



April 12, 2012

CITY OF SARATOGA SPRINGS
GAPS Committee
Agenda

7:00 PM

- Call to Order
- Approval of 4/2/12 Committee minutes
- Workshop – City Council Proposal
- Public Comment Period
- Discussion – need for another meeting & date
- Adjourn

ADJOURN



April 12, 2012

CITY OF SARATOGA SPRINGS
GAPS Committee
Meeting
City Council Room

PRESENT: Supervisor Matt Veitch
Clark Brink
Supervisor Yepsen
Bill Sprengnether
Rick Fenton
Stephen Towne
Amy Durland
Dennis Brobston

EXCUSED: Geoff Bornemann
Commissioner John Franck

RECORDING OF PROCEEDING

The proceedings of this meeting were taped for the benefit of the secretary. Because the minutes are not a verbatim record of the proceedings, the minutes are not a word-for-word transcript.

CALL TO ORDER

Commissioner Franck welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 7:07 p.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Amy Durland moved and Bill Sprengnether seconded to approve the 4/2/12 minutes as distributed.

Ayes - All

Workshop – City Council Proposal

Supervisor Veitch advised the draft proposal e-mailed to the Committee can be changed, added to, or thrown out all together.

Supervisor Yepsen asked for a recap of the first 2 meetings, as she was not at those meetings, of what they thought they would present to the Council. She hasn't submitted hers and Geoff's ideas or thoughts yet.

Supervisor Veitch stated they gathered a lot of information regarding what the issues are. It is up to the Committee to decide on a format and the content of the proposal that will be given to the City Council. The more difficult part is a consensus of the group.

Supervisor Yepsen stated she is not sure how far this Committee is intending to go.

Rick Fenton stated we need context, mission, history, etc. It is also important that the public see they were heard. He also suggested identifying issues, obstacles, next steps, and categorize recommendations.

Stephen Towne stated he was less focused on the outline and therefore encouraged individual thoughts. When he thinks of South Broadway, he thinks of West Fenlon through Lincoln/Circular, not the Joe Collins' area.

Clark Brink stated there is no one solution. This Committee will hopefully serve as a model for other areas of interest. The major issue consists of 3 geographic areas which can then be broken into short term and long term goals.

Supervisor Veitch stated the initial plan was to see something happen in that area but how do you make it happen. He agrees with the framework of history and background and go from there. We are not a group that can affect the real change; that has to come from the comprehensive plan or something the mayor does out of his department.

Clark Brink stated he hoped that they would focus on successes and opportunities and not limitations. The charge of the Committee is about a future vision and executing the potential that is already in place.

Bill Sprengnether stated he sees the final report as something that should summarize what has been said amongst themselves and the public. They should also decide on the most important pieces they should call attention to.

Supervisor Yepsen stated they should list the problems, opportunities, the strengths, and the threats. Maybe they are making too much of this.

Amy Durland stated she would rather see them list the potentials. They should work on what is available to them and list the action items.

Dennis Brobston stated they need to be honest about what is going on. He sees limitations with property owners as it comes down to being able to fund things. We need to prepare recommendations to help stimulate redevelopment. He sees this document as a 2 page executive summary; they can always go back and share the detail.

Rick Fenton confirmed if they are all thinking of 3 geographic areas.

Committee gave consensus that they are – first section is West Circular to West Fenlon; second section is West Fenlon to East/West Road; and the third section is East/West Road to the Kayaderosseras Creek.

Supervisor Veitch suggested that the actual Zoning Code be an appendix to their document in case the City Council would like to review it.

Committee reviewed the zoning for each area again to be sure they all understood.

Rick Fenton added that upon his research, he found that it was important to incentivize the type of development wanted in particular areas.

Supervisor Veitch stated things such as fees for water connections, etc. could be waived for upfront collection but will need to be collected on the back end.

Clark Brink stated again he wants to come out with a positive statement of the unrealized potential of the parameters already in place. He hopes this will a point of view for the potential the City has and the opportunity to grow smartly and economically viable for the individual investing and the City.

Supervisor Veitch stated they need to be more open or clear about what you can do in these areas. How do you take this type of information and put it into a marketing plan.

Amy Durland stated we need to identify the positive conditions in each area. This would include flexibility, existing resources, proximity to other locations, etc.

Stephen Towne encouraged the group that they should not get caught up in the 'how to do' this. An identity change can start with one company. The list has to be short and list recommendations. Part of their recommendations could be spot zoning, speed issues, and then move on. They should focus on the north section.

Rick Fenton stated he would not be comfortable with that as a lot of the people who came to the meetings and spoke were from the southern most section.

Stephen Towne stated there isn't enough meat in the middle and southern sections as far as improvement potential. He would just list them as short worded sense of direction.

Dennis Brobston stated he agrees with the issues in the middle and southern section, however, it is out of their control as there is not enough opportunity.

Bill Sprengnether stated the way those areas are zoned now; the City doesn't want development out there.

Amy Durland stated they should submit some creative opportunities for those 2 areas and move on to the third area.

Supervisor Veitch stated as the Committee suggests, they will focus on the northern area and not get too much into the other areas. They will touch on the issues and opportunities there but not make that the focus of the report. He asked the Committee what they think the next step should be.

Stephen Towne suggested that everyone produce more focused commentary that be limited to 1 page.

Clark Brink stated the perception is the process is more cumbersome than any of us intended or want it to be; it is more expensive than we want it to be. It is an issue. The boards serve a purpose and are lead by the people who live in this community. Perceptively, people are not ready to think out of the box and take the risk.

Supervisor Veitch stated right now the City doesn't do the marketing. There is an issue with the perception of the process and we are not giving the opportunity to the land owners. Maybe the report should contain this information.

Supervisor Yepsen stated if you have never done this before you need someone at City Hall to help you and walk you through the process.

Amy Durland stated this conversation is getting away from the idea that the group was originally thinking of; coming up with more proactive ideas as a vision for this area.

Bill Sprengnether stated he doesn't feel it is getting away from the issue. The process a potential developer would go through needs to have the process explained to them; it has to be addressed.

Stephen Towne stated he has heard all his life that we need to streamline the process. If they want to push that item as a recommendation, they need to be specific.

Supervisor Veitch stated if we are promoting this area, it needs to be stated you will go through a process that is different than anyplace else.

The Committee agreed to submit all comments by April 27th to Supervisor Veitch. They also agreed to the proposal having an introduction, process, mission, conditions, and recommendations. The first section will be focused on the northern section. Supervisor Veitch and Commissioner Franck will put the other 2 sections together. Public comments will also be included.

Public Comment Period

John Wainwright of 80 Crescent Street thanked the Committee for their time. The upper area of Broadway is very accessible but not much fun to look at. It has a large amount of undeveloped space and ripe for change and development. This area needs a focus, identity, or a theme. South Broadway provides little reason to stop. It would be great for people to say they are there and be the beginning point for further exploration. He hopes they will consider bringing a movie theatre to this area.

Iris Lu of Hibachi Restaurant stated she would like to create a sculpture park on her land. The process you go through before the boards is intimidating and costly. The process has to be a joint project between the land owner and the City.

Discussion – Need for Another Meeting & Date

The Committee agreed there is need for another meeting. The next meeting will be Thursday, May 10th at 6:00 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

Clark Brink moved and Dennis Brobston seconded to adjourn the meeting.

Ayes – All

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:22 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Ribis
Clerk

Approved: 5/10/12