

City of Worthington
Community Visioning Committee
Tuesday, November 10, 2020 - 6:00 P.M. – 7:30 P.M.
Virtual Meeting via Microsoft Teams

Committee Members Present: Laura Abu-Absi, Kathryn Burris, Catey Corl, Paul Cynkar, Cindy Findlay, Matt Lees, Linda Mercadante, Austin Mitchell, Don Mottley, Beth Sommer, Graham Wood, and Joe Sherman

Committee Members Absent: Jon Melchi

Others Present: Assistant City Manager Robyn Stewart, Management Assistant Ethan Barnhardt, Public Information Officer Anne Brown, Lauren Falcone Poggemeyer Design Group, and no visitors were in attendance

Mr. Sherman convened the meeting at 6:04 p.m.

MOTION *Mr. Mottley moved, seconded by Mr. Cynkar to approve the meeting minutes from the Community Visioning Committee meeting of October 26, 2020.*

The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Sherman commended the Committee for their work throughout this project and for a successful presentation to the City Council last night.

Ms. Falcone expressed that the Council meeting was very positive, and she did not know of any Councilmembers who came back with additional questions today. She brought up how President Michael had a comment about how to rectify competing thoughts within one vision. She thought that these visions did a good job of meeting in the middle, however there will still be divisions on certain issues though. The goal was to make sure each vision had something everyone could buy into. Mr. Mottley shared that the Committee has put together statements everyone can agree on, but we have multiple strains of thought out there. The last vision dealing with governance is how you resolve that, different people in the community would make different choices, and we must fall back on the last governance vision to figure out how to reconcile those divisions. Ms. Falcone explained that there was feedback from a community member including a comment about Council ranking the visions. The decision was not to rank the visions and if funding comes available, there could be working teams to figure out which comes first. Ms. Mercadante said she thinks President Michael's question pertained to the UMCH property and different plans. She knows that President Michael has a preference for high density over patio homes. It is not the Committee's job to make a decision about that, but we should at least show we are aware of the tensions here. We can share what we have heard to show the different viewpoints. Ms. Abu-Absi brought up how Councilmember Kowalczyk recognized there is conflict, but it is ultimately Council's job to decide. She agrees we should refer back to wheel of visions and not be prioritizing. Ms. Findlay asked if there is a way to emphasize that this is a discussion that the community wants Council to have and start work on. Ms. Mercadante asked if we should at least summarize what the Committee heard. Ms. Falcone described how the action steps give ideas, and they are varied with different viewpoints.

Ms. Corl asked if there has been a discussion about metrics and tying back with the visions. She wondered what are the outcomes we are trying to achieve and the metrics that will need to be hit, and if maybe that is a tangible way to think about next steps. Visions are what we aspire to holistically, but we need to

incrementally move all the visions up. She heard last night uncertainty about how those things are balanced. Ms. Falcone responded that when we get to the action steps it could also incorporate benchmarks. Ms. Corl explained how action steps are solutions to problems. When thinking about UMCH, it is a problem that needs resolution and could hit on multiple visions. The metric should be more about what good progress looks like. Ms. Falcone described how the action plan is more what we heard. Mr. Sherman expressed how the Committee needs to be really careful. UMCH is a landmine and to get dragged into this is something we want to step very carefully on, and we need to get away from specifics. Ms. Abu-Absi agreed, noting that she would like to go back to the resolution that created the committee. She does not want the Committee getting into something that the City Council did not sign off on via the scope. Mr. Mitchell asked to make sure our final report includes what is included in the scope and whether the scope includes an action plan. Ms. Falcone explained how there would be action items and include implementation matrix. The associated metrics need to be solidified and should be broad because there are so many conflicting issues. Ms. Stewart described how her thoughts were that after the holidays there would be people coming together in working groups around each vision statement, and working to take the suggested action items, vetting them, and creating an action plan that everyone can agree on.

Ms. Corl described how in her professional work they come up with "idea portfolios" to capture thoughts. People need clear and tangible thoughts and the metrics become that tangible thing. Ms. Falcone expressed how she likes the concept of an "idea portfolio". Ms. Corl further explained that we would prioritize where to focus based on import. If things are critically important, they become more prioritized. Mr. Mottley conveyed that he is concerned, and if we were to put a label on our task, it is helping to develop policy for the City, not implementation details. Going over the details or gap analysis is more about implementation. If we are getting involved in implementation, that is for the working groups and administration, not something in this report. Ms. Abu Absi said that the notion of having working groups into the next calendar year is news to her. Ms. Falcone explained how that is the next phase with the idea lab concept and roundtables with fresh legs that can take on this project, the Visioning Committee was not charged with actual implementation. Mr. Sherman described how at his next Council update it is appropriate to ask what their idea is for moving forward. Ms. Falcone explained how the Visioning Committee are the experts in visioning and what people are saying and feeling. Ms. Stewart expressed how Council will probably not be ready to discuss next steps since they have not seen the full report yet, but that could be accomplished in December to say what they are thinking about as far as next steps. The concept of creating a working team for each vision statement to bring people together who are interested in each area of focus along with some staff members who work in those areas would help lend insights and enable exploring new ideas. It would be great to have the Visioning Committee to bridge between the visioning process and the working groups.

Mr. Sherman asked whether we go on or wait to see what Council has to say. Ms. Falcone expressed that as long as it follows the scope, then we are fine. Ms. Findlay asserted that the report needs to have some sort of broad map and metrics to show how we are on the road towards achieving the visions. Ms. Corl expressed that we need some sort of outcomes we are striving for that demonstrate we are making progress to reaching each of the visions. This would be separate from the idea portfolio. Mr. Mitchell said that we need to stick to the scope, and he has confidence that whatever the next step is, Council will look to the Visioning Committee to move forward. Ms. Abu Absi brought up that a review of the scope would be helpful because she is not sure if the Visioning Committee should come up with benchmarks. We have

not done a thorough review of the implementation aspect. Mr. Sherman said that it is appropriate to ask Council, and we want to make sure we close this the way to set the stage for what is next.

Mr. Cynkar brought up how two comments made by Council were subtle. The first from Bonnie was about the conflict between visions and how is it resolved. There are going to be conflicts and we must be prepared for that. There is the question of whether the Visioning Committee helps in any way to prepare Councilmembers for responding to different issues. Along the same lines, another Councilmember made a comment about how they have put a heavy load on the Committee's shoulders. Council is going to be left with responding to the different issues and conflicts. There is the question about whether the Committee has any role helping them respond to or helping find information to respond to those types of things. Mr. Sherman replied that he has not heard that role. Mr. Lees expressed that should be included in the report and will give them the information they need about the things that were heard or how prevalent they were. Ms. Falcone described how the goal was not to solve UMCH. Council should look at things through lens of visions. For UMCH, throughout the outreach, people wanted balance and for something to be done. The majority wanted development there. However, we cannot scientifically tell the percentage of people who wanted something.

Ms. Falcone described how the scope is broader than she thought it was. There is language talking about ways to achieve and implement the vision statement. She is not sure if we have the capacity to do that, and she is unaware of efforts to do an evaluation like that and is not sure if we had robust enough conversations to do those things. She suggested calling that out in the report.

Ms. Corl asserted that if there is no consistent approach about how to achieve implementation, it is not going to get there. Part of any plan for working groups would be establishing some sort of firm metric to know if we are making progress. Ms. Falcone provided the example of diversity. It would be great to have monthly celebrations or banners celebrating different groups. If you have a quarterly diversity event, you have worked towards that vision and are actually seeing change.

Ms. Brown mentioned that the press release is about to go out and Mr. Sherman may be getting a call from the This Week News reporter. Information about the visions has been updated on our website and on the newsflash section.

Mr. Barnhardt discussed the website and how a decision needed to be made about extending the contract. The committee discussed options and suggested extending the contract as-is for three months and then change to the view-only option for twelve months.

Ms. Falcone brought up the idea of putting together a video to showcase the visions. Mr. Lees suggested finding a diverse group of people who support each of the seven vision statements and have them read the statements and talk about why that vision means something to them. Mr. Mitchell explained how it falls into the public information piece and it is important we do everything we can to get the word out that these vision statements are there. Mr. Lees said that the goal would be to have the video done by the end of December or the beginning of January, and he will work with Ms. Brown on this.

Ms. Falcone asked if committee members needed more time for wordsmithing the draft chapters of the final report. Mr. Mitchell described how the report contains the details that tie back to what was heard from the community and it is important to make sure folks have the time to read and give their feedback. This needs to be a Visioning Committee effort through the end. Mr. Sherman asked what is realistic for

the time frame, because there needs to be a structure for this . Mr. Cynkar expressed that we need to wait to see some of the initial reactions, but this does not need to drag on.

Ms. Abu Absi asked who is approving the report, is it the committee or Poggemeyer. Ms. Falcone responded that it is written as “we” and refers to “our consultant”.

The meeting adjourned at 7:58 p.m.