

**Council/PC/Place Worksession  
Water Street Center  
November 19, 2013**

Call to Order at 5:09 p.m.

**Councilors present:**

Huja, Kristin, Kathy, Dede (Councilor Elect Bob Fenwick)

**Planning Commissioners present:**

Natasha Sienitsky  
Dan Rosensweig  
Gennie Keller  
Kurt Keesecker  
John Santoski

**PLACE present:**

Beth Meyer  
Rachel Lloyd  
Andrea Douglas  
Richard Rice  
Claudette Grant  
Bill Emory  
Tim Mohr

**Staff present:**

Missy Creasy  
Paige Rice  
Miriam Dickler  
Maurice Jones  
Jim Tolbert  
Chris Engel

PLACE members Beth Meyer and Rachel Lloyd gave an introduction about “why design matters” and shared some ideas about planning, green infrastructure, and community engagement.

Richard Price opened a discussion about urban design opportunities in Charlottesville. PLACE has discussed aligning our zoning code with the goals in our Comprehensive Plan.

Ms. Szakos said she likes to hear perspectives on how property rights and by-right plans can work well. She said Dominion Power is interested in removing poles from sidewalks if we can come up with an inventory of where they exist.

Beth Meyer said there is a disconnect between the space we have and regulations. Best practices from leading cities are implemented with wider streets; we need to come up with innovative ideas that work for Charlottesville's unique size.

John Santoski said Planning Commissioners have to work within certain limits, which can be frustrating. Shifting Council vision over the years creates a dynamic environment with conflict over what is and is not important.

Dan Rosensweig said there is some mutual frustration over lack of coordination between planning groups and departments.

Mr. Price said there is a link between quality economic development and urban environment.

Ms. Szakos said digestible ideas turn into huge initiatives that become unwieldy and feel out of reach. It creates a sense of not being able to move forward on smaller projects for lack of a global plan.

Beth Meyer said there are a few templates that are being developed with the SIA and West Main projects that can be used for prototypes for the rest of the City.

Kurt Keesecker said we need to find a way to have more holistic discussions, including about how a project impacts surrounding areas, not just its footprint.

Rachel Lloyd directed the conversation about design metrics for success and strategies for implementation.

John Santoski said we have to put practical resources behind ideas in order to implement them. Mr. Huja said the City has greatly increased its allocations to bikes, sidewalks and trees.

Ms. Galvin said we have to establish priorities and coordinate them with the CIP, the comprehensive plan and individual departments.

Gennie Keller said planning is done at a macro level, but is implemented on the junior staff level and there is tunnel vision. Reports are written about parcels, not about place on the whole.

Claudette Grant reviewed things they have learned from the SIA project process.

Ms. Smith said she supports hiring an outside consultant to examine our zoning and how it meshes with our comprehensive plan. She is interested in examining the "shared streets" idea.

Mr. Tolbert reviewed a few major opportunities currently open for in-house development potential (see report starting on page 6 of materials).

Kurt Keesecker said we should define a matrix of goals that evaluate each small area plan so that we can evaluate if we have accomplished these goals.

Beth Meyer said plans like the Parks and Rec Master Plan, the Bike/Ped Master Plan, and the Stormwater Plan, need to be coordinated. There should be one large, holistic plan instead of several plans that do not speak to each other.

Ms. Szakos said there is a huge need for planning in the Woolen Mills/Martha Jefferson district. If we start with that area, we should recognize up front that at least three types of areas need to be addressed in the plan.

Beth Meyer said we should create guides for public infrastructure, including vision, and the difference between a design guideline and a performance spec. We need to identify the metrics for success for the comprehensive plan components.

Mr. Tolbert said we can examine strategies for providing criteria to developers for SUP requests.

Mr. Huja said community engagement is necessary and important, as it has been with small area plans in the City's history.

Dan Rosensweig said there is consensus towards taking targeted small areas and coming up with a narrative vision for them, and from that devising a criteria list for SUPs. We can come up with a process for the Planning Commission, including input from PLACE and public participation. Ultimately this will come down to what resources Council will devote towards this versus their other priorities.

Ms. Galvin asked the group to analyze the tables she distributed and see if the missing policies she highlighted would inform new resolutions and ordinances.

The meeting was adjourned.