

TOWN OF ONTARIO COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Steering Committee Meeting #3 | November 4, 2020

Meeting Minutes

Attendees:

Susan Brown	Brian Natale
Don Cedruly	Joe Barone
Joe Crestuk	Glenn Majewski
John Evanowsky	Carol Schwartz-Mizelle
John Graziose	George Konstantinou
Bob Heintzelman	Matt Horn, MRB Group
Bob Kelsch, Deputy Supervisor	Jane Nicholson, MRB Group

Welcome + Introductions

Matt Horn, MRB Group, welcomed the Steering Committee attendees to the third Steering Committee meeting. Matt introduced Senior Planning Associate, Jane Nicholson, to the Committee who will be assisting with the Visioning session.

Project Updates

Matt opened the meeting with brief updates on the following:

Website: The website, ONWARDONTARIONY.ORG is now live, and encourages all Steering Committee members to visit it and share within their networks.

Community Survey: The survey is posted on the website and has received approximately 50 responses to date. This number is projected to increase throughout the process. Matt asked all Committee members to share a link within their social media networks and listservs.

Public Workshop: The workshop is scheduled for December 10th and has been published in the Ontario newsletter. The visioning session the Committee is working on in this meeting will serve as a foundation for the workshop.

Visioning

Matt explained that visioning is a verbal expression of where you want to be; spoken in the present and does not include the words *will be*. Visioning is the framework for the Comprehensive Plan, and the results from this session will culminate in three draft vision statements that will be distributed to the community at the public workshop.

In the context of the Comprehensive Plan, visioning is intended to support the data, that is, the demographic and statistical analysis that tells the story of where the community is today. If results from the data indicate that the community is heading in the right direction, the vision and supporting policies will help accelerate implementation.

Committee Question: Doesn't the Committee need the statistical information in order to make informed decisions? Especially on a regional approach, are we pulling the data?

Matt explained that the data is important, but comes into the picture later in the process. The community first needs to decide what they want. He uses the examples of Fairport, Skaneateles,

TOWN OF ONTARIO COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Steering Committee Meeting #3 | November 4, 2020

and other communities and explains that you need to identify what attributes that you're aiming to achieve. The community needs to decide what you want first. Then the data is brought back in which is used to indicate what you need to do in order to achieve what you want.

The “Golden Circle”

Matt walked the Committee through the “Golden Circle”; that is, the why, how, and what of successful visioning. He explained that every organization understands “what” they are doing, most know “how” to do it, but only the best understand “why” they are doing it. The “why” is the root of the Comprehensive Plan.

Matt used familiar examples to demonstrate how defining the why is one of the most critical components of the planning process. The Wright Brothers versus Samuel Langley with two different approaches to flight – one with the desire to win, and one with the desire to connect people to the world. The Wright Brothers knew their “why”, and stuck with the process.

Another example includes Steve Jobs and the iPod in comparison to the Gateway replica, as well as Martin Luther King who had no interest in main stream media, but his informal networks and power of “why” that got people to believe in his message.

Matt explained that people don't buy *what* you do, but *why* you do it. Otherwise, it is just a commodity.

Matt reviewed the Law of Diffusion of Innovation: the groups that represent the “innovators”, “early adopters”, “early majority”, and the “laggers”. This group is the innovators responsible for setting the tone and vision. You can either be a community of choice or circumstance, where the community of choice is a result of believing in your why and wanting to be in the community. Communities of circumstance are a result of having to be in that place for a particular reason (job, etc.), but would leave at the opportunity. Your goal is to be a community of choice. If you are outward about your why and get others to be onboard, that's the power of the vision.

Committee Question / Comment:

- What is the median age? Many aren't coming back; you don't see the amenities (i.e. restaurants) that other communities have.
- Visual perception as you enter the community

Matt explained that the Comprehensive Plan provides clarity around the why; serving as a SEQR defense (see questions related to the Comprehensive Plan), and sets the tone for important regulatory decisions. You all were a part of this process, and it is critical that your zoning and planning boards understand the vision as this will guide future approvals and decision-making.

Thought Prompts

Each of the Committee members were given a “thought prompt” page prior to the meeting which are intended to steer the development of the vision statement.

Matt asked Committee members why they chose Ontario, and referenced the photos submitted at the beginning of the planning process identifying areas/assets that you like and dislike. Is this what you were thinking in terms of your why?

He further asked Committee members why they got involved in this process, and what keeps them in the community. A summary of the Committee members responses is provided at the end of this document.

TOWN OF ONTARIO COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Steering Committee Meeting #3 | November 4, 2020

Committee Question / Comment:

- The need for affordable housing
- Challenge of keeping people under 40 in the community; there is room to absorb more students in the school system

Matt provided a high-level overview of how affordable housing is defined through market rate housing, wholly subsidized, partially subsidized, and workforce. Workforce describes the bulk of people who work or live in the community can find a home to live in. This is the type of housing the community is looking to attract, and comes back to the zoning discussion of allowable uses (mixed use, higher density, etc.)

The ultimate goal is to have a vibrant community, and you have the opportunity to built it first and with intention (great places don't happen by accident!).

Summary & Next Steps

MRB Group will distribute the list of "why" Ontario for review, feedback, and comments. This list will be used to develop three draft vision statements that will be turned around quickly for comment from the Committee in anticipation of the workshop in December.

The next meeting is to be held on December 1st at 7:00 p.m.

The meeting adjourned at 8:35 p.m.

TOWN OF ONTARIO COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Steering Committee Meeting #3 | November 4, 2020

Visioning Exercise Results

Why did you decide to come to Ontario?

- Close-knit community
- Values
- Place for Families
- People who care

What keeps you here?

- Location – relative to the city and lake
- Rural opportunities, such as hunting, nature
- Allows for home occupation / business that other communities would not permit

What are some of the challenges?

- Tired of seeing the community going in the wrong direction
- Challenges with elected / appointed boards
- Micro-management
- Aging community
- Assets obscured

Opportunities:

- Shopping
- Infrastructure
- Workforce housing
- Vibrancy
- Opportunity to grow amenities
- Raise the profile of the community / perception
- Innovative companies
- Grow the population
- Grow the tax base
- Parks and Trails
- Proximity to the lake

Question to the Committee:

- What's missing on the opportunities list?