

City of Worthington
Community Visioning Committee
Meet and Greet Event
August 19, 2019 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.
Griswold Center, 777 High Street, Worthington

Committee Members Present: Laura Abu-Absi, Kathryn Burris, Paul Cynkar, Cynthia Findlay, Matthew Lees, Jon Melchi, Jack Miner, Austin Mitchell, Don Mottley, Joe Sherman, Beth Sommer, Graham Wood

Others Present: City Council President Bonnie Michael, City Council President Pro-tem Scott Meyers, City Council Member Rachael Dorothy, City Council Member Doug Foust, City Council Member Beth Kowalczyk, City Council Member David Robinson, Paul Tecpancatl (Poggemeyer Design Group – PDG), Lauren Falcone (PDG), Linda Amos (PDG), City Manager Matt Greeson, Assistant City Manager Robyn Stewart, and Paul Dorothy.

Note: Many of the “Others Present” left before the end of the meeting.

The first 20 minutes of the event involved informal talking amongst the individuals present.

At 6:20, the individuals present took their seat and began the group discussion. The discussion started with Roller Coaster Ice Breaker in which each person commented on how they would feel if they were in line to ride a roller coaster. The responses from the Committee members are highlighted below:

Laura: excited

Graham: terrified for a literal one

Cindy: throw up

Jon: carousel at Zoo

Austin: still loves roller coaster, with Dad on mine ride

Beth: memories of Blue Streak

Kathryn: last time on one, it was her first and last ride

Paul: caught glasses when lost them on coaster

Jack: loves rollercoasters

Joe: front row, hands up

Don: not a fan, but a private pilot

Matt: hasn't been on one for 25 years

Paul Tecpanecatl offered comments to the group on Visioning. Visioning is planning for the future- an overarching goal or statement that exemplifies the core values and principles of the community. It takes into account its greatest attributes; think back when you bought your house here, what community assets did you notice, the type of houses, the neighborhood, schools, churches, places to shop, etc. Worthington has a tremendous tradition with its New England type of layout- the town square and adjoining neighborhoods. Planners are now trying to emulate this type of design called New Urbanism. Celebration, FLA, is an example of this. It was developed by the Disney Corporation. I personally found it- antiseptic,

the concept made sense, it was walkable and connected, but it had an impersonal feel to it. New neighborhoods are also doing away with cul-de-sacs and reintroducing grid streets and alleyways.

A good exercise in formulating a community vision is to have each person think of the community 15-20 years from now and to describe it. By taking the common elements from all participants, the initial drafting of a community vision statement could begin.

To help you develop a good vision statement, you will need input from all segments of the community. This will help you identify the “essence of Worthington”. This will be done through forums, surveys, focus groups and interview. As you develop Worthington’s vision, you will need to take into account our constantly changing technology- such as autonomous vehicles, public transit improvements, 5G cell technology and high speed internet. In regards to housing- we now have the development of tiny houses. Seattle has built subdivisions of these tiny homes for their homeless population. Given the high cost of housing in some regions, communities are exploring drastic measures. Minneapolis has done away with single family zoning to spur higher density development.

Worthington is landlocked, which is another factor to consider in creating your vision. As Worthington’s older residents retire and sell their homes will they be able to find other suitable housing in the city so that they can stay in the community? One of the most popular types of senior housing development is Senior Villas or cottages (housing for the over 55 population group). A community must be able to provide housing for all residents- from entry level/first time home buyers to empty nesters and retirees. Another phenomena is our Millennials- they don’t want to leave home, want to stick around and work from home. They also like new technology and are addicted to social media.

Successful visioning, needs everyone in the community to participate. Our job as consultants is to help you generate public input and to provide you with enough information to help you make informed choices. No one should have preconceived ideas. We, (PDG consultants) will be apolitical. We want to make sure that at the end of this process that consensus can be reached on a community vision that will be embraced by the entire community. This Vision will then be used by City Council to guide and prioritize development. We want to help you develop a Community Vision that you and the entire community will be proud of.

Lauren Falcone went over ground rules, which were noted as follows:

- Be good listeners
- Do not monopolize conversations, everyone must be given opportunity to speak
- Be respectful of different opinions
- Take visions from public and help mold into common visions
- Chance to share your visions during key person interviews and in Phase V
- Find common ground, not all agree 100%
- Parking lot issues (items not relevant to Visioning will be listed for City to address and follow-up at different venue)

Ms. Falcone asked for any additions or changes to the ground rules. None were offered.

Ms. Falcone also discussed the following expected roles of the Committee, City Council, Consultant and City staff:

Committee Roles

- Provide overall management of the vision process
- Identify & coordinate with existing City Admin/Elected officials
- Provide guidance, advice for visioning process regarding community engagement, data gathering and data interpretation
- Gather feedback from community about needs, aspirations, values for future
- Develop and conduct community outreach and survey methodologies to validate a communitywide perspective on needs, aspirations, values
- Develop a draft vision/positioning statement for community reaction and commission adoption
- Provide comprehensive analysis from data publicly collected (majority and significant minority views)
- Active listener, not one of advocate
- Active participant during life of Committee
- Appoint Chair and Vice Chair
- Attend all meetings/events,
- Monthly reports to Council (Chair and Vice Chair)
- Looking forward, not focusing on past

Consultant Roles

- Guide VC, Public through visioning process
- Conduct/facilitate all VC meetings, public input processes
- Utilize administration for technical support and VC for boots on the ground support
- Provide written summaries of visioning process
- Unbiased and objective, not involved in politics
- Looking forward, not focusing on past

City Council Roles

- Pre project work (appointed Visioning Committee, reviewed RFP responses, conducted interviews, chose consultant)
- Attend meetings as listeners
- Provide any support to VC as requested, needed
- Looking forward, not focusing on past

City Staff Roles

- Collect and distribute bias for VC
- Provide previous planning docs/reports for PDG to review

- Provide admin support to consultant, VC
- Attend all meetings in listening capacity, provide institutional knowledge
- Provide meeting space for stakeholder interviews, VC meetings, SWOT/SOAR, Focus Groups, Visioning Session, Charrette, Public Event
- Update social media, community engagement websites
- Publicize process in City newsletter/website
- Looking forward, not focusing on past

The group discussion concluded with a Worthington trivia game. Following the trivia game, each Committee member was asked to write down “What Worthington is to you” and a list of fast facts/glossary items they would like defined and distributed.

The meeting concluded with the Consultants sitting at tables with the Committee members for more informal conversations with members.

The meeting concluded at 8:00 p.m.