



TOWN COUNCIL

AGENDAS, MINUTES & MEETING VIDEOS

[Home](#)[Search](#)[Town Council Meetings & Videos](#)[Town Council Meetings & Videos prior to March 2013](#)[Share](#)[RSS](#)[Alerts](#)[Details](#)[Reports](#)

File #:	13-0471	Version: 1	Name:	
Type:	Agendas	Status:	Passed	
File created:	11/5/2013	In control:	Board of Aldermen	
On agenda:	11/12/2013	Final action:	11/12/2013	
Title:	Carrboro Branding and Marketing PURPOSE: The purpose of this agenda item is to present the findings of the Branding study to the Board of Aldermen.			
Attachments:	1. splinter carrboro june report , 2. splinter carrboro june report2 , 3. toc report nov6			

[History \(1\)](#)[Text](#)**TITLE:** Title

Carrboro Branding and Marketing

PURPOSE: The purpose of this agenda item is to present the findings of the Branding study to the Board of Aldermen.

body

DEPARTMENT: Economic and Community Development

CONTACT INFORMATION: Annette D. Stone, AICP Economic and Community Development Director 919 918 7319

INFORMATION: Cities, Towns and Counties across the State and Country are recognizing the value of branding a community. Branding is the art of aligning what you want people to think about your community with what people actually do think about your community. Branding is communicating through visuals and words that tell the unique story, in Carrboro's case, about this special place.

The Board of Aldermen recognized the need to re-brand the Town (there is an existing visual that is used throughout Town signage) in several planning documents. First, in the 2006 RTS report, "Creating Carrboro's Economic Future," the study points out the need to brand the community in order to communicate to new and re-locating businesses why Carrboro is an attractive place to start a business. In the 2008 Local Living Economy Task Force Recommendations, the Task Force recommended developing a brand, stating "The consistent use and promotion of a Town graphic and tagline provides a visual hook to uniquely identify those businesses, programs, events, products, people and the physical environment that define our community. Properly developed, this graphic and tagline could embody the unique traits and characteristics of the community (i.e. quality, successful, unique, healthy, committed, beautiful, funky, leading edge, fun, historic, active.)".

The Town officially began this process of branding last year with the selection of The Splinter Group to guide a community conversation and develop a process for stakeholder engagement. In the past year, staff and the

consultant have meet with Town advisory boards, attended community events, held public input sessions, and collected information. The information collected was about people's feelings and thoughts about Carrboro. What makes Carrboro, Carrboro?, was asked in surveys, interviews, and in meetings. The results were reported to the Board of Aldermen at the June 2013 Retreat (attached).

That information was used by the creative team at Splinter to develop ideas for visuals and phrases that describe Carrboro, in the proverbial "nutshell." The attached report is an accounting of the process, community feedback, results of the focus groups and input from advisory boards to develop what has emerged as the preferred brand.

FISCAL & STAFF IMPACT: If adopted by the Board of Aldermen, the initial "launch" of the brand will be through the Town's new website, which is waiting on the branding process for the "look and feel" to launch. Also, already included in the FY 13-14 budget for launching the new brand is \$6,500 for banners to be used throughout the Downtown and the Community Resource and Visitor Guide which will be used to introduce the brand to the Community. Town staff is working with the newly formed Carrboro Tourism Development Authority to develop a walking map for Downtown and other marketing materials that will use the new brand to promote Carrboro. Upcoming marketing opportunities are Carrboro Chill being planned by Downtown businesses for December 14th, immediately after the Holiday Parade, and in February as there is continued interest in the now annual "For the Love of Carrboro" campaign.

Town staff is working on estimates for cost of replacement of Town signs which will be considered in next year's budget. Other opportunities to promote the brand will be sought out and budgeted for accordingly.

RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends the Board consider adopting the new brand and directing staff to move forward with implementation.



CARRBORO BRANDING PROJECT

PROGRESS REPORT 6.12.13

As the first phase of our branding project, we are wrapping up a successful community engagement and feedback campaign and have just begun our analysis of responses. The Let's Talk Carrboro campaign consisted of an online survey, idea stations placed throughout town, and group sessions and individual interviews with key town stakeholders. Details and raw statistics on the campaign are noted below.

In general we received insightful and thoughtful feedback that will help in the brand development process and future marketing initiatives. We did have an undercurrent of negative reactions to Carrboro's need for branding and a resistance to change of any kind. We actually received a phone call from someone distrusting the process and wondering if another town was doing research to determine (and probably steal) what makes Carrboro so special.

Here's a breakdown of responses to the campaign:

RESEARCH

ONLINE SURVEY

We've had 128 responses to our online survey at letstalkcarrboro.com, 57% of respondents live in Carrboro, 28% work here and the remaining 15% visit. Over 55% of survey participants were 30-49.

Let's Talk Carrboro!

We asked folks:

- What makes Carrboro "Carrboro"?
- How would you describe Carrboro in five words or less?
- Do you have a "Carrboro Moment"? Something that happened to you in town that is etched in your memory and uniquely Carrboro?

Let's Talk Carrboro

Tick Basicamp Apple eBay News

Let's Talk Carrboro!

TELL US WHAT MAKES THIS SUCH A SPECIAL PLACE.

Let's Talk Carrboro is a project spearheaded by Carrboro marketing agency, The Splinter Group. We have been hired by the Town of Carrboro and are gathering community input to lay the groundwork for a new logo and future marketing campaigns for the town. Please take a moment to add your voice to the conversation!

*** 1. What best describes your relationship to Carrboro?**

☐ I Live Here

☐ I Work Here

☐ I Visit Carrboro

*** 2. Which category below includes your age?**

☐ 17 or younger

☐ 18-22

☐ 23-29

☐ 30-39

☐ 40-49

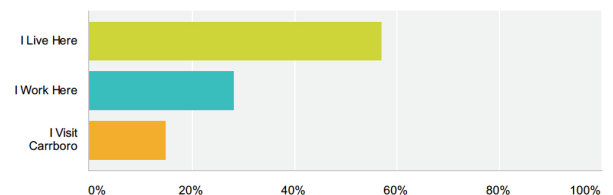
☐ 50-59

☐ 60 or older

*** 3. What makes Carrboro "Carrboro"?**

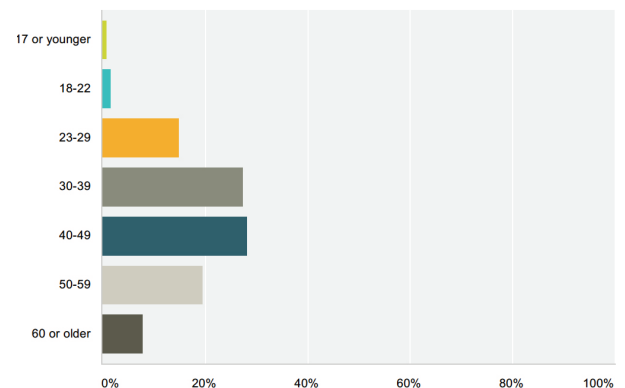
Q1 What best describes your relationship to Carrboro?

Answered: 128 Skipped: 0



Q2 Which category below includes your age?

Answered: 128 Skipped: 0



IDEA STATIONS

We set up idea stations at 23 Carrboro businesses during the month of May, asking a simple question “What Makes Carrboro, Carrboro”. We have harvested 188 responses from 18 businesses to date. We had the largest concentration of responses from downtown merchants (Weaver Street Market, Milltown, Looking Glass) but also received feedback from the northern edge of town (BP at Calvander, Winmore Salon) and from “legacy” businesses (Fitch Lumber, Cliff’s Meat Market). We placed idea stations en español at two locations to engage Latino population (Don Jose Tienda, Panaderia in Carrboro Plaza), but unfortunately received no responses.



GROUP SESSIONS

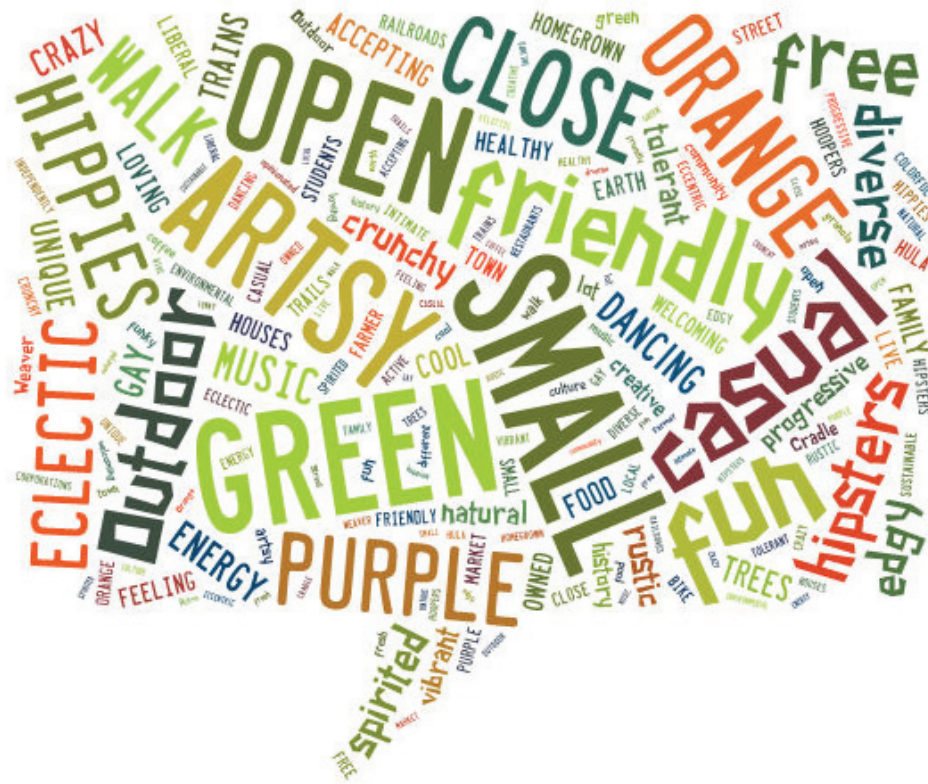
In addition to personal interviews we conducted group exercises to stimulate brand discussion with the Arts Committee, Economic Sustainability Commission, Recreation and Parks Commission, Planning Board, and Transportation Advisory Board. We also led a session at the Driving Carrboro Forward Business Meeting. We collected questionnaire responses from 64 folks during these sessions.

EVENTS

We set up tables and/or manned idea stations at several Carrboro Farmer’s Markets, Open Streets, Carrboro Day and the Carrboro Block Party and received feedback from 115 people at these events.

INTERVIEWS

We approached over 40 individuals we felt were important stakeholders in the brand, and conducted 20 one-on-one in-person and online interviews including sessions with Lydia Lavelle, Jacquelyn Gist, Randee Haven-O’Donnell, Damon Sells, and many local business owners.



We received plenty of insightful and interesting feedback throughout this campaign, much of which extends beyond the scope of what we were hired to do but will come in handy for future marketing and brand initiatives. Specific to our immediate goal of developing a logo and tagline for Carrboro, we are currently analyzing recurring emotions, statements, word use and descriptions of the town. We will distill this community feedback into a branding summary we will submit in late June along with a complete report including all survey, idea station and interview responses. Then, we begin the design and creative process. We plan to officially present these directions in September.



LET'S TALK CARRBORO
RESEARCH ANALYSIS

Let's Talk Carrboro was a six-week community engagement campaign to gather ideas and input from residents and visitors and to inform and make the public a part of the branding process.

We used a multi-level approach to gather feedback, including idea stations at local businesses, an online survey, group sessions with town stakeholders, an event survey, and one-on-one interviews. Our goal in each avenue was to engage and solicit opinion and emotion that could be distilled into our brand efforts and future marketing initiatives.

With any survey or research project like this you typically receive the most response from two ends of the spectrum—people who love and live the brand and people who hate or have issues with the brand. This rang true in this campaign. We received many glowing responses with true insight and feeling about the town and what people enjoy about it. We found many repeated words, statements, and feelings as well as common favorite places, people and things. We also received a fair amount of responses that criticized the town, its handling and/or awareness of current issues, expressed a distrust of the process or questioned the need for a brand.

We find all of this insight helpful to the process and believe we are ready to dive into creative directions for your logo, tagline and brand assets. The following report distills community feedback into manageable information that will inform our process.

REPEATED WORDS: Community/Community Feel, open-minded, free, hippies, walk-able, bike-friendly, eclectic, hipsters, weird, open, local, eccentric, funky, diverse, small, green, sustainable, active, artsy, edgy, intimate, fun, colorful, music, spirited, culture, coffee, dancing, energy, environmental, crunchy, gay, artsy, rustic, unique, fresh, crazy, fun, trains, tolerant, trees, cool, granola, food, family, natural, casual, accepting, entitled, vibrant, different, friendly, progressive, loving.

When we break this down, here are common feelings and wordplay:

COZY: relaxed, friendly, welcoming, laid-back, chill, cool, homey, casual, friendly, family oriented, neighborly, supportive, lovable, inviting, southern, quaint, simple, peaceful, bright smiles, kind

UNIQUE: funky, eclectic, artistic, musical, weird, different, fun, eccentric, vibrant, odd, quirky, playful, zippy, granola, distinct, creative, carnival, pleasantly edgy, spirited, diverse, crunchy, scruffy, unpredictable, free

FOOD: fresh, organic, local restaurants, beer, farmer's market, vegetarians, healthy, culinary, tasty, delicious

ACTIVITIES: biking, walking, walking dogs, dancing, hula hooping, running, gardening, happening

OPINIONATED: progressive, elitists, liberal, privileged, left-winged, accepting, tolerant, friendly, entitled, sophisticated, independent, open-minded, intelligent, educated, egoists

HISTORY: rustic, vintage, historic, mill houses

REPEATED STATEMENTS, WHAT APPEALS: independently-owned businesses and restaurants, music and arts, festivals, small town feeling, friendly, healthy, progressive, everything is close by, homegrown, casual, down to earth, mill houses, history, welcoming, creative, liberal, hula hoopers, opinionated

COMMON PLACES PEOPLE LOVE/ASSOCIATE WITH CARRBORO: Weaver Street, Farmers' Market, Cat's Cradle, railroads, trails, Open Eye Café

Here are some quotes pulled from responses to What Makes Carrboro “Carrboro” that show the range of feedback we received:

Community, hippie, organic, healthy, eco-friendly, walk able, bike- friendly, full of music and food trucks. Open Eye Café and Weaver Street, farmer’s markets and small, locally owned businesses. Guys with dreadlocks, sandals and acoustic guitars. Girls with tattoos, cargo shorts, organic cotton, trees and yoga mats. Tech-savvy, drive hybrids. We’re green, clean organic, close-knit and way cooler than Chapel Hill.

Stay funky, my friend. Please do not become Chapel Hill.

Don’t screw it up!

Creativity, energy, innovation, everyone is outside, openness, small business support

People on the street taking time to talk with each other and valuing that. Art, and music everywhere

Live life with no pretentions. Be what you are all and enjoy the fresh food, coffee, music, festivals and the people.

Carrboro has an open and accepting atmosphere. People here are interested in other people.

The fact that Carrboro asked this question is very Carrboro.

We are close together, physically, socially, and culturally. And we share well.

Not only tolerates eccentricity, but celebrates eccentricity

Carrboro is great but it’s already a bit too self-consciously in love with itself. Don’t make it worse with this campaign

It’s the best place, I see happy relaxed people and I want to become one of them.

Lack of planning, branding thought or foresight. Why change that? To become Chapel Hill?!

Open Minds, Open hearts, Open arms!

I love Carrboro because when I walk out my front door I just might run in a street fair where people are doing yoga, making energy with each other or celebrating our town!

It’s the place hippies and hipsters love calling home

It is a BUBBLE of self absorbed hipster bullshit. Please do not draw any more attention to this fact.

I’ve never lived anywhere that was so instantly easy to enjoy living. I moved into an apartment/condo area and instantly made friends with my neighbors, who were friends with their neighbors, who knew the people up the hill, who knew some more friends, and soon a close-knit group of 30 under-35-years old group of awesome friends, all new to the area for various reasons, was created and we’re still friends today even though only 3 of those people still live in Carrboro.

The independently owned businesses are the most important thing about Carrboro.

Business owners and workers support each other and the people who live here help each other and look out for each other. It’s the true definition of “community” and makes living here invaluable.

Here's what we learned and distilled from our research.
We will have these sentiments in mind as we move into our creative phase.

Carrboro is an unconventional place that cannot be neatly wrapped up with a bow.

Carrboro is a non-traditional town that supports and encourages creativity.

Carrboro is genuine. It looks you in the eye.

Carrboro has an independent spirit that is positive and optimistic.

Carrboro's eclectic nature is a by-product of an environment that fosters difference and tolerance.

Carrboro is a feeling. People feel different when they are here.

Carrboro welcomes outsiders because it is one itself.

Carrboro is not static. It is active and in constant flux.

Carrboro is neighborly. We are on a first-name basis.

Carrboro is smart and serious, but it can also laugh at itself.

Carrboro is up-tempo and down to earth.

Carrboro has a rhythm to it. And its own beat.

Carrboro is cool but would never call itself cool.

Carrboro has a rich history, but is not stuck in the past.



CARRBORO BRANDING REPORT

11.6.13

The Splinter Group is in the final stages of a nine-month campaign to develop a new brand identity for the Town of Carrboro. In the following report we will update you on each phase of this campaign, including research/community engagement, creative development, and presentations to our focus group and town committees and brand stakeholders. Through this process we have received positive feedback and strong preference for a logo direction and tagline we believe will serve Carrboro well for its signage, identity and marketing needs.

SCHEDULE

MARCH: Official Hire

APRIL-MAY: Let's Talk Carrboro, Research & Community Engagement

JUNE: Report Findings to Stakeholders

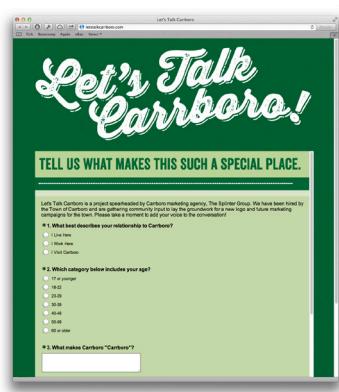
JULY-AUGUST: Creative Development

SEPTEMBER: Focus Group Presentation, Revisions to Feedback

OCTOBER: Presentations to Stakeholders

NOVEMBER: Final Presentation & Approval

LET'S TALK CARRBORO



Our campaign started with a two-month community engagement campaign we called “Let’s Talk Carrboro”. Our goal in this phase was to engage town officials, residents and visitors to share experiences, emotions and opinions about Carrboro. The primary components of this campaign were:

ONLINE SURVEY: We had 135 responses to our online survey at letstalkcarrboro.com, 57% of respondents live in Carrboro, 28% work here and the remaining 15% visit. Over 55% of survey participants were 30-49. Our questions centered on wordplay, emotions and experiences.

IDEA STATIONS: We placed “idea stations” at 23 Carrboro businesses including Weaver Street Market, Carrboro High School, Open Eye Café, The Salon at Winmore, Calvander BP and Cat’s Cradle asking one simple question...What Makes Carrboro “Carrboro”. We had over 200 responses over a four-week period.

GROUP : & INDIVIDUAL SESSIONS: We hosted group sessions with the Arts Commission, Economic Sustainability Commission, Recreation and Parks Commission, Planning Board, Transportation Advisory Board, and Driving Carrboro Forward, attended events such as Open Streets and Carrboro Farmers’ Market, and held over 50 individual interviews.

FINDINGS

We distilled the feedback we received during Let's Talk Carrboro into some initial findings that helped guide the creative process.

- Carrboro is an unconventional place that cannot be neatly wrapped up with a bow.
- Carrboro is non-traditional and supports creativity.
- Carrboro is genuine. It looks you in the eye.
- Carrboro has an independent spirit that is positive and optimistic.
- Carrboro is a feeling. People feel different when they are here.
- Carrboro welcomes outsiders because it is one itself.
- Carrboro is neighborly. We are on a first-name basis.
- Carrboro is smart and serious, but it can also laugh at itself.
- Carrboro is cool but would never call itself cool.

We filed two reports in June with more information on Let's Talk Carrboro. Those reports are attached for easy reference.

CREATIVE PROCESS

When we begin the creative process, the first question we ask ourselves is “what story are we telling?” What is the message that we want our audience to take away? In developing brand identities, the outcome is usually a logo paired with a tagline or slogan. In the case of this project, we began with slogans first as creative ways to distill down the key sentiments we drew from our research. We needed our creative to be meaningful, not just attractive.

Our research told us that we want folks to understand that Carrboro is a lively town that is unconventional, open to new ideas, unique beyond words, accepting of others and supportive of growth and change.

We produced a series of key words to provide criteria for our creative process. We wanted to create a brand expression that said Carrboro is:

- Active
- Unconventional
- Independent
- Welcoming
- Creative
- Complex

Our approach to visual design again referred back to our research. We learned that there wasn't a single shared visual icon that represented the town. Unlike some towns, we don't have a huge Arch, or a Golden Gate Bridge or even an Old Well. Over and over we heard that Carrboro is a feeling. An attitude. A sense of possibility. So we decided to pursue a mark in which the very rendering of the name itself captured and communicated the unique feeling of the town. Rather than creating an icon that stood next to a conventional type treatment of the name, we put all of our energy into developing a creative portrayal of the name through interesting typography and graphic design.

We wanted to create an original design that spoke to the people of Carrboro first. We wanted Carrboro to “get it” before anyone else did. And we wanted there to be a moment of interactive interpretation and a sense of discovery.

FOCUS GROUP

Fifteen initial slogans and logo directions emerged from our creative process. In August we presented these to a focus group consisting of members of the Arts Commission, Economic Sustainability Commission, Recreation and Parks Commission, Planning Board and other members of our community.

The focus group echoed and reinforced our instincts—they challenged us to avoid being safe and easy. Carrboro is not just another town..it isn't easy to sum up and neither should the logo be.

Of all the logos and slogans presented to the focus group, two main directions on each rose to the surface.

SLOGANS

1. DIFFERENT AS USUAL

When in Carrboro, expect the unexpected. Our eclectic mix of characters, businesses, and organizations push the envelope on creativity and progress. There is nothing typical about Carrboro. We are known for our being ahead of the curve and outside of the box. The uncommon is common and our diversity is what unifies us.

2. IT'S CARRBORO, FEEL FREE

This phrase is about liberty, encouragement, and hospitality and has its roots as a Southern colloquialism. It captures both our welcoming, hospitable nature, but also speaks to the notion of empowerment that comes from a supportive community. "Feel free" implies an open-mindedness where more is possible. Carrboro is supportive and encouraging. Optimists and pioneers are welcome here. Do your own thing becomes own your own thing. Open a business, start a band, learn a foreign language or run for office. Feel free means more yes's than no's. With less doubt, more is possible here.

LOGOS

Two logo directions also emerged, as seen on the following pages...

LOGO #1

We use overlapping, blended type and color to illustrate the idea that Carrboro is made up of many unique individuals that come together to create one body. Different colors, perspectives and voices retain their sense of individuality while tolerating and embracing difference. Through community, there is social overlap and colors begin to blend and change. This logo tells the story of how Carrboro takes all kinds and is more than the sum of its parts. It's colorful, energetic and interactive.



= DIFFERENT AS USUAL =

LOGO #2

For our second design we created an evocative piece of original art that captures the lively energy and spirit of the town. Rather than using traditional typography, this design creates the town name entirely out of lines and circles that flow into each other. The shapes within the design are suggestive of growing trees, faces, bicycle tires, spinning records, hoops and trails. The interplay between the letters gives a sense of movement, encouraging you to wander through the design as you would tour through the town, seeing unique characters and sites along the way. The flow in this design grew out of the notion that things are fundamentally different here. Helvetica does not apply. Carrboro has its own sensibility and we sought to capture it with this design. Like Carrboro itself, the mark is open to interpretation.



OUTCOME

In our six committee presentations during the month of October, logo #2 and “Feel Free” were the consistent favorites. Folks overwhelmingly responded to the originality of the design, the signature shape, and the way in which it communicated the essence of “feel free”. The legibility of logo #2 was discussed in some of our meetings but the idea that the logo was abstract and worthy of a longer look in itself spoke to the essence of Carrboro. Additionally, our context mocks (to follow) showed that logo #2 is much more versatile than Logo #1. Because logo #1 relies on a variety of colors to communicate its essential idea, it lost much of its power when reduced to fewer colors. This is a real concern when dealing with printing limitations and associated costs.









YOUR GOVERNMENT

OUR COMMUNITY

DOING BUSINESS

FOR VISITORS

HOW DO I...?

It's Carrboro feel free

Notify Me

Report a Concern

Online Payments

Community Engagement

Share

Site Tools

Agendas & Minutes

Bid Opportunities

Codes & Ordinances

FAQs

GIS

Job Opportunities

Public Parking

Recreation Registration

NEWS

At Vero Eos Et Justo

Et justo odio dignissimos estet lorem ipsum ducimus uht.

Read More

At Vero Eos Et Justo

Et justo odio dignissimos est lorem ipsum et ducimus uht.

Read More

CALENDAR

CARRBORO DAY

Join neighbors and friends to learn about and celebrate the unique qualities that make our town special. Enjoy old Carrboro stories and photos, poetry readings, music and dancing, interactive field games, crafts, family activities and more!

View All

10



OPEN SOURCE VARIATIONS

While there will be an approved logo for official town use, one of the things we love about Logo 2 is the concept of it being a signature shape or icon that is open to interpretation and customization. In the spirit of the “feel free” tag line, the mark has an open-source quality in which color and texture could be added by the public in a very Carrboro way. The interpretations carry the signature brand design while highlighting different aspects and appeals of the town. This participatory sense of the brand is emblematic of the process we’ve been engaged in. From the beginning, we’ve sought to create something unique that folks will embrace and make their own. Allowing and encouraging interpretation puts our money where our mouth is. Below we are showing how the Farmers’ Market, NC PRIDE, a skate shop, or Open Streets might interpret the mark.



SUMMARY

From the beginning of this process we've firmly believed that we are branding Carrboro because we CAN, not because we MUST. This difference in motivation is a critical distinction. Carrboro is not a desperate product that needs to increase market share. It is thriving, attracting regional and national attention, and it's simply time to unify and symbolize what makes this place so singularly original. This decidedly positive motivation has led us to creative choices born out of a sense of celebration and joy.

We are seeking your approval on this logo direction and feedback to color variations. The following two color schemes were favored in our presentations and have been used in the context examples. Your feedback will help us to create a style guide that specifies approved color, usage for identity and marketing and any allowable variations of use.

