

Report on DAC Meeting #1 Organization and Guidelines

**Jack Langowski
August 23, 2014**

Table of Contents

Table of Contents.....	2
Summary of Public Meeting.....	3
Summary of Concepts Generated.....	4
Future Direction.....	5
Meeting Minutes.....	6

Summary of Public Meeting

The Carbondale Downtown Master Plan Advisory Committee conducted its initial meeting on August 20, 2014 at the Carbondale Civic Center. The committee will be referred to as the “DAC”, or the Downtown Advisory Committee. The meeting was chaired by Jack Langowski and all 19 members of the committee attended. The theme for the business of the day was to confirm various aspects of the organization, set guidelines for the committee members, and provide an overview of what other college towns have done to improve the attractiveness and flow of the public from university corridors to the downtown district.

The first item of business was to select and vote on a vice-chair and a secretary. Meghan Cole was nominated by Jack Langowski and the DAC unanimously approved. Nominations for secretary resulted in a secret ballot between Marie Bukowski and Elaine Ramseyer, with Marie receiving the majority of votes and she was declared the secretary of the DAC. It was also announced that D. Gorton was appointed by the chair to serve the DAC as its communication specialist.

The task of forming a purpose statement was tabled for discussion at a later meeting. It became clear that the immediate mission of the DAC was to invite and listen to comments from the public regarding their desires for improvement in the downtown district. The “listening” would occur during a series of seven public meetings that would follow, each with its own theme tied to potential improvements for the downtown. The public could also send comments to the DAC through their website, which listed their e-mail address as downtownplan@ci.carbondale.il.us. All documents generated by the committee would become a part of the public record and everyone had access to these documents through the DAC webpage at www.explorecarbondale.com.

The DAC and public were informed of the planned schedule for these meetings by the Chair, who also noted that the meetings would be held at different venues to facilitate attendance. The themes represented transportation, signage and streetscapes, business development, and downtown integration with SIU, the

hospital, and adjacent neighborhoods. There would also be separate meetings for arts and entertainment, and economic, civic, and neighborhood viability.

Members desiring to be involved in specific themes would be grouped together to plan for the agendas of each theme. That planning would include prepared presentations by DAC or external speakers to stimulate the input and discussion of the public. Each meeting would result in a separate report prepared by the theme group and placed on the website. Ultimately, the reports would be submitted to council for consideration with recommendations for the tasks to be accomplished by consultants. Upon completion of the consultant support, a final report would be prepared and submitted to City Council tentatively by June of 2015. The process was adopted by vote of the entire committee.

Jack Langowski then listed and discussed a set of guiding principles that would apply to all members while serving the committee. The guiding principles are:

- Visit and coordinate the site requirements
- Start on time and respect agendas and schedules
- Coordinate with city staff as soon as possible
- Invite guest speakers that can shed light on the specific theme being discussed
- Take notes, provide meaningful comments, and do your homework on the topic
- Start your reports early and get them in as soon as possible
- Talk to other committee members who share the same interest area theme and listen to each other and to public comments and ideas
- Finish with the best products possible

Mr. Langowski then asked the City Manager to deliver a prepared presentation on what other college towns are doing to improve their downtown areas. Mr. Baity gave current examples of current developments, and examples taken from the cities of Paducah, Kentucky; Milwaukee, Wisconsin; Kent, Ohio; Champaign, Illinois; Normal, Illinois; Collinsville, Illinois; Evansville, Illinois; Effingham, Illinois; and Knoxville, Tennessee. He discussed the imminent downtown bike path and

additional parking area currently in the planning stages. He talked about the advantages of making South Illinois Avenue a two-way street and the improvements in arts and entertainment that could be made if that action could occur.

Summary of Concepts Generated

Public Comment was requested by the Chair and the following points were raised by the attendees:

- Bury the utility lines that currently hang in the downtown district
- Install trees and outdoor café seating to improve the mood and create life in the downtown
- Eliminate parking to create better environmental spaces (landscaping and parks)
- Keep the parking and consult with sign-making companies on signage
- Two-way street would slow traffic and allow the elimination of some traffic lights
- Request that the DAC remain open-minded to alternative concepts and ideas
- Requests recreational areas in the downtown space
- Encourage walkable downtowns
- Include foot patrol officers for safety and a bike hostel to support the Trans America Bike Trail
- Promote walking and riding of bikes
- Include edible greens in the street green space
- Include graphic designers to create a city brand based on heritage and history
- Support young business owners and more bike paths

Future Direction

Although the meeting was heavily skewed towards DAC organization and guidance, there was time allocated to public input and committee comments. Future meetings will be designed to begin with one or more stimulating presentations on the meeting theme, followed immediately by public comment and input, then committee comments, followed by a vote on the top five issues heard during the meetings discussion.



MINUTES

Downtown Master Plan Advisory Committee

Wednesday, August 20, 2014

Room 108, 6:30 p.m.

City Hall/Civic Center

Mr. Langowski called the meeting to order at 6:31 p.m.

Members Present: Bleyer, Boeckman, Bukowski, Carter, Cole, Colombo, Gorton, Gregory, Langowski, Dr. Pink-Harper, Ramseyer, Dr. Reddy, Schachel, Sheffer, Sigler, Terry

Members Absent:

Staff Present: Baity, Burtley, Price, Taylor, Wallace

1) Approval of Minutes:

No minutes to approve.

Opening comments by **J. Langowski**

- A. The area of study was defined by the boundaries of TIF District number one and two.
- B. **J. Langowski** stressed the committee members are not consultants but the City will employ consultants in December to create a finished plan.
- C. Information and ideas are requested from all members of the Committee, the community and from visitors to the community.
- D. The schedule of upcoming meetings is posted on the Committee's website. A way to submit ideas and contact the committee members is also provided.

2) Report of Officers, Committees, Communications:

A. Nomination and Election of Vice Chair and Secretary:

J. Langowski described the role and duties of the Vice Chair.

J. Langowski nominated **M. Cole** and gave her qualifications to hold the position of Vice Chair.

D. Gorton nominated **E. Ramseyer** and gave her qualifications to hold the position of Vice Chair.

The floor was closed for nominations by **J. Langowski** and votes were cast by secret ballot. 14 votes were cast for **M. Cole** and 3 votes were cast for **E. Ramseyer**.

M. Cole was elected Vice Chair.

J. Langowski described the role and duties of the Secretary.

J. Langowski nominated **M. Bukowski** and gave her qualifications to hold the Secretary position.

The floor closed for nominations by J. Langowski and votes were cast. She was elected unanimously.

M. Bukowski was elected Secretary.

B. Committee Purpose and Member Comments:

J. Langowski asked the committee to approve the proposed purpose statement.

Committee members began a discussion over the purpose statement.

D Gorton felt the committee should add redefining and improving the downtown to its purpose statement.

M. Cole The plan should be used and not be put on a shelf. The plan should be a living document that can be changed and has a time line for projects to be implemented.

J. Langowski The plan should set a time frame that is short in nature so the plan has achievable goals.

Eric McMillen (audience member) stated the proposed statement is a mission statement not a purpose statement. A purpose statement is why the committee exists and the mission statement is what you wish to accomplish.

M. Stalls (audience member) stated the committee needed a black male representative.

Trent Stevens 104 ½ E. Jackson St. (audience member) volunteered to serve as the black male representative.

Karen Martin (audience member) The committee needs to define what the committee is looking for and talking about.

Michael Fripp (audience member) asked is there a budget established with a projected cost to implement projects?

J. Langowski responded that the plan does not have a budget.

Danielle Salisco (audience member) feels the state of residences in Carbondale is the number one complaint and slum lords are the issue, not the beautiful downtown. The residences need to be improved before the economy can turn around.

J. Langowski changed the title of the proposed purpose statement to the proposed mission statement.

Trent (Audience Member) Try and use more resources from the university.

A. Miller asked for clarification of D. Gorton's comments as it relates to the culture and soul of downtown.

D. Gorton responded that the committee should be seeking what it is the community is seeking from its downtown master plan.

A. Miller states the committee should include language regarding ensuring the downtown stays the economic engine for the community.

G. Sheffer stated he intended to listen to the people and keep an open mind and add their comments to the mission statement. The mission statement has to be general in nature to accommodate the public comments.

Bernard Hennaburger (Audience Member) stated the plan should develop the

existing City culture and showcase it to the rest of the world.

E. Ramseyer asked that the committee include an open forum portion to the mission statement.

J. Langowski summed up the comments and agreed the addition of a statement regarding active listening and promoting the existing culture should be added.

The motion to approve the purpose statement was tabled by **J. Langowski**.

C. Committee Process and Member Comments:

J. Langowski stated areas of interest pertinent to the master plan were identified and noted they were flexible and somewhat overlap each other.

1. Transportation – This section will focus on the different modes of transportation in our community and how we can better integrate them into our downtown. It will also discuss traffic patterns, parking and public safety.
2. Signage – This section will focus on the use of objects to assist creating a downtown character that is unique.
3. Business Development – This section will focus on our variety of businesses and ask the question “Do we have the right mix for our town?” The city has 250 different establishments. The plan should help identify impediments to growth.
4. Downtown Integration – This section will look at the interface of downtown area with the university and hospital and neighborhoods that surround the downtown area. Improve ease of access to the downtown. Students, hospital persons, and residents to be involved in the discussion
5. Arts and Entertainment – Carbondale has several bands and other entertainment options such as the Carbondale Community Arts, and some great venues are here. This section will help define how to support and grow this segment of our downtown help develop a great marketing plan for the community.
6. Economic Civic Viability – This section focuses on how to make the plan doable and starting to implement the ideas contained above.

J. Langowski continued describing the process from which the committee will use to develop the downtown master plan.

1. Members interested in a particular topic should join in on the planning of the specific meeting that will be focused on that topic and help plan and direct that meeting.
2. The committee will gather public input in an ongoing basis through the meetings or website, provide written reports to City Council on a monthly basis, and the members that lead each meeting will provide reports, in both a short and long form about the issues and ideas brought up during the meetings.
3. Those reports will be given to the consultants to allow them to incorporate all

the public comments and desires into the Downtown Master Plan.

4. Identify and select a consultant in a timely manner.
5. Receive from the consultant, monthly community meetings and progress reports from the consultants.
6. Review draft report and obtain public comment on the draft report.
7. Approve a final plan.

J. Langowski and **D. Gorton** had a discussion over requirements for subcommittees and their meetings with regards to the open meetings act.

J. Langowski made a request for a motion to adopt the process as described above. **E. Ramseyer** moved to adopt. **J. Langowski** adopted the process with the notion that it can be changed in the future.

J. Langowski discussed and listed the following guiding principles.

- A. Visit and coordinate the site requirements.
- B. Make thoughtful and meaningful basis.
- C. Start on time and respect agendas and schedules.
- D. Coordinate with city staff as soon as possible.
- E. Invite guest speakers that can shed light on the specific topic being discussed
- F. Take notes, provide meaningful comments and do your homework on the topic.
- G. Start your reports early and get them in as soon as possible.
- H. Talk to other committee members who share the same area of interest and listen to each other and to public comments and ideas.
- I. Finish with the best product possible.

3) Old Business

None

4) New Business

Mr. Kevin Baity, City Manager, provided a presentation on what other similar communities have done to revitalize their downtown areas. Mr. Baity gave examples of current developments occurring in the City of Carbondale. Mr. Baity provided a thorough presentation with examples from Paducah, Kentucky; Milwaukee, Wisconsin; Kent, Ohio; Champaign, Illinois; Normal, Illinois; Collinsville, Illinois; Evansville, Illinois; Effingham, Illinois; and Knoxville, Tennessee. Mr. Baity also discussed the future Carbondale Bike Path and additional parking lots that are currently in the planning stages right now.

Mr. Baity also focused on arts and entertainment in other towns. Shelbyville, Ohio

provides public artwork. Evansville, Illinois provides public art sculpture. Centralia, Illinois provided a large clue board to cover an issue with an existing building and provide a public art piece. He showed a scene in Kent Ohio of a street festival in full swing. Mr. Baity suggested creating two way streets from University Avenue and Illinois Avenue. Illinois Avenue would become a business route and have the ability to be closed to allow for street festivals and other public events. A discussion followed regarding how this idea would work and what things would change. Mr. Baity shared the secrets to success with the group and then completed his presentation.

J. Langowski wants to make sure the environment is not artificially created and is really built to support the community. **Mr. Langowski** asked for public comments.

5) Public Comments

Stephanie Eicholz (Audience Member)– Wishes to bury the power lines in the downtown area and feels this is the only way to achieve the goals stated by this commission.

Karen Martin (Audience Member) – feels trees and outside café seating improve the mood of a city and creates life on the city streets. She feels the town has lost its historic cohesiveness and thinks it's just ugly.

Simone Beck (Audience Member) – noted other communities eliminating parking to create successful downtowns.

Larry Weatherford (Audience Member) – Keep the downtown parking and wishes the city would consult the local sign companies when addressing signage in the downtown area.

Currin Bishop (Audience Member)– two way traffic would slow traffic and allow for the elimination of some traffic lights.

Jesus Ponce De León (Audience Member) – Wishes for a different downtown and not a downtown that every other town has developed in the last 20 years. He wishes the city to use the “open innovation” process where the community reaches out to ask for new ideas and concepts via the web and other resources. He asks for the committee to be open to alternative concepts and ideas. He hopes real ideas and change will come as a result of this plan.

Stacy Swoboda (Audience Member) – The downtown area needs new recreation areas in the downtown area.

Treesong (Audience Member)– Consider our values, social justice and environmental sustainability. Consider integral cities and support a creative economy. Encourage walkable downtowns.

Trent Stephens (Audience Member)- He suggested adding foot patrol officers to the downtown, specifically at the fountain in town square. He suggested moving the parking lot in front of ABC liquors to surrounding vacant lots and convert it into a park area to support community events. He also suggests adding a bike hostel to the downtown as we are on the trans America bike trail. He also suggested investing in tents and materials to host a professional street fair.

Erin Palmer (Audience Member)- She feels the community should promote walking and riding bikes. Street parking should be restricted to promote biking on the street. The new 710 building is too big and out of proportion and the city should set size laws to limit the size of buildings. Be careful not to just accept anything and ensure new development

is good for the community.

Cody Roach (Audience Member)- Include edible greens in the street green space.

J. D. Higler (Audience Member)- Graphic designers should be brought in to create a city brand that is controlled by the city. The brand story (our history and where we want to go as a city) will tell the city why to do things and guide us to find our future.

Jeremy Clow (Audience Member)- Feels there is no substantial historical façade south of 13 and the committee should keep an open mind to changing things. Mr. Clough also stated he is very much in favor of a bike path in the community.

Shelly Hill (Audience Member)- In favor of increasing the presence of the bike paths in the community. Strongly encourages supporting young business owners in our community.

J. Langowski asked for comments from the committee.

J. Sigler – Felt the committee did too much talking in this meeting and not enough listening. He agrees to removing the parking from downtown. The young professionals graduating from SIUC should be encouraged to stay and build our community. He is the demographic that the community needs to keep and it is his goal to be convinced into staying in Carbondale. If he can be convinced then the plan should be a success. The community needs to create resources to complete projects rather than only working with what we have.

G. Sheffer – Challenge committee to see both sides of ideas and find a way to compromise and keep an open mind. He also strongly suggests keeping parking in the downtown area.

J. Langowski – Noted it is only 16 and a half minutes to walk from Longbranch to Harbaughs. Noted its 30 to 45 minutes of walking to get to where you want to go in a larger city and you don't think about it.

A. Miller – Community must improve the economy to keep the university growing. He challenged the committee to come to these meetings with a community agenda not a personal one. We must keep graduating students and make them want to start a family here. Building more parking is also critical to the town.

D. Terry – Asked does the university support the town? Community has to provide parking for the downtown area or businesses will not succeed. Keep personal agendas out of the plan.

6. Adjournment

J. Langowski thanked the public and committee for coming and announced the next meeting will be September 3rd at 6:30 p.m. at the offices of Carbondale Main Street.

J. Langowski asked for a motion to adjourn.

A. Miller made the motion to adjourn and **G. Sheffer** seconded.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:52 pm.