

ENVISION CAMBRIDGE

Engagement and Communications Working Group, Meeting 01

05/10/2016

CDD 4th Floor

Committee Attendees

Ben Peterson, Cathie Zusy, Debbie Bonilla, Eryn Johnson, Justin Crane, Phyllis Bretholtz, Sarah Kennedy, Tara Greco, Zuleka Queen-Postell

Staff/Utile Present

Staff: Stuart Dash, Melissa Peters, Gary Chan

Utile: Tim Love, Dan D'Oca, Will Cohen, Meera Deean

Committee Members Absent

Elaine DeRosa, Jeenal Sawla, Justin Kang

2 attendees from public.

Meeting Overview

- Presentation from consultant on project overview and engagement strategy (available [here](#))
- Discussion

Committee Feedback

- Comment on how the same level of input is gathered using different methods. Concern that data collection and analysis is not consistent across modes.
- Question on the purpose of the citywide plan and how inputs during the visioning phase will interface with other city processes (i.e. citywide needs assessment)
- Concern that committee membership is not diverse. There was a suggestion to add additional members to the committee. Several members sent names to city in follow-up emails.
- Suggestion to use "house party" model to broaden outreach.
- Suggestion to use games to illustrate tradeoffs between different planning scenarios (i.e. Ecodistricts).
- Need to build trust and buy-in from community. Need to explain why this plan is relevant to people's lives today, not only in 30 years. Need to answer the questions, "Isn't the city built out? Is there room for more change?"
- Need to make sure all committee members have equal opportunity to speak.
- Need to have a concerted outreach effort to students and small businesses.
- Important to make clear that there is not a predetermined outcome; getting representative set of voices.
- City needs to do a better job in advertising for committee membership in order to include a diverse set of applicants.
- Hire community coordinators to help create community cohesion. Historically, churches and other houses of worship have served this role, but they are, generally, in decline.
- Neighborhood schools are no longer neighborhood schools. This is also disruptive to community cohesion.

ENVISION CAMBRIDGE

- There are very few public meeting spaces in Cambridge and most of them cost money. CHA buildings charge money to rent public spaces.
- Maps should show all current and approved development in Cambridge.
- Housing questions should ask about current (today – 6 months) housing needs as well as future needs.
- CDD should develop a list of places available to host community meetings.

Public Comments

- Consultant and city staff spoke more than committee members; this needs to be the reverse.