

# ENVISION CAMBRIDGE

## Engagement Working Group Meeting #3 Notes

June 12, 2016, 5:30-7pm  
CDD, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor

### Committee Attendees

Elaine DeRosa, Tara Greco, Justin Kang, Sarah Kennedy, Jeenal Sawla

### Staff/Consultants Present

Will Cohen, Meera Deean, Iram Farooq, Melissa Peters

### Committee Members Absent

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

### Public Attendees

James Wilkinson

### Meeting Overview

1. Citywide visioning
  - a. Recap of the June 15<sup>th</sup> visioning workshop
  - b. Outcomes
2. Additional visioning activities
3. Activity updates
  - a. Newspaper
  - b. Website
  - c. "What's the Plan" Panel 2 from June 30
4. Next Steps and Wrap-up
5. Discussion

### Committee Feedback

- Where is the Mobile Engagement Station going? Where else could we go? We have to go where people are. Community pools, ongoing events/meetings at public housing (check CHA calendar of events), and other civic areas like salons, barbershops, and shops.
- Where will the newspaper go? Suggestions include supermarkets and local businesses.
- There is already a lot going on, outside of the Envision Cambridge process, that takes up the time of residents, and it can be hard to prioritize this in addition, and the current phase of the planning process is still so high-level.
- The conversations will only get to challenges people are dealing with when people feel safe discussing it. To be able to say how hard it is to be in Cambridge can be scary.
- To connect with the business community, go into long-standing businesses and ask them their take on what has been changing in the city.
- We should also schedule meetings for other times of the day. And schedule meetings in the morning for businesses.
- Many people's timeframes are much closer to now than three years. If the public gives input, then they need to see that we've processed it and then see something tangible.

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- A way to deal with that may be to give historic examples of things in Cambridge that got redesigned and took a long time.
- There is a lack of overall public awareness about the planning process. Around community organizing, a big takeaway is that a town hall for, say, millennials would have a hard time packing the room. We need to find trusted community partners for communities we want to reach, and have them help organize it. Right now, Envision Cambridge is a young idea.
- Boston Creates did an excellent job with outreach. They got a lot of buy-in from ~20 communities, so that their constituencies would believe that it has value.
- Boston 2024 tried to do a lot of outreach among millennials. Hundreds of people came to discuss the project when a trusted community member helped. There were daily town halls held by the plan itself, but it wasn't until a community member helped with organization that those kinds of numbers appeared.
- The City is developing a meeting-in-a-box kit that would be a way for there to be more self-directed meetings, and this would be a good way to help with additional outreach.
- The engagement working group can help beta test this kit before it gets finalized.
- Does the city have a list of community partners? It may help the plan know how else to reach out to. The city and staff can make a draft of that list and check in with the working group later.
- The panels and events may want to be more specific as well going forward – with the topics so broad right now, it may make people less interested in attending. This is a balance which this stage of a planning process needs to work through.
- How can we make the plan less broad in the public's eye? It is true that since the plan goes for another 3 years that there is plenty of time to reach out to different constituencies.
- Some of the biggest issues for people today – like incentive zoning, etc. – only have a certain group of people involved in processes around those topics. It is important that, going forward, we encourage more than a small but vocal community to give feedback.
- Maybe one way for the plan to give something back, now, is for us to report back what people say they want to the community to be. And that statement needs to be something easy to connect with or respond to.