



## MINUTES

**Downtown Master Plan Advisory Committee  
Wednesday, February 03, 2016, 6:00 p.m.  
Carbondale Civic Center  
200 South Illinois Avenue**

Mr. Langowski called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m.

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**Members Present:** Bleyer, Bukowski, Clow, Cole, Colombo, Gorton, Gregory, Langowski, Ramseyer, Schachel, Sheffer, Terry

**Members Absent:** Boeckman, Carter, Miller, Dr. Reddy, Sigler

**Staff Present:** Price, Taylor

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Approximately 17 persons in attendance.

**1) Bring to order and roll call of members:**

**J. Langowski** made his opening remarks. Tonight's topic is to review the framework of the Downtown Master Plan and provide comments to the consultant.

**M. Bukowski** called roll and determined a quorum was present.

**2) Approval of minutes:**

**J. Langowski** asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the November 18<sup>th</sup>, 2015, meeting.

**M. Cole** made the motion and **M. Bukowski** seconded the motion and all were in favor.

**3) Progress report on America's Best Communities by Meghan Cole:**

**J. Langowski** made introductory remarks. He introduced **M. Cole** to discuss the status of the America's Best Community project.

**M. Cole** stated the City was selected to be part of the top 50 but did not get to progress further. It was a great opportunity for the City of Carbondale and we got a standalone plan out of the process. She was proud of the work submitted.

**J. Langowski** thanked **M. Cole** for her information and congratulated the City on being a quarter finalist.

#### **4) Introduction of representatives of Houseal Lavigne Consultants who will present their update:**

**J. Langowski** introduced **Nikolas Davis, ASLA** a senior associate with Houseal Lavigne Associates, LLC.

**N. Davis** presented the agenda to be discussed this evening with an Overview Process. He reviewed who the members of the consulting team were and who has helped to put together the data they will see this evening. He also reviewed the steps that have been taken over the process to gather public input from all areas of the community.

**N. Davis** discussed the structure of the framework plan. He stated there will be three chapters. Chapter 1 will discuss the purpose of the plan and provide an introduction. Chapter 2 will discuss the Influences and Opportunities. Chapter 3 will discuss Actions and Recommendations.

**N. Davis** discussed Chapter 1. This chapter discusses the purpose of the Downtown Carbondale Master Plan. The planning process that has been followed will be discussed in this section of the plan. The public input and comments gathered by and from the Downtown Advisory Committee (DAC) is listed and shown where in the plan it is addressed. This section will also discuss the history of Carbondale, its regional setting, the importance of the downtown, the role of the downtown and a more detailed description of the Study Area.

**N. Davis** discussed Chapter 2. This chapter discusses the Influences and Opportunities in the downtown. The chapter discusses the extensive Community Outreach process that is occurring and discusses the reviews of all the past plans, studies and reports that were completed. It also discusses the built form inventory that was conducted and the Market and Demographic analysis that was performed. The existing land use and the current zoning are also discussed in this chapter.

**N. Davis** discussed Chapter 3. This chapter discusses the Actions and Recommendations in the downtown. The vision for Downtown Carbondale is discussed in this chapter. Plans for the five main subject areas are also discussed. Those areas are: Land Use and Infill Redevelopment; Arts and Entertainment District Framework; Parking and Transportation; Pedestrian Mobility and Connectivity; and Beautification, Streetscape and Signage.

**N. Davis** discussed the upcoming project timeline and the next steps to be undertaken. He stated the consultants are working on Chapters 4 and 5 of the plan. Chapter 4 will address the Downtown Branding and Promotional Strategy Framework. This chapter of the plan will establish the criteria and/or steps for future marketing efforts. Chapter 5 will address the Downtown Implementation Strategy. It will discuss how to use the Downtown Plan, provide an action agenda and implementation matrix and discuss potential funding sources and implementation techniques. The next step for the first 3 chapters will be to revise and refine them after the input received tonight and from our open house on Tuesday night. The plan will incorporate additional cross references,

certain sections will be added or bolstered. The plan will be revised for typographical errors and some of the imagery will be replaced. Some of the supporting graphics and vignettes will be developed further or refined. He then discussed future deliverables. The Downtown Carbondale Master Plan Draft will be delivered to the DAC and made available electronically to the public on February 24, 2016. The Downtown Open House and final DAC meeting and public hearing will occur on March 09, 2016. The final Downtown Carbondale Master Plan will be recommended to the City Council by the end of March, 2016.

**N. Davis** discussed the opportunities for providing feedback on this draft plan.

**N. Davis** turned the meeting over to **J. Langowski** and asked for any comments the DAC may have on the plan.

**J. Langowski** discussed the process leading up to this point. He noted that the Committee did provide some written comments to the consultant. **J. Langowski** then asked for comments from the Committee.

**G. Sheffer** stated there were some very good ideas included in the plan. He stated it was lacking a plan for drawing a larger variety of businesses to the downtown. The concept of using the vacant lots for community gardens is a good idea as long as they are kept up and look good even in the off seasons or downtown could not look the best it could look.

**B. Bleyer** stated he was tasked with reviewing the Functional Land Use section of the plan. He asked if there had been any discussion with the land owners of the areas that are indicated as redevelopment opportunities.

**N. Davis** stated the consultant had not reached out to the owners of the properties.

**B. Bleyer** asked if adopting codes that require a certain architectural look was being considered.

**N. Davis** stated the Implementation section of the plan will address how to approach the owners of the suggested redevelopment lots. He also noted that page 85 of the plan covers the potential design guidelines.

**B. Bleyer** asked what the students' main concerns were.

**N. Davis** stated Chipotle is the most requested restaurant. A lot of the students were unaware that the City had a downtown. The students also suggested a more consistent set of operation hours downtown so they don't have to guess what businesses are open.

**M. Bukowski** stated she was focused on the Arts and Entertainment section of the plan. She indicated that the plan gave good examples of different types of arts events and activities that could happen in the downtown area. She felt it was skewed too much in that direction without speaking about a central venue where these things could take place. She wanted a specific location for a site to support outdoor Arts and Entertainment events in the downtown.

**N. Davis** agreed an outdoor venue does need to be located downtown.

**E. Ramsayer** discussed the future of Downtown Carbondale. She spoke about the need to connect the Head and the Heart of downtown. She spoke of the need to connect Southern Illinois University (SIU) and Southern Illinois Healthcare (SIH) into the downtown. She spoke about the blacksmithing school at the University. She stated it is the #1 blacksmithing program in the country. We should utilize that resource to create wonderful artwork and create visually appealing bike racks, benches, and other street furniture. She noted that the Carbondale Community Arts (CCA) has purchased a bike rack from the school. She stated the City needs to support the Carbondale Music Coalition and Carbondale Main Street and help establish an annual event downtown. She stated she is happy the parking lot in the town square is proposed to be removed and a green space is to be installed. She thanked **J. Langowski** and **N. Davis** for all the work that has been put in this plan.

**K. Schachel** stated she enjoyed reading the plan. She is pleased with the detail the consultants have gone into. She liked the native plant screens for the parking lots and liked the inclusion of the food truck idea. She asked to have some way to try and prevent vandalism like what occurred recently at the Japanese Meditation Garden.

**D. Terry** stated he liked their comments on landscaping and code enforcement. Mr. Terry also mentioned that some guidelines for landscaping would be appropriate. This would promote a consistent streetscape.

**N. Davis** stated it is currently addressed in the City Ordinances but suggestions will be provided that could be adopted to improve the code.

**K. Gregory** stated the Cross Section examples were very good and showed how the bicycle lanes can be integrated into the streetscape. She thought the addressing of the Wayfinding was great. We should help students know when they are entering downtown.

**D. Gorton** commented on the housing sections. He felt commerce was the primary focus of the plan and not encouraging entrepreneurship from our citizens to develop in our downtown. He also felt that code enforcement was not addressed in the plan and that it should have been. He stated that 1,200 rentals have been added to the community in the last 5 years. He stated he is working with his neighborhood to bring Gigabit internet to his area of the City. He stated he emailed a detailed list of his comments to the Consultants.

**J. Clow** stated on page 159, he felt an additional gateway should be added at the entrance of Highway 13 into Carbondale from the East.

**N. Davis** stated it was an oversight on the graphic and they intend on suggesting one there.

**J. Clow** suggested that a wayfinding effort be enacted at between Walnut Street and College Street. That is where the majority of students congregate. He suggested that

sustainability must be included in the plan.

**N. Colombo** stated he was taken aback by the current amount of parking located in the downtown. It truly is a perception that there is a lack of parking. He feels that the shared parking concept is a great idea. Being able to use the bank parking lot after business hours for central parking in downtown is a great idea. The general road conditions in and around downtown need improvement. He suggested removing the median from West Mill Street to improve connectivity.

**M. Cole** reviewed the comments made by the committee and made comments on them. The City has a lot of quick, convenient and easy things for students to do, and we need more of these uses in the downtown to build density and foot traffic. We need a common resource for the public to access all upcoming events that are happening in town. The neighborhoods are very important to downtown and the new housing options that are going in are very helpful. Sustainability does need to be included in the plan.

**J. Langowski** discussed how the downtown is categorized by zones and opportunity sites in the plan. He didn't see a sufficient emphasis on collaboration among principal stakeholders (HIU, SIH, adjacent neighborhoods, and the City) emphasized in the plan. He wants to see an implementation plan that can be tracked for items to be completed after the plan is adopted by City Council.

#### 5) Comments from the public:

**J. Langowski** opened the floor to members of the community that had comments.

**Don Monty (audience member)** stated he is concerned the plan does not go into greater specifics. It does not address the design ideas on a Carbondale block. He would like to see what an entire block of Carbondale streets would look like. He felt there was a discrepancy between the Request for Qualifications (RFQ) and the end product. He expected to see concrete examples of branding and way finding. He suggested that the City Staff could reach out to the individual redevelopment site owners to see if they have plans for redevelopment and then include those plans in the Downtown Master Plan. He made the point that the 1,200 rentals added to Carbondale were not all conversions. The majority of those were from new apartment complexes that have been built recently.

**N. Davis** stated the plan will not include specific design proposals for individual blocks but the plan will provide design ideas that can be used throughout downtown. They will provide examples of other cities way finding and branding programs.

**G. Scheffer** asked if code enforcement will be addressed.

**N. Davis** stated it will be addressed in the implementation plan.

**Ed Van Awken (audience member)** stated he was here to speak to the committee on behalf of the Preservation Commission. He read a letter from Brad Cole to the City Council expressing the desire of the Preservation Commission to create a "Carbondale Historic Park" located in the large green space behind the Carbondale Public Safety

Center. He read a speech that was given at the dedication of the plaque located in front of the Carbondale Public Safety Center. The plaque and his speech discussed some of the history of the site and told of its significance to the history of Carbondale. Mr. Van Awken then stated he was speaking on his own behalf and invited the student members of the DAC to come to the next Preservation Commission meeting on the 8<sup>th</sup> of February.

**Jane Adams (audience member)** stated the issue of flooding that occurs in downtown was not addressed in the plan. She was encouraged that pervious pavement was encouraged. She stated the flooding problem could potentially be solved using a “WOW” factor to bring people into downtown. She noted the phrase “students and faculty” was used often. She wanted to make sure that “students, faculty and staff” is considered as there is a large difference between the two.

**J. Langowski** asked if the audience had any further comments. Seeing none, **J. Langowski** closed the floor to comments from the audience. He turned the meeting over to **N. Davis** for a review of the upcoming schedule.

**N. Davis** reviewed the upcoming schedule. He stated the Downtown Carbondale Master Plan Draft will be delivered on the 24<sup>th</sup> of February, 2016. The next meeting will be on the 9<sup>th</sup> of March, 2016. That will be the last chance for any public comment and will be a public hearing for the plan. The Final Downtown Carbondale Master Plan will be delivered to the City Council at the end of March, 2016.

**J. Langowski** thanked **N. Davis** and stated he is looking forward to the branding and implementation chapters.

**N. Davis** thanked the Committee for its continued enthusiasm and encouraged them to maintain that enthusiasm to get the plan implemented.

**6) Final comments from members of the DAC:**

There were no final comments from the members of the DAC.

**7) Announcement of next meeting, date, time and location:**

**J. Langowski** announced that the next meeting will occur on March 9<sup>th</sup>, 2016 at 6:00 in the same room.

**8) Adjournment:**

**J. Langowski** asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting.

**M. Cole** made the motion to adjourn the meeting. **E. Ramseyer** seconded the motion

All were in favor.

The meeting adjourned at 7:55 pm.