



MEMORANDUM

to Downtown Steering Committee Members
Jean Hasser, Project Manager, City of Napa

from Anchi Mei, Project Manager, MIG

re Downtown Steering Committee Meeting #1 Summary

date July 27, 2009

I. INTRODUCTION

The Downtown Napa Specific Plan (the "Plan") will guide the City of Napa in its planning efforts to create a more inclusive and vibrant Downtown Napa. The purpose of the Plan is to develop a community vision for the Downtown and create tools and strategies to implement the vision through recommendations for public and private development. The Plan will include detailed policies, design guidelines and development standards that work toward a holistic vision of Downtown. Building from the input gathered during a comprehensive community engagement process, the Plan will help lead the City towards a more sustainable, pedestrian-friendly and attractive Downtown.

To help guide the process as the Plan develops, the Downtown Steering Committee (DSC) has been established and will provide feedback and serve as a liason between the planning team and the community at large. The DSC includes Downtown residents, property and business owners, and community members. It is a diverse group with a breadth and depth of knowledge and interests for all aspects of the Downtown, and above all else, a passion for bringing positive change to Napa. The charge of the DSC is to help shape and refine community concepts and recommend a draft Downtown Napa Specific Plan to the City Council. A total of seven DSC meetings are scheduled to take place throughout the planning process. Meetings will typically be held from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. on Wednesday evenings.

II. MEETING FORMAT

On Wednesday, June 17, 2009, the City kicked off the first DSC meeting. The meeting was held at the First United Methodist Church in Downtown Napa from 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. The DSC is composed of 15 members and 4 alternates. All DSC meetings are open to the public and approximately 30 community members attended.

The meeting commenced with an introduction from Tambri Heyden, the Planning Director for the City of Napa, as well as self-introductions by each of the DSC members. Following

the introductions, Chris Beynon, principal from the lead consultant team MIG, Inc., then presented an overview of the project as well as the charge and responsibilities of the DSC members. Anchi Mei, project manager from MIG, presented a condensed version of the existing conditions analysis presentation.

Following a short break, the meeting focused on results from Community Workshop #1 and the preliminary vision elements that emerged from that meeting. Chris Beynon facilitated DSC members in a robust discussion further defining, refining and prioritizing key vision elements to guide the Plan. Comments made by the participants during this discussion were recorded on a large wallgraphic by Anchi Mei.

III. COMMUNITY COMMENTS

The following is a summary of comments gathered from community members during the facilitated discussion on the emerging vision framework for the Plan.

- The Napa River is an “intellectual crossing”
- Walkable
 - Be specific about what walkable means
- Create a Downtown parking strategy that allows you to park once and walk around
- Need more people living in the core
- Need more offices
- Need more ground floor retail zoning for pedestrian friendly buildings
- Make it a 24-hour or 19-hour Downtown
- Create the right balance of housing and commercial uses
- Public spaces and parks
- Bring in more local and national stores
 - Make it unnecessary to drive out of town to shop
- Create a transit hub (even with transit center relocated)
 - To the airport and Sam Francisco
- Create safe and convenient bike-oriented streets in and out of Downtown
- Create pedestrian zones Downtown (no or limited cars allowed)
- Restore the street grid north and south
- Plow ahead for all of Downtown (be willing, heavily encourage and actively partner to redevelop underutilized sites and buildings Downtown)
- What and how to make Napa unique?
- “Curate the Downtown experience”
- Ensure a movie theatre stays Downtown
- Create an entertainment district
- Quality building materials lasts
- Create and encourage timeless architecture
 - New buildings need to reflect Napa design character
- Preserve site lines to historic buildings
- Historic = sustainable
- Being green also mean taking care of nearby rivers and being stewards of Napa’s surrounding agriculture
- Downtown Napa is the most beautiful place on earth!

Public Comments

- Make Napa a magnet!
- Small town character
- Public art
- Downtown lacks small retail spaces (e.g. 700 square feet like in Healdsburg)
- Need mini-shuttles ("hoppers)
- Car share
- Electric vehicle (EV) recharge stations
- Follow up on traffic studies that analyze circulation impacts on neighborhoods west of Jefferson
- Additional police and security will be needed with Downtown growth

IV. Next Steps

DSC members were asked to complete a walking tour of the planning area and provide their thoughts and ideas for improving Downtown in terms of land use and circulation. Their comments have been synthesized and will be discussed at the next DSC meeting which will focus on drafting a preliminary Downtown Strategy to begin implementing the vision through land use and circulation improvements. The project team is continuing to synthesize the DSC's ideas on the vision and refining the vision framework for presentation at the third DSC meeting in September.

The next DSC meeting will be held on Wednesday, August 5, 2009 at the Napa River Inn in Hatt Hall located at 500 Main Street.