

Master Plan Steering Committee Meeting

**December 5, 2011 - Fire Place Room Old Library - No Heat Temp 56 degrees - Brrrr
Meeting called to order 9:00am**

Present: Tim Clark, Joe Hutchinson, Michelle Catalina, Lucy Wallace, Ron Ostberg, Jim Breslauer, Sue Brown (BWP)

Public Forum Review by MPSC with Sue Brown

Repeating themes -

- “Small-town-ness” - connectedness valued
- Agrarian landscape to be preserved.
- Need for proactive planning by government
- Not taking our identity for granted.

Challenges -

- Walkability - car dominated transportation
- Dwindling number of opportunities where people can build relationships (community spaces)
- Supportive services and infrastructure for aging population
- Can the C-District become the “miracle mile”?
- Cost Benefit analysis - Personal Privacy/independence vs Community/commercial based services (both a personal and political issue AND how do we spend our tax dollars) Taxes vs. fee based approach.
- How to approach Devens - should we wait for the MP to be finished to define an approach or should we try and do it in advance of ATM as a special project. Can Devens be a benefit to the community or not? Do we have to solve Devens before proceed?
- What things related to the master plan are contingent on Devens and which ones are not, which should we focus on?

Criticism of forum-

- Wrap up too quick
- Sticker exercise confusing - much conversation focused on items that didn't generate any stickers
- Not a lot of visions for the future

Sue Brown presented cloud data maps from the public forum

Ostberg questioned if there are planners who have done a comparison of Taxes vs. quality of life? Is there an analytical form to determine “value” vs “taxes” ?

Brown Discussed updated workplan status.

Stakeholder Interviews (Summary Document)

- Draft complete will be updated with telephone interview input
- MPSC members who attended interviews can review and note anything that's missing
- MPSC to decide whether to post on the web (remove names?)

Draft Vision and Goals (Project Deliverable)

- Initial draft complete (provides context for survey)
- BWP to review with MPSC in January
- Revised draft to be presented at Public Forum 2 (early February)
- Final Vision and Goals to be submitted at end of project

Near term Work Plan December – January

- Draft Survey discussed (see below). MPSC agreed to refine survey and shorten the open time to 4 weeks from 6, keeping current end date.
- Alternatives (initial drafts due 12/19, revised drafts due 12/30, MPSC review w/working groups,
- MPSC to refine final alternatives to be presented at Public Forum 2. MPSC recommended that when developing “alternatives” don’t just focus the ones that come easy. In other words - solutions that are necessary OR processes that need to be defined will shape the next phase of the project
- Visioning Conversations- BWP will lead 2 sessions per the contract - who will be the target group? Is this the best use of BWP’s time?
- Suggested by MPSC that BWP consider using the time to create a process to resolve tensions of a particular issue - BWP to facilitate specific working groups to get beyond their strong opinions. Can BWP identify the sticking points? Can BWP challenge the statements of Dysfunctional government uncovered at the public forum?
- Wallace asked if we get at a more targeted decision making? Can we frame the problems and discover the common ground? Then fit it in the overall context and how we look at ourself. We have to get in front of the “change” so we are not in a position to react.
- MPSC suggested BWP consider identifying particular action plans that need to be developed either during phase 2 or in parallel. C-District is a big piece of work - professionals needed, perhaps a scope of work should come out of it phase 1. Its one thing to say we need an action plan, its another to actually define what that is. They are of investigation need to be defined with some considerable rigor. Look at town center action plan, defined in the 2002 MP.

Draft Survey Discussion

Sue Brown presented an Overview of the survey - Purpose is to test what we heard in initial visioning and conversations at First visioning session. Confirm or poke holes in these assumptions.

MPSC recommended a 4 week target suggested for how long would the survey to be open.

Suggested to re-order the questions. Re-arrange Social aspects first, then physical? Should we hit them with the challenges first? Then drift into the visioning? Is this a way to get them engaged in the survey to create a sense of urgency and show MPSC is responsive to inputs from the first forum?

MPSC suggested the forum was less than perfect, not enough time to dig down into a couple of key issues. We need to be comprehensive in touching all these areas. This may expand the survey slightly to make sure other citizens can participate in the dialogue.

MPSC suggested the introduction be re-written to create as sense of urgency and set the tone that the MPSC is not judgmental, “we are still in a listening phase”.

BWP agreed to revise the survey by Wednesday and distribute. MPSC agreed to schedule extra meeting on Friday morning to deal specifically with edits to the survey to keep the project on track.

Meeting adjourned 11:45pm Minutes drafted by TAC