

Comprehensive Plan Update
Aldermanic District 5 Neighborhood Meeting Summary

November 13, 2014 – 6:30 PM
County Annex Building
Conference Room 1 & 2
1462 Strongs Avenue, Stevens Point, WI 54481

PRESENT: Community Development Director Michael Ostrowski, Associate Planner Kyle Kearns, Community, District 5 Alderperson Mary Stroik, Cathy Dugan, Ian Scheilhaass, Neil Prendergast, Zach Walters, Craig Calzavara, Steven Chojnecki, and female UWSP Student.

Meeting Summary:

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. 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.

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. Staff then led discussion within the small group using the questionnaire as a guide. Responses to the questionnaire and feedback gathered by staff from public comment and conversation within the small group have been summarized below for each question.

QUESTIONS & RESPONSES FROM QUESTIONNAIRE:

1. What do you see as the community's major strengths and assets?
 - Stevens Point bus system and student ID is a life saver.
 - Late night transit.
 - Starting to add bike lanes.
 - Jefferson School is an asset for district 5.
 - District 5 has good standards (property).
 - Churches in district 5.
 - Emerson school site, which is close to the district.
 - Disc golf courses in the area. It gives people something to do.
 - Lincoln Center for the seniors.
 - City making people upkeep their properties compared to other communities. There are not a lot of run down properties.
 - UWSP Suites, they are close to campus.
 - Community festivals – Riverfront, Cultural, Christmas Parade.
 - UWSP
 - The Square
 - Farmer's Market
 - Fountain
 - MSTC in the downtown
 - The city has a lot of diversity in restaurants (chain and family-owned).

- City is in a convenient location, especially for natural resources.
 - The city is a good size (population).
 - No huge sprawling mall with a lot of impervious surface.
 - There are so many activities close to the city, recreation.
 - The city has experienced a steady population growth.
 - UWSP is close to neighborhoods.
 - The city has a good mixture of small and large lots for residential.
2. What do you see as the community's major weaknesses or liabilities?
- Parking in the city. Limited free spaces for students. Bad signage stating regulations.
 - One-way streets.
 - Parking on Maria by UWSP causes vision problems.
 - People are horrible at keeping sidewalks clear of snow and ice.
 - District 5 does not have a lot of parks.
 - The railroad tracks act as a barrier, as well as Division Street.
 - Lack of supply of good student housing near campus.
 - Available housing, which leads to higher rent prices, need additional supply.
 - Intersection of Brawly and Ellis Streets with Division Street. The yield and stop signs are difficult to manage.
 - The railroad tracks on Hwy 66 on the west side of the river are always blocked by the train.
 - Train crossings.
 - The intersection of Franklin and Division; no one stops for pedestrians.
 - Shopping opportunities.
 - The city has a lot of good things that people do not know about. Make welcome packets for new residents and students. They should include events, attractions, and coupon books. This will help boost economic development.
 - No parking for staff and teachers at Jefferson School
3. What do you see as the community's major opportunities
- The Square
 - Fox Theater
 - Redevelopment opportunities as opposed to continued outward expansion.
 - Protect and expand walkability in the city.
 - A bicycle and pedestrian route for the inner core. This is a way to attract additional people.
 - Wisconsin, Jefferson, Dixon streets could be dedicated as bicycle thoroughfares.
 - Informational package and pamphlets for students and new residents identifying all community events activities, and offering coupons.
 - Better partnership with city staff and the university on promoting activities and working on growth
 - Make the city a place students want to come and stay – how is it better than other campuses
 - Create park and ride on the edges of the City to the inner city and surrounding communities
 - Kiosks around the city for advertisements
 - Ability for bikers to trigger traffic signals on the road while remaining on their bicycles
 - Increase retail options
 - Infill development and a focus on the center city
 - Analysis of major thoroughfares for bike and vehicular traffic

- Maintaining walkable and bikable community
4. What do you see as the community's major threats?
 - Loss of the countryside with continued growth.
 - Retaining existing housing stock.
 - Pressure to continue to build outwards.
 - The police department should be located more centrally in the city. As the city continues to grow towards the east, the police department should move, or create a substation.
 - Expansion of UWSP into the residential core geographically, and redeveloping homes and historic blocks
 - Loss of students.
 - UWSP and UW system competition to gain students
 - Lack of diversity (people).
 - Selling of city parks.
 5. What is your dream for our community?
 - More bike friendly.
 - More environmentally friendly.
 - Improved bus system
 - Conserve energy.
 - Utilize existing plans and documents such as "A Path to a Sustainable Stevens Point"
 6. What kind of community do we want to create?
 - Great school system
 - Maintenance of parks and rivers – natural resources
 7. What would you like to see change?
 - Continued restoration of the downtown.
 - Fill big empty buildings (former Copps grocery stores).
 - Continue to bring smart business into town and support local business
 - Protect Stevens Point's culture
 - Improve the school board and school system to be one of the best in the Midwest
 8. What would success look like?
 - Keep making new attainable goals.
 - Goals keep changing.
 - Increase density in the central area. Keep people in the center.
 - Increase the quality of life and good jobs.
 - Activities and vibrancy, culture, quality of life, diversity, living wage jobs
 9. Any other additional comments or feedback?
 - The intersection of Jefferson/Wisconsin and Division needs a better sensor to trigger the light for bicyclists.
 - The city has had success on the margins of the city, while also maintaining the inner core.
 - Continue to bring in "smart" businesses (business that we need).
 - Support the businesses that we have.

- Protect the culture.
- Keep up the school system. School board is embarrassing. This hurts our ability to attract residents.
- Trans generational – is there a way we can track this?