

Advisory Committee Meeting #1 Notes | 4/14/2022**Attendees****Advisory Committee Members:**

- | | | |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Mark Borenstein | <i>Land Use Attorney at Bowditch & Dewey, LLP, Worcester Resident</i> |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Roberta Brien | <i>Worcester Business Development Corporation, Vice President of Projects</i> |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Lynn Cheney | <i>Business Owner - Maker on Main</i> |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Germán Chiriboga | <i>University of Massachusetts Chan Medical School, Program Director</i> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Alyssa Corazzini | <i>Resident (not able to attend this meeting)</i> |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Amanda Gregoire | <i>Massachusetts Development Finance Agency, Vice President of Real Estate Services</i> |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Sujatha Krishnan | <i>Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission, Deputy Director</i> |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Albert LaValley | <i>Worcester Planning Board, Chair</i> |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Joyce Mandell | <i>Resident & Urban Planning Partnership</i> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Amie Shei | <i>The Health Foundation of Central Massachusetts, President and CEO (not able to attend this meeting)</i> |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Casey Starr | <i>Main South Community Development Corporation, Director of Community Initiatives</i> |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Suzanne Wood | <i>University of Massachusetts Chan Medical School, Sustainability Manager</i> |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Ulysses Youngblood | <i>Business Owner - Major Bloom</i> |

City Staff (Worcester Planning & Regulatory Services Division):

- | | | |
|-------------------------------------|----------------|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Stephen Rolle | <i>Assistant Chief Development Officer</i> |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Michelle Smith | <i>Chief Planner</i> |



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Consultant Team (Utile):

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Tim Love	<i>Principal-in-Charge</i>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Will Cohen	<i>Senior Urban Planner</i>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Zoë Mueller	<i>Project Manager</i>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Andrea Baena	<i>Urban Design Lead</i>

Agenda

- 1. Introductions (20 mins)**
 - a. City Team
 - b. Consultant Project Team
 - c. Advisory Committee Members
- 2. Project Focus (15 mins)**
 - a. Building from past plans
 - b. What the plan is and isn't
 - c. Core topic areas
- 3. Advisory Committee Role (15 mins)**
- 4. Project Timeline & Engagement (25 mins)**
 - a. Phases & key deliverables
 - b. Engagement philosophy, approach and elements
- 5. Next Steps (10 mins)**
 - a. What to expect in the next few months

Meeting Notes

I. Introductions

Committee members, city staff, and consultant team members introduced themselves and gave brief overviews of their technical expertise and personal interest as they related to the planning process.

II. Project Focus

Utile provided an overview of the opportunities a citywide long-range plan provides for Worcester and the topics that a citywide long-range planning process cannot address.

Comments from Committee Members:

- Could you provide a one-pager or talking points to help us explain what the plan is to community members and stakeholders?

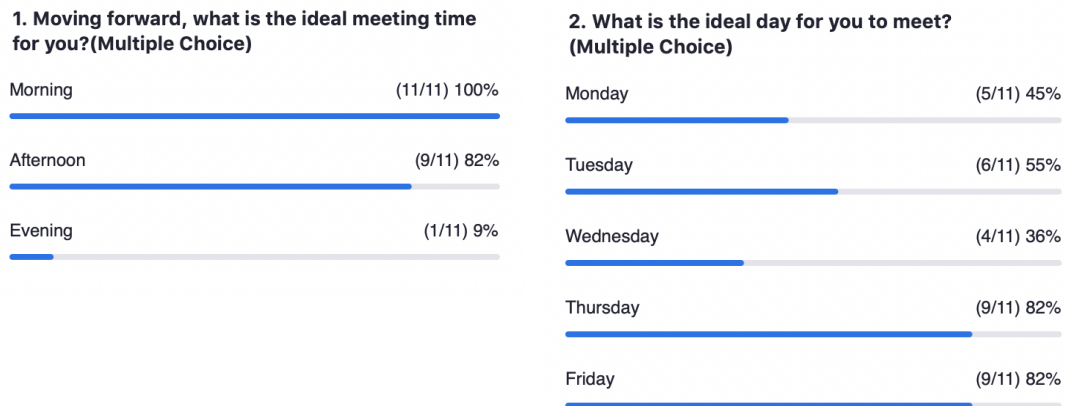


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- Planning Team Response: Yes. The main points to communicate are (1) the importance of these planning efforts to people’s everyday lives, (2) that a Citywide Long-Range Plan like this one is about setting a framework and strategic priorities to be implemented and (3) that it won’t address every detail.

III. Advisory Committee Role

Utile introduced the attendees to the Committee’s role in the larger planning process, as well as the role of other advisory bodies such as the topic-specific working groups and the planning board. Committee members were also asked to submit poll answers indicating meeting time preferences. The results of this poll are copied below - the overall preference was for Thursday or Friday mornings.



Comments from Committee Members:

- Will meetings continue to be virtual?
 - Planning Team Response: Yes. In general we will be meeting virtually. If there is an opportunity to coordinate with another in-person event, we can try an in-person meeting. But we’ve found that a virtual setting allows more people to attend.
- Can you follow-up with contact information of other Advisory Committee members so that we can stay connected?
 - Planning Team Response: Absolutely. If all Committee members are alright with sharing their contact information with each other, that would be great.

IV. Project Timeline & Engagement

Utile presented the project timeline to Committee members, including the phases and key deliverables of the project. Utile also provided an overview of the key principles underlying the engagement process. A key element of the process will be the hiring of a local community organizer to support outreach efforts throughout Worcester.



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- Are you using machine translation for the survey or is it human translated?
 - Planning Team Response: The survey is machine translated, due to the evolving nature of the survey, and is based on the language the user's device is set to. We are planning to provide interpretation services for in-person events.
- Can we help with survey outreach? Are there printed materials that we can use?
 - Planning Team Response: We encourage all committee members to help people learn about and participate in the survey. This isn't a standard survey - it is dynamic and allows people to submit their own comments and vote on each other's comments, making it more engaging and meaningful but making it impossible to translate into a printed format. Like any engagement tool, this survey has strengths and weaknesses - it is just one piece of a larger engagement strategy that includes tools, events, and activities that aren't so reliant on digital methods. The survey is not intended to be conclusive - it is intended to help us have a productive conversation at our upcoming in-person events.
- The online survey tool is very fun and accessible for youth. Can we extend the deadline? Can we plan to reach more youth?
 - Planning Team Response: We will need to close the survey at some point so that we can analyze some of the key results such as areas of consensus and areas of disagreement. We could take a snapshot of the survey at one point in time and then encourage people to keep participating over a longer period of time. However, there is also value in closing the survey and moving on to the next set of questions and activities beyond this first tool.
- Could we create a quick video explaining the survey to share on social media? An explanation may help clarify how it works?
 - Planning Team Response: Once we have the organizer onboarded we will enlist their help developing tools like this. Social media campaigns are effective, and word of mouth is also an important method for getting the word out.

Comments from Committee Members on the Community Organizer:

- Can we get people that are leading neighborhood meetings to help with community outreach? All neighborhood meetings are listed on the city's website and the neighborhood meetings are well attended.
 - Planning Team Response: This is a great suggestion and is one of the things we expect to work closely with our organizer on once they are onboarded.
- Are you still hiring a community organizer? The job post is still on the website.
 - Planning Team Response: We're not accepting applications anymore because we have already selected an organizer. Utile is currently working to get that individual under contract.
- Is it a requirement for the Community Organizer to speak more than one language? Would they join us for meetings?



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- Planning Team Response: Yes. Our intended organizer is conversational in Spanish and has some knowledge of other languages. Regarding engagement of the organizer with this committee, we are suggesting that the organizer have one-on-one meetings with any committee members that are willing. In addition, the organizer could certainly join the advisory committee meetings when it would be helpful and we could have one session where the committee members get to meet the organizer.

V. Next Steps

The consultant team emphasized that they learned a lot at this meeting and will incorporate committee member feedback, especially as it relates to public engagement and the role of the community organizer. Specific follow-ups to be resolved include:

a. Supplemental Information for Advisory Committee

Planning Team to circulate committee member contact information and a document with talking points explaining what this plan is.

b. Translation

Planning Team to evaluate ways to increase translation quality beyond the automated services currently being used on the website and survey.

c. Survey

Planning Team to (1) provide the Advisory Committee members with responses to FAQs for the survey to support promotion efforts, and (2) work with the organizer, once onboarded, to do more customized outreach like social media how-to videos. After further conversation, the planning team determined not to extend the survey deadline significantly beyond the current end-of-May closing - the intent is to focus in-person outreach throughout the summer engagement events on new questions and activities that build on the survey and push the conversation to the next step in the process.

d. Organizer & Outreach

Planning Team to coordinate one-on-one meetings with the organizer and explore what kind of ongoing relationship between the organizer and Advisory Committee would be most productive. Planning Team to work closely with the organizer to increase the presence of the plan at community events.

e. Scheduling for Future Advisory Committee Meetings

Planning Team to send out holds for future meetings based on preferences shared during this kickoff meeting.

