

Comprehensive Plan Update  
Aldermanic District 1 Neighborhood Meeting Summary

October 8th, 2014 – 6:30 PM  
Portage County Annex – Conference Room 1 & 2  
1462 Strongs Avenue, Stevens Point, WI 54481

PRESENT: Community Development Director Michael Ostrowski, Associate Planner Kyle Kearns, Community Development Department Intern Kelly Strombom, District 1 Alderman George Doxtator, Plan Commissioner Garry Curless, Portage County Associate Planner Sarah Wallace, UW-Extension Community Resource Development Educator Nathan Sandwick, Joan Curless, Dennis Rosenbrook, Brandi Makuski, Barb Jacob, Janice Doxtator, Cris Harris, Bob Fisch, Tom Brown, Tim Bordinrdt, Layne Cozzolino, Josh Stolzenburg, Nerissa Nelson, Taylor Christiansen, Steve Smith, Elizabeth Schrader, Maggie Keneen, Cathy Dugan, and Neil Prendergast.

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Discussion and possible action on the following:

1. Comprehensive Plan overview
2. Establishing a vision
3. Discussion of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats (SWOT Analysis)
4. Questions, comments, concerns, and project's next steps.
5. Adjourn.

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1. Comprehensive Plan Overview.

Community Development Director Michael Ostrowski and Associate Planner Kyle Kearns provided a brief presentation where they described the city's comprehensive plan update project and visioning tactics to establish an overall vision for the community. This included describing the strength, weakness, opportunity and threat analysis (SWOT) to assist in gaining critical public feedback and input.

2. Establishing a vision.

Staff proceeded to provide examples of feedback and input which pertained to a small area or neighborhood, or to the entire community, citing that an overall vision is derived from an examination of the entire community.

3. Discussion of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats (SWOT Analysis)

A questionnaire was provided, of which can be obtained online, which included nine questions for participants and attendees to answer freely or use as a guiding document when providing input and feedback.

4. Questions, comments, concerns, and project's next steps.

Three groups led by Community Development Department staff were created to lead discussion and moderate through the questionnaire provided. Responses to the questionnaire and feedback gathered by staff from public comment and conversation within all groups have been summarized below for each question.

## QUESTIONS & RESPONSES FROM QUESTIONNAIRE:

1. What is your dream for our community?
  - Economic growth, higher paying jobs
  - Keep University, cultural activities, and synchronization with UWSP.
  - Stevens Point is a hard place to leave, maintain good values
  - Professional atmosphere and business friendly for families
  - Live music in downtown
  - Operating fox theater
  - Membership for arts incubator
  - Restoring older neighborhoods
  - Thinking about baby boomers and seniors; provide housing for seniors moving into smaller residences, closer to things.
  - Lullaby site growth, solicit input. Proactive input on Lullaby
  - Diverse housing opportunities
  - No cars on downtown main street
  - Pedestrian and biker friendly corridor into downtown from residential areas
  - Centerpoint Drive becoming two-way
  - Two-way bike lanes on one way roads
  - Low cost and safe living for all generations.
  - No more homes to convert to student houses
  - Possibly licensing all rentals
  - Housing- take pressure off- create more units less conversion
  - Need to look into condition of student housing and improve if needed, instead of building big complexes
  - Cultural Activities
  - Low cost, safe living for all generations
  - Business friendly climate in downtown
  - Dense downtown
  
2. What kind of community do we want to create?
  - More cooperation between all units of government driven by finance- sheriff & Police Department, common dispatch
  - Create an environment where companies want to come to (Inviting)
  - UWSP keeps things stable
  - Increase intergovernmental cooperation - Opportunities with Park Ridge fire department
  - Don't have mayor dictate, government needs to work with people
  - People need to come forward and be heard
  - Stable, diverse race
  - Voted down UWSP parking ramp; can't complain about parking on street.
  - Library is key to downtown
  - Public Art/ landscaping art/beautification
  - Creative industry initiatives and development
  - Safe and secure place
  - Adaptable to changes resulting from climate change and resource depletion
  - More green spaces, parks, outdoor & indoor meeting spaces
  - Diversity in age groups, culture and productivity

- Neighborhood identities (associations)-Signage?
  - Walkability/accessibility
3. What would you like to see change?
- Minorities encouraged to be involved in government committees
  - Get young people involved in community projects
  - TIF funding for jobs
  - See a change in parking downtown- alleviate parking problems on city streets
  - Raise minimum wage, be sensitive to business owners
  - Nicer homes in center of city switching from rentals to single family
  - Cooperation amongst government and private sector - library staff can be integral to Fox and incorporating staff.
  - Create a different atmosphere for adults, not so much taverns, more diverse activities from 5pm to 10pm (e.g. Fox Theatre shows, restaurants, wineries/breweries.)
  - First floor housing not appropriate for downtown
  - Beautify the City as it is ugly now - bad lighting and landscaping standards should be improved.
  - Review "Path to Sustainable Stevens Point" for better process for development
  - Create urban farming zoning classification
  - Space for entertainment downtown away from Sentry Insurance and Noel Fine Arts Center (UWSP).
  - Better process for development/community plan and input
4. What would success look like?
- More development; more jobs
  - More vibrant downtown with arts and culture
  - Cultural Activities
  - Accommodate - attractive for every wage job. Bring in people who want to work in this part of the state
  - Lead by example at the city
  - Public engagement at meetings and at council meetings.
  - Demolition ordinance
  - Regional rail and additional regional transportation opportunities
  - Solar on all appropriate rooftops
  - Public spaces that are filled with people and activity
  - Urban farms
  - Diverse and robust industry and commerce
  - Having Mid State and UWSP students stay in Stevens Point because of the growing community and diversity in economies and activities – increase available workforce
5. What do you see as the community's major strengths and assets?
- Community and growth
  - University of Wisconsin Stevens Point
  - Riverfront; need to take advantage with riverfront development and activities
  - Proximity to countryside, very close
  - Green Circle Trail
  - Raise Children and good values, caring community
  - Educated Community

- Global player- working with Noel and AIG
  - UWSP; having people move out of the area after graduation and people know where Stevens Point is still.
  - Trivia (national recognition)
  - Location middle of everywhere; easy access to places, stores, hospitals, etc.
  - Green community
  - Water
  - Good relationship with state; lots of exposure on state level
  - Philanthropy
  - Engage public more
  - Age, diverse social networks
  - Strong farming capacity
  - Midwest Renewable Energy Association (MREA) and sustainability oriented groups/ networks
  - Natural resource base in region
  - Personable, committed small business owners
  - Great local food system
  - Farmer's Market
  - Proper scale for community involvement that can be heard
  - Great topography for bicycling and walking.
  - Sentry Insurance (national recognition)
6. What do you see as the community's major weaknesses or liabilities?
- Poor people, payday loans, two parents working
  - Low amount of high paying jobs
  - North side has twice as many street lights. Lights need to be shielded. Study for ambient street lights. Number of lights not addressed.
  - Land locked- always need to annex, need more land
  - Short sidedness- "it's not going to happen", Naysayers- need to look towards the east (EPCC)
  - Aging infrastructure and workforce
  - Resistance to change, e.g. need for student housing
  - Water resources
  - Government needs to be more specific in meetings
  - More farm shed
  - Parking makes downtown look ugly
  - Sidewalks by Emy J's
  - Poor public transport
  - Pedestrian walkways
  - Neighborhood associations; create more
  - Connection from downtown to residential areas
  - Emphasis on parking
  - Make living easier for the elderly
  - Heavy car reliance/poor public transport
  - Need to attract people in their 20's and 30's
  - Traffic concerns on Centerpoint Drive, street near greenhouse needs to be changed

7. What do you see as the community's major opportunities
  - East side development and south side development. Empty buildings (Former cooper site)
  - Industrial Park
  - East Park Commerce Center
  - Create better balance between nodes of transportation
  - Change laws for bicyclists and bike lanes and promote bicycle on the road
  - Rail transportation; regional multi-modal
  - Creative place making and creative economy
  - Sustainable community and green spaces
  - Lullaby site becoming a transition between a huge residential area and the downtown and Mid State. This could become a green space, meeting space, a place for Mid State students and community members alike.
  - Make it easier for older people without cars to get around
  - Focus on biking/walking and transit to attract younger families
8. What do you see as the community's major threats?
  - Flooding- Natural disasters
  - Schools lack of sufficient funding - ability to raise revenue (WI revenue going down)
  - Lack of communication between government, like with life skills center
  - Aging community
  - Skills gap
  - Reported sexual assaults, drugs, gangs. Increase communication with law enforcement and public
  - People who succeed move away, need to help people who stay
  - Community / government plans behind closed doors
  - Neighborhood characteristics can change
  - Public input before development
  - Poor planning, lack of community input
  - Expansion issues
  - Can't see major asset, the classic downtown neighborhood landscape. Follow more of a town-pedestrian path like Plover, not a suburb path.
  - Multi-family 3+ housing, degrades style and design
9. Any other additional comments or feedback?
  - Important to have corner store and mixed use developments. Isolated places for commercial and retail.
  - Identify a way to include people in the planning process early.
  - Cohesive neighbors. UWSP needs to do a better job.
  - Delineation and obtain public feedback. Engage neighborhood first.
  - Example - Tribune project (Encourage), Brainstorming different elements and markets

5. Adjourn.

Meeting End at 8:11 PM.