

City of Worthington

Community Visioning Committee

Tuesday, January 14, 2020 - 6:00 P.M. – 8:30 P.M.

Worthington Municipal Building, 6550 North High Street, Worthington, OH

Committee Members Present: Joe Sherman, Don Mottley, Matt Lees, Cynthia Findlay, Beth Sommer, Paul Cynkar, Kathryn Burris, Laura Abu-Absi, and Austin Mitchell

Committee Members on Conference Line: Linda Mercadante

Committee Members Absent: Graham Wood, Jon Melchi

Others Present: Assistant City Manager Robyn Stewart, Management Assistant Ethan Barnhardt, Lauren Falcone (on conference line) and 1 visitor was in attendance

Mr. Sherman convened the meeting at 6:08 p.m.

MOTION

Mr. Mottley moved, seconded by Ms. Sommer to approve the meeting minutes from the Community Visioning Committee meeting of December 10, 2019.

The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Sherman detailed his presentation to the City Council in December and how supportive they are of this process. They are appreciative of the work that is being put in and anxious to see the results. At the next Council meeting he intends to show them some of the work of the committee such as the postcard and the Vision Worthington banners. He will be presenting to Council on January 21st which will be on a Tuesday due to the Martin Luther King Jr. holiday.

Mr. Mitchell described how they have come up with three deep dives for Chris Boring's update. In addition to previous questions from the Committee, he is going to come back on January 27th to discuss additional topics including Boomers Become Seniors, Rise of Millennials, and Transportation & Walkability. He will provide a report in advance and allocate thirty minutes for discussion.

Mr. Sherman asked if anyone had anything to add to Dr. Bowers or Ms. Brown's discussions or any other items to follow up on.

Ms. Sommer said she asked about National Church Residences property and the subsequent development and she was informed that they pay \$90,000 in property taxes currently and will pay \$350,000 in property taxes on the new development. Mr. Cynkar said it was interesting how the state puts the city and school district in different positions. Apartments create an influx of tax dollars, without new students. The schools have no reason to be against additional apartments. Mr. Mottley noted that at a certain price level there are not a lot of kids, but more revenue.

Mr. Cynkar brought up the conceptualization of enhancing US 23 from Worthington to Delaware that is not necessarily in the City but involves someone making plans outside the city.

Mr. Sherman brought up the redevelopment of the Holiday Inn site and the potential Tru Hotel. Mr. Cynkar said the feedback on the Tru Hotel is that it is modern but minimalistic. The Chamber of Commerce is considering going to the developer to say does not fit here. Some businesses say they would not let their people stay in a Tru Hotel. Ms. Stewart explained that what drives the selection of a hotel flag is the STR

Report which evaluates how much you can expect to charge per night. The hotels at Crosswoods are older and their room rates are decreasing. Two hotels have recently closed there. That means the STR Report said that this area near the interchange cannot support higher room rates. Hilton will give the Tru flag which has a lower room rate. Mr. Sherman mentioned that Anthem could be leading to that. Ms. Stewart said that Polaris can accommodate people with much higher room rates. The hotel industry really relies on the data from the STR report.

Mr. Mitchell brought up Dr. Bowers' presentation and the question around how to engage students. He would like to get Dr. Bowers' thoughts on how to do that. Ms. Findlay said she would put the Committee in touch with Principal Pete Scully at Thomas Worthington. She does not mind working on that effort after the stakeholder group's work is completed. Mr. Sherman said he followed up with Dr. Bowers to say that they would keep him up to date on their work. Mr. Cynkar suggested involving a social studies or civics class and possibly involving Vicki Gnezda. We could see about getting into staff meetings and PTA meetings. Ms. Stewart said that you can reach out to parents through the PTA Council and then the school PTAs.

Mr. Sherman moved on to discuss the Farmers Market. He and Mr. Mitchell visited last weekend to see how it operates. They found a couple locations that could probably work. They will not reach out to Nina Parini until they are ready to start. He plans to discuss strategy at the meeting on the 27th. He said he would plan to be at the Farmers Market every weekend he is in town. They will have engagement cards and postcards to pass out. They need to talk about how to approach this and what is the script.

Ms. Sommer explained how last year there was an informal survey conducted to find out where people were from and how often they come. Ms. Stewart said that the Partnership may have that data they could share.

Ms. Findlay brought up the possibility of conducting a public meeting in an empty store front. That way we might be able to capture people walking by. Mr. Sherman that was a good idea to discuss at the next meeting.

Mr. Sherman brought up the postcard and whether it should be done quarterly or semiannually to change some of the content. Ms. Sommer responded that it would be best to consider the feedback first. Mr. Mitchell said that it could be part of communications working team determining what information to get out. Mr. Sherman asked Committee members to think about where they would like to see these distributed and come back with ideas at the next meeting. He asked about the timeline to print postcards. Ms. Falcone responded that two weeks is plenty of time to produce the cards and print them. In the planning documents it is listed to have them at the library, Griswold Center, Arts Center, and the Chamber of Commerce office.

Ms. Sommer asked when the Chamber's annual meeting is because she wonders if they would let us have a booth to distribute information. Mr. Cynkar said that meeting is on February 27th and February 4th is the Groundhog Day breakfast. They are working with Mr. Greeson to incorporate visioning into his presentation. Mr. Sherman asked for follow-up on the content of Mr. Greeson's presentation.

Mr. Lees overviewed the Communications Team that is made up of himself, Ms. Abu-Absi, Ms. Findlay, and Mr. Wood with support from Ms. Barton with Poggemeyer and Ms. Brown and Mr. Barnhardt with the City of Worthington. He overviewed their responsibilities and goals. Their scope does not include how

data will be collected from the Vision Worthington website. There will need to be a decision about who will oversee that and determine how to put the data from the website to use.

Mr. Mitchell asked about what “resident inquires” would be. Mr. Lees said it could be something where someone might ask to find something or ask what the next event will be. Ms. Abu-Absi said that she imagines the team may manage responses, responding quickly to the obvious ones and pushing other items to the Committee as needed.

Mr. Sherman asked out data collection and if there are tools within the site that allow the data collection to happen. Mr. Barnhardt responded that he has not seen how the data collection works firsthand, but there should be the ability to pull up reports on the backend of the website to summarize information.

Ms. Findlay asked if the website has the ability to live stream events. Mr. Barnhardt said he has not seen tools like that yet.

Mr. Sherman explained how someone needs to own responsibility for the data collection tools. Ms. Falcone said that Poggemeyer would own that and report on it. The Committee expressed their support for that strategy.

Ms. Abu-Absi asked about the data collection tools and what information we want to collect about the demographics of individuals engaging whether online or in person. Mr. Lees explained that the registration page for the website includes some demographic questions, but it is recommended not to overwhelm people when they are registering. We should just get what we absolutely need and then ask for deeper information later.

Mr. Mitchell asked if we care about demographics as long as we reach the 80% goal. Mr. Mottley asked how do we know that we have reached 80%. Mr. Cynkar noted that the more information you ask, the more people do not feel anonymous. Ms. Stewart questioned what happens if the demographics of the 20% that do not engage are a specific subset of the population. Ms. Sommer said that we definitely want to know the age of people to get input for all age ranges and where they live.

Mr. Lees demoed the VisionWorthington.org website to the Committee.

The Committee discussed possible changes to the sign up questions, focusing mainly on the questions about how they relate to Worthington, specifically whether they live in the City or the school district, or if they live or work in the City.

Mr. Lees asked that the Committee members read through the website and provide comments back to him. They need to decide when to launch the website. He requested that comments be sent by the next meeting.

Ms. Abu-Absi questioned what Poggemeyer’s role with the data collection tools will be. Mr. Lees replied that Poggemeyer will provide the questions and content, which the communications team will get out. Ms. Falcone clarified that the Committee would control the content, Poggemeyer will provide suggestions.

Ms. Abu-Absi asked what will be the hook to get people to register. Mr. Lees explained that it will be staying in the know and registering as a way to track the process and be engaged with it. Ms. Falcone brought up the discussion about having gift card drawings for people who participate.

Mr. Sherman asked how he should describe the communications plan and the website to the City Council on Tuesday night. Ms. Stewart suggested showing snapshots of the website that are not interactive since the page is still being developed.

Ms. Findlay explained how the key stakeholder interview team met on December 23rd via telephone to discuss not only the questions but the purpose of what is trying to be accomplished. They had a discussion about organizing the list of potential interviewees which is 90-95% full. They will start with interviewing the Committee as a stakeholder first in groups of three to begin testing the tool.

Ms. Falcone stated that Poggemeyer would be in town on January 27th for several days to conduct interviews.

Ms. Findlay suggested that the interview team sit in on a couple of Poggemeyer's interviews to get comfortable and for consistency. Poggemeyer's 25 interviews are to include the Visioning Committee. She explained how they have some blanks from Mr. Mottley and Mr. Wood on who they would like to have interviewed. She asked if they have a couple people in mind. Mr. Mottley said that he does. Ms. Findlay explained how the purpose of the interviews is not only to gather a vision from a few key stakeholders, but to inform what questions should be asked of the community at large. This will define a set of priorities as this group of stakeholders see them. She discussed the overall demographics of the group and how they need to make sure they are touching some older residents, younger residents, and some minorities.

Ms. Abu-Absi said it is important that the group is mindful of which segments of the community they are reaching. She does not remember if we asked anything like that on the key stakeholder interview tool. Particularly for Councilmembers, it is important to get their input on constituencies they hear from consistently and those they do not engage with often. Ms. Findlay said we may want to refine the questions for Council to include something along those lines

Ms. Sommer explained how she thought that the people who were not selected for the Visioning Committee would be interviewed in-person. If we are not including those applicants in the in-person interviews, she would change her two selections. It is vital to interview those who applied but were not selected.

Ms. Findlay said that members can change their two selections if they would like. She then walked through the list of stakeholder interviews and who will conduct them, writing them on the whiteboard as follows:

- **Visioning Committee to be interviewed in groups of three to four by Poggemeyer in person**
- **Submitted Visioning Committee Names to be interviewed by Poggemeyer in person**
- **City Councilmembers to be interviewed by Visioning Committee appointee in person**
- **Ten Council candidates to be interviewed by Visioning Committee team in person**
- **Applicants to Visioning Committee not selected to be interviewed via survey tool online**

Ms. Sommer asked if it was agreed to have two Visioning Committee members at each interview.

Ms. Findlay said they would record the interviews with audio. Poggemeyer would then summarize and aggregate the answers from the interview tool by question, removing identifying information.

Ms. Mercadante asked what is the point of recording the interviews if they are not transcribed. Ms. Findlay said she has talked about doing full transcriptions in order to be able to pull quotes from it. Ms. Mercadante said it would be hard to locate and identify those things without transcribing them. Ms.

Falcone suggested not doing recordings, but to take internal notes. When participating in a team of two, one person takes notes. Ms. Stewart suggested taking personal notes on details and anything sensitive, then summarizing the interaction for the group, and informing interviewees that the results will be reported in the aggregate.

Ms. Findlay explained how they have a list of questions for the interview tool with a lot of open ended questions to spawn a back and forth discussion with the interviewees. She asked for everyone to provide their input over the next week. She explained that Ms. Falcone is going to create a Sign-Up Genius for everyone to fill in their availability for the in person interviews.

Mr. Mitchell asked if the group supported the organization of the stakeholder interviews as listed on the whiteboard. Mr. Sherman suggested letting everyone have a few days to think on it and respond. Mr. Mitchell said he would volunteer to do more in-person interviews as needed and other can do the same on a voluntary basis.

Ms. Stewart stated she can provide applications in case the Committee wants to identify some individuals for in-person interviews based on their backgrounds.

Ms. Abu-Absi explained how it would be helpful to have a digest of all the things that need to be done and when. Ms. Stewart said that she and Mr. Barnhardt will send out action items to the Committee in an email so they can track everything they are supposed to be doing.

Mr. Cynkar detailed the work from the Speakers Bureau team. They will be giving formal presentations to groups within the City of Worthington. The first thing that the group has to do is target their audiences, looking at what groups they want to talk to. He was under the impression that not only the working group would do presentations, any member of the committee could. They just need to be on the same page using same script, message, and PowerPoint. People will need to be comfortable in front of an audience. Each presentation would be formalized but customized. Once an audience is targeted, we will need to schedule events. The City will create a master calendar to share with the group and keep it up to date with speaking engagements. We would then try to match speakers with the audience. If someone is familiar with a group, that could be good opportunity for them to be the speaker there. Preferably we will have two people there, with one person taking notes. It is important to get snippets of the things people say to aggregate and analyze later on.

Questions or issues that come up requiring information can be forwarded to Joe or Robyn. It is important to introduce the Vision Worthington website and possibly do a demonstration of the tool. We want people to sign in so we can track numbers to be able to show Council how many people attended these things. Ms. Stewart said there could also be an option to be added onto the communications list. Mr. Cynkar explained how they want to do a minimum of 30 formal speaking engagements. We are going to have very busy schedules for the people involved.

Ms. Sommer added that we should have a sheet of paper that has all our info on it. Mr. Cynkar brought up his suggestion of having an engagement card. He explained how he checked around and found a 2.5in x 2.5in card template and he showed a mockup of what the card could look like. The front of the card will have the Vision Worthington logo on it. The back of the card will have members' contact information. The idea is to print cards for everyone to pass out when talking to people with interest. He proposes having a box printed for everyone.

Ms. Findlay suggested adding a QR code to the cards.

Ms. Falcone brought up that they have used similar cards in the past and that they are a good idea.

The Committee expressed approval of the idea of the card and wants to move forward. They then had a conversation about how to list contact information and determined they should use individual member contact information for a more personal touch.

Ms. Abu-Absi asked about the resources we have available for this to use for printing.

Mr. Sherman said it is \$1000 to have 100 cards printed per person. Increasing that to 250 per person is a large savings in cost.

Ms. Stewart suggested a 250 count run of a generic card in addition to the individualized cards.

Ms. Falcone said she would tweak the wording of the Speakers Bureau PowerPoint. Mr. Cynkar said they want to have a standard guide, so they are all on the same page. Some people are good without a PowerPoint, but others like having a PowerPoint to provide some support. He asked to receive feedback in the next couple days.

Ms. Abu-Absi said that one thing she likes to do when speaking to groups is to give timely and practical examples of why they should care. Ms. Falcone and Ms. Stewart responded that they could figure that out and think about examples.

Ms. Falcone discussed several action items. She asked if a volunteer sheet should be put together in One Drive. Doing a calendar was discussed for committee events so that everyone is on the same page. The past document summary was received from the City, Poggemeyer will review it and then push out to the Committee. For the next meeting she will be here in person.

Ms. Sommer asked for the status on another member being recruited for the group. Mr. Sherman said City Council is close to an appointment. Ms. Stewart said Mr. Bucher is working on his recommendation and it has to go through Council.

The meeting adjourned at 8:29 p.m.