

MEETING REPORT

PROJECT NAME: Lancaster Economic Development Strategic Plan
MRA PROJECT #: 14045
MEETING DATE: July 11, 2014
LOCATION: Lancaster, PA; Marriott Hotel Conference Center
SUBJECT: **Steering Committee and Working Group Meetings**
ATTENDEES: PROJECT TEAM: Megan Griffith; John Hershey; Tom McGilloway; Tripp Muldrow; Shelby Nauman; Bob Shoemaker; Marshall Snively; Kristen Wyche

WORKING GROUP MEMBERS: Adam Althouse, Alice Yoder, Charasay Powell, Charlie Crystle, Chris Stump, Cory Amman, Dan Belk, Daniel Betancourt, Dave Bender, Deborah Barber, Denise Whitman, Doug Groff, Ed Gordon, Emily Landis, Emma Hamme, Gene Aleci, James Reichenbach, Jeff Owen, Jeffrey J. Vrabel, Jeremy Hess, Jessica Mailhot, John Biemiller, Jonathan Coleman, Larry Benilly, Lydia Walker, Margie Marino, Mark Buckwalter, Mary Colleen Heil, Melissa Brosey, Melody Keim, Nicole Seuffert (RGS), Noah Miller, Ole Hongvanthong, Sam Houser, Sam Wilsker, Schirlyn Kamara, Scott Standish, Stephanie Reese, Tom Ponessa, Tracy Beyl, Tracy Linhorst, Vy Banh, Reverend Ed Bailey; Elvin Rodriguez; Robert Ecklin

PREPARED BY: Megan Griffith; July 22, 2014

Consultant team met with Project Steering Committee and the Working Group to review input received during the July 9-11th work sessions and garner additional input.

1) INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

- A. Marshall Snively called the meeting to order; welcomed attendees and stated project scope and status.
- B. Marshall asked Working Group members to introduce themselves.
- C. Consultant team was introduced.
- D. Tom McGilloway reviewed team background and summarized meetings from the 2 days prior.
- E. First public meeting is the evening of August 14, 2014. In response to a desire to reach out to a more diverse population (expressed in many of the individual meetings throughout the three days), Tom McGilloway and Tripp Muldrow began by seeking input on how to help with this. .
 - a. Welcomed advice for increasing diverse representation at public meeting
 - b. Discussion included:

- i. Working Group members need to assist with this effort – drawing upon individual networks
 - ii. Reach out to church congregations; start with small groups. Host introductory meetings with individual groups prior to inviting attendance at larger, public meeting. Marshall has list/contact information
 - iii. Latino community meets every 1st Thursday. Next meeting is August 7th at 5:30 PM; Groff Family Funeral Home at 520 West Orange.
 - iv. Assets is conducting a survey to inventory businesses in Lancaster; can facilitate outreach out
 - v. Don't discount idea of accessing younger group with written blog
 - vi. Utilize media: Local radio stations; social media (Twitter, Facebook, Websites, etc.)
 - c. Marshall indicated information will be available on the LCA website.
- F. Tom McGilloway and Tripp Muldrow followed by identifying five themes which had developed through the work sessions:
 - a. Connections: across all levels (i.e. physical, social, visual, etc.)
 - b. Two Approaches to Economic Development:
 - i. "Classic" sense: job creation; development; bringing visitors and consumers into the city; etc.
 - ii. "New Economy": grassroots efforts; creating networks; etc.
 - c. Financial challenges and opportunities: costs to redevelopment; funding resources; investment opportunities; etc.
 - d. Individual financial hardship and accommodating housing needs: poverty, affordability challenges; housing shortages; etc.
 - e. Branding: including perceptions of the city; celebrating local image and cultural identity; possibility of naming neighborhoods/districts
- G. Tom and Tripp facilitated the theme discussion

2) FACILITATED THEME DISCUSSION

- A. "Connections" must include element of equitable development; upward mobility; connecting underserved populations (families facing poverty; youth; etc.)
- B. "Intergenerational" connections – engaging youth and keeping them engaged
- C. Create a process to connect thinkers and doers (ideas with implementation strategies)
 - a. Schools with economic development (all age levels—youth to college—mentor; demonstration)
- D. Identifying champions and centers—"point people" and places/organizations in each corridor
- E. Focus on building networks and sharing
 - a. Link between generations; storytelling
 - b. Develop relationships and foster connections across boundaries
 - c. Work with School District regarding career days.
- F. Community gardens are great way to bring people together.
- G. Transportation connections

- H. Potential strategy opportunities for multicultural festivals
- I. Make this plan implementable; a strategy of its own
 - a. use variety of tools and outlets to reach different audiences – foster networks within communities which used to be present
 - b. Layers of opportunity (not limited to one major project)
 - c. Tools for tracking progress
- J. Plan for retaining existing businesses and residents
 - a. Avoid/prevent gentrification and displacement (no strategies at the expense of others)
 - b. Need to be careful of displacement and gentrification (example: artists with affordable studio space in a warehouse on North Queen are being displaced because of redevelopment of that warehouse. Not necessarily bad, but this plan needs to connect displaced individuals to resources. Great stuff happening here because of the arts. Can't lose this population; understand that surrounding Townships are already recruiting this "creative class." York, PA is recruiting the "makers"; Lancaster is at risk of losing the makers (painters, builders, craftsmen, filmmakers, writers, etc.).
 - c. Address stigma and stereotypes
 - d. One legacy: "Bigness of the small". A lot of small actions happened in addition to the larger recommendations of the previous plan.
- K. Possibility to attract "makers" to the Southeast (part of the city). Challenge is that there is a perception that the Southeast is all poverty.
 - a. Stereotypes and perceptions are not limited to single areas/populations. Not all artists are "starving". Also, some artists don't understand how to market themselves.
- L. Suggestion: "Lancaster: City of Makers" – great aspirational theme to gather around. "Cheerleaders" help young entrepreneurs.
- M. Part of economic development is taking the time to talk about the issues (as is being done today). Implementation Plan should include mechanism to continue these discussions.
- N. No longer about how to attract businesses/people ("Classic" economic development); about connecting the dots (i.e. existing innovators, residents, and resources, etc.) ("New Economy")
 - a. Remove/identify solutions regarding barriers to investment
 - b. Don't lose sight of business to business connections (ie: make it easier for everyone to shop at the market).
- O. Many people have faith in the school system; we all have responsibility to change perceptions by sharing our good experiences.
- P. Fig Lancaster Magazine is an excellent vehicle to tell peoples' stories.
- Q. Need to consider alternative transportation: bike share/bike network.
- R. Need to factor parks plan into economic development plan.
- S. Holistic, citywide approach
 - a. View city as a family; as an enterprise
 - i. Take ownership in the city's future and have a share in the city's health
 - b. Group development of a positive city identity
 - c. Important how we brand/image ourselves. Caring for Lancaster's future:

- i. "A society grows great when old men plant trees whose shade they know they will never sit in." — Greek proverb.
- T. Identify other models for development; such as the Eldorado Promise in Arkansas; NYC model for neighborhoods; etc.
- U. Tap into the region at large
 - a. Connecting with/to the county
 - b. "We are a city inside a county and we need to look at how we tap into county."

3) CLOSING REMARKS

- A. Marshall Snively commented to the Working Group and Steering Committee and noted the important community discussion. He cautioned not to lose sight of the scope of this economic development strategy's focus on the commercial districts of downtown and the neighborhood corridors. While understanding the broader community issues is an important part of the effort, it was discussed that a lot of great projects and initiatives (both physical and social) are happening all over the City and part of this planning process will be developing strategies to "connect those dots" in order to strengthen our commercial cores that serve as neighborhood and City centers.
- B. Action Items
 - a. Develop community web resource(s)
 - b. Conduct analysis and provide insight into research and project development process
 - c. Conduct precedent research; identify models
 - i. Small downtowns/entertainment districts
 - ii. Neighborhood retail
 - d. Review current plans and identify how to incorporate elements of those plans into economic development strategy.
 - e. Advertise the August 14th meeting