



MILWAUKIE ALL ABOARD

Community Vision and Action Strategy
Vision Advisory Committee Meeting #2
October 6, 2016 6:30-8:30 pm

MEETING SUMMARY

Members Present

Jessica Neu, Barbara Eiswerth, Zara Logue, Arianna Van Bergen, Douglas Craig, Shannah Anderson, Adrianna Stanley, Angel Falconer, Howie Oaks, Misty Collard, Bryce Magorian, Ben Rousseau

Members Not Able to Attend

Rochelle MacDonald, Greg Baartz-Bowman, Chris Davis, Alejandra Torres

City of Milwaukie

Mark Gamba, Mayor; Lisa Batey, Councilor
David Levitan, Mary Heberling, City of Milwaukie

Consultants

Kirstin Greene and Anais Mathez, *Cogan Owens Greene*
Daniel Franco-Nunez, *IZO Marketing*

Others Present

Sarai Rodriguez, Maxwell Bernard, Odalis Aguilar-Aguilar, Tyrenna Jacobs; *Youth Vision Action Team*

Conversation is summarized by agenda item below.

Welcome

Mayor Mark Gamba opened the meeting and welcomed members of the Vision Advisory Committee (VAC). He thanked participants for serving on the committee to help steer the direction of the City.

Introductions

Kirstin Greene, Cogan Owens Greene, invited VAC members to introduce themselves and describe what prompted their desire to serve on the VAC. Reflections, summarized by participant, include:

- Jessica Neu: I have a degree in political science and family ties to the Air Force, so I feel a strong sense of civic duty.
- Barbara Eiswerth: I've been a resident here for 21 years and am a local artist. I believe in community. I want to keep Milwaukie great, but also want to see the City progress.
- Zara Logue: I want to see the community grow in a healthy way, and preserve some of its great qualities because I have kids that will be growing up here.
- Arianna Van Bergen: I'm really interested in local politics.
- Odalis Aguilar-Aguilar: I thought this would be a great way to learn more about where I go to school, and maybe make it a place I could continue to live in.
- Sarai Rodriguez: The Youth Vision Action Team interested me because Milwaukie is a great place. I came from Gresham, and it feels much safer here.

- Douglas Craig: I want to help change and revitalize the downtown, and keep it as a place for families.
- Shannah Anderson: I feel close to nature, in a community-oriented environment. I want to make sure we maintain that.
- Adrianna Stanley: I'm a transportation engineer and was curious to see what it's like to be on the other side of things for once!
- Angel Falconer: I have kids here and look forward to building a community that is more accessible for everyone.
- Maxwell Bernard: I have interest in political science and urban planning. I think that small government and small groups like this is where the most change happens.
- Tyrenna Jacobs: I go to school here and I wanted to be involved in something that helps make this city more vibrant, pleasing and better for everyone.
- Daniel Franco-Nunez: I represent a Spanish marketing company and work to support the minority voice. This project seemed important. I grew up here and went to Milwaukie High School. This is a great opportunity to have impact on people's lives.
- Howie Oaks: I've been involved since moving here and building an intentional community. I felt the need to expand that to the local neighborhood and bring forward lessons to help broaden the scope. I am looking at the city through my children's eyes.
- Anais Mathez: I am part of the consulting firm that was hired to help facilitate this process. I'm excited by the energy in the room.
- Kirstin Greene: I am the principal of Cogan Owens Greene and am honored to be able to carry your voices forward.
- Misty Collard: My kids are my motivation. I volunteered with the AmeriCorps and Habitat for Humanity when I was younger. As a result, issues such as housing and accessibility are important to me. As an adult, this is my attempt to reengage in the work that I participated in when I was younger. I grew up in a small Colorado town where there was so much life and artwork around, creating really vibrant spaces. I have a desire to see that here in Milwaukie.
- Bryce Magorian: I'm from Milwaukie and am really interested in the micro scale of politics.
- Ben Rousseau: I love this town and I plan to stay here. I'm motivated by my children and want this to be a great place for them. I have a desire to see major changes throughout the world as well, so this is one area where I feel like I may be able to affect some change.
- Mayor Mark Gamba: I ran for office because of the issue of climate change. However, that is only one of the big problems we have. Equity is the other. I want Milwaukie to be the most livable, equitable and sustainable city in the country.
- Lisa Batey: I'm a Councilor and have a desire to see a more vibrant City.
- Mary Heberling: I'm an Assistant Planner with the City and am excited to work on this project because I grew up here.
- David Levitan: I'm a Senior Planner with the City and this project was one of the main reasons I moved from my position in Beaverton.

Vision and Action Plan Updates

Kirstin Greene, Cogan Owens Greene, provides an update on several phase 1 activities and documents.

- The verbatim comments, attached as an appendix, to the Stakeholder Interview Summary are highlighted as a source of good feedback.
- The group is reminded that the school district and parks and recreation district are partners in this project.

- Kirstin reviews the key messages in the Communications and Engagement Strategy, pointing out the message on growth, i.e. *as you're poised to grow more, how can you grow better?*
- The group is reminded that the online survey is still up and running, and to help spread the word. There is also an article out in the Pilot. VAC members are ambassadors, each with your own networks. Kirstin asks that everyone shares out on Facebook, to their friends and family, etc.

Town Hall Save-the-Date and Discussion Leaders

- Postcards for the Town Hall are printed. VAC members are encouraged to take a stack and pass them out.
- VAC members are called upon to be discussion leaders or a note-taker at the Town Hall. A notice will be sent out to see who can do what. There will be a brief training and overview shortly before the event. Every discussion leader will be paired with a note-taker.

Updated Draft Community Profile

- As suggested by the VAC, the community profile is organized by the 4 sustainability lenses.
- The VAC had said it is important to address the challenges we know we are facing, so a list of potential challenges has also been added to the text.
- Kirstin reviews the challenges and opportunities noted in each of the four key categories and then opens it up to observations (summarized):
 - Surprised that 40% of MHS students live below the federal poverty line.
 - How do we allow the people that live here to be able to continue to be able to live here? What do we have to do with our housing stock? Zoning should be fixed so that everyone can continue to live here.
 - There may be a human function here, in addition to land use and zoning.
 - Having a local social services hub be very helpful for people.
 - Rent control should be part of the City's programming. However, cities are currently disallowed from making rent controls, though this is being reviewed with the legislature. There is talk about making no-cause evictions illegal, and also allowing cities to be able to impose some sort of limit.

Emerging Themes

Kirstin reviews some of the emerging themes, noting:

- Accessibility is more than transportation. It will be beneficial to unpack that over time.
- Funding is a key piece.
- Communications can always be continually improved. Additional translation languages may be needed in the future.

Kirstin reminded the group that the Youth are scheduled to code all the input received to date on October 24th. A call was made for VAC members who would be willing to come together for a worksession on October 25th to craft the vision statement in advance of the Town Hall. Misty, Bryce, Ben, Mark, Jessica, Arianna, Angel and Howie all volunteered.

Youth Reflection

Anais Mathez, Cogan Owens Greene, provided an update on some of the community outreach and youth engagement activities. To date, seven Community Conversations have been completed, with nine more scheduled. The Youth team canvassed downtown Milwaukie and got 20 surveys. They will be visiting the Business District and the North Milwaukie Industrial Area next.

Anais introduced the Youth Team and Daniel from Izo Marketing, who is helping lead the Youth Team. They briefly summarized their activities to date and noted anything surprising that they heard.

- Tyrenna took notes at two Community Conversations (Madres de Corazon and Ledding Library) and helped with business canvassing in one day. She noted that people have great things to say about the library and often emphasized the small town feel. She was surprised to hear that parking was such a big issue.
- Max spent time canvassing businesses downtown. He mentioned that people had very strong opinions about parking. There was also questions about what else would be done with the waterfront, and a desire to see more park amenities for kids.
- Sarai took notes at the Citizen’s Utility Advisory Board Community Conversation. She mentioned that there was a lot of concern about affordability, both currently and in the future.
- Odalis joined in business canvassing downtown. She felt that business owners seemed worried, especially about parking for their employees.

Daniel noted that the concerns of most small businesses tend to be more immediate. They are not necessarily looking 15 years down the road, but rather to the next month or paycheck. Kirstin mentioned that this suggests a phased approach in the action plan development.

Town Hall Agenda

Kirstin reviews the draft agenda for the Town Hall. The new City Manager will be introduced to the community at this event. Mark Gamba provided a brief overview of her background for the VAC. Other aspects of the town hall draft agenda include:

- Opportunities for instant polling.
- Discussion around the vision statement and whether it is on the right track.
- Discussion around the City’s old vision statement to identify what progress has been made.
- Focus of this Town Hall will be what we aspire to; metrics will be identified at the next Town Hall.
- Mary Heberling will create an historical overview board that describes key trends in demographics, history of growth and settlement, etc.

Emerging Themes (*revisit*)

Kirstin revisits emerging themes, asking the group what may be missing from the list. The following comments and reflections were noted:

- The aesthetic piece wasn’t quite included, like art. There are many underutilized spaces that could be revamped with art.
- Accessibility was mentioned in terms of transit and the physical obstacles that disconnect neighborhoods. However, it also reflects the ability to interact with the City. Translation, information dissemination (i.e. like a pamphlet in the utility bill), and considerations for flexible meetings is all part of “accessibility.”
- Specific thoughts are missing about energy, building codes, compost, green construction, water and air quality.
- The “hyper-local” idea of community is very important. Little neighborhood nodes are what create the sense of community and encourage engagement rather than apathy. How can community design support socially connected communities? Zoning can help create these neighborhood nodes, but the density requirements to support small businesses will remain an issue. Tax credits exist to create mixed-use areas with mixed-income housing. This will be

important to consider moving into the Comprehensive Plan Update. Ideally, solutions are organic to the neighborhood in order to keep the fabric of the neighborhood.

- The City's identity is missing from this list. The Bing Cherry was proposed as a concept for branding Milwaukie's identity. Kirstin mentioned that Brian Scott could be invited to weigh in on community identity.
- School demographics are a missing item. The accessibility and community piece should be broadened to reflect the diversity of Milwaukie.
- Neighborhood nodes should include a shared activity that overcomes language barriers and political/cultural barriers to create connection.
- An interesting idea is a "community weatherization" program, like a modern version of a "barn raising," for people that can't afford to upkeep their houses. The neighborhood can get together once a month to work on a house or yard. This could be extended to installing solar panels, planting new trees, etc.
- Inclusivity should stand on its own a little bit more.
- A multicultural event should be highlighted at the farmers' market every 6 months or so. There is a big Hispanic community in the City and at the High School, but not at events like the Farmer's Market and First Fridays. It was suggested that the community be asked what kind of things could be celebrated if a parade or festival were set aside.
- Creating a new fruit like the Bing Cherry takes creativity and innovation. Labeling Milwaukie as innovative is a nod to the Bing Cherry, Dark Horse Comics, ArtMob, etc.

Public Comment/Announcements

Lisa Batey announced the dedication of new sculptures in town will happen on October 7th. She also mentioned that a Boys and Girls Club opened in Oak Grove, having moved down from Sellwood. It currently is inviting children from three elementary schools.

Next Steps/Concluding Remarks

David announced that a doodle poll will be sent within the week to schedule the next VAC meeting for November. In addition, there will be a booth at the Farmer's Market on Sunday. He reminded everyone to continue to spread the word about the Town Hall.

Adjourn

Mayor Mark Gamba thanked the group and adjourned the meeting at 8:30pm.