



CITY OF WEST MELBOURNE

JANUARY 17, 2015

COMMUNITY CORE VISIONING WORKSHOP

FACILITATOR'S SUMMARY REPORT

*Workshop facilitated
and report prepared by
The FCRC Consensus Center*



CONSENSUS CENTER

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INTRODUCTION

On January 17, 2015, members of the City of West Melbourne City Council met for a workshop to discuss a potential community core for the city. A list of participants and attendees may be found in Appendix A. The objectives of the workshop were to:

- Develop a joint Council vision of the desired future of the community core area.
- Develop a shared understanding among Council members of what uses should be allowed in the community core.
- Agree on direction to staff for further development of community core options and tools, based on the joint vision and desired uses, for future Council consideration

Discussions at the workshop were facilitated by the FCRC Consensus Center. This summary was prepared by the facilitator and outlines the information reviewed, discussions undertaken and preliminary conclusions reached by Council members at the workshop.

Mayor Hal Rose opened the workshop, welcomed members, and outlined the objectives for the day. Rafael Montalvo, facilitator for the workshop reviewed the agenda and the hoped-for outcomes for each session.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Christy Fischer, Director of Planning for the West Melbourne reviewed a map of the potential community core area, as developed by staff based on earlier Council comments. (The map of the potential community core area used as a starting point for workshop discussions may be obtained from the City of West Melbourne Planning Department). She provided background on current uses, zoning and development activity in and around the community core area. Her presentation also included basic information about the concept of a community core and how that concept has been implemented in other communities.

VISIONING EXERCISE

The retreat began with a visioning exercise to outline the future of the community core area, as desired by Council members. Members were asked to consider the following scenario.

It is the year 2025 and the West Melbourne community core has grown and prospered over the last 10 years. You have been asked to write an editorial describing the role of the West Melbourne community core in the life of the community.

- *What is the headline you would write?*
- *What are the key points you would want to cover in the editorial?*

Discussion

Members offered the following responses (headlines and editorial points).

- Pathway to the Future: West Melbourne hits home run with new community center and parks!
 - Park includes skateboarding, and one third of it is devoted to special needs.
 - The community core provides insight into the values and structure of the city.
- Community feel.
- Not about being a big city.
- The community center should have a look you can feel proud of. Proud to be part of the city.
- Traditional.
- Not just gas stations and convenience stores.
- West Melbourne Community Park attracts large crowds.
 - Family friendly.
 - A must-see destination.
- "The City that Cares".
- West Melbourne population grows!
 - Now 30,000
 - Still a family-oriented town with parks and education
- West Melbourne enjoys public-private partnership along Minton corridor.
- Recreation facilities.
- Would like to have some kind of 4-5 star accommodations along the corridor. The park is a driving force, with Embraer and other facilities we have the opportunity for that and high-end restaurants – something like the Marriott Hotel at Lake Mary – within walking distance. Families will come to use that park and will need a place to stay. Attract one or two the rest will follow.
- Someone is looking into an arena out there. There is not anything like that out there now.
- Civic center.

Themes

Members then identified common themes running through the various headlines and editorial points. Their suggestions are listed below.

- Five star hotel may not be realistic.
- Community values. You see it again and again in the comments.
- Recreation activities.

- Destination.
- Family-based town open to all.
- Easy to walk.
- Sports complex.
- Will attract visitors.

USES AND CHARACTERISTICS

Participants next discussed the uses and characteristics that should be allowed or promoted in the community core. To start this discussion they considered two questions.

- *What uses should be allowed in the community core to support achievement of the vision you described in the previous exercise?*
- *What other characteristics should the community core have?*

Members' initial responses are presented below, followed by a more detailed description of the conclusions they reached upon further reflection.

Initial Discussions

- Medical centers.
- Convention centers.
- Is this the right area?
- Boutique hotel on Flanagan.
- Office space – people could go the café and park during lunch, and other people and businesses will come.
- What can we surround the park with that will augment the facility?
- On the broader question, I want West Melbourne to be a place where people want to live. I am more interested in serving residents' needs.
- Need to add something different.
- Need little shops that other places don't have – unique businesses.
- Minton Road is not the right place for some of this.
- I think everyone is right -- we may be talking about more than the Minton Road corridor.
- A pedestrian way with lots of different activities surrounding it. It becomes a destination in and of itself.

Conclusions

After reflecting on their initial comments, Council members concluded that their answers and discussion implied the possibility of more than one community center.

- A number of their answers applied to an expanded version of the Minton Road Corridor, consisting principally of the area presented by staff at the beginning of the meeting, but extended north to include the Helen Street area and up to Henry Avenue. They also identified several uses that would be desirable *near* but not actually *in* this corridor. The mix of uses and characteristics should be primarily for residents, but will draw visitors as well
- A second set of answers applied to centers west of I-95 that might be developed or expanded in the future. Members believed these were likeliest to be located along St. Johns Heritage Parkway or Dike Road. These centers might include uses, such as a convention center, that serve primarily non-residents.

During this discussion, Council members developed the following lists of uses, and confirmed each using the consensus-testing scale in their packet. (The scale may be found in Appendix B). Each list received mostly 4s and 3s on the scale (strong support or support) from Council members, with some 2s (minor reservations).

Uses to Be Allowed in the Minton Road Corridor

- Recreation.
- A pedestrian way.
- Unique shops.
- Hotels.
- Restaurants – ideally ones that you can't get just anywhere, but potentially including some others.
- Commercial recreation.
- Offices.
- Residential (only as part of mixed-use buildings).
- Not industrial, car dealership or stand-alone residential.

Uses to be Allowed Near but Not In the Corridor

- Stand-alone single and multi-family residential.
- Schools.
- Police, fire, and other government.

Uses and Locations in other Centers

- Convention centers.
- Medical centers?
- Might be a center for anything, really.
- Open to many different types of uses, as long as it gets planned how we want it to go.

- Would prefer to see it not industrial, rather hotels or a “West Melbourne Celebration”.

EXAMPLES OF COMMUNITY CENTERS

During the final session of the workshop, Council members viewed and discussed slides of other community cores in the region, including Winter Springs Community Center, Winter Park Village, and The Avenue, Viera. The purpose of this discussion was to identify characteristics of these centers that might be desirable or, conversely, characteristics that might be inappropriate for the West Melbourne community core. Among other aspects of each example, members addressed building heights and design, relationship of the buildings to the street, placement and treatment of parking, and the mix of uses including their placement relative to each other. (The PowerPoint presentation used to prompt discussion during this session is available from the City of West Melbourne Planning Department.)

Member comments on each example are presented below.

Winter Springs Community Center

- Like the access road.
- Like the brick street.
- We may not have enough land to do this.
- We could have something like just the front part.
- The parcel off of Heritage Boulevard would lend itself.
- We would get a glorified strip center that is really nice, given the land we have.
- With an access lane, laid out properly it might work.
- Like the consistent design.
- Pedestrian safety.
- Like the overall design character.
- Like the canopies.
- Like the pedestrian walkways.

The Avenue, Viera

- Is there enough depth to put the retail on the street in the Minton Road corridor?
- Yes, but it would be tight.
- Don't have the space to do that.
- Don't like The Avenue -- it is just awful.
- I don't like it either. Especially the loop.
- Hammock Landing is better.
- The stores are nice but traffic is definitely not well done. There are lots of bottlenecks.
- There is a little variety, so there is some walking, nice restaurants.
- It does have a lot of parking.
- I like the way it looks. It is visually appealing, but the park is a waste.

- Same thing we saw with Winter Springs. Because the stores are attached to each other, that increases the amount of commercial for the property. Higher. If we go to any version of this model, we will need to increase heights.
- Bands play in the green.

Winter Park Village

- I like that not everything is square. Different angles, different sides.
- Don't have to get in and out of your car. You can walk.
- Disney has a large parking area, and you are then funneled in to a large walking area.
- I really like the outdoor seating.
- In the first slide, I like the taller buildings.

NEXT STEPS

To conclude the discussion, participants considered next steps. Their comments are presented below.

- We need to have some kind of session with more than one resident attending, then really look at what restrictions we will put on this corridor.
- One of the things that I didn't see in the slides is the allowance for drainage.
- Aesthetics are important. We don't want a metal building with fake facade. We may want to consider a CRA in that area.
- Could we do something like in Lake Mary? A big square, with restaurant on each corner. Would be within our budget, put in greenery around it. Maybe a lake. You could go to the restaurant, and then walk around.
- What do we need to do now to make sure more uses we don't want don't come in?
- Practical matter of land use -- would create an overlay district.
- We ought to move on the consensus.
- Has to happen soon.
- One other thing - the ugly retention pond with the fence around it at the corner at Helen next to Minton Road. Want to do something about that.
- Staff will bring back to the Council, options for implementing the points agreed-upon during today's discussions.

APPENDIX A – LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

City Council

Mayor Hal J. Rose

Deputy Mayor Bill Mettrick

Council Member Stephany Eley

Council Member Andrea Young

Council Member John “Coach” Tice

Council Member Pat Bentley

Staff

Scott Morgan, City Manager

Christy Fischer, Director of Planning and Development

Sue Frank, City Clerk

APPENDIX B – AGENDA PACKET AND WORKSHEETS

**West Melbourne City Council
Community Core Visioning Workshop
January 17, 2015
3:00 p.m. - 5:30 p.m.**

West Melbourne, Florida

AGENDA

Objectives

- Develop a joint Council vision of the desired future of the community core area
- Develop a shared understanding among members of what uses should be allowed in the community core.
- Agree on direction to staff for further development of community core options and tools, based on the joint vision and desired uses, for future Council consideration

3:00 Welcome, introductions, and agenda review

3:15 Background on current land uses, zoning and development activity in the community core

3:30 Visioning exercise

- What role should the community core play in the life of West Melbourne?
- Desired community core uses and other characteristics

4:15 How should the community center look?

- Council members will be asked to review examples of community cores, and identify and discuss aspects of each example that might be appropriate or inappropriate for West Melbourne

5:00 Next Steps

- Summary of direction to staff
- Approach to future public participation
- Initial public comment

5:30 Adjourn

WORKSHOP GUIDELINES

For Council Members

- Ask questions and verify assumptions
- Be focused and concise - balance participation
- Express and acknowledge differing views
- Seek shared understanding and "consensus" where appropriate
- Help ensure recording is accurate
- Share in keeping to the agenda

For West Melbourne Staff

- Provide background information
- Answer questions from Council members

Public and Other Observers

- Observe respectfully
- Offer brief, initial public comment, if desired

The Facilitators' Role

- Help structure and guide discussions
- Maintain a record of group products
- Prepare the workshop report

CONSENSUS RATING SCALE

At various times in today's workshop, you may be asked to respond to emerging ideas or statements using the following.

- 4 **Support.** This is what I would do.
- 3 **I can support this** - Even though it might not be my first preference.
- 2 **Minor reservations.** I might be able to support this, but would like clarification or refinement of the idea first.
- 1 **Major reservations.** I cannot support this without major changes.

[Note: Each worksheet was presented on it's own page in the original packet.]

WORKSHEET 1

ENVISIONING THE FUTURE WE WANT

Think about the following scenario.

It is the year 2025 and the West Melbourne community core has grown and prospered over the last 10 years. You have been asked to write an editorial describing the role of the West Melbourne community core in the life of the community.

- *What is the headline you would write?*
- *What are the key points you would want to cover in the editorial?*

Please use the space below for individual notes. Your facilitator will provide additional instructions.

Notes:

WORKSHEET 2

Potential Uses and Other Characteristics

In this discussion, you will be asked to address the questions below. Please use the space provided for notes in preparation for the discussion. Your facilitator will provide additional instructions

- What uses should be allowed in the community core to support achievement of the vision you described in the previous exercise?

Notes:

- What other characteristics should the community core have?

Notes:

WORKSHEET 3

Examples of Community Cores

In this discussion, you will be asked to look at slides depicting several community cores from around the Central Florida area. In each case, the community core was the result of intentional efforts to redevelop an area as a focal point for the community. As you review each example, you will be asked to answer the following questions.

- What is there in this example that we might want to include in the West Melbourne community core?
- What is there in this example that might be less desirable in West Melbourne?

Characteristics you may want to discuss include:

- Building heights and design
- Relationship of buildings to the street
- Placement and treatment of parking
- Mix of uses, and their placement relative to each other

Notes:

APPENDIX C – MEETING EVALUATION SUMMARY

Please rate each of the following statements using a 0 to 10 scale, where 0 means totally disagree and 10 means totally agree.

1. Please assess the overall meeting.

- 9.00 The agenda packet was very useful.
- 9.67 The background information and presentations were very useful.
- 9.00 The objectives for the retreat were stated at the outset.
- 9.33 Overall, the objectives of the retreat were fully achieved.

2. Do you agree that each of the following meeting objectives was achieved?

- 9.67 Develop a joint Council vision of the desired future of the community core area
- 9.67 Develop a shared understanding among members of what uses should be allowed in the community core.
- 9.67 Agree on direction to staff for further development of community core options and tools, based on the joint vision and desired uses, for future Council consideration

3. Please tell us how well the facilitators helped the participants engage in the meeting.

- 10.00 The facilitators made sure the concerns of all members were heard.
- 10.00 The facilitators helped us arrange our time well.
- 10.00 The members followed the direction of the facilitators.

4. Please tell us your level of satisfaction with the meeting?

- 9.33 Overall, I am very satisfied with the meeting.
- 9.67 I was very satisfied with the services provided by the facilitators.
- 9.33 I am satisfied with the outcome of the meeting.

5. Please tell us how well the next steps were explained?

- 8.50 I know what the next steps following this meeting will be.
- 9.5 I know who is responsible for the next steps.

6. What did you like best about the meeting?

- Speaker did a good job of presenting/listening.
- Thinking outside the box.
- Open discussions.

7. How could the meeting have been improved?

- Focus on Minton Road only. Make comments a little more concrete.
- None.
- More community present possibly, but that may have restricted discussions.

8. Do you have any other comments that you would like to add (Please use back of form if needed)?

- No.