

Appendix 6: Advocates' Roundtable Summary

Infill/Redevelopment/Revitalization Stakeholder Discussion 6/19/14

Attendees:

Peter Duvall, Mel Freeman, Cheryl Cort, Brian O'Malley, Zorayda Moreira-Smith, Patrick Maier, Erik Fisher, Amy Owsley, Jay Falstad, Brent Bolan, Rich Marsiglia, Jake Day, Glen Irwin, Lee Epstein, Richard Wilson, Happy Mayer, Don Mulrine and Margaret DeArcangeli

What "Big Idea" do you have for infill, redevelopment and revitalization?

- Encourage adaptive reuse of historic buildings
- Develop an overarching process that allows us to revitalize and maintain communities
- Develop new funding streams for acquisition and demolition purposes
- Develop a means to bring a market rate development to disinvested areas
- Promote infill development and focus transportation investments to support existing metro stations and existing community rather than sprawl
- Develop an education strategy and help people navigate and apply for state and local resources
- Continue programs offered by DHCD
- Collaborate and cooperate (point directed to state and local governments)
- Disperse transportation funds more cautiously
- Create a sizable infrastructure fund that includes a sustainable funding mechanism at the state and local level
- Commercial areas are really struggling. Develop an investment strategy/plan geared towards attracting new businesses into buildings that have not been invested in for years

What does quality infill, redevelopment and revitalization mean?

- Products and projects that raise the bar, maximize use of space, increase density to boost economic development, and minimize per capita land consumption.
- Support for small business owners. Provide them with resources necessary to flourish and prosper, streamline permitting

processes, reduce fees (particularly redundant fees), and stop trying to create new revenue sources through taxes and fees.

Small businesses that are doing well will generate more tax revenue, but they cannot be choked by fees and regulations.

- Sustainability. The metrics and tools used to measure and achieve sustainability change depending on scale.
- Resiliency. Quality communities can be sustained, even after they "take a hit," such as the loss of a business. Communities need diversity to be resilient.
- Improvements across a range of community markers.
- Developers need to look at their market analysis because not everything fits in certain communities. Their "go-to" chain businesses do not always work.
- 360-degree view of the community.
- Process really matters. Infill, redevelopment and revitalization is most successful when a developer comes in without a plan and engages the community. This way there is no preconceived notion and the plan is developed in conjunction through community engagement.
- Community engagement to determine what people type of business they would like to see go into a newly renovate/revitalized vacant buildings.
- Not demolishing entire neighborhoods.

What's working?

- In certain areas the number of small businesses has increased.
- Public and private investments near transit.
- Businesses and residents working together. Providing opportunities for residents to become business owners.
- Garnering strong support from the state on community revitalization. Regulatory support is needed.
- Existing local/state programs have been vital.
- Sustainable Communities Tax Credit is now available to small business owners.
- Office to residential conversions in Baltimore City, coupled with Zipcar and the Circulator, which makes the residential units more attractive to people without cars.
- MARC weekend service expansion
- Station North's parcel-by-parcel approach.
- Money should be given to people, not places.

- Address forest conservation. There is a need to make it more difficult to build on greenfields. There is a need to simultaneously protect our natural resources while aligning this resource as places for people to enjoy.
- There is a need for more urban green spaces that function as instructional spaces.
- Consider ways that regulations can have multiple outcomes. For example, stormwater management requirements improve the quality of water runoff but can also increase green space “backyards” and tree canopy, or other community features or functions.
- Green spaces should be viewed as assets.
- Stormwater: make sure the rights things are happening. Figure out a way to improve quality of life on all levels. The smaller projects, which help change the face of blocks of neighborhoods face a difficult time funding wise when these types of fees are imposed.
- Need to include developers in these conversations.
- Developers should be required to pay all the fees associated with any new developments. Developers and SHA needs to meet its SWM responsibilities.

What are the barriers to quality infill, redevelopment and revitalization?

- Communities need to feel empowered to ask for and expect more.
- Rural communities: align and promote economic development more effectively.
- Priority Funding Areas can be geographically enormous.
- Ask for what we really need and want. The needs’ statement needs to be clarified.
- There is a need for planning funds.
- Sometimes funds that are allocated with good intentions (such as for schools) are not well coordinated with other efforts (like housing and economic development).
- National and economic forces that affect small and large businesses ability to operate. Small towns need more assistance with visioning and planning their communities. They require on-going technical assistance. Local leadership is needed to fill this gap.
- The local government should help local businesses first before they court and bring in big business.
- Local decisions sometimes undermine stated goals.
- Sometimes businesses get two different answers to the same question, which makes it hard for them to proceed with plans to open, expand or renovate.

- On the ground grassroots people need to be involved in the development of policies and regulations.
- The small business aspect needs to be at the front of each of the discussions taking place.
- Expand the conservation to the DBED, DLLR and DHMH.
- Capacity issues exist at the state and local level.
- Education Component.
- Property owners sit on their properties for years and hope to sell to developers for ridiculously high prices.

What opportunities exist to accelerate quality infill, redevelopment and revitalization?

- Provide public assistance for infrastructure improvements in communities.
- The loss of highway user funds hurt local governments.
- Funding needs to be structured so that it is used for its intended purpose. Should be tied to Sustainable Communities.
- Make design standards available to local governments/developers.
- Increase opportunities for small business owners from the neighborhood to have access to resources so that they can invest back in the communities.
- Increase targeting of resources.
- Build capacity of local government staff and others to handle infill, redevelopment and revitalization.