



Town of Sykesville Comprehensive Plan

Advisory Committee | Meeting #4 Summary

Thursday, August 20, 2020 | 6:00 PM – 7:30 PM | Zoom Meeting

Attendees

1		Al Mcevoy (Advisory Committee)	11	✓	Mark Dyer (Town Council)
2	✓	Anna Carter (Town Council)	12	✓	Norman Fogg (Advisory Committee)
3	✓	Brandon Smith (Advisory Committee)	13	✓	Rachel Becks (Advisory Committee)
4		Debbie Scheller (Advisory Committee)	14	✓	Roger Lerner (Advisory Committee)
5	✓	Stacy Link (Town Council)	15	✓	Troy Truax (Michael Baker International)
6	✓	Eric Valenstein (Advisory Committee)	16	✓	Vanessa Shamberg (Michael Baker International)
7	✓	Jana Antrobus (Town Staff)	17	✓	Peter Quintanilla (Michael Baker International)
8	✓	Joe Cosentini (Town Staff)	18	✓	Kirsten Compitello (Michael Baker International)
9		Julia Betz (Advisory Committee)	19	✓	Cameron Weiser (Michael Baker International)
10		Laura Scheiner (Advisory Committee)			

Meeting Materials

- Advisory Committee August 20, 2020 Meeting Agenda
- Advisory Committee August 20, 2020 PowerPoint Presentation

Meeting Discussion and Summary

Welcome and Introductions

- Troy Truax thanked everyone for joining and took attendance of all participants on the call. Troy remarked that the last time the Advisory Committee had met was on July 16th and provided a brief overview of the consultant teams efforts over the past few weeks related to public outreach.

Public Involvement Summary

- Vanessa Shamberg provided an overview of the stakeholder engagement approach, which has included:
 - Stakeholder Focus Groups (Complete): Four focus groups with 25 participants
 - Elected Official Interviews: Scheduled for the week of August 24

- In late August, Michael Baker will be drafting a public online survey that seeks public opinion on the topics discussed with the Advisory Committee and stakeholders. Vanessa noted that the Advisory Committee will be critical in distributing this as widely as possible.

Focus Group Findings

- The Stakeholder Focus Groups included representation from:
 - Planning Commission
 - Merchants
 - Raiders Football
 - Zeteo Tech
 - Carroll County
 - Downtown Sykesville Connection
 - Property Owners
 - Raincliffe
 - Merchants Association
 - St. Paul's United Methodist Church
 - Elm Street Development
 - Warfield Development
- **Shared Treasures** included:
 - Main Street, Downtown, and DSC
 - Sense of Community/Small-Town Charm
 - Warfield and Riverfront Potential
- **Additional Treasures** discussed by stakeholders included:
 - Regional Proximity to metro areas
 - Nearby amenities (Piney Run Park)
 - Family-friendly environment
 - Boutique Retail
- **Shared Challenges** included:
 - Parking
 - Sidewalk/connectivity
 - Connectivity to Warfield
- Shuttle connectivity for Warfield was a topic of conversation, and a Dotto shuttle was shared as one method of transportation for consideration.
- Parking was identified as a great concern, especially during Town events and on Sundays when people drive to church and attend the farmers market.
- **Additional Challenges** discussed by stakeholders included:
 - Carroll County's real estate market
 - Geographic constraints of the downtown
- The challenge of geographic constraints shared in the Stakeholder Focus Groups was in the context of developable area in the downtown (e.g., 0% vacancy with a waiting list of businesses wanting to open downtown). Focus Groups shared a strong retail vision for downtown.
- The use of rooftops for apartments or outdoor seating for restaurants and other businesses is shared as an opportunity for downtown.
- Town Hall has a large yard which could be utilized as a communal gathering space.

- Stakeholders would like the Town to capitalize on remaining growth areas such as Warfield, the riverfront, and the vacant property on 714 Sandusky Road located behind E.W. Becks.
- Stakeholders shared transportation safety improvements should include downtown streetscapes, the river bridge, and along Schoolhouse Rd and Oklahoma Avenue.
 - Residents have been seen walking or bicycling the wrong way on Oklahoma Avenue.
 - Wayfinding and signage should be developed on I-32 and in Town to direct visitors and residents to places of interest.
- Parks and Recreation – A trail connection to Eldersburg (As outlined in the Carroll County Parks and Recreation Plan) would benefit the Town, as well as a formal Town Parks Department.
- Warfield – Unanimous desire to see the development come to fruition, though it must complement the Town and have a creative approach to transportation to and from downtown.
 - Retail, Restaurant, and big box uses are not desired
 - Possible uses include a community center, entertainment, office and biotech, and hospitality.
 - Stakeholders shared the idea of a shuttle or Dotto train as a method to reduce stress on parking infrastructure and transport people from Warfield to the downtown and back.
 - Transportation in town must be fun and convenient
 - Apple Butter Factory is another location which could be used to develop a community center.
- Vanessa Shamberg explained that there were many similarities between the “Treasures and Challenges” that were shared by the in June and July, but that stakeholders had some additions as well.

Discussion and Next Steps

- Troy will be meeting with the Mayor and Town Council the week of August 24th.
- Based on the findings from stakeholder outreach and the Town Council interviews, Michael Baker will develop an online survey and work with the Advisory Committee to distribute it as widely as possible within the Town.
- The updated Community Profile will be posted on Microsoft Teams once completed.
- During the October meeting, Michael Baker and the Advisory Committee will identify a Vision Statement and begin Issue Prioritization for the comprehensive plan.
- Urban Design Workshops will be held in the Fall:
 - Michael Bake will work with the Advisory Committee to identify specific locations which they would prefer to use as the focus during the design workshops.
 - Peter Quintanilla (Michael Baker International) shared that tactical urbanism (the practice of using temporary materials to “preview” urban design changes) could be used to get the public involved in the design process and see the ideas the Town is working with.
- Vanessa shared the Sykesville Comprehensive Plan logos with the Advisory Committee Members
 - The committee agreed that the first and second logos should be merged: the icons in the first logo will be paired with the language from the second logo.
 - The logo will be put on the Town of Sykesville webpage with the comprehensive plan information.
- **Next Meeting:** September 17, 2020