2. The mixed-use development at the junction of Church Street with University Ridge (Church Street North).
3. The development of replacement housing for the shoddy brick duplexes and the creation of a neighborhood park by opening up a culverted stream (Biltmore Park).
4. New townhomes and a greenway inserted in left-over land (Springer Street East).
5. The redevelopment of the football stadium and adjacent mixed-use development (Sirrine Neighborhood Center). Projects ('E', 'G', 'M' and 'K' in Plate 41.)

The Church Street Neighborhood Center

Two factors spurred the development of this centerpiece of the plan. First, was its central location at the logical crossroads of the community where local residents could meet people from outside the area. Second, this location was distinguished by the presence of the functioning Ramada Inn, which a developer (and co-sponsor of the charrette) proposed to upgrade and redevelop with new conference and fitness facilities. The developer planned to support this redevelopment, together with adjacent mixed-use buildings by a parking deck constructed as a public–private joint venture with the city (project 'G' on Plate 41).

Building off this redevelopment of the southeast quadrant of the intersection, we designed a series of mainly three-storey mixed-use buildings, predominantly, housing over retail and restaurants, interspersed with offices.

Because of the odd block configurations created by the diagonal alignment of Church Street, it was difficult to create typical building floorplates for the intensity of development usually found in a Neighborhood Center and still fit sufficient parking on each site. As a result, the center will need the centralized parking deck in the Ramada Inn redevelopment to achieve its optimum building densities. This facility will provide an opportunity to 'park once and walk' to other retail stores and restaurants in the area. Residential apartments and townhomes would line the structure to provide a visual screen to the cars and an active street edge along its public perimeter. Figure 10.12 illustrates a typical example of this arrangement from Charlotte. Shared parking arrangements with staggered peak and off-peak timing between uses will also facilitate the success of this center. We also recommended that the local bus route, which currently runs down the western edge of the neighborhood, be re-routed to pass directly through the center, thus making the new activity center accessible by means other than the car.

Figure 10.11 Site of Church Street Neighborhood Center, as existing (Compare with Plate 42).

Figure 10.12 Apartments screening parking deck. Park Avenue, Charlotte, NC, 2002. David Furman, Architect. The parking deck is shared with an adjacent office building and street level stores. This is a standard, but highly effective urban typology. The only drawback is that the apartments are single aspect, that is, they face only one way and are accessed off an internal corridor. The consequent lack of natural cross-ventilation means that most climate control has to be mechanical even under benign external conditions.

We took care to preserve the 60-year old willow oak trees along the north side of Haynie Street with their capacious tree canopy. We set our new buildings back from the street to protect the trees' root system, and recessed the upper floors still further to make room for the canopy branches (see Figure 10.13).

We knew that most of this development, and the regeneration of the neighborhood's core area, was contingent upon the improvement of Church Street, transforming it from a hostile thoroughfare to a pedestrian-friendly boulevard: the street needed to change from a barrier into a seam that reconnected both sides of the neighborhood and reinvigorated the area with pedestrian activity. The team's preliminary traffic analysis indicated that four lanes would be sufficient to carry thorough traffic, and we accordingly recommended the following changes to the roadway as shown in Figure 10.14.

- *A landscaped median taking over the center two lanes with protected turn lanes at key locations.*
- *Improvements to the pedestrian environment with wide sidewalks separated from the kerb by a generous planting strip and geometrically ordered street trees.*
- *Lighting in the median for automobiles and along sidewalks for pedestrians.*
- *Buried and relocated overhead wiring within the vicinity of the Neighborhood Center. The wiring in the remainder of the corridor should first be consolidated to one side and placed on decorative poles in an orderly manner, or if finances allow, buried*

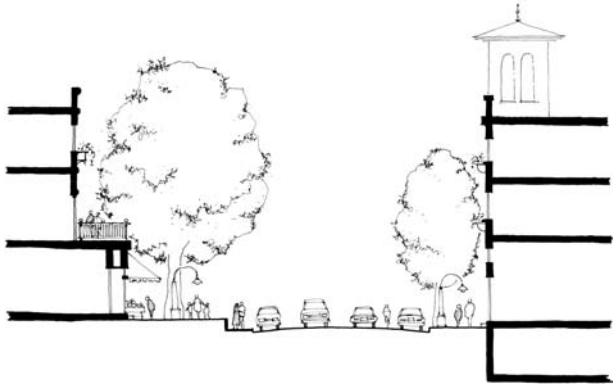

Figure 10.13 Haynie Street Section. At this urban focus, the spatial enclosure on the neighborhood streets is tightened. Here the height-to-width ratio is approximately 1:1.5. The mature trees enhance the enclosure and sense of a central place.

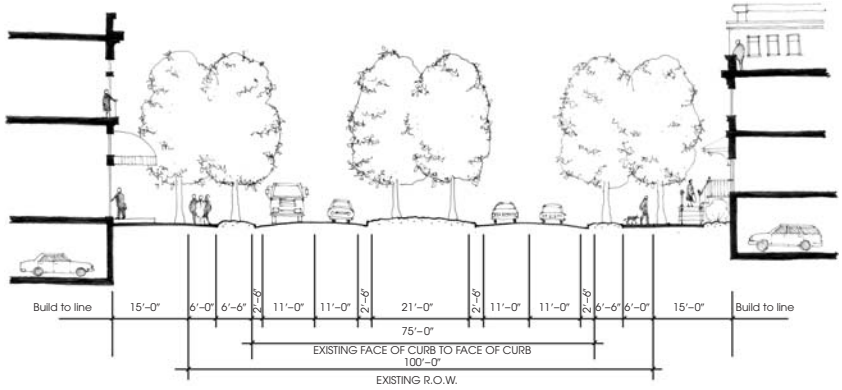

Figure 10.14 Church Street Section. This section is taken at a 'typical' point along the length of the street rather than at the neighborhood center in order to demonstrate the generic condition. With a street width of 130 feet (39 meters), the buildings can rarely be tall enough to create the desired spatial enclosure. Disciplined tree planting helps to break down the width and create zones of enclosure within the overall space.