor Riley:**

Thank you very much for the warm introduction and wonderful escort today over from Hershey and your willingness to be a glutton for punishment to hear me speak twice in one day. A lot of people in Charleston would probably snicker at that. They've had to hear me all these years. I thank you all so much for inviting me to be with you today, and I can't tell you what a wonderful sight this is for me, and I mean that most sincerely. To see a room full in the late afternoon after many people here have had busy days coming for the purpose of thinking about and shaping their city's future.

You know, in America, there's never any reason for anybody to ever say, isn't it too bad? Isn't it too bad if you can't do so and so? Isn't it too bad if so and so happened? Because we can do anything we want to in our communities. We govern ourselves, there is no one holding us back. In a community like this, so committed and dedicated to it's future, and as an outsider it is an extraordinary sight for me.

I've had the great pleasure of meeting your wonderful Mayor this afternoon, seeing your fabulous city hall and hearing about many of the exciting plans that Lancaster has. So as a fellow citizen of America, and one that has an interest in historic places, and as a student of the city, and I've had the occasion to be working in this field for many years, it is a thrill for me to be here in this historic community, especially one that has such an extraordinary potential and one that is obviously poised to reach that.

What I will do this evening is talk about some projects in Charleston, not as an outside lecturer or teacher about specific things. Many of you could do the same for me if I sat in the audience about your city. I think the benefit of this kind of exercise is just to conjure up ideas, to perhaps, reinforce ideas and thoughts and aspirations that you have or help you look at your community in a different light, and I hope with even more optimism than you have now. So if we can dim the lights, that serves two purposes: so you can see the slides better, and if you want to get a little wink, doze off, I won't know the difference and please feel free to do so. Is there a way of dimming the lights here? If not, it's okay.

Charleston is a very old American city. It was developed before the elevator and the automobile and a city, like Lancaster, that had its buildings built in a human scale, the size that we all can relate to. Towers and steeples accentuate the difference. Buildings that address the sidewalk and people feel at home and at ease and in control. The

mothers and fathers of Charleston had the wisdom at the turn of the century to preserve our city. We didn't have any of the participation in the Industrial Revolution in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> Centuries. So we had a city in mothballs ready to be preserved. But Charleston is not a theme park or movie set, nothing is pre-ordained.

We had the opportunity to make all the mistakes and suffer the failures that any American city has. This is one of them. This was the demolition of the historic Charleston Hotel. The nation's first architect designed it. It was the sight of the Democratic Convention of 1860, and yet, in the 1950's, they allowed it to be demolished because the community was convinced that to be a great community, you had to have a drive-in motel, if you really wanted to be progressive. So our goal was not to make any of those mistakes.

We started working in the residential parts of our city, which is very important. The more people living in the city, the stronger the city is going to be. We had the problem of vacant lots. We wanted to build attractive, affordable housing in there. This is what houses look like in Charleston; they are frame structures that address the sidewalk, but in the fifties and sixties this is what they built for affordable housing because they said it didn't matter. You know, it really doesn't matter for poor people; what the houses look like. Isn't that ridiculous? All human beings understand beauty, and every street in the city deserves beauty. In fact, we can never allow anything and there is no excuse to ever allow anything to be constructed in the city that doesn't add to its beauty. No one ever said, you know the recipe for the city is you got to have this in it; you've got to have some ugly buildings. You don't have to do that and there's no reason to do that. It only happens when we let our guard down. So that's what they built in the fifties and sixties, and usually, so you would know it was an unsafe neighborhood they'd put a cyclone fence around it, to kind of make sure you were good and scared.

We were determined to build handsome housing. We had a design competition, picked a young architect and that's what he designed. It fit right in, and didn't cost anymore than the ugly stuff, but it looked like it belonged. Luckily we'd had that experience when the housing authority had a grant for new housing projects. They were so excited. They called me, they said, "Mayor, we got the grant, 120 units, we know just where to put it. Tear down some buildings here and build two blocks of projects." I said, "We're not building any more projects." They said, "Mayor, you've got to be crazy, you're going to get impeached, you'll surely be defeated. We've got this waiting list, we need the projects." I said, "No, we're just not going to do this anymore. It was a good aspiration, but it failed. You build these monoliths; crowd a bunch of poor people in there and then act shocked that it doesn't work. It ignores all the lessons of Western civilization about neighborhoods and cities for the last 750 years. It ignores the street, it ignores scale, there's no individuality. We're not going to build it anymore. We're going to scatter them throughout our city." Well they were quite taken aback, but after adjusting to that for a while, they agreed, to their credit, and then we started the interesting process of finding the sites; which of course creates a discussion.

The average citizen doesn't turn to their spouse in the morning getting out of bed and say, "Honey, wouldn't it be great if we could get us some public housing next door. You know, we never had any public housing next door." So we had to work through the neighborhoods. Your Mayor would understand. We found the sites, and we had the architects excited, told them what we wanted, they came with the renderings and they were ugly as sin. We fired those architects, got some other architects. They got the message and that's what we designed. From right to left: the first two are new buildings for very poor people owned by the housing authority, public housing. The one to the left was an older structure that had been there. It blended in and it didn't cost any more than the ugly stuff.

When Prince Charles came to Charleston for a big meeting 10 years ago or so, the only photo-op he had was transplanting that tree right in the middle that Hurricane Hugo had knocked down. Because he thought, more than the mansions or the historic buildings in Charleston, this was the most valuable lesson architecturally we had to share with the rest of the world. That is you can build very handsome buildings for very poor people and do them beautifully. We won a federal presidential design award for that.

At a cocktail party at the home of the president of one of our colleges, a servant who was serving the food, you know there were a lot of people standing at the cocktail party and she was serving trays of food and drinks, and she came past me and kind of whispered, she said, "Mayor Riley, I want to thank you," and I said "What's that for, ma'am?" She said, "Monday, I'm moving into 7 Marion Street", that was one of these houses, "and it's so beautiful." I thought of all the times we haven't thanked public housing because it beats the riots and the rain, but maybe when they just had a couple of words to utter, they hadn't used the word beautiful before, and why not? That should be the standard for anything we do in our city. Now this two apartment building for poor people became a catalytic agent that restored a neighborhood.

Across the street, these buildings were in desperate condition, we put that new building, they got restored we helped a little bit with that, but it was privately owned. Just below it was a vacant lot. Market rate housing went there. Around the corner, vacant lot, market rate housing went there. Catalytic agent, public housing, beautifully designed, adding to the neighborhood. We worked to keep the bulldozers out. It's very difficult. But in these poor neighborhoods, people were leaving, and the buildings looked awful. They looked like this. We knew that we had a duty to save them if we possibly could. You know we all need memories, don't we? And cities need memories. Every time we lazily tear down a building, we forever take away the memory of a city that can never be put back. We lose the scale, we lose the history, and usually what is put back is not replaced with equal value. So we've worked with a lot of these, we've done several hundred of these. This is all affordable housing, working with people who own the property with modest means. Giving loans and grants or helping them purchase and we've saved these neighborhoods. In fact our problem with these neighborhoods now is, the pressures of gentrification, which we're dealing with and we have a number of initiatives and gentrification committees, but neighborhoods that were dying have come back to life and affordable housing and beautiful buildings are available for our citizens.

This is one done by one of our non-profits and it was so pretty, we had a little ribbon cutting and I went by the next Sunday and took these photographs. I love the thought of a person with modest resources having an apartment with a piazza overlooking the 19<sup>th</sup> century roovescape of her city.

These freedom cottages were owned by African Americans during the time when they could first buy land after the civil war, it's like a half of what we call a Charleston Single House. The hurricane about killed them but we knew we had to save them. It was part of our history. So we work with non-profits and have them restored as affordable housing.

We've been struggling with how you design transitional housing, for people moving out of shelters. We have a fabulous shelter for the homeless. Non-profits work with the city, four thousand volunteers, it's a phenomenal story in it self. So we needed transitional housing, and, the architect inspired by that designed that. That won a top AIA award too. Very poor people moving out of the shelter, get a few bucks to pay a little bit of rent, and it adds to the quality of the neighborhood.

This was a house that the building officials wanted to tear down. They called me and said, "Mayor we've got to let 175 Fishman come down," and I said, "Well I hate to tear that down, we ought to try to save it." He said, "Mayor, it is shifting, we can't save it." It is true that the power pole there is exactly vertical. I said, "Well, let's go take a look at it" and he said, "Mayor, we have been monitoring it. It is shifting daily and it is going to fall on that house next door and kill the people." I said, "well, it can't kill the people if we move them out of it." He said, "What do you mean?" And I said, "Let's get them some housing for a while, a relocation." So we moved them to the Howard Johnson. They had never stayed at a Howard Johnson before and they thought it was fabulous. We got somebody in there and it looked pretty bad and restored five units of affordable housing and an office on the first floor. That was a corner building. If we'd let it go, the rest of that little piece of neighborhood, the Cross-town (highway crossroads) would have come through and it would have been gone.

This is also on that Cross-town. These were two houses the medical universities were going to tear down for parking. We got them to give them to us, moved them to a site, and restored them for affordable housing. It was on this little stub of a street that I hadn't noticed before because cross-town cut it through.

I took this next picture standing up at that porch on your left looking towards me and there's this wonderful tree growing out and it was actually growing out of the street, which makes it a very determined tree. I thought it was so nice, except that it had this awful looking house right underneath it. So I called our people and said we need to buy 15 ½ Cracking Street and they called me and said, "Mayor, I hear you want to buy 15 ½ Crackling." I said yeah. She said it can't be saved. I said, "Let's go take a look at it." She said, "It is liable to fall on us and kill us." It is true that you barely see the utility box was still left, and the power company was trying to turn off power, they couldn't remove

it, it had become a structural component of the house. It was really in bad shape. We put some money into it and restored it as affordable housing. When we were doing this street up and had this ribbon cutting, this lady came up to me and she said, "Mayor, I want to thank you." I said, "What's that for, ma'am?" She said, "Because people usually ask me where I live, and I was embarrassed to tell them because it was so ugly, now I can't wait for people to ask me where I live, because everybody knows how pretty it is."

We work hard on new construction for affordable housing. This was a corner; a bad vacant corner lot and the buildings next door to it had already gotten the virus. They were dying too. I mean it was just unending. So we put together our development of non-profits, and this is now housing for mentally ill people. It's not an institution. You know, people who need medication, but can't be institutionalized and get some help. The designers worked to make it look like the single houses, but they don't have entrances that will work on the street. It just looks like that, but we have one common entrance and it goes into a courtyard. So we've got a challenged population, a difficult site, good urban designs solved the problems.

This is our downtown. The downtown is the hardest work for us. It's the hardest work because we're fighting market pressures that have caused and allowed the suburban retail development, but we have to save our downtowns. The reason we have to isn't just because of the tax base, and that's very important; and it's not just because of the jobs, and that 's very important; it is because it's the public realm. It's that part of our city that everyone owns. It's the most democratic space. We can't let our future generations be sentenced to the private zones. They need to come to places they own. The heart of the city is theirs. They're reminded of their citizenship. It's the most democratic space, it's worth their time and memorial. People have come to celebrate the market place and with commerce, and eye contact and elbow contact and civic spirit. That's why we have to save our downtowns and at all costs, and it's as hard as the dickens, and it's not going to happen overnight. The best we can do is to have a good plan and then do it piece by piece. Stick to the plan. Do it piece by piece with the commitment that it took a long time for the city to get built and it will take a good while, but if we understand the high purpose that it serves, then we should have the willingness and the "stick-to-itiveness" to do it. Ours was in desperate shape, because our suburbanization happened rapidly, right after the Korean War. All of a sudden, our main street, which had been the shopping district for our part of South Carolina, was an extreme mess. We did it by the numbers. We showed what the buildings used to look like, and we did some facade grants to help buildings like these get restored. We encouraged apartments on the second and third floors and did several hundred of those, and got shops on the first floor. Buildings like this that nobody thought could be anything got restored. Hurricane Hugo knocked it down. The morning after Hugo, I was going up King Street, half that building was in the street. Broke my heart. But because things were happening, the owner was able to put her new building back, even better.

Our biggest challenge was that vacant lot right there in the middle. Our Main Street is the street from top to bottom on your left that doglegs, King Street. When I was a child,



where the vacant lot is, were two department stores. In the middle of the slide, to your right, you can see some red roofs, that's our Market Street and the old public market. Now that area of town was having some reemergence. So our strategic challenge was to put enough of the right stuff with the right design on that vacant lot so that people would move from Market to King Street. People will not walk past a vacant lot in an urban context, and they don't much like ugly spaces either. You got to pull them along. So we had a lot of challenges and I must say that downtown is just as delicate as a complicated eco- system. There are lots of unintended consequences of well meaning actions out there that are bad. We really have to carefully seek through our strategic plan to understand all of the inter-relationships of the downtown. We sought to do that here.

Now we had scale issues. We had buildings of that size, so it couldn't be a big tall building on the street. We had the market building that needed to be respected and actually it had never really been symmetrical in terms of Market Street and Meeting Street, so we had to move the site back. We insisted upon storefronts, retail, hotel, conference center and parking, as you are planning here and it was built and it has been a fabulous success. In fact, at the intersection of Market and Meeting Street, a few slides back, where no one would have walked, it is, and in fact I think the kind of people like Holly White, that would have counted people using an intersection, would be so thrilled. It's just so, if anything, it slows a lot of cars down, people complain about that. It's been a fabulous success. Now, the details are so important. You know, in life, if we work hard, and then the last ten percent let it coast, it's always a bad result. Isn't it, anything in life? It is the same way with the city.

We have two important details here; one is the parking garage, which I think you can figure out on the upper right, and the other is a conference facility on the left. In the conference facility, they have pre-assembly space, which is where you hang out before you go into the meetings. Cocktails, coffee or whatever is appropriate. So they wanted the pre-assembly space, that's the wing to the left, to overlook the church and the church graveyard. The reason, not because they liked the graves so much, even though it was kind of pretty, is that it would be near the elevator tower. So if you're in the hotel, you come out of the elevator, turn to the right and you're right into the pre-assembly space, very convenient, easy. The bad thing with that was, that down there in that building up there on the left, was the service corridor to the kitchen area and all that back of the house stuff would have had to have been on the street. I said you all can't do that. They said, "Why?" I said the whole reason we're doing this is to help the street. You know, in America, no one ever, ever, until recent generations, would build a building that didn't honor the street. Bow to the street, respect the street, pay homage to the street, it was a public street. It wasn't just a suburban development that happened on a parking lot that allowed people to think that they could just plop down any kind of building on a street, for crying out loud. I said, "No, we're doing this to energize the street. We want you to look up and see real stuff and when you're there, we want you to look up", so they agreed to do it, much to their credit. It cost them a little bit more, and said it's the best decision they ever made because it made the place real

for them. You look out to the street, you see real stuff, you're in the pre-assembly space, now that clock tower, you look out and you see the street.

Now you see some red bricks out there. Part of an understanding consequence problem we had to worry about was, what if we built up all that stuff? King Street, that's the main street that needed helping, Market, for all the people that went down Market Street. That would have been terrible. So we had to find a way to strategically move them up King Street, so we came up with the idea of selling bricks. You're name in a brick for ten dollars, and I thought we'd sell four thousand; we sold twenty two thousand. When we got up to ten thousand, I raised the price to twenty- five dollars. We kept selling them. You know what, people wanted their grandparents names in the street, they wanted their names, their kids' names, they wanted to emotionally reinvest in their Main Street. They wanted to be part of it. Well, we have wonderful events there at Christmas time, and festivals, and all like that. As you do here, Queen and King. One Sunday, after we had opened the hotel and all of the wonderful catalytic agents had worked and the buildings were being restored. I was walking up the street, Sunday after Church to get an out of town newspaper, and a fellow started coming towards me who I knew. He was retired, married, lived in the suburbs, was walking alone, noon on Sunday down King Street. I said, "Hi, how are you doing?" He said, "Fine." I said, "What are you doing down here now?" And he kind of started to blush and like he was maybe going to have to reveal an emotion, which of course we men never want to do. And he said, "Joe, Doris and I went to early Church, she had some chores to do around the house, and I um." He said, "Joe, I have to be honest with you, I just sometimes like to come down here and park my car and walk around because it's just so pretty and I'm so proud of it." That's why we have to work so hard and I will tell you, the building style that you have here in Lancaster, it is remarkable, and the degree to which it is intact is a national treasure, and the opportunities that this presents to you is beyond anything you can understand because you're too close to it, but that is a fabric that any city in America would give it's eye tooth for.

Probably 75 or 100 buildings have been restored. We even got Saks 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue to build a building there cater-cornered from Charleston Place. It was an ugly old semi-lot one story old Bank building, looked like a mortuary kind of thing, and they got rid of that and it's a really nicely designed building with store fronts on the main street, King Street, and then on the side street, Market Street. That's on Market Street.

Now across the street from that, was this theater. That's showing it facing King Street, Market Street's just to it's left, an old early art deco theater and we wanted to get it restored, so we did a deal with the developers, and bought it and got everything worked out and got it restored. But on the side of the theater across from Saks was this blank wall, and they were going to shrink the volume of space in the theater and were willing to put some shops there. I said that's great. The trouble was the sidewalk is so narrow they couldn't do regular store fronts, they were going to have to punch something in there like that and then you'd have the arcade behind it, dark, it doesn't work very well. And so I said, "What would it take to do a nice store front?" They said we need wider sidewalks. I said well that's no problem. So I called our people and I said, "Look, we

need wider sidewalks on Market Street." They said, "Mayor, you can't do that." And I said, "Why?" And they said, "You'd have to narrow the street." And I said, "Well, I was actually always good at math, I'd figured that out. I'd work hard..." And I said, "What's wrong with narrowing the street?" And I said, "What do we have now?" And they said, "Lanes 11 feet wide." I said, "What about lanes at 9 feet wide? Pick up two feet on each side." And they said, "Well, we'll study that." So they came back with a very impressive series of charts as to why it couldn't be done. The reason it couldn't be done, is if you just had lanes that were nine feet wide, and you had a beer, a giant beer delivery truck illegally parked in one lane of traffic, and a giant greyhound bus, that never used that street anyway, it wouldn't be able to pass it without risking a collision of their rear-view mirrors. And I said, "You know, what if we never let the beer truck illegally park on the street?" So we widened the sidewalks of course, the beer trucks are doing fine, and rather than that, we got this. Now this was a shady day, and I took these pictures, it wasn't very good, but we got nice storefronts. Now the thing is, this is what cities are about. It's not the convenience of the beer truck. You know, for a generation or two, we gave the convenience of the automobile primary priority. Baloney! What a city is about is a momma holding her child's hand, walking past storefronts feeling safe and looking at a real building, a real space, and feeling a real part of it and then we find a place for the beer trucks to go, and we did that, and it's doing just fine.

This was a building that was going to be built, and the developers needed to buy some land from the city behind it. I said, "No problem, Take it to the real estate committee, adjacent land owner; we'll sell it to you for appraised value, but I said you need to put shops on the first floor." They said, "Mayor, our people don't like mixed use, they just want offices." I said, "Well, we won't give you the land, sell you the land." They said, "Well, we'll go broke." I said, "I don't want you to go broke, you're all nice guys, but, what did William H. White, the wonderful student of people in the city say up in Madison Avenue that did so well in the seventies? Because every twenty two feet there was another storefront." I said, "I'm trying to move people from Market Street to King Street, and I don't want them walking past blank walls, or draperies. We want some storefronts." So they agreed to do it, later they told people it was the smartest idea they ever had, because they would get much more rent from the storefronts than from the offices. So what we got there is some shops like that, and they're very nice. I took this one Sunday. Those people were having a perfectly good time until I took their picture. They thought I was some kind of weirdo or something. But it works very good and those details are so important.

This is a terrible fire we had on upper King Street, where, it was even worse, barely hanging on. Our firefighters, miraculously, contained it to one building. I was out there with them, as a mayor would be. But the next morning, the building official called me. He said, "Mayor, just to let you know I'm going to issue the permit for the demolition of the Blustein Building, that was the name of the building." I said, "We can't tear that down." He said, "Mayor, the structural capacity is gone. The building will fall into the street and kill people." I said, "Well, what if we barricade the sidewalks?" He said, "It's a state highway." I said, "Well, too bad." So anyway, I knew we couldn't, the reason is

this... It was a corner lot, ok, the area was struggling, the building becomes a corner, its vacant, what is it? Rubble filled old parking lot for three generations. Then the virus spreads to the next building, and they die, and the next building. So we acquired the façade, put in a good bit of money, then the owner, and a great guy, called me and said, "Mayor, I think there's a little miscommunication." I said, "What's wrong?" He said, "People tell me you expect a three story building, we're just building a one story building." I said, "Nicky, everybody will know how stupid I am. If we spent all that money on a three story façade for a one story building." He said, "Nobody will rent it." I said, "You build it, we'll rent it. We'll find tenants, the city will move some offices in there." So he built it, we put offices in there, so rather than a rubble filled corner lot we had a storefront. The guy's retail business probably increased ten times. We leased the upper floors for five years. We moved out, the private sector was dying to get in there. It saved several blocks, because we didn't have the building come down.

This is a building that the church there, needed to tear down for surface parking, and that's on a corner, and admittedly the building wasn't great, but our people knew it had some historical meaning, so we told the Church they couldn't tear the building down for parking. They were real mad. It's like; you're not going to Heaven if you can't park next to the Church. I mean, you'll get lost on the way. But we had a line and a bank was formed. It was restored as a bank, and we found parking for the Church around the corner. You know, if we work hard, there's a win-win situation out there. You just have to work a little bit harder.

This is a parking garage we built many years ago, and I will say, not humbly that the country wasn't building nice looking parking garages. This was in the late seventies, early eighties, and I told the architect, we wanted a building that didn't look like a parking garage because it was in a very prominent historic location, and the architect, who couldn't have been more polite, said, "Mayor, you just don't understand, architecture form follows function, the building's supposed to look like what it is." I said, "Now, I did hear that one time, but we will not do that in this location in Charleston." And I told him I wanted it to look like closed shutters, he didn't like that. So he kept sending me renderings where louvers would come down about half way. I really think he thought he'd lose his license if you couldn't see the cars. I mean who ever thought of designing... Anyway, I sent out a police photographer to take pictures of buildings with closed shutters and we finally got it right. It won a top AIA award, National Diamond of the Arts Award, law offices on the first floor, and shops, it's a beautiful building.

Now this is Charleston Place, the Hotel Conference Center. We needed to put a parking structure there. Now those buildings were in really bad shape, and they were junky. I mean there were strip joints and the one building, about half way up it looks like it had some pink there, actually it had been burned, and you just drove into a parking lot in there. It was really junky stuff and the easy thing would have been to take the buildings down and build a really pretty parking garage. But we knew that wouldn't be the right thing to do and so we acquired the buildings, let the owners keep the fronts if they wanted, up to forty, fifty feet, I forget which. We cut off the back, and built a

parking garage. That string of buildings, all beautifully restored, we did that, that was part of our deal, but they are filled with uses. I mean the busiest restaurants in town are there. It is the most wonderful piece of the street. And you know that the thing is, again, we had the suburban model, I'm not speaking pejoratively of suburban models, and it is just not an urban model. In the suburban model, there's no reverence to the sidewalk. In a city, the sidewalk is the finest, most important realm. And you know, puncturing it, or putting a non-pedestrian building or use there should only happen when we can't do anything else and this is extraordinarily successful. And then behind it, is a beautiful brick parking facility. It is very handsome and the turn around and portico is there.

We um... This is the parking garage that we built; I'm sorry, I'll show you this one first.

Now this was on a side street where retail didn't lend itself. And it was near the old Citadel. But the architect, I think, did such a good job of breaking down the scale and letting it meet the sidewalk nicely.

The two great architects, Lewis Kahn and Vincent Skelly were walking across red square twenty years ago, and Skelly turned to Kahn, he said, "Louie isn't it so beautiful how Saint Basil reaches the sky?" And he said, "Yeah Vince, and isn't it so lovely how it touches the ground?" You know, so often in America, we focus on the tops of buildings, but people do not fly around in helicopters looking at tops of buildings in the city, they walk on the street and so often, that is the last consideration, when it should be the first. How the building meets the sidewalk and how a human being will feel as they walk along it; and I park there often.

Here you can see the cars at work there, but it's very pleasant and I think it's very successful. We plant flowers in our parking lots; this is a wonderful open garden in a parking garage, and flowers in front of our lots. We plant big trees there. This was a parking lot. It's an interior space, you know, with buildings around it. It was seedy kind of stuff in there and we worked with several landowners and got a twenty-five year lease to put a really nice parking lot and to put beautiful trees in there. They really didn't want to do it; they didn't think it would make any money. However, we've been making plenty of money, so they came to see me about three years into it and they said, "Look Joe, you're right, we're wrong, let's re-negotiate and we'll build us a parking deck." I said, "No, we don't want to do that. We've got all these trees in there, it's a nice green spot." But I was nervous. Twenty-two years, you know what would happen. So I entered into a confidential conspiracy with our parks people. We had passed a tree ordinance, and I asked our Parks Director, how much fertilizer would those trees need, to where they'd be too big to cut down in twenty-two years? So we could be ok there. We have Oleanders and Lady Baxter roses; bought a few of those from the city myself, and around the early part of March, the flowering peppermint peach trees, in this parking lot. I go into the parking lot; I spend seventy-five cents riding through that parking lot just to watch those trees bloom in March. It's very beautiful.

This is the historic St. John's Hotel they wanted to restore, but it was shot. Engineeringly, it just couldn't be saved. They couldn't do anything with it. So they demolished it and put this back. Now this isn't a good preservation technique, I don't show this for that, although in that circumstance, it was the very best they could do, because the building basically was gone. But that's five stories and this is seven stories but they're the same height, and that encouraged us to pass a height ordinance in the city.

Now every city is different. I mention that not for Lancaster, or any city, but rather, it's each city going that extra step to understand it's character and to have design guidelines and a palette of construction that fits the city. That's our responsibility and we could easily do it.

This was called the Lodge area. The first Masonic Lodge in America was right down there in an alley you can't see. It was going to be demolished for high-rise stuff. The community stopped it, and a wonderful mixed-use development came there. You know, the texture and fabric; if you think of all these buildings which look like the dickens, and taking them away, and what you would have lost is a restaurant, a bookstore, offices, an inn, residences, all kind of stuff and it graces the street so nicely.

This is the Exchange Building that is argued to be the most historic building in South Carolina. This isn't a very good slide, but if you look straight ahead, eventually you see a car, there's a street there. This is the back of the building. It faced that street, East Faye Street, and then here's this most historic building in the state, and they've paved right up to the thing, years ago, for a few more parking spaces, and basically closed a thru little cobblestone street. So we put a tree right where that, you see where that car is kind of way up in front of the slide to your right, we put a tree there and did some nice landscaping so the building would have a nice edge and then we reopened the little cobblestone street, and people said, "Why y'all want to put that little street back there?" And we said, "Because the little street used to be there, and it was a nice little street minding it's own business until you messed it up." Allan Jacobs, the great planning professor/writer, one of the great books is "Great Streets", streets that circle the same places, and it's where the little streets are, and the little alleys, just like you wonderfully have here. It's pure gold. Because what it is, for human beings; there are lots of choices, lots of variety, it's very unusual. So to take a little street like that and remove it would be a terrible thing to do. Now if you do good stuff in the city, good things happen. We reopened that street, and I promise you property values doubled, because it was on a real street, rather than kind of stuck on a parking garage.

Another thing about streets, is this; we got our telephone company to move back into the city. They'd been out of the city and they were going to build this new office building, I was so excited. Then I met up with the architect. This is Meeting Street, a main street in the city, but this is on the upper edges of it, where, admittedly you know, things haven't happened or arrived yet, but it will. So they came, and the architects, and they were going to design a building with only a side entrance, you see, to the left, and no entrances on the main street. I said, "You can't do that, you can't build an office

building that turns it's back to the street." So they came back and they said, "Well we'll do one entrance down towards the end and on the side." I said, "You can't do that, it's got to be symmetrical, no one would ever do that. You don't do that to the street." They said, "Well, no one's going to use the entrance, Joe. I mean, the employees aren't going to use the entrance." I said, "You put it there, eventually somebody's going to want to rent that space." So they built it and they got the first entrance there about south. Within six months a company wanted to rent the space, and so we got the entrance rather than a building that turned it's back on the street, and the street's coming along and it's going to do just fine. We have to respect the streets. The uses in our city are so important.

William H. White also wrote, "Seven Ways to Nullify Downtown." You move your governmental complexes out of downtown into convenient mall locations surrounded by asphalt where everybody can easily park. You take all that energy out, and the purpose of a city, and civic uses. So this is what we call four corners of law. City Hall on the left; St. Michael's Church, obvious. The building on the right is the County Courthouse, once the State Capital and then we're going to go down the street and turn back and look this way, and on the left is the Federal Courthouse. So the Feds had to expand the Courthouse, and they designed this building that was way out of scale, and this nice park adjacent to it. And we said, "You can't do that." And they said, "Well, we're leaving." We said, "Well, that's really a mean thing to do. I mean we've got this four corners of law here and it's so nice, it's unusual." And they said, "Well, we need this big thing." So it's a long story and to shorten it, the city went around the corner and bought the old Piggly Wiggly that had closed and we gave the back of that property to the federal government. Now I want you to know that it really hurts for the city to give land to the Federal Government. It's not supposed to work that way. But we did so they could move their building back, and so rather than have an out of scale building in Charleston, we've got these transitional zones where the residential and the civic or commercial are back. But rather than the out of scale building, we've still got the nice park, and then you just peek around the corner, and there's a new courthouse, and everything's fine, and since then they've expanded to the back behind some other historic buildings which I don't have time to get into. I might say while we're at it that the county worked well with them, and they've done a fabulous job of restoring their little courthouse, putting the judicial center there. Very difficult, cost more money, and people wanted to move it out of downtown. I said, "Let me tell you something, that is the quintessence of our government right there, the court house, right? Well, when the litigant comes out, when the juror comes out, when the witness comes out, when the people who work in the courthouse come out, when the lawyers come out, do you want them walking out into a convenient asphalt sea of parking, or would it be better when they leave their courthouse, the hall of justice to walk into the most beautiful zone in this city and hear the chimes of the two hundred and fifty year old church bell ringing? Of course the latter, and so that's going to be very beautiful, and next time around I'll have some slides of that.

Charleston was built on water. It's fabulous. We understood the need to extend it. This was burned out in the fifties. A developer acquired it, was going to build a Venice of the

southeast. High-rise buildings, wonderful tax base, closed off to the public, and we told them we thought it should be a park. I had some people willing to give me half of the money, he said, "Well he'd just as soon go ahead and build the Venice of the southeast. And I said, "Well, I'd just as soon go ahead and buy it for a park and if you don't want that, we'll condemn it because we really think it's important for the public to have access to the water's edge." Where upon he called me a Hitler like dictator. He's a good guy, and we're good friends, but he was very mad. Anyway, we eventually did a land swap deal and tax breaks he got from a donation, just everything on the up and up. Worked out a deal, we bought the land, took about two years, and when we had the deed signing he forgot about his previous comment, everybody had a couple drinks, and he got up and told the assembled group that I reminded him of Winston Churchill. Which was so much nicer than the time before. But anyway, we saw it as an opportunity to rebuild the edge of the city. So we studied what the city used to be, because we didn't know. Rather than plop down a park, to make it fit, to make it feel like it was always there, or always should have been there, and it was of course controversial, lots of money, property off the tax books, lots of money to maintain, weird people go to parks, why are you spending money on parks, and do this. We built it; it is the most loved place in our city. No one can imagine Charleston without it. People adore it of all walks of life, and all backgrounds and for all kinds of uses to play and have fun, walking.

You know when each park has a different purpose, and the design of the park is no more important than the design of the purpose of the park and how people use it. In this park we have no events, we have no music, we have no permits. The only scheduled event we ever had was the opening of the park. Because this is a park, unlike other city parks, where it's design is a thing of beauty, to enjoy forever, and in a bustling city people need opportunity for peace and repose and they love it. These benches, these swings are so popular, my wife and I have only ever been able to get into them on a rainy, February afternoon, and that suits us just fine.

Details are so important. We wanted the good gravel. You know, gravel is nice in a park; crunchy, soft sound. You know, getting away from the hard edge of the city, but they had sent us this really boring gravel, you know, gray. The gravel needs to handle wheelchairs, and high heeled shoes, so it needs to have a good substance, and so I spent about two years working on that, and the woman thought I was crazy that was working for the city and she resigned, told everybody I was nuts because we did fifty samples trying to get the right one. Every place I went, I just looked down at the gravel and I once almost got in trouble, because I would always have to take samples back and it was really nice gravel at the Smithsonian. So I was scooping up some in an envelope and luckily this very overweight security guard came running towards me and I scooted out of there and didn't get into any trouble, but we made a new recipe. It's eight or ten ingredients like Grandma's pancakes, it's the prettiest gravel path in America and it's the prettiest park anywhere, and we've got our own rules, each park is different. There's no music or skateboarding here, there are other places for that. We have this development going on behind the park. Now we got this land on a slot for nothing back here, and we built the public park, and now the most expensive housing in South



Carolina is being constructed right there, admittedly on the waterfront, but also on a public park because it's a place of great beauty.

OK, if we can slip on the other carousel, that's the bad news, we need to slip on the other carousel. The good news is this next carousel doesn't even begin to be as long as the first carousel, but I appreciate your help right there, and I appreciate your kind attention. Thank you; thank you very much.

You start an ethic, and it catches on; so we've got this commitment to the water's edge and people bought in. The port is going to redevelop that area; it's a state port, not a city port authority. They accepted the ethic of moving the water, so I said, we want public access along the water's edge when it's redeveloped, and that's in the plan. In fact, Stan Axton, who is doing some work for you here, worked with us on this plan and then we created a waterfront connection up to that tall building; the tall building didn't want to let us go in front because they had their own private piers. Now I knew I couldn't condemn that, it wouldn't work. So I told them I'm not condemning it. I'm not going to condemn. If you don't want it, we're not going to do it. And so we tried that approach, and then as luck would have it, their bulkhead was rusting out, and falling into the harbor, and so we did a deal where we joined in the cost and then do the connection and then we took over in perpetuity, the maintenance of the bulkhead. So we worked that out, so we got the connection in front of there and created a maritime center and parks along there. It's really just a wonderful new public zone, a beautiful new South Carolina aquarium on the water's edge.

Well that got us going to where everybody accepted the notion that if Charleston is a peninsula, that we should have public access all the way around the peninsula with very few interruptions. So we started working on the west side of town, and had different concepts, some more complicated than others and we built this. This was on the street that before there was just a tiny bit of shoulder, nothing to walk on, I mean it just deteriorated into the marsh, and so we came up with this plan, and you know, I thought everybody knew what we were talking about. I had spoken about it for a few years. It took a long time to do with the permits and everything. When we finally constructed it, I couldn't go anywhere for three weeks, four weeks, without someone telling me how wonderful that was. And you know it was giving them this beautiful edge; that belonged to them, because they are a citizen. They owned it, and it provided a wonderful access. We carried it on up, eventually under those bridges and we terminated our ballpark.

Our ballpark, as you see, is on the water. We worked hard to put it there. It was controversial; it was an old landfill. They tried to build a building there for twenty-five years; the building kept sinking. You know it was very controversial, and why are you putting it there, and it costs more, and all that, but it is a fabulous ballpark. The citizens love it. From most seats, except for the ones down real close you have a view of the water. And since we opened the ballpark, nobody who has talked to me about going there, has talked to me about the ball game. They want to tell me about the park. They want to tell me about their feelings. They want to tell me about taking the kids, grandkids. They want to tell me about the sunset, the colors on the water, the colors in

the sky, the breeze; the beauty of the place. And when I was running for reelection time or so back, one of my opponents said, "You know Mayor Riley is spending all this money on that ball park, and he didn't tell you that a developer offered him free land out on the edge of town for the ball park." And I said, "No I didn't, I didn't think it was important, because I'm not interested in free land. If I'm going to build something for the citizens, I'm putting it on the finest land, not the cheapest land." If you build something for the public, give them the nicest part of town if you possibly can. But this is what you see after you go back from behind first base and get a hot dog and turn around, and that's what you look at. It's like an observation deck at a national park. It's a beautiful part of the public realm that our citizens own. The visioning is so important; we have the power to decide.

This was a bridge coming in on one end of the peninsula, Calhoun Street is our only wide, really wide east to west street that goes all the way; and at the other end we were building the South Carolina Aquarium.

A preservation leader came calling on me one day and he said, "Joe, you got a new bridge coming in one end, aquarium at the other, a lot of development pressure. Do you have a plan for Calhoun Street?" Now Calhoun Street was a beat up old pockmark street, and I said, embarrassed, "I don't, but we should have, thank you." So we got the preservation organizations together, got the neighborhoods, civic groups, colleges, universities, hospitals, all like that, and they came up with a plan, and it was a vision of an urban boulevard. I said this is a big street. Put the buildings up to the sidewalk, where a lot of them weren't, and put fine public buildings, strong buildings. We don't want motels there, things like that. So luckily we did the plan; when good friends of mine had bought this lot to build a Max Sleep Inn. Buckets of money; cash cow. You know, wonderful term back then. And I said, "You can't do the inn because the plan doesn't say so." Well they didn't like that, so they went to City Council. The Mayor won by one vote; kept the cheap motel out. The County was looking for a new place for the library. They were thinking of moving it out of town. City buys the land, gives it to the County; they build the new library instead of a cheap motel. We got a main branch of the library.

Across the street was a big surface parking lot. Plan said you don't want that. School board was going to move out of downtown. We did a deal with the school board, we own the land and built the building with them, School board and city offices right across from the library; directly on axis. Two public buildings on what clearly now is going to be a great urban boulevard, but if the community hadn't developed the vision, it would be a pockmark street with surface parking lots and cheap motels.

Also on this street we've got this wonderful square we're redoing, and this building to the left, which is at the corner of King and Calhoun Street, which was halfway up our main street was a closed hotel. College called; it had been foreclosed, said they wanted it for dorms. I said, "You can't have it for dorms." And they said, "Joe, why don't you like dorms?" I said, "No I like dorms, but everybody, everyone here knows that this building was built as a hotel. So if it becomes a dorm what happens is, a little invisible light blinking, used to be a hotel, area went bad, you know, best deal they could

do is a dorm deal, this area must not be any good any more: That's our main street. I said, "We're not going to do that." So we got the bankers and twisted a few arms, and pressured them like that: and got seven banks together, put HUD 108 money in it, preservation tax credits, land, parking garage and all like that. It was a fabulous success, the hotel is, but more important, the three blocks surrounding it are in the midst of an amazing revitalization, and if we had allowed the wrong use to go there, it would have never happened because we would have damaged that ecosystem.

Charleston is a small city, we always wanted tourism, but it used to be seasonal. So we didn't have any trouble handling visitors this time of year to see Rainbow Row or preservation started in America; wonderful azaleas that are about full bloom now, but it became a year round industry, and all of a sudden we had to cope with the problems of success. Handling all the visitors without disrupting the lives or our residents, and having the negative impacts bother them. So we knew we needed a new visitors center and we acquired land uptown at those old railroad buildings, which you can see was a pretty bad area and we could have torn the buildings down. They didn't look like much as you can see, but we restored them as a Visitors Center. Wonderful old railroad buildings. The Visitors Center is so beautiful, people pose visitors when they get there, they haven't even been downtown yet, because it's so nice. We put a map of the city under glass as you go in because the trick was, we wanted people to get out of their car, and get in a trolley vehicle, and feel that with public transit, and their feet, negotiate the city comfortably. That would be better for our residents, less congestion and much better for the visitors. So they do that, they get in the trolleys, it's been a wonderful success. The trolley goes down our main street; this is where the buses come in. We had to build a bus shed, we built the prettiest one in America. We have Confederate Jasmine and Wisteria growing up the columns. It's the nicest way you've ever seen to enter a city, the old railroad building.

The Chamber of Commerce is going to move downtown, and what you and the Chamber did with City Hall and their building, that's a national award winning story there. We got the Chamber to fix this building up and stay there.

This is a park that died. You know we can't let parks die. This is a park that died because the racial make up of the neighborhood died, and people were afraid, the city kind of abandoned it. It's called Hampton Park. It's where my grandparents would take me to feed the ducks on a Sunday afternoon. I said we've got to restore the park. I later found out that even my best friends thought that I had blown it on this. No one was going to go to Hampton Park no matter how much money you put into that thing. Well we did a plan. It said we needed to open it and trim down the azaleas so you could see through. Move and create different orientations. We could move the band shell, create a water feature, and we also brought the ducks back. And I told people, you know everybody was so paranoid about the thing, they knew the ducks were going to get killed. And I said, "Let me tell you what we do. I'm going to have a duck slush fund, and anytime a duck gets killed, you just go buy another one and put him in there and we're not going to tell anybody. Well, the park was going good, and one day the head of the park's department came to me despondent. He said, "I found a dead duck." I

said, "Oh no, well go get a new one." He came back a week later. He said, " We found another dead duck." I said, "Well, go get a new one." But I was starting to feel bad and then he came to me a week later and he said, "we found out what happened." I said, "What's that?" He said, " A red tailed hawk is in there killing the ducks." Well we felt bad that the ducks were hurt, but at least, it wasn't a human being that was doing it. Since then the red tailed hawk has gone elsewhere and everybody's fine.

We also had wonderful rose beds, and we wanted to rebuild those, so I came up with the idea that you could, for five dollars, buy a rosebush that would be planted in the park and get a certificate that would be personally signed by me, all for five dollars. We sold every one, and you get the most wonderful letters: Dear Joe, Judge William Henry Simmons, you know Betty died last year, and when I was courting her, we'd go to Hampton Park and I really thank you for this opportunity. People wanted to emotionally reconnect. This park that was unsafe, has got the prettiest rose garden in South Carolina. It's the safest place in our city, and the neighborhoods around it are experiencing unbelievable regeneration because a park that was dead came back to life.

Trees are so important, and I promise you that I'm almost finished. This was a parking garage on the right; we built it before we knew how to build good parking garages, to be honest with you. So I said, we need to put a tree at one end, a tree at the other end, and then there was a surface parking lot across the street behind a bank building, and I said, we need to put a line of trees there. So we did our trees and I called the bank, and they said no, and I said, well, why and they said because we loose some space. I said we'll re-stripe. I talked to our people, re-stripe the lot, put in some small car slots, you have more space. He said, well, people don't like small cars; and then it was funny, about a week after we put about a half million dollars into the bank, he called and said, "You know our board likes that tree idea we discussed it at the board meeting." So we planted trees, and everything was going great, until this building on the left was going to be built. And they said they'd have to take a tree out for construction because it'd be killed, and my people said that was reasonable, and I said well give me \$750.00, that's what a new tree costs, so they did. But then you know it started. The engineer comes to me and said, "Joe I know you wanted that tree but it's the only place for the utility vault." I said, "Find another place for the utility vault." Then the architect says, "Joe the only place for the dumpsters is there, the trees got to come out." I said, "No, find another place for the dumpsters." Well, I knew I'd get the tree back if I was around, but I worried about my successor. You know, they'd come to him and say, "You know, we all liked Joe, but he was kind of weird about this tree and we've got to take it out." I had to find a way, so we dedicated the tree on Arbor Day. Had a big event. And I knew we needed a special hook, so we dedicated it to commemorate the site of the original wall of the city. We weren't sure where the original wall of the city was, but it had been in that neighborhood, I knew that. And so we got this wonderful marker, if you go by there you feel very patriotic. It talks about the fortification of the city and all like that. So they're not going to cut that tree down. Now it's just one branch growing out. I'm happy to tell you the tree is along the side there from the bank. The bank, they're building a new building, I was nervous. Because eventually I knew they'd build a new building.

And they came to see me with the plans, and I didn't see any trees. And they were so nice, you know, and I hated to ask them but I said, "What about the oak trees there?" And they said, "Oh Mayor, we're designing this building around those oak trees. We think those are so important." It's so interesting, those trees that got there, that had to fight. Once established, they no longer needed anyone to fight for them. But the point is with these trees, one of these days on a hot August day somebody will walk down that street and they'll be in shade, and there will be breeze blowing, and they'll hear the birds singing and the squirrels scampering and they'll be occupying a livable place.

These are flowers. We just like planting flowers around. This is my recipe for living. Local city kids playing, flowers blooming, and an art show going on.

These are slate sidewalks we used to have in the city around the turn of the century, and didn't have any for a long time. When we did the waterfront park, we wanted to put slate in there. So we ordered this beautiful slate, we put it in, and I was so disappointed, it just didn't look right, and the problem was, the edges at the quarry now are cut so precisely, you drop them in, and we don't mortar the joints on these sidewalks in Charleston for good reasons. It just looked like a new patio. We were so disappointed. Well our parks people came up with the idea, if you just run the torch around it, it pops off the edges and it rounds the edge a little bit, and it looks like it was always there. I show you that, not for that technique, because you don't have slate up here on your sidewalks, but that's a workman, essentially on his hands and knees, worrying about a tiny detail in his city. That's how we have to feel about our cities in the United States of America. We can't run from cities any longer. We're an urban nation. The quality of our life, the success of our civilization in the United States now depends upon the quality of our cities. So we must see the cities that we have is a valuable family heirloom that we inherited, and we have an extraordinary responsibility to care for it gently and to pass it on to future generations better than we found it. Let's say that we all agree about this here. What about the citizens? You know, we do have a democracy.

This is Barry's Liquor Store; it's a place I go when I buy liquor, infrequently, and it's an interesting store because I know all the guys there, we kind of went to different high schools together. It's so interesting, they all wear pistols. You can see them, they have holsters, and they don't have jackets on. I mean our city's very safe, obviously the liquor store is very safe, but they got permits from the sheriff years ago, and it's just a pistol thing, you know, they have on these pistols. So it's quite interesting. And I went in there one day and I approached the counter and they all kind of converged on the other side like I was about to receive some information. What do these guys in the liquor store leaning on their pistols want to talk to the Mayor about? Well we had the street that had had the asphalt in the middle and we were digging it up for water lines and somebody sent me a note and said while you're digging up, why don't you plant something there? So I sent out the parks people and they did a rendering like that. So rather than this, we got this. One of those fellows leaning on his pistol said, "Joe, you know what you did down there on Broad and Rawley?" I said, "Yeah." He said, "That is the prettiest thing I've ever seen." Another one said, "Joe, you know where I live don't

you?" I said, "Sure." He said, "I drive two miles out of my way going home just to drive back." Another one said, "Joe, I like where you all got that oak tree you transplanted and got a light shining up." Then they went on to talk about the flowerbeds two blocks from the liquor store. Then they want to talk about how in a development, the new buildings blend in with the old buildings. These guys, wearing pistols in a liquor store wanted to talk to their mayor about beauty in their city and how much it meant to them. Our culture's dying for it. There's enough violence, there's enough plastic, and you know what the Europeans understood about cities long ago; they're not smarter than us, it is that an average person's lives are enhanced when their city is made more beautiful. Because they might not have the mansions, the bluestone, the granite, the finery, but their city should have that. So our people will support it every time we give them the opportunity. Well if the support is there, is there a moral imperative? Is there a reason why we can't fail? Yeah. The reason is that cities must be a place where every citizen's heart can sing.

This is the southern end of our waterfront park. If you can see way up to the top, we were surcharging our land. So we wanted to get something going, so this pier, that had kind of fallen in, a lot of those granite blocks that you see there had actually been in the mud. We had designed it so that it would look like that. I thought that you needed a rail around, because we used to take our children down there when they were little and I was worried. And they said, "No, mayor, people, they're going to be all right. It needs to flow out to the water like that." They said, "You know, people can sit on these benches, they might even sit on the granite stone. It's going to be fine." I said OK. One morning at about sun up I was jogging and I saw a fellow doing just what they said. The sun's up; legs draped over; I knew him but didn't bother him; I just kept on jogging. I saw him two weeks later; his name was Clarence Hopkins. His jobs were shining shoes and sweeping up in front of a filling station. He was an epileptic. Frequently had seizures on the sidewalk. People would help him. Rode a bicycle. Lived with his mother. I said, "Clarence I saw you in the park the other morning." He said, "Yeah." I said, "Do you go there very often?" He said, "I go every morning." I said, "Why?" He said, "Because it's so beautiful, and I love it when those big ships are coming in and the sun's coming up." You see, in our cities, if we're lazy about them, really don't care, let them be scarred and damaged, a lot of us can take trips, you know go to the country, live in the country, join the club, send the kids to camp, whatever. But there are a lot of people in our city that only have the city. Clarence Hopkins had never been anywhere. He's never seen the wonderful rolling hills like in this part of Pennsylvania. He hasn't see the rocky coast of Maine, the sunset in the Pacific, our purple mountain majesties or amber waves of grain. All he had was his city. When we were dedicating the water front park I hadn't seen him in about six months, and I had found out he had had a stroke, but he was recovering and he had lost his speech. We arranged for him to be brought in a wheelchair handicapped accessible van. His family thought it was kind of unusual but they appreciated it. It was going to be a wonderful event. Symphony orchestra playing at sunset, May in the Spring, and he came, several thousand people there, I didn't introduce him or speak to him, but I wanted him there because I knew he would enjoy it. But I wanted all the people who had worked so hard on the park, and there were many who had, to be reminded why we built that park, and why we do things

like that. Because when Clarence Hopkins, was healthy, in his city, could get on his bicycle and ride down to the public park and clothe himself with peace and beauty everyday, and if we work hard to build great towns and cities for the Clarence Hopkins of our community, we'll build towns and cities worthy of a great country.

Thank you very much.

**Tom Johnson:**

I tried to inform you that we were in for a wonderful experience this evening. Mayor, we are curious folks in Lancaster and would love to probably have some questions about some of the things you may have mentioned. What I'd like to do is have the mayor come back to the podium, and if anybody would have any questions, we have a mike back in the back and we also have one up front. If you would stand in line and we'll ask the questions in an orderly way. Also, if the brevity could be used in the actual phraseology of the question itself, so that the Mayor can answer as many as possible. Do we have anybody that might be interested in asking the mayor any questions? Would you mind using the microphone so we don't have to repeat the question?

**Question:**

Thank you, I really enjoyed your presentation, it was outstanding. You brought up an interesting point about integrating low cost housing into other residential areas. It seems to me there'd be a lot of resistance to this, how did you overcome it?

**Mayor Riley:**

Well, it wasn't easy, and I guess it isn't easy. We have overcome it I think just by the proof of what we've done. First of all our public housing is the easiest to control because our housing authority owns it and we don't let people who use drugs or act bad stay in public housing. The purpose of public housing is for people who, for reasons maybe not their fault don't have much money and they're entitled to a good night's rest and all of that. And then with the good urban design, it makes it more acceptable in the neighborhoods, and, you know, what we all know is that the poor people are just as nice as not poor people. They are. I mean there are bad, just some bad people. But poor people aren't bad people; there are bad people, some of who are poor, some of who aren't and it doesn't mean that we aren't sensitive to problems of behavior. I will say that with one of our non-profits may have dropped their guard a hair. One of the things we do is we offer to screen tenants for anyone who has participated in our housing programs. So we can do a record check, and again, it's not that people don't have second chances, but if somebody's got a recent drug record, or something like that then we don't feel any responsibility to admit them to the housing. Are there any other questions?

**Question:**

Beside yourself, who were your strongest allies in city government? Did you actually build into department heads and things like that, people who were allies?

**Mayor Riley:**

I have lots of allies. We have a very strong preservation organization in our community and they've been great allies. Sometimes we've had some differences, not many. I've have been blessed with some very good members of City Council. The business community has been in our corner. What I feel my responsibility is, and I think all of our responsibility, is to explain things in a manner that address the heartstrings of people, the basic heartstrings, like when we were working on restoring our downtown, it was,



you know, lots of people were concerned about the dwindling tax base in the city, I sold it on that. Lot's of people were concerned about the loss of pride in their inner city, so I sold it on that. And you know you try to, because a lot of times people understandably, if it's not in my field, I need some help in translation. The easiest way for it to be translated for me is to how it truly does fulfill a desire or goal or a belief that I have. You know, I worked hard on that. Please know that nothing I showed you tonight was done by me. It was done by a wonderful collection of people and a dedicated community. Obviously, I can't do anything, I'm directly elected, I can't do anything that my citizens don't want. They would show me the door in a hurry.

**Question:**

Yes sir, I'd like to talk about public safety for a second. I remember back in 92, I read something about your police chief who did a lot of innovative things. I know drugs is a problem in the city, I believe he had a novel way of getting rid of some of the drug dealers in your area. Can you comment on your success in that area? I know that, I think it was that he pinpointed where your hot spots were and put police officers in those areas with cameras or something like that, to dissuade people from coming into the city. Just how did that work and how's it working out now?

**Mayor Riley:**

I will tell you this in all honesty, that there will be some citizens from Charleston who if they were here would tell you that we haven't done enough about the problem of drugs. It would be dishonest for me to give you the impression that we solved all of our problems. Our police chief is remarkable. I think he's the best police chief in America, and the cities of New York, Detroit, Washington, Dallas, Los Angeles and others who have tried to hire him from Charleston to be their police chief thought so as well. He likes living in Charleston and he likes the budgetary and political support that he's got. We've had a dramatic reduction in our crime rate, we've done it as you're doing here, with team policing, getting the police out into the neighborhoods. Crime prevention, nosy neighbor crime watch, hiring the best police officers, paying them well, giving them benefits for their education, keep hiring more police officers, giving them all the resources and all like that. We've made the city's crime rate lower than it's ever been. Certainly per capita and in some categories, we have fewer crimes; we have fewer burglaries now than we did thirty years ago when we had 57,000 people as opposed to 97,000 people. But, getting back to your question, the challenge of drugs is a really hard one, and we're working hard, but we just have to keep working harder. I think that part of the solution of that is really getting the citizens as involved as possible. The problem with drugs, and not to go on about this, that this is a crime, where both parties are conspiring to do it and not get caught. You know, if somebody robs you, you didn't want to get robbed, so your going to find, either if you don't resist, you're certainly going to tell on them if you recognize them or something like that. So, but we're working hard on it, and I think we've made great headway, but it would be dishonest for me to make you think that it's not a problem in Charleston.

**Question:**

Specifically, where did the money come from? State/Federal Funds, and State Funds, Local? How did that work?

**Mayor Riley:**

From everywhere, state, local, federal and private. We did plenty of private fundraising for these projects; City Bonds, Tax Increment Financing Bonds, sale of city properties. This might be a little bit of an over statement, but my philosophy has been that no feasible worthwhile project ever fails because of lack of money. It might fail for other things or you might have to work like crazy to find the money. The British term for a plan is a scheme, and there is nothing added with that, that is just in their vernacular. That's what it is called. But you know, it's a better term because a scheme connotes being creative and inventive and strategic and wily maybe in a correct way. So that's what I've done, and what I believe, and again, I say, feasible. If I say, "Oh yeah, what Charleston needs is a domed, 80,000 seat stadium that costs \$400,000,000.00", that's not feasible. We're a little community. So it's got to fit in, but I believe that if it's the right thing in the right place for the right reasons, if it's in scale and it's feasible in a context, then usually if you're very creative, you can find the money. Usually, but it's hard, and some of these projects took a long, long time to do. We could always use a lot more money and I'm right now, trying to figure out ways to fund other things we're doing, these projects were over time. But it's wrong, if it does all those things I've said, it's wrong to accept the defeatist attitude on the money, rather be creative and find it.

**Question:**

At what point did you involve the general public or citizens in your planning? And how did you do that?

**Mayor Riley:**

Well, in various ways. All of our planning processes start with the citizens. So we have our comprehensive plan or we just recently did a downtown strategic plan update and we do it by the numbers and go out and involve the citizens from the beginning. Which doesn't mean that you can have ideas that the specific idea doesn't emanate from the citizens. The water front park didn't emanate from the citizens precisely, but the most recent comprehensive plan had said that waterfront access was an important community goal. So I believe strongly in the involvement of the citizens, and you can't do it any other way any more. Jack Robbin, a wonderful man who died last year, who was a great leader in Pittsburgh, he worked for David Lawrence that long ago. He did wonderful things there, he worked for the state for a while, and worked for the Ford Foundation. I luckily got to know him late in his life. Jack once said that what had changed since he started Renaissance Fund with David Lawrence in Pittsburgh in the thirties, was that back then you could come up with a good idea and tell the people that's what you were going to do, and you can't do that anymore, and it's good that you can't do that anymore. If in the final analysis, if the people don't think it's a good idea,

you can't do it. So don't try to do it, and you don't cut the mud. But that doesn't mean that we don't mutually have some selling responsibilities to each other as well.

**Question:**

What is your and Charleston's relationship with your county?

**Mayor Riley:**

We have a good relationship with our county. Our system is different than South Carolina. We have a county school district board then we have a county government that doesn't run the schools. We get along well, that doesn't mean we agree on everything. Again, I accept the responsibility of the county government.

**Tom Johnson:**

If I could just say that this will be the final question. The two ladies, we'll take them both.

**Question:**

Just curious, you have in South Carolina, you have the capacity to annex surrounding tax bases. Is that correct?

**Mayor Riley:**

Yeah, it's not easy, but we do and it's helpful, and I know you don't and that's a particular challenge, but you know there are ways to make each system work. And in cooperation and mutual bonds can do a lot as well. Yeah.

**Question:**

Good evening Mr. Riley. This is the second time I've heard you speak today, and I must say it's just as good the second time.

**Mayor Riley:**

Ah, bless your heart, you deserve extra credit or something.

**Question:**

I enjoyed it; it was very good, but since I got to hear you a second time, I reflected a little bit about what you said earlier, and in particular someone asked earlier this evening; I think the question was about public housing. I live in a small borough and we have public housing. The point that you made was very important in that the new housing you created, people actually had an address, they had ownership in the community. They were also a property owner. I think that's a very important point and the other thing is, the borough that we live in, you feel very desperate, so whenever anything comes along that promises economic development, we feel compelled to accept it. That we need to right away comply and get in and compromise, and I think that what you were saying today, you had a standard you kept saying no, I'm sorry, we need to reevaluate and keep going back. I think that was an important point that you made. You don't need to accept the first thing that comes along, and you shouldn't if it doesn't fit your community. I think that was an excellent point that you made.

**Mayor Riley:**

You know, we never have to accept anything less than excellence, and I believe, that Charleston is a great city, and I believe that Lancaster is a great city. Great cities aren't just the London's and Paris', and if we believe that of ourselves and therefore are unwilling to tolerate anything that is less than excellence. Then sure enough we'll be great cities. Thank you all very much.

I'll tell you, I will let you all go, but this gentleman had a question and I won't give a long answer, I promise.

**Question:**

I was hoping that someone would ask; you had mentioned that you had problems with the gentrification and I didn't hear you say anything more about that.

**Mayor Riley:**

Yeah, we are dealing with the issues of gentrification. I actually have a task- force, we've now met eight times. We've been working on it by providing public housing, or non-profit housing and housing for the elderly and affirmatively making sure we've got as much affordable housing in these areas as possible. I'll tell you a very short story. We had a low-income housing that was privately owned. The developer announced that they were clearing it out, there was no money in it, we couldn't stop them, but we worked with them. The end result of that was, they were getting rid of 160 units of affordable housing that was in bad shape. And we will be producing, working just with them, on that site and another site, 100 units of new affordable housing that will be integrated and indistinguishable. In fact 50 of the units they're going to build for us, the housing authority is going to buy some, and when you go in there, 3 years from now, you will not know whether a doctor or a 75 year old person of modest means is living in one of those buildings. They'll be different sizes.

**Question:**

I guess we are talking about two different things. You are talking about gentrification and low income. I am talking about diverse cultures not necessarily gentrification or low income.

**Mayor Riley:**

Well, by our anti-gentrification efforts it does that. Because we serve all people, so it means that African-Americans or Hispanic People or White People, or whatever, they all participate in it so it has a result of making sure. What we wanted to do was make sure that the historic preservation in Charleston no longer meant, one crowd moving out and another crowd moving in. Now a day, what historic preservation means in the neighborhoods that we're working in is that our goal is that they'll always be diverse. Diverse incomes, diverse races, and that's so important. Poor people need to see rich people. Young people need to see old people. Brown people need to see white people and black people and we all need that. It makes us better. Thanks a lot.

**Don Roseman:**

Thank you Mayor Riley. I hope we all leave here tonight with the thought, can Lancaster learn to Charleston? Just like Charleston was in its day, many of our existing thoughts and ways must change in to a 21<sup>st</sup> Century light. Someone called it, "thinking out of the box". I think we have heard that all evening, others would just say this is common sense. There will be a great many though, that will sit around and say, "it can't be done", and half a dozen of them will take us to court. We know it is the right thing to do and we know it can be a success; we must persevere.