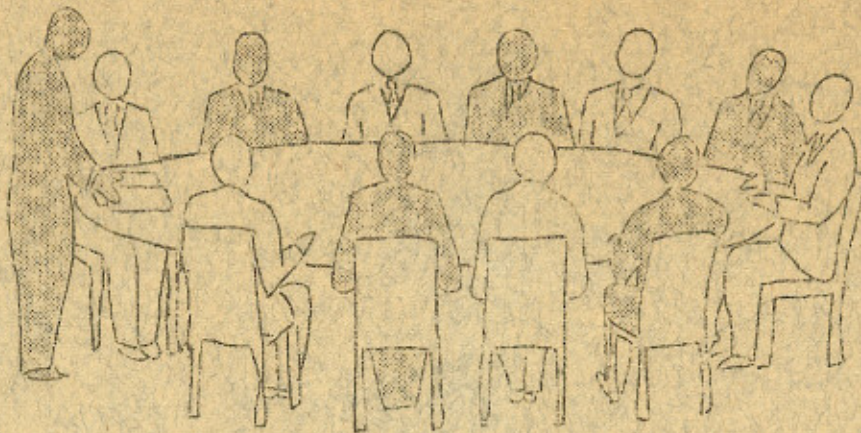


1953 EDITION

COMMUNITY COUNCIL
OF GREENVILLE COUNTY
110 W. MC BEE, CAPERS BLDG.
GREENVILLE, S. C.



GREENVILLE'S BIG IDEA GROWS

The BIG IDEA refers to the Self Survey of Conditions Affecting the Negro Population of the Greenville, South Carolina Area. The fact finding was conducted by more than 200 citizens of both Negro and white races during the summer and fall of 1949. Committees compiled reports and made recommendations.

The Community Council, working with citizen groups throughout, made those findings available to the public, thus encouraging the translation of the recommendations into action.

The Big Idea began to pay off in specific improvements even during the study, and many additional improvements have come about since. It is difficult to say how many of the results directly came from the study. Perhaps it would be better to say the study contributed to a "climate of opinion", which nourished the findings, stimulated thinking, physical improvements and long range planning. It is this "climate of opinion", undoubtedly, which has made many things possible, and which will continue to influence our people and bring about progressive changes in our community.

The study has been reproduced in two forms: "Everybody's Business", a mimeographed, detailed 85-page booklet, and "Greenville's Big Idea", a smaller, illustrated, printed summary of 32 pages.

"The Big Idea Grows" is an attempt to bring up to date the tangible results of Greenville's Self Survey, realized within three years of the completion and publicizing of the citizens' findings.

August 1953

COMMUNITY COUNCIL
112 W. McBee Avenue
Greenville, South Carolina

THESE THINGS HAPPENED WHILE THE STUDY WAS BEING MADE:

1. General interest was taken in improving recreational opportunities. An option was taken on land for a State Park.
2. The Greenville American, Negro Newspaper, was published January 1950 to November 1951. It was then combined with the Atlanta World, giving subscribers a larger weekly paper, with sections devoted to local Negro and community news.
3. A maternal care project was begun by the Auxiliary to the County Medical Society.
4. Blinker lights were installed at Negro school crossings for safety.
5. Interest was shown in improving educational opportunities throughout the county.
6. Negro doctors began attending meetings of Greenville Medical Society.
7. A Negro chapter of the Red Cross Gray Ladies was formed, volunteers to serve in Negro wards of the Greenville General Hospital.
8. The YWCA Branch Program for Negroes began experimentally.
9. Better housing was proposed and slum clearance projects got underway.
10. A new elementary school was planned for the Nicholtown area.
11. There was increased awareness of the unhealthy conditions under which many Negro families have had to live.
12. The City Health Department condemned several slum houses.
13. Daily newspapers improved noticeably in handling news about Negroes: the word Negro is now properly capitalized; newsworthy pictures of Negroes are used.
14. City Council appointed a special committee to investigate employment of Negro policemen.
15. Intangible gains of the study:
 - a. brought people together, not as people of two races, but as citizens with a common purpose.
 - b. strengthened Recreation-Education Division of Community Council
 - c. promoted leadership and purpose in the Negro community itself
 - d. opened channels of communication between white and Negro citizens
 - e. gave citizens specific proposals for community social improvement

WHAT HAS HAPPENED SINCE STUDY WAS COMPLETED?

Community Participation

1. Two Negro YWCA members were elected to the YWCA Board for the first time.
2. Community Council membership meetings are now open to all citizens of the community and a Negro is on the Council Board for the first time.
3. The Annual meeting of Community Chest is open to all citizens. Three Negro citizens are now serving on the Community Chest Budget Committee.
4. The number of places where inter-racial meetings are held has been increased. Prior to the study, Negro and white had met together in a few places, but only after the study were places opened broadly. Among the places where such meetings are held at present, are churches (Christ Episcopal, First Baptist, Fourth Presbyterian and others); schools, agencies (Salvation Army, YWCA, Phillis Wheatley, Community Council); public auditoriums (new County Court House, City Hall, County Office Building).
5. A Negro Business and Professional Men's Club has been organized for the purpose of fostering civic and social betterment of community life.
6. In a recent Polio drive to select the "most beautiful man", a Negro was given the greatest applause for being most popular among some thirty candidates for the "most beautiful man" contest. This recognition came from an audience made up of mostly white people.
7. On July 18th, 1953 at the Parker High School Auditorium, before an all-white audience, a Negro girl won first place among 41 participants on the USA Talent Show contest conducted by a local radio station. The applause meter record determined the winner.
8. The solicitation of Negroes in the Community Chest Campaign has been largely merged with solicitation of other business and professional divisions of the campaign. The term "Negro Division" has been done away with at the request of the Negroes.

Education

1. The State General Assembly set up an educational Finance Commission to direct an extensive program to promote the improvement of schools and their physical facilities. Emphasis is being given to the providing of equal facilities for Negroes. Such conditions as double sessions are to be eliminated.
2. The School District of Greenville County, Number 520 has been created replacing the former system of 82 separate school districts in the county.
3. Bus transportation for Negro and white children is now on the same basis. For example, at the beginning of the 1951-52 school term, five

Education (cont.)

busses were transporting county students to Sterling High School and one school bus was transporting students between Lowndes Hill Section and Nicholtown School, both for the first time.

4. Free textbooks are now provided all school children in the county.
5. There is improved instruction and supervision of education throughout the county.
6. A new lunch room and rest room have been built in the Brutontown School and the West Greenville School in the Parker District.
7. A new elementary school of 26 rooms has been completed in the Nichol-town area of Greenville.
8. Up to January 1, 1953, \$1,729,407.28 had been allocated to Greenville County for the purchase of sites and the construction of additions or new buildings for Negro schools of Greenville County. These funds have been made possible through the South Carolina Sales Tax. Some of the major projects, either underway or to be completed in the near future, are: a High School in the southern part of the County in the Fountain Inn Simpsonville Attendance Area; an Elementary School in the Ellen-Woodside Attendance Area, the St. Mark's Elementary School in the Taylors-Greer Area, and the Travelers Rest Elementary School. Eight additional rooms will also be added to the Gower School in Greenville.
9. A full physical education and health education program for the entire County is now being conducted for all Negroes with special emphasis being placed on the opportunities after school.
10. Much interest has been shown in adult education work with the objective of increasing these opportunities whenever possible.

Health

1. The Gower Street School P.T.A. and City Health Department jointly sponsored a clean-up campaign in that neighborhood.
2. Greenville General Hospital Board made available staff privileges to doctors, based on medical qualifications and ethical standards.
3. Two Institutes on Human Growth and Development were planned jointly, the courses being offered Negro and white simultaneously, but at different locations.
4. Work progressed toward an enlarged General Hospital which will provide many additional facilities and services to Negroes.
5. The application of physicians to the Greenville County Medical Society is acted upon according to qualifications and ethical standards, without regard to race or creed.

Health (cont.)

6. The Human Growth and Development Institute for September, 1953 ^{was} will be non-segregated; previous Institutes have been on a segregated basis.

7. The three local Negro dentists are helping ^{FREE} provide dental care for children who are unable to pay with its seventy-two (72) beds

8. Greenville General Hospital has the Corbett Wing that are available to Negro patients. In addition, there are twelve (12) beds for obstetric patients and ten (10) beds for colored children.

Housing

1. The City Council took a strong stand relative to Negro housing to make possible a low income Federal Housing Project of 348 units called Field Crest Village. The Project was completed during spring of 1952.

2. The Roosevelt Heights Housing Project of 300 units was completed during 1950.

3. The local Housing Authority completed the Slum Clearance Survey which disclosed that of all slum dwellings needing replacement 85% are Negro and 15% white. An effort is being made to improve the slum areas either by a complete re-development or renovation of buildings so they will conform with the City Code, which is considered adequate.

4. A local Negro citizen is developing a restricted Negro residential area which was very much needed.

Industry and Employment

1. A local radio station was hired for commercial time for the first time in connection with the opening of a new Negro business.

2. Another Negro cab company with six cabs and its own radio system is now serving the population.

3. Greenville now has a Negro lawyer who came to the city late in 1951.

4. A Negro has been employed as Field Representative by a national distributing company to cover several states, including South Carolina.

5. Four Negroes have been regularly employed as announcers by a local radio station.

6. A local white-owned business promoted their Negro delivery man to a skilled job in their plant.

7. During the past ^{Five} ~~Four~~ years three Negro postal employes were employed for the first time.

Law Enforcement

1. Newspapers are favorable to the appointment of Negro policemen, but no action has been taken by the Police Commission.
2. City Council passed an anti-mask bill.
3. The Council of Church Women has secured considerable support in its request to establish two rehabilitation camps (one for Negroes, one for whites) for youthful and inexperienced prisoners who are sent to the county prison camps.
4. The County Delegation appointed a Rehabilitation Board and will approve a sum of \$5,000 as extra funds to be used in beginning the rehabilitation program.
5. The County Delegation has a special Committee studying the entire penal system of the County. Much improvement in the handling of prisoners may come from this Study.
6. The City Civil Service Commission, the City Council, and other responsible groups have no objection to Negroes being appointed as policemen providing they meet the qualifications expected of others who pass examinations.

Recreation

1. Four Recreational Training Institutes (Social Recreation, Conduct of Playgrounds, and Crafts) have been offered by the Community Council and City Park and Recreation Department. Joint planning for the concurrent institutes was established as a method of work.
2. The Recreation-Education Division of the Community Council located a site for a Negro State Park in Greenville County; the County Legislative Delegation provided funds to purchase this 300 acre site; a five-year plan of development of the park is underway, with first year funds appropriated by the State Legislature. The park was named Pleasant Ridge State Park. The water dam has been completed and will provide a large area for swimming and boating. Picnic areas will be available, along with some shelters. A new house has been built for the superintendent, who is a Negro, formerly of Greenville. Although funds have not been provided by the Legislature for further development of the park during 1952-53, an effort is being made to secure funds to continue the development plan that has been started. The State Highway Department has promised to pave a road into the park from the main highway.
3. A new Negro commercial theater was opened January 1951, showing a better class of pictures.
4. A Negro USO for servicemen was opened in September of 1951. Plans for enlarging and improving the facilities were announced in January of this year.

Recreation (cont.)

5. The first Negro Recreation Supervisor was appointed by the city, February 1, 1951.
6. The City Parks and Recreation Department enlarged the playground staff. A new lighted softball field was opened, and plans made to develop recreation areas on land made available by two housing projects.
7. YWCA Branch program began operation under a full time professional leader, paid from Community Chest funds. A building is rented for the Branch Headquarters.
- ? → 8. The Study of Phillis Wheatley was completed, as recommended in the Self Survey.
- ? → 9. The number of Negro Boy Scout troops increased to 30 from approximately five. *44 units in the Council — 16 units in the County*
10. Negroes are being admitted to several large community cultural and religious programs, for instance: Don Cossacks Chorus, Horace Heidt's Amateur Program, etc. Negro citizens are bringing Negro artists to the city: Hazel Scott in 1951, Marian Anderson in 1952 (a non-segregated audience with excellent attendance).
11. Happy Hearts Park provides a small combination wading-swimming pool. Limited leadership is employed.
12. Negro P.T.A. groups were stimulated to sponsor Recreation programs in Freetown, Oscar Street, Brutontown.
13. The Public Library Board purchased a building on East McBee Avenue and established a much improved Negro Branch Library.
14. The first out-door swimming pool (20 x 40 feet) was built at the Phillis Wheatley Center and opened for use in June, 1953.
15. The City Council purchased a 49 acre tract of land on which will be developed the first large City Negro Park. A large out-door swimming pool will be ready for use about September 1, 1953. Many other recreational opportunities will be available at this park. The house at the park is serving as an indoor recreation center. *do it complete?*
16. The City Recreation Department opened the Mayberry Park Community Center Building for use on May 23, 1953.
17. The Greenville Kiwanis Club and the YWCA, in cooperation with the City Recreation Department, sponsored during August, 1953 the first Negro Day Camp for girls.
18. The County Legislative Delegation approved \$500 for leadership at Happy Hearts Park for the summer of 1953.

Religious Resources

1. Several churches have sponsored week-day activities with volunteer leadership.

Religious Resources (cont.)

2. A Negro Council of Church Women has been formed.
3. The Episcopal Church has increased activities at the St. Philips Negro Church.
4. Presbyterian Churches of the city have joined together in buying land, raising money for the construction of a Negro Presbyterian Church in Nicholtown, and supplying a Negro Presbyterian minister during the past year. This will be continued for the present time through the joint support of all local Presbyterian Churches.
5. White and Negro Baptist leaders are completing plans for establishing a school for the training of Negro ministers and church leaders in upper South Carolina. A group in the First Baptist Church is providing funds for the education of a Negro minister.
6. Several Negro churches have improved their physical plants by making additions to their church and educational space.

Sanitation

1. Two downtown businesses, one a department store, have provided rest rooms for Negroes.

Transportation

1. White and Negro citizens appeared before City Council requesting city bus transportation for 600 local students attending Sterling High School.
2. Southern Railway improved Negro rest room and drinking facilities.
3. Extra busses are now being run during peak hours in Nicholtown and Fieldcrest Area.

Welfare

1. The Mental Hygiene Clinic opened, serving white and Negroes.
2. A State Industrial School for delinquent Negro girls was built near Columbia.
3. A volunteer sponsored Day Nursery has been operating in the Fieldcrest Village housing project. This program was initiated by the Tenants Association members who live there.
4. Several Negro citizens have been active in raising money for a Negro Day Nursery program. It is hoped that another Negro Day Nursery will be opened during the coming year.
5. A full time day nursery is in operation at the Allon Temple Methodist Church.

Miscellaneous

1. Modern problems and social studies classes in local white high schools have studied the contents of the study, emphasizing the process. They have heard speakers on phases of the findings and visited Negro groups and facilities for first hand information.
2. Impetus was also given to people in other communities:
 - a. Through Southern Regional Council bulletin.
 - b. Through newspapers and magazine stories appearing in the New York Times, New York Herald Tribune, Christian Science Monitor, daily newspapers throughout the country, Community Chests and Councils of America magazine, National YWCA magazine and many others.
 - c. Through Conferences with leaders from other towns, held informally at:
 1. Blue Ridge Institute, Blue Ridge, N. C., 1950-53.
 2. YWCA Regional Meeting, Atlanta, Ga., 1951.
 3. Piedmont Regional (South Carolina) Conference of Social Work, Clemson, S. C., 1950.
 4. Southern Sociological Society, Atlanta, Georgia, 1950.
 5. Southeastern Conference Community Chests and Councils, Edgewater Park, Miss., March 1951.
 6. National Conference of Community Chests and Councils, Milwaukee, Wis., February 1952.
 7. National Meeting of Community Welfare Council Leaders, Cleveland, Ohio, January 1953.
 - d. Through requests that have been received from leading libraries throughout the nation asking for copies of the study to be on file in the research departments. Several graduate students have written for more information on the study.

THE COMMUNITY COUNCIL

is interested in maintaining up to date records on all community wide improvements in the fields of health, recreation, education, and general welfare. If the list of improvements listed on the preceding pages is not complete please call the matter to the attention of the Community Council Office. You are also asked to help keep this list up to date in the future. The Council plans to issue annually a report similar to this one and will, therefore, need your help in keeping the list of improved services and opportunities current.

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COMMUNITY COUNCIL OFFICERS 1953

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