

*Fort Atkinson
Community Placemaking Initiative*

**Proceeding Report: Final Steering
Committee Workshop**

(Consensus Vision Sketch, Areas of Emphasis and Implementation)

April 7, 2016

Participants

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Others

An audience with members from the
community observed the workshop.

Facilitated and Compiled By:

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May 3, 2016 Draft

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Section 1

FINAL CONSENSUS VISION SKETCH: ORGANIZED BY PRINCIPLES OF COMMUNITY PLACEMAKING

This represents the Steering Committee’s “consensus vision sketch” for the Fort Atkinson community using a framework around the principles of community placemaking. Vision ideas for additional “corollary principles” including economic generators are also a part of this vision sketch. It was developed during two workshops and was refined at the April 7th workshop. As described on page 36 of “Principles and Practice of Community Placemaking”, the purpose of this vision sketch is:

- *To develop a narrative vision which describes what a desired community would look like in the future.*
- *To use the actual language of the community, as close as possible, in order to reflect the values of the community.*
- *This vision of success provides the target for actions and strategies which, when implemented, would move the community of Fort Atkinson toward its vision.*

Each vision statement describes the “desired end-state” of what the community would like to have in place at a future point in time. The typical lead-in phrase for each vision statement is illustrated as follows:

The Fort Atkinson community (we) will.....(add individual vision idea).

I. Physical Configuration:

Principle 1: Compact Community with Clear Urban/Rural Differentiation

- We will embrace the bypass while growing our community smartly and sustaining a healthy and prosperous downtown.
- We recognize the acquisition by Fort Health Care at the Highway 26/12 interchange as a future investment in the City.

Note: There was significant discussion on these vision ideas. To further inform these ideas, the participants and facilitator reviewed the professional perspectives on the importance of this principle on page 8 of *Principles and Practice of Community Placemaking*, including these excerpts:

- A strong model of growth contains the vision of compact urban form while protecting the green spaces of natural areas and working farms around the periphery of the city.
- Future development patterns that recognize the clear distinction between the country and the community are positioned for sustainability.
- Future development patterns that are more compact and contiguous to existing development make communities more sustainable.

Principle 2: Strong Urban Center

- We will use our downtown buildings as an asset.
- We will better plan/define what we want downtown to be (i.e. Retail? Quaint? Services?).
- We will learn from other cities' downtowns (Niche opportunities? Services?).
- We will assess/plan for our downtown.
 - Consumer spending on retail
 - Other spending
 - Service
 - Hope to understand the best mix of those listed above.
- We will focus on the interests of downtown, realistic options and create a healthy mix of uses.
- We will better accommodate our smaller business start-ups in downtown (With access to Madison College/UW Whitewater Innovation Center and other expertise); Example: incubators.

Principle 3: City-Centered Redevelopment and Infill

- We will have targeted investment as suggested in the public concept mapping.

Principle 4: Integration of Housing and Employment

- We will have housing close to where people work.(including downtown)

Principle 7: A Mix of Housing Types

- We will have rental options for young professionals, senior citizens and the elderly (affordable, competitive, adequate quality)
 - Will have middle-range costs in rentals (ranging from \$550-\$700 in current dollars).
 - Will use to recruit young professional (so we need housing for this sector).
- We will have innovative ways to address housing needs (Example: Waterloo had incentives).
- We will have “transitional housing” available in our city, and will meet these needs in coordination with community groups and nonprofits.
- We will access housing grants and further utilize other available grants such as offered through the County (further involve banks in this effort).
- We will leverage partnerships with other Jefferson County communities to address similar issues (i.e. collaborate more on housing; work together on opportunities with the proposed Medical College in Jefferson; other).
- We will address issue of buildable lots so we need to address these physical limitations at identified general locations throughout the City (Example: there are approximately 60 lots behind Pick ‘N Save but only about 30 of these lots are buildable.)

II. Circulation and Transportation:

Principle 8: Pedestrian and Bike-Friendly Environments

- We will make it easier to bike by identifying bike corridors (bike paths).
- We will take advantage of biking by making safer paths (to Carnes Park and other destinations).
- We see opportunities for investment in a new bike route to Carnes Park by coordinating with new development at the Highway 26/12 interchange on the northwest side.
- We will create safer bike routes and create safe routes to all schools.
- We will recognize landmarks, such as artesian water near Rock River Park, in bike route improvements along Riverview Drive (Highway 106)
- We will create, add and “infill” sidewalks in several subdivisions (many from the 1970’s and 1980’s).

Principle 9: High Quality and Convenient Public Transit and Transportation

- We will use the by-pass to bring people to our City.
- We will have better ways to get students who don’t drive to schools (Example: to Madison College).
- We will address the transportation issue (elderly, youth) and recognize this needs addressing as a County issue (significant needs for both social and community services).
- We will improve our existing roads.

III. Natural and Cultural Resources and Environment:

Principle 10: Environmental Resources and Parks

- We will identify our physical assets to better meet our needs (Rock River – Federal Waterway Designation).
- We will recognize that we are strong in this category (Natural Resources) and keep it up.
- We will better showcase our “river walkway” (should be a center piece) and linkages to Lake Koshkonong (and its future).

Principle 11: Preserved Farmland and Related Open Spaces

- We will retain our agricultural identity (and our agriculture history) and linkages to local foods.
- We will preserve our farmland and our uniqueness for local agriculture (more local, more organic).
- We will have “Information Technology” links to agriculture enterprise.
- We will build on our strong base and support for agriculture and related start-up businesses.

Principle 12: Historic and Cultural Resources Preserved and Integrated into Contemporary Settings

- We will build on our cultural assets and integrate them into economic development and other strategies.

IV. Identity and Sense of Place:

Principle 13: Strong Local Character, Community Identity and Sense of Place

- We will be a self-sufficient County (everything we need should be here).
- We will build on our nine (9) international companies (small town and international business – unique identity).
- We will capture and canvass to make sure we are marketing our unique attractions.
- We are a community that embraces the spirit of volunteerism, and will rely on this spirit in implementation of the vision ideas.

Principle 14: Public Spaces Enlivened by Work of Art and Sculpture

- We will “frame our area” with these strengths (including the “arts”).
- We support art-based activities, events and initiatives, and will leverage incentives and partnerships.

V. Attributes to Instinctively Draw Us to Places:

Principle 15: Connectivity

- We will have enhanced signage for “wayfinding”.

Note: Participants are interested in providing additional context and definitions on the concept of wayfinding. The facilitator changed roles and provided some research-based concepts around the concept of “wayfinding”:

Wayfinding is the process by which you move through an unfamiliar environment toward a destination. It is a hierarchical system of navigational cues that you internally process while you are on the move. Wayfinding sign systems have become popular tools to help communities guide visitors and convey a positive image. (Source: The National Trust Main Street Center)

- We will build on motor-coach destinations (Fireside) and other attractions (Café Carp, Lorine Niedecker).
- We will have ease of access to our downtown for special events/attractions, and assure downtown safety related to pedestrian and parking safety (market our good location to draw people from the west side, from high school events and from the Fireside).

Principle 17: Variety and Whimsy

- We will address entry ways to our community (add whimsy; make attractive; also relates to Principle 15).
- We will create unique, new activities (riverboat rides incorporating the by-pass; be creative) Bring the FUN back!

Principle 19: Many Choices and Many Things to Do with Sociable Settings

- We will have flexibility, unique needs of younger generation (interest in giving back, philanthropic opportunities and other personal rewards).
- We will have opportunities to involve diverse communities (including youth, Latinos and women), and integrate them into the community (engage sectors of the population not engaged in the City, and provide leadership opportunities.).
- We will invite, listen to and engage diverse populations. (Better identify diverse groups and involve them in new ways.).

Corollary Principles and other Vision Ideas and Strategy Areas **(Related to the Support and Implementation of Placemaking Principles)**

The three additional areas in this section are fully a part of the “Consensus Vision Sketch”.

Economic Generators

- We will build on assets of those drawn to town (amenities that our business draws, i.e. 2 Rivers Bicycle and Outdoors).
- We will create an identity of strong employers and opportunity for good jobs that attract and maintain workers. (Characteristics of good jobs include those jobs with flexible benefits, opportunities for career growth and provide personal fulfillment.)
- We will continue our good mix of employment opportunities.
- We will have a diversified economy.
- We will support a culture that supports entrepreneurs.
- We will bring together “clusters” in innovation centers (examples: agriculture, science, business investors, education and other sectors)

Note: The *Principles and Practice of Community Placemaking* document (Page 4) identifies corollary principles, including “Economic Generators” that are also fundamental to making places special and of high quality. A community must have a strong economic base and economic vitality to support quality places. The synergy of the private sector in concert with the public sector drives community revitalization. It was determined that this corollary principle is actually a component of or “cuts across” many of the identified principles. Ideas around “economic generators can also be considered as strategies or part of a pattern of policies or actions necessary to support and implement the principles of quality places. For these reasons, ideas around economic generators are not included in the primary listing of principles, but are certainly imbedded in key concepts of placemaking.

Growth and Change

- We will better understand and have active dialogue around “growth potential”, growth trends and implications of growth in Fort Atkinson (Note: Include exploration about the limits of growth which has been identified as 15,000 people based on natural boundaries and geography).
- We will determine and figure out:
 - How big do we want to be?”
 - How do we define “growth”?
 - Do we want to grow or not?
 - How do we want to grow?
 - What type of growth do we want?
- We will figure out “how we want to change”.

General Community Quality and Livability

- We will have high quality schools, good jobs and good health care.
- We will build on our location and proximity to education (day-care, pre-school, K-12 and Madison College; and re-tool people for new careers, move to new places in their lives and lifestyles through education.)
- We will build on our being the hub of wellness and health care.
- We will help our partner communities so we are all strong.

Note: The *Principles and Practice of Community Placemaking* document (Page 5) also identifies a link between placemaking and notions of sustainability and quality of life. The reference to community livability has gained prominence as part of urban design movements committed to reestablishing the relationship between the art of building and the making of community, through citizen-based participatory planning and design. An argument can be made that the ultimate outcome or long-term vision for a high quality of life in the future is both sustainable and livable places; sustainable and livable places should reflect a balance among environmental, economic, equity and livability values.

FINAL CONSENSUS VISION SKETCH: CONCERNS, LIMITATIONS, CONSTRAINTS AND OTHER OBSERVATIONS

Participants reviewed the vision sketch and identified potential concerns, limitations, constraints, feasibility considerations and other observations associated with the vision ideas.

- a. A limitation of the vision sketch is that there are fiscal resources associated with many of the ideas, and there are challenges in the “how” of getting these going.
- b. A concern is that the vision sketch will get people excited about the vision ideas, but then we may not be able to implement the ideas.
- c. It was recognized that the vision sketch represents many good ideas, but it was suggested that we need priority areas, strategies, action plans.

Note: The facilitator led a discussion on the agreed upon objectives of this five-part placemaking series of workshops. The “Project Understanding and Scope” document which was reviewed with the Steering Committee contains the following purposes and objectives:

Primary Purposes of the Community Placemaking Initiative:

- To guide the City around concepts of community placemaking, visioning and key characteristics of the community.
- To inform the City and community on important ideas and areas of emphasis for integration into a future and more extensive comprehensive plan.

Other Objectives:

- To determine foundational ideas for use in the future comprehensive plan update and potential future detailed corridor designs and plans (which will likely be developed by consultants/professional planners at a future time).
- To provide the community with a variety of opportunities to be informed, to give input and to be engaged in the placemaking initiative.

The facilitator further described that the Steering Committee will be asked to make recommendations on areas of emphasis (priority) for follow-up. A general discussion on follow-up phases including mobilization of the community, potential leadership organizations (implementation bodies) and other ways to assure meaningful responses to this community placemaking initiative.

Section 2

AREAS OF EMPHASIS (A ROADMAP TO GET STARTED)

The facilitator described all the steps that have been a part of this initiative including: 1) Learning about the principles; 2) Evaluating the extent to which the principles are evident in Fort Atkinson, including an assessment as to which Fort Atkinson was weak and where the community could build on their strengths; 3) Developing a Consensus Vision Sketch framed around the principles of placemaking along with economic generators and livability; 4) Developing a “Cognitive Map” or “Concept Map” containing hopes and graphically targeted areas of investment opportunity.

As part of the Proceedings Report from the March 3rd workshop, the facilitator identified potential areas that appeared to be emphasized through this multi-phased process (See Figure 1). In a wide-ranging discussion, five areas of potential emphasis were captured by the facilitator. The first four areas related to individual principle or corollary principles of community placemaking.

The Steering Committee identified a fifth area of emphasis that recognized that there may be multiple other principles that need to be addressed. The Steering Committee will invite and seek further input from the broad community to better determine areas of emphasis for which there is community energy, interest, capability and readiness to pursue and take follow-up action. This identification of “areas of emphasis” was aimed at selecting a shorter-list of priority areas that may be a starting point for the community to mobilize and initiate activity.

The discussion captured these five priority areas of emphasis based on input from the community and the Steering Committee.

- ❖ I. Economic Generators
- ❖ II. Strong Urban Center: Downtown (Principle 2)
- ❖ III. Redevelopment: City-Centered Redevelopment and Infill (Principle 3)
- ❖ IV. Housing: A Mix of Housing Types (Principle 7)
- ❖ V. Community Character, Livability and Identity
(Multiple Principles and Combination of Principles)
 - Areas where there is community capability, energy and passion to initiate action.
 - Areas where there is a motivated volunteer base (individuals and community groups)

Figure 1
Areas of Emphasis
(From Workshop 4 Proceedings Report)

The facilitator reviewed the ideas from the Public Concept Mapping Workshop (March 3rd), and selected four principles in which there was a particularly strong response by the participants in general as well as by each table. Three of the areas were reaffirmed by the Steering Committee, and have been included in this figure. The ideas are summarized in this figure, and represent potential area of emphasis for follow-up attention including refined planning and mechanisms for implementation. Individual strategy ideas for potential follow-up action were also suggested at the March 3rd Workshop.

I. Physical Configuration:

Principle 2: Strong Urban Center

- a. Lots of agreement: DOWNTOWN – Add more activities/business/events and make more vibrant.
 - b. Downtown: Add 2nd Story Living – make nicer; add 3rd story? Add more downtown living and encourage more traffic by foot
- Downtown is important
 - There are huge needs downtown
 - Main Street – needs to be more accessible for both foot traffic and vehicles
 - A “Greener” Main Street was suggested

Principle 3: City-Centered Redevelopment and Infill

- a. Development of Creamery Building – this will bring people downtown.
 - b. Redevelop the K-Mart Lot, the Lorman Property, and Vacant lot Main Street/Madison (This is a prominent and main entry to Downtown that should be addressed). Options should include:
 - Temporary measures
 - Interim solutions as well as long term
 - There was a desire for something to happen at these areas.
 - c. K-Mart/Lorman/Thomas: Address the voids
 - How do we address these private properties?
 - Need to come up with public/private strategies.
 - d. Consider the “Incremental Development Alliance” approach: encourage incremental improvement (i.e. one shabby home to redevelop/one mixed use property to fix-up downtown)
 - e. Can think of “development” in many different ways.
- Existing buildings should be redeveloped
 - Repurposing of K-Mart was suggested
 - Repurposing along Rockwell, K-Mart, Creamery, and the Chamber block was suggested
 - K-Mart, Thomas, Klemment Business Park – How do we tackle?

Principle 7: A Mix of Housing Types

- a. Address the Senior Citizen housing (not enough places to go!)
- b. Not all seniors need memory care/assisted living (housing options for seniors should go beyond just a big building – A suggested area for new housing: K-Mart)
- c. No place in town for seniors: 62+

- d. Senior Housing \$ Range:
 - o Aim for \$750-800 – now prices per month are over \$1,000 which is too much.
 - o Need less costly housing
 - o Limited options for senior housing: Now we only have Blackhawk Ridge, and one other (Harmony Grove)
 - e. Housing need exist for young people, too.
 - f. No housing is readily available for young people (either no vacancy or high rent).
-
- Learned: Youth/Seniors – there are housing shortage!
 - Housing needs were emphasized
 - Seniors need a variety of housing (not just assisted living)
 - Tiny houses is a new alternative
-

Summary Comments on Areas of Emphasis

The Steering Committee identified five areas of emphasis as an initial “shorter list” of placemaking principles that the community could focus on and address.

- ❖ Economic Generators
- ❖ Strong Urban Center: Downtown (Principle 2)
- ❖ Redevelopment: City-Centered Redevelopment and Infill (Principle 3)
- ❖ Housing: A Mix of Housing Types (Principle 7)
- ❖ Community Character, Livability and Identity
(Multiple Principles and Combination of Principles)

The next section will provide initial guidance on ways that community energy could be mobilized to take follow-up action in order to move toward the “Consensus Vision Statements” and other ideas related to these areas of emphasis.

Section 3

IMPLEMENTATION AND FOLLOW-UP

Placemaking is defined as: planning endeavors focused on spatial development, urban design, the public realm, streetscapes, infrastructure and community-based revitalization---all involving the general imaging and re-imaging of places. The project understanding and scope agreement recognized that this initiative's primary purpose was to lay the foundation for follow-up comprehensive planning or other more detailed project planning. However, it was also expected that community energy could be mobilized to take follow-up action after the conclusion of the formal placemaking series.

The Steering Committee began a discussion on how to position the broad Fort Atkinson community on implementation of promising areas of emphasis. The facilitator generally described some foundational concepts around community development and implementation. An initial listing of some key "implementation bodies" was identified by the Steering Committee.

Implementation Considerations

In planning processes, the follow-up implementation phase is defined as the carrying out of strategies, and the incorporation of strategies into the relevant organizational systems (usually, both City government and the community). This typically requires the empowerment of many different individuals and groups who represent the lead "implementation bodies" (individuals, groups, committees, organizations, new entities, etc.). Some descriptions of roles played in implementation are shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2 Implementation Functions

Plan implementation typically includes the formal or informal designation of several follow-up functions or roles which may include:

- Coordinating Committee or Team: A smaller group to lightly coordinate follow-up implementation.
- Implementation Process Champion: Initial Convener/Person designated to provide initial leadership on a follow-up activity.
- Implementation Action Teams: Formal or informal work groups or teams may be important in providing further strategy detailing (action plan development), identification of activities, sequencing of tasks, project execution and other implementation activities. These may be self-directed.

The Steering Committee further recognized that both existing groups and new groups will need to be mobilized to successfully implement the ideas in this placemaking initiative. The Steering Committee discussed, in an abbreviated way, some groups that could play important roles in the implementation of ideas from the placemaking initiative. The Steering Committee reaffirmed the importance of inviting community members to volunteer for follow-up activities that motivate and excite them.

Existing Implementing Bodies in Fort Atkinson

- City Government-Policy committees, City department managers, City staff. *(The City Manager mentioned that the City would likely be very involved in addressing Principles 2 and 3-Downtown and Redevelopment)*
- Already have a collaboration among three groups that are addressing the “Economic Generators” area of emphasis: The three are 1) Chamber of Commerce, 2) Industrial Development Corporation, and 3) Economic Development Team--which is meeting monthly now. *(They could be briefed on the work of the Steering Committee, and they could respond to ideas from the Community Placemaking Initiative.)*
- Many civic groups and nonprofits are already working on aspects of the placemaking principles and areas of emphasis. *(The ideas from the placemaking initiative could further inform or focus their work.)*
- Existing informal groups.
- Consultants and technical advisors

New or Proposed Implementing Bodies

- Follow-up Placemaking Implementation Group - Could sponsor, launch and guide overall implementation of placemaking activities. *(This could include volunteers from the Steering Committee and/or solicit other volunteers.)*
- Downtown Task Force or Task Force on any area of emphasis* - Could provide extra focus to this area of emphasis.
- Implementation Action Teams* (New Formal and/or Informal Work Groups) – Could lead the detailing and refinement of major initiatives and strategies, identification of needed actions, sequencing of tasks, carrying out of projects and other implementation activities.

* Any self-directed and motivated group could be invited and/or encouraged to address any of the principles needing attention. The “Consensus Vision Sketch” could be used as an initial guide for the desired target of action.

It is assumed that the composition of these promising implementing bodies will be refined and adjusted as the placemaking initiative is communicated and shared broadly throughout the community.

Other community placemaking initiatives around Wisconsin are piloting community mobilization team to address priority areas such as those identified in Fort Atkinson’s Community Placemaking Initiative. For example, A “Community Design Workshop/Community Design Charrette” was held last fall in Baileys Harbor. This small community, of just over 1,000 people (in the Town), have created seven community work groups or teams to address priority initiatives. Baileys Harbor has developed a webpage to document the activity in these seven areas of emphasis (See Figure 3)

Figure 3
Example from Baileys Harbor

Community Design Workshop Updates-Webpage
<http://dcvbweb.com/baileys-harbor/community-design-workshop-updates/>

As many of you know, Baileys Harbor recently took part in a community charrette with UW Extension. We will use this page to post updates on projects and committee assignments. Teams and workgroups have been assembled around these seven (7) areas of emphasis:

- Affordable Housing
- Business Development
- Dog Friendly Group
- Downtown Group
- Garden, Food and Agriculture Group
- Green Infrastructure Group
- Trails Group

Downtown Group*

We will post these notes as they come in and publish the next meeting date as we are made aware of them.

Next Meeting Date: April 16, 9am Town Hall

Meeting Notes:

[April 2nd Baileys Harbor Downtown Group Meeting Notes](#)
[Project Group Meetings 2-12-16 downtown meeting notes](#)

Resources:

[Potential Resource](#)

*This type of webpage documentation is being done for all seven Team and workgroups in Baileys Harbor.

Summary Comments on Implementation

As mentioned, it is expected that community energy will be mobilized to take follow-up action after the conclusion of the formal placemaking series. There is not a script for how this should unfold. Some guiding concepts on “self-directed” implementation has been provided along with an example for a related community placemaking initiative. Additional ideas on launching a potential follow-up event are provided in the next section.

Section 4

COMMUNITY FORUM ON THE RESULTS OF THE COMMUNITY PLACEMAKING INITIATIVE

The Steering Committee and facilitator briefly discussed a follow-up community forum or summit to share with the entire community the results of the Community Placemaking Initiative. Since time was short near the end of the April 7th workshop, some preliminary ideas on the format and content of this community event are outlined. However, it is assumed that the facilitator and the Coordinating Committee (Paul Kotz, Jude Hartwig and Matt Trebatoski) will meet to further design this event.

Overall Purposes of the Community Forum:

- ❖ To present the finding of the five-part Community Placemaking Initiative to the broad community.
- ❖ To mobilize the community around the findings of the initiative.
- ❖ To invite the community to be involved in follow-up, implementation activities.

Atmosphere of the Event:

- ❖ Fun Event...At a nice venue...Food...Drink...Graphics...Presentation Materials...
- ❖ Steering Committee members to present different parts of the findings:
 - UW Extension/others to prepare short PowerPoint on Principles
 - Someone present Assessment Findings
 - Someone present Consensus Vision Sketch
 - Someone present Public Mapping Concepts (Todd to help identify prints of Cognitive Maps; other visual representation; involve Todd in graphic oriented Executive Summary)
 - Someone present the many ways for meaningful follow-up and movement towards implementation..
- ❖ Come up with fun way to Invite Involvement: Themed around “The Spirit of Invitation”
(i.e. Large Sign-Up Sheets templated for each Area of Emphasis plus Other Principles for Sign-up/ volunteering; Use Design Charrette Lessons Learned.)

❖ Example “Sign-up Sheet”

Principle/Topic Sign Up Here If:

- ✓ *You are passionate about this topic*
- ✓ *You want to contribute to special places in your community*
- ✓ *You have talent and want to volunteer in your community*
- ✓ *You want to make a difference!*

All are welcome!

Summary Comments

The community forum will be an important follow-up activity to mobilize the community around the findings of the community placemaking initiative in Fort Atkinson. It was also provide an opportunity to invite the community to be involved in follow-up, implementation activities. The Steering Committee and others will jointly seek further input from the broad community to better determine where there is community energy, leadership, interest, capability and readiness to pursue and take follow-up action on the ideas brought forward in this initiative.

Appendix

Fort Atkinson Community Placemaking Initiative Steering Committee Workshop

AGENDA

Thursday, April 7, 2016
Hoard Historical Museum
6:00 pm – 8:00 pm

❖ Workshop Objectives

- To build on the insights from the Public Concept Mapping Workshop
- To review and refine narrative vision ideas around the framework of community placemaking principles.
- Review findings from other four workshops and determine areas of emphasis.
- Identify promising ways that the community network can respond through follow-up and potential implementation activities.
- Discuss outline presentation by Project Team and Steering Committee to the full Fort Atkinson community.

❖ Review “Proceedings Report” from the March 3rd Imageability and Public Concept Mapping Workshop

❖ Status of other Community Activities Related to Placemaking (Including student placemaking exercise led by Lydia Statz)

❖ Dialogue on Concerns, Limitations and other Observations on the “Consensus Vision Sketch”; and Refine Vision Sketch Accordingly

- *What are some potential concerns, limitations, constraints, feasibility considerations or other observations associated with the vision ideas?*
- *What are your proposed additions or refinements to the Vision Sketch?*

❖ Review Findings and Determine Areas of Emphasis

❖ Outline the Content of a Presentation by the Project Team and Steering Committee to the full Fort Atkinson Community

❖ Wrap Up

Prepared By: Steve Grabow, Professor and Community Development Educator, UW Extension, Jefferson County Office, March 24, 2016

FORT ATKINSON COMMUNITY PLACEMAKING INITIATIVE

IN TEN YEARS...

In January 2016, a group of seventy-two Fort Atkinson High School students were approached to give their input about how they would like to see their community change in the coming decade. At the end of an introductory planning workshop and introduction to the community visioning process currently happening in Fort Atkinson, students were tasked with answering the question “*Ten years from now, what would you like to see in Fort Atkinson?*”

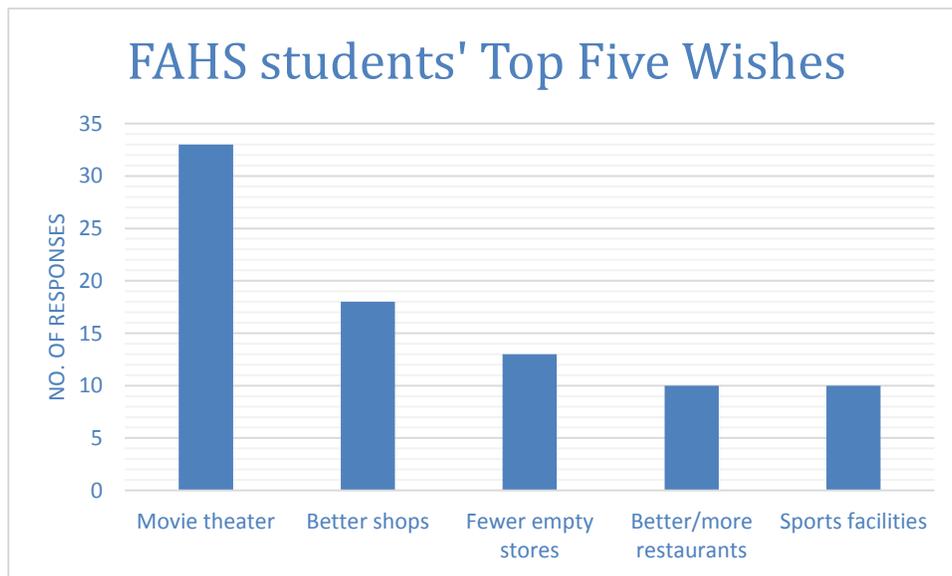
Facilitated and Compiled By:
Lydia Statz
Graduate Student
School of Architecture and Urban Planning
University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee

February 29, 2016

IN TEN YEARS...

In January 2016, a group of seventy-two Fort Atkinson High School students were approached to give their input about how they would like to see their community change in the coming decade. At the end of an introductory planning workshop and introduction to the community visioning process currently happening in Fort Atkinson, students were tasked with answering the question “Ten years from now, what would you like to see in Fort Atkinson?”

The results obviously reflect the priorities and experience of most teenagers, with some of the most common answers being “a movie theater (32 votes),” “Cherry Berry,” and “Starbucks.” However, it is also clear that the students of Fort Atkinson care deeply about their community, and many of their answers can offer insight into the priorities of the younger generation.



LOOKING FOR ACTIVITIES

As in many small towns, the teenagers of Fort Atkinson often feel left out. Many expressed a wish for more year-round activities for teens to take part in, including several wishes for indoor and outdoor sports facilities, improved parks, and options such as additional shops and restaurants, laser tag, paintball and go-kart.

While many of these may not be economically viable in Fort Atkinson, the implication is clear. A full 57% of the students listed some entertainment activity on their wish list. Notably, most of these students were 14-15 years old, and therefore unable to travel to reach entertainment on their own. Students clearly feel that entertainment options for those without access to transportation is lacking.

“Maybe like a teen place where you can dance on Fridays.”

“I want to see more events like Rhythm on the River.”

“More places and opportunities for teenagers to go and hang out and have fun.”

“More sit-down, non fast-food restaurants.”

“In ten years, I would like to see more activity places for the winter time.”

LOOKING TOWARD A BETTER FUTURE

Many students noted one of their main priorities for Fort Atkinson's future was to see an increase in the number of small businesses, job opportunities, and a thriving downtown. Thirteen of the students wished to see no empty storefronts on Main Street, while six expressed a wish for a greener or more aesthetically pleasing downtown through greenery, street art, or more beautiful buildings.

Another popular wish was for more, or better, shopping options in town. Some of these suggestions were general, while some mentioned the popular chain stores that students are familiar with. Again, many of these suggestions may not be economically viable in Fort Atkinson, but it does show that young people don't find much to interest them among our current downtown business mix.

"(I would like to see...) more expansion, larger companies, and more jobs."

"More environmentally friendly buildings."

"I want to see more events like Rhythm on the River and no open storefronts, more family owned businesses."

"I think we should really clean up Main Street by adding more things like trees and flowers. I would like to see all the shops filled, but not just with things like retirement businesses...If it's possible, I think we should make the buildings look nicer too."

MODERN TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM

Most of the students who participated are unable to drive, and thus heavily reliant on the city's pedestrian infrastructure, or rides from others. This may have colored some of their observations and wishes for additional transportation options, and more support for pedestrians.

"I would like to see buses that transport to Madison, Johnson Creek, Milwaukee and Janesville. They can also stop and pick u people in neighboring towns."

"(I'd like to see) crosswalks where they're needed and more of them."

"Safer communities – more sidewalks on streets without them."

"More drivers stopping for pedestrians."