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See Lancaster Reports
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See Lancaster Staff Visits Virginia County Program and National Main Street
Office

When See Lancaster staff learned Lancaster was one of perhaps only two county wide Main Street programs in the United States, they sought information on their counterpart. When it was also learned that Loudoun County, Virginia was interested in comparing notes with See Lancaster, a trip was planned for October. The South Carolina Main Street program director, Beppie LeGrande made all the arrangements and staff director Frank Keel and LeGrande visited the Virginia County last week.

The first full day there was spent with the National Main Street representatives. It was explained how both of the counties came to the decision that being a county wide program was beneficial for their communities. At the conclusion of the meeting it was determined that Lancaster would be the recipient of a visit from the National headquarters in the near future. Working through our state agency, a county wide Charrette will be developed from information that has been collected over the three years of the program's existence.

Later in the day a visit to an award winning Main Street program, Barracks Row, offered many insightful economic projects that could be implemented in our

county. The community was located in downtown Washington, D.C., and had many challenges that interested Keel. Many things Lancaster is already doing, but many new ideas were also discussed.

All day Thursday and Friday morning were spent meeting officials and community leaders involved in the Main Street Loudoun County program. Their challenge is to coordinate seven incorporated towns and a number of pods (planned urban developments), a mammoth undertaking. There were communities the size of Heath Springs as well as cities larger than the City of Lancaster. As discussion transpired over the two days, it was evident there were many similarities as well as extreme differences, but many opportunities to work together to the benefit of both counties. It was the conclusion of LeGrande and Keel that keeping in touch was a must. Representatives from Virginia will be visiting Lancaster in the future to better understand our program.

The trip opened many doors of opportunities to assist See Lancaster with its future plans. Meeting with the National Main Street group was an opportunity to let them know who and where See Lancaster was. Meeting with Loudoun County community members gave staff someone to keep in touch with and discuss mutual issues that arise in a county program that do not come up in a single Main Street town.

We will have more on this trip in our e-newsletter that we will be introducing soon, but you can also write us on our blog from our website at seelancaster.org. or e-mail us anytime.