

THE BIG IDEA GOES ON

Greenville's Big Idea began to pay off in specific concrete improvements even during the Study. Many additional improvements have occurred since the Study was completed. Not all of these could be considered direct results of the self-survey alone; but in most cases the self-survey had a lot to do with making the forward step possible.

Some Things That Happened During Time Study Was Being Done

1. Better housing and slum clearance projects underway.
2. General interest in improving recreational opportunities with option taken on land for a State Park.
3. Greenville American, Negro newspaper, started January 1950.
4. Maternal care project started by Medical Auxiliary.
5. Blinker lights installed at school crossings for safety.
6. Interest in improving educational opportunities throughout county.
7. Negro doctors at meetings of Greenville Medical Society.
8. Negro chapter of the Red Cross Gray Ladies as volunteers in Negro wards of the Greenville General Hospital.
9. YWCA Branch Program for Negroes begun experimentally.
10. Funds allocated for additions to four elementary schools.
11. New elementary school planned for Nicholstown area.
12. Increased awareness of the unhealthful conditions under which many Negro families have had to live.
13. City Health Department condemns several slum houses.
14. Daily newspapers improved noticeably in handling news about Negroes: the word Negro is now properly capitalized, newsworthy pictures of Negroes used and courtesy titles are beginning to be used before names of Negro women.
15. City Council appoints special committee to investigate employment of Negro policemen.
16. Intangible gains: (a) it got people together, not as people of two races, but as citizens with a common purpose.
(b) strengthen Recreation-Education Division of Community Council.
(c) growth of 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?

Health

1. The Gower Street School P.T.A. and City Health Department jointly sponsored a clean-up campaign in that neighborhood.
2. Occasionally Negro doctors attend own patients at General Hospital; however all admissions to hospital must be through a white doctor.
3. Two Institutes on Human Growth and Development held and planned jointly.
4. Work progressing toward enlarged General Hospital which will provide many additional facilities and services to Negroes.

Sanitation and Safety

1. Some street paving in the area of Sterling High School partially completed.

Education

1. A new lunch room and rest room have been built in the Brutontown School and the West Greenville School in the Parker District.
2. All teachers in the Greenville and Parker School District received increase in pay.
3. School reorganization plan defeated at polls by people living outside Greenville city limits; leaving school opportunities for Negroes in most of county on a very limited basis.
4. Construction on additions to four elementary schools in Greenville progressing on schedule.
5. Several sections of county becoming more concerned about educational opportunities for Negroes; some new construction planned at Greer.

Religious Resources

1. Several churches have sponsored week-day activities with volunteer leadership.
2. A Negro Council of Church Women has been formed.

Law Enforcement

1. Newspapers are favorable to appointment of Negro policemen, but no action has been taken by Police Commission.
2. City Council is about ready to pass an anti-mask bill.
3. Council of Church Women active in trying to secure a camp for youthful and first offenders, to remove such persons from the Chain gang.

Recreation

1. Three Recreational Training Institutes (Social Recreation, Conduct of Playgrounds and Crafts) offered by Community Council and City Park and Recreation Department. Joint planning for concurrent institutes.
2. State Park land secured from County tax funds; a development plan made with hope that the State Legislature will appropriate necessary funds for complete development over a five year period.
3. A new Negro commercial theater (Harlem) opened January 1951, showing better class of pictures.
4. City Parks and Recreation Department enlarges playground staff, a new lighted softball field opened, and plans made to develop recreation areas on land made available by two housing projects.
5. YWCA Branch program under full time professional leader, paid from Community Chest funds.
6. Study of Phillis Wheatley underway, as recommended in Study.

7. Number of Boy Scout troops increased to 30 (was approx. 5).
8. Negroes being admitted to several large community cultural and religious programs; for instance, Don Cossacks Chorus, Horace Heidt's Amateur Program, etc.
9. Happy Hearts Park provides a small combination wading-swimming pool; some paid leadership.
10. Stimulation given to Negro P.T.A. groups to sponsor Recreation Programs - Freetown, Oscar Street, Brutontown.
11. Citizens Committee appointed to study all recreation in area.
12. First Negro Recreation Supervisor appointed by city, February 1, 1951.

Transportation

1. White and Negro citizens appeared before City Council requesting bus transportation for 600 students attending Sterling High School.
2. Southern Railway improved restroom and drinking facilities.

Welfare

1. Mental Hygiene clinic opened, serving white and Negroes.
2. Community Council failed in its attempt to secure more adequate emergency relief allowances.
3. Industrial school for delinquent Negro girls now under construction in Columbia.

Community Participation

1. Negroes conduct very successful part in Community Chest campaign.
2. Negro Y.W.C.A. member elected to Y.W.C.A. Board for first time.
3. Community Council membership meetings now opened to all citizens of the community.
4. Annual meeting of Community Chest open to all citizens.
5. The number of places where inter-racial meetings have been held have been increased including several churches, (Christ Episcopal, First Baptist, Fourth Presbyterian, etc.) schools, agencies such as, Salvation Army, Y.W.C.A., Phillis Wheatley and Community Council; public auditoriums such as the new County Court House, City Hall and several other facilities.
6. In the recent Polio drive to select the most beautiful man, a Negro was given the greatest applause for being the most popular among some thirty candidates for the most beautiful man contest. This recognition came from an audience made up of mostly white people.

Housing

1. The City Council took a strong stand relative to Negro housing to make possible a low income Federal Housing Project of 389 units in the Greenacre area. Construction on the project to begin soon.

2. The Roosevelt Heights Housing Project has been completed for some 300 residents.
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.
4. A Negro apartment hotel of nine stories was approved by City Council after considerable opposition.

Commercial

1. Radio Station WESC was hired for commercial time in connection with the opening of the Huddle Soda Shop. This is the first Negro business to be opened with commercial radio time.

Miscellaneous

1. Impetus to people in other communities:
 - a. Through Southern Regional Council bulletin.
 - b. Through newspapers and magazine stories (New York Times, New York Herald Tribune, Christian Science Monitor, many daily newspapers throughout country, Community Chests and Councils of America magazine, National YMCA magazine, etc.
 - c. Conferences with leaders from other towns informally and at:
 1. Blue Ridge Institute.
 2. YMCA Regional Meeting.
 3. Piedmont Regional (South Carolina).
 4. Conference of social work.
 5. Southern Sociological Society, etc.
2. Community education in Greenville.
 - a. Series of newspaper articles on each phase of study.
 - b. Distribution of study to many local groups.
 - c. Talks before churches, schools, civic, cultural, social agencies, etc.

ADDITIONAL RESULTS DURING 1951

HEALTH

Greenville General Hospital has made available staff privileges to Negro physician

SANITATION AND SAFETY

The Galloway-Carr Furniture Company and Belk-Simpson Company have made restrooms available for Negroes.

EDUCATION

With education for Greenville County being served as a county unit plan, many improvements will be made in educational opportunities for Negroes and Whites. For example, at the beginning of the school term, September 1951, five school busses were being used to transport students to Sterling High School and one school bus transporting students between the Lowndes Hill Section and Nicholtown School, both of these for the first time. A new elementary school of 12 rooms has been completed in the Nicholtown area.

RELIGIOUS RESOURCES

The Episcopal Church has increased activities at the St. Phillips Church and the Presbyterian Churches have employed a trained Negro minister to work in the area. The Baptist Churches are also providing some excellent field work, and probably other denominations are doing work that is not known to the committee at present.

LAW ENFORCEMENT

The Council of Church Women have secured considerable support in their request to establish rehabilitation camps for youthful offenders who are sent to the county prison camps. The County Delegation is presently considering the matter.

Greenville now has a Negro lawyer, who came to the county late in 1951.

RECREATION

Recreation Training Institutes continue to be held, the next one January 7-11.

The State Legislature appropriated funds to begin the development of the Pleasant Ridge State Park for Negroes. This park will be available for limited use during 1952. The water dam is 95% complete now and will provide a large area for swimming and boating. Picnic areas will be available along with some shelters. A new house is being built for the Superintendent, who is a Negro formerly living in Greenville.

COMMERCIAL

A Negro cab company (Eagle Cab Company) with 6 cabs and its own radio system is now serving the population.

COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

There has been an improvement in the coverage of Negro news by local newspapers, which includes more pictures and the use of titles such as Mrs. for a married woman.

HOUSING

The low-income Federal housing project of 389 units in the Greenacre Road area is nearing completion.

OBSERVATIONS ON SELF-SURVEY PROCEDURE

It has been felt advisable to make some brief observations on the method of conducting this "Self-Survey of Conditions Affecting the Negro Population" as an aid to other communities wishing to undertake similar studies. In reviewing our experience in the Study certain procedures appear to have aided while others hindered progress. We pass these observations on in the hope that others may profit from our errors. The following steps appear to be essential in any survey of this kind:

1. NEED - There should be a real sense of need for the survey among some active group or groups in the community. If this sense of need for, or interest in, a survey is not present or cannot be stimulated the project stands little hope of success.
2. DEFINE - The group instituting the survey should be able to state clearly the objectives of the study. This entails setting out clearly the limits of the study showing what should be included and what omitted. It is important at this stage to be realistic about the amount of work that will be necessary to complete the study in order that the group does not "bite off more than it can chew".
3. RESPONSIBILITY - The responsibility for the overall direction of the survey should be assigned to a Directing or Steering Committee composed of persons who are "sold" on the idea and should include Negroes and whites who have the respect and confidence of community groups. Sub-committees should be created to gather necessary information on each field of service to be studied. These committees must be given specific instructions as to what is required of them.
4. STAFF WORK - Any survey of this kind requires a great deal of clerical work. This includes the keeping of minutes of meetings, sending out notices, mimeographing, checking of facts, proof reading, etc.
5. REVIEW - The material submitted by the sub-committees should be reviewed immediately by the Steering or Directing Committee as a whole to pass on its completeness and accuracy. Any time lag will make corrections difficult.
6. REVISION - Each section, upon being approved by the Steering Committee, should be submitted to all organizations and individuals concerned in the community for observation and comment.
7. RE-WRITE - When corrections or additions have been received the first draft should be revised. It is important at this stage to make sure that all necessary corrections and comments have been included and that the final draft has the approval of the Steering or Directing Committee.
8. PUBLICITY - It may be advisable to prepare brief summaries of each section of the study for release to the newspapers. There should be some control over what is published so that the essence of each section is given to the public.
9. FOLLOW THROUGH - The Steering or Directing Committee should make sure that some responsible group or groups will follow through on trying to implement the recommendations that have been made. This work should begin while public interest is high.