

MINUTES
CYF NEIGHBORHOOD & COMMUNITY COMMITTEE
DECEMBER 17, 2008

Members Present: Michele Gara Grady, Geoff King, Ryan Baniszewski, Leslie Frey, Robert Johnson, Gary Anderson, Winona Francis, Jason Doucette, Mark Pellegrini

At the start of the meeting the members present reviewed the following working agreement developed at the previous meeting:

Working Agreement

Committee members will be cooperative, open-minded, respectful of others opinions, honest, inclusive, and supportive of each other's differences. Everyone will have an opportunity to lead. The Committee will work towards consensus.

There was some discussion about what "working to consensus" means. It was agreed this means getting everyone to agree on a decision or a course of action, as opposed to a majority rule process. The advantage of consensus is that all members agree on and support an approach, even if some agree though it is not their preferred choice.

Next, Committee members worked to refine the vision statement developed at the first meeting. The vision statement, which represents the result the Committee wants to achieve, is:

A vibrant, safe community built and connected by thriving neighborhoods.

If this is the result we want to achieve, how do we get there? The group brainstormed a list of characteristics around each of the key words (the ones italicized in the vision statement) to further define what those words meant to them. This exercise was intended to make sure everyone was using these words to mean the same thing, and to help the group identify the most important things to accomplish. Below is each key word with the comments or suggestions that were made by the members present.

SAFE

- People are out and about
- Well lit areas at night
- People know each other
- People watch out for each other
- Cleanliness (there's no litter, junk cars, graffiti or other signs that show no one cares about the place)

- Sidewalks so it is safe to walk
- Bike trails

VIBRANT

- Clean
- There are activities and special events that are fun for all ages (like the Manchester Road Race or activities sponsored by the recreation department)
- A community center where everyone can gather
- The hustle and bustle of people on the street all the time, not only on special events
- Neighborly activity – kids running around, barbeques, knowing your neighbors
- People that are friendly and outgoing
- Interesting places to shop
- Entertainment (places that draw people)

CONNECTED

- Togetherness – common goals, interests, and values
- Accessible – streets, sidewalks, bikeways and other types of physical connections between neighborhoods and places
- Participation – people take part in community affairs (part of this success means getting information to people – communication)

THRIVING

- Emphasize the positive things in a community
- A growing community, people want to be there
- Jobs
- Shopping
- Good schools
- Events
- Diversity – people of ages, races and ethnicities; different types of housing and different types of neighborhoods

NEIGHBORHOOD

- People who look out for each other, pick up the mail, shovel the walk, watch the house when people are on vacation
- Neighbors that will lend you things or that you can lend things to, sharing

- Neighbors who visit and socialize
- Neighbors who are outgoing, introduce themselves and make everyone feel welcome
- Neighbors who are helpful

COMMUNITY

- Manchester

The group agreed that at future meetings we may refine these lists further. At future meetings we will attempt to agree on where Manchester is now in terms of the vision statement; what else we need to do; what else do we know; who else we might need to talk to about this vision; and what actions are necessary to achieve the vision. Our goal is to suggest the one single recommendation which would be the most important in getting us to the vision.