

Barkhamsted Economic Development Meetings

The following is a description of a series of meetings that are scheduled to begin a dialogue with the public and private sectors to gain consensus for a thoughtful approach to economic development that is compatible with the character of the community:

Riverton Focus Group

Historic Riverton has undergone changes since the closing of the Hitchcock factory which has had a negative economic impact on the community. Unless creative steps can be taken to offset these impacts, Riverton will continue to lose its vibrancy. This village has many positive attributes and there is the opportunity to build on some successful events and to explore utilizing the National Trust for Historic Preservation's Main Street approach. A key concept is to promote economic development within the context of historic preservation.

The Town of Barkhamsted is a member community of the Connecticut Main Street Center and will utilize CMSC staff services to facilitate the public session in conjunction with Garnet Consulting Services, Inc.

This session has been scheduled to take place on January 20, 2009 at the Barkhamsted Elementary School. The snow date for this meeting is January 29.

Route 44 Focus Group

Several studies have been done by volunteers and the best ideas will be explored to build an economic development strategy by advocating a public-private partnership in developing a shared vision for economic development. Development along the Route 44 corridor is inevitable as can be seen in other towns east of Barkhamsted and with careful planning and dialogue there is the opportunity to minimize the visible impact while maximizing the economic opportunity of this area.

This session has been scheduled to take place on February 10, 2009 at the Barkhamsted Elementary School and will be facilitated by Mark D. Waterhouse, CEcD, President of Garnet Consulting Services, Inc. The snow date for this meeting is February 18.



CAPTURING THE VISION – FOR RIVERTON

January 20, 2009

Agenda

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|---------|--|
| 7:00 pm | Welcome and introductions
Review: district boundaries |
| 7:15pm | Purpose and Overview of Visioning |
| 7:30pm | Visioning exercise: entire group |
| 8:00pm | Break-out groups draft Vision Statements |
| 8:30pm | Presentation of completed drafts |
| 8:45pm | Next steps |
| 9:00pm | Adjourn |



1) INTRODUCTION: VISIONING & THE PLANNING PROCESS

- A vision is not just a dream, but the ultimate benchmark toward which all efforts are directed. A powerful vision for your district conveys a sense of personality, character and identity.
- A vision **DECLARES YOUR INTENTIONS** – it describes what your district will look like, and how it will operate, in the future.
- Visioning is a tool intended to build consensus and manage change in a meaningful way. Having a diverse group of citizens create the vision can lead to higher levels of commitment and enthusiasm for downtown revitalization.
- The visioning process enables you to take an active, rather than reactive, role in shaping change. Visioning creates the overall framework for what the community wants its revitalized district to be.
- Without the vision all you have are a series of projects and promotional activities, but you can't really make any significant change because you haven't articulated where you want to go.
- Significant development takes time – the vision helps you communicate where you want to go more efficiently.
- Once the vision is established then you can:
 - Perform a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats (SWOT) analysis
 - Identify Strategic Goals
 - Define Projects and Activities that help achieve those Goals
 - Develop workplans
 - Attract your partners and volunteers

2) THE VISIONING EXERCISE

SAMPLE: Vision Statements

- Think about what you would like Riverton to be in the next 5 to 10 years
- Remember, Main Street is a comprehensive program focused on:

1. Restoring the civic value	<i>through</i>	Organization
2. Restoring the social value	<i>through</i>	Promotion
3. Restoring the physical value	<i>through</i>	Design
4. Restoring the economic value	<i>through</i>	Economic Restructuring



- **QUESTIONS TO HELP STIMULATE RESPONSES IN THIS VISIONING SESSION:**
 - What are Riverton's greatest assets and opportunities?
 - Why is Riverton important to the entire community? to the region?
 - What qualities and characteristics will Riverton have in the future?
 - What will Riverton be known for in the future?
 - What are the connections for pedestrians and shopping and dining, to parking, the crosswalks and public spaces?
 - What kind of retail is there in Riverton?
 - What are families doing?
 - Are there recreational activities?
 - What kind of people are in Riverton?
 - How does Riverton look at different times of day, or of the year?
- **CLOSE YOUR EYES AND TAKE A WALK THROUGH YOUR DISTRICT:**
 - Look left and right and up and down
 - Use all of your five senses: what do you see, hear, smell, touch & taste?
- **WE WILL GO AROUND THE ROOM AND ASK EVERYONE TO TELL US WHAT YOU SEE:**
 - Use two word descriptions, adjective-noun-verb combinations or concepts (urban village, gathering places, pedestrian oriented, outdoor dining, family-friendly, multi-generational, culturally diverse, etc.)
 - If needed, the facilitator will clarify responses

3) BREAK-OUT GROUPS TO DRAFT A VISION STATEMENT

- We will break out into 4 equal groups, with representatives of merchants, property owners, residents, etc. in each group
- Assign a scribe and a spokesperson, who will read your draft to the group
- Incorporate the two-word answers we captured and make it reflective of your downtown's specific assets and opportunities
- Look for key phrases that might be the centerpiece of your statement
- Use the present tense so the reader can imagine that they are already in this place
- Be as succinct as you can be, capturing the essence of your vision for Riverton
- This is meant to be fast-paced. The most important goal at this moment is to evoke real feelings - the editing and word-smithing can come later



- Don't get ahead of yourselves with goals and projects right now – let the vision guide that part of planning later.

4) BREAK-OUT GROUPS REPORT BACK

- Each group reads its statement
- Are any questions raised, or is there a need to clarify?
- Are there the makings of a final vision statement from these drafts?
- Create an ad hoc committee to draft a final Vision Statement
- Board / Group reviews and approves

5) NEXT STEPS IN PLANNING FOR DESIGNATED MAIN STREET COMMUNITIES

Planning Sessions:

- Review / approve Vision Statement
- Develop the Mission Statement
- Perform SWOT analysis –
- Identify strategic goals –

Committee Workplanning:

- Identify current committee projects and any new projects that support these goals
- Committees prioritize projects, identify partners and budget requirements
- Committee Chair / Executive Director roundtable – to coordinate projects and identify any possible overlap or duplication
- Board approves final plan and budget