Chapel Hill 2020:
Comprehensive Planning through Engagement

Presented by Mayor Mark Kleinschmidt
12/13/14
for the Mayors Innovation Project
Building Sustainable Communities: A Leadership Forum
Burlington, VT
Cutting through the Noise

In 2011-12, the Town of Chapel Hill tried something “REALLY BIG”
Cutting through the Noise

COMMUNICATE

transmit information

share or exchange information

convey ideas

VS.

ENGAGE

involve

attract

establish a meaningful connection
Community Mapping

Uses data for a better understanding of the dynamics of a geographic area:

- Resources
- Religious Organizations
- Schools
- Community Services i.e. homeless shelter, food bank, child care, after school tutoring
- Nonprofit Organizations
- Demographics
- Number of Owner Occupied Homes/Renters
Creating Our List

- Phone book for religious organizations
- Melissa Data was used to identify:
  - 797 Chapel Hill based NGOs
  - 274 Orange County based NGOs which serve Chapel Hill
- 24 NGOs, primarily representing hard to reach communities, were identified as groups we wanted to interview
What did we learn?
Interviewed Groups: Preferred Meeting Times

- Weekday Morning: 2 responses
- Weekday Midday: 6 responses
- Weekday Evening: 14 responses
- Weekend: 4 responses
Interviewed Groups: Barriers to Participation

- Language/Format/Distribution
- Lack of accessibility to buildings and materials for people with physical or developmental challenges
- Low English Language/Literacy Skills
- Mistrust
- Inaccessible Communications*
- Meeting Accessibility Issues **
- Lack of Time
- Lack of Transportation
- Disinterest

*Language/Format/Distribution
**Lack of accessibility to buildings and materials for people with physical or developmental challenges
Interviewed Groups: Member Interests

- Transportation: 8 responses
- Affordable Housing: 8 responses
- Jobs: 5 responses
- Environment: 3 responses
- Homelessness: 2 responses
- Non-profits/services: 2 responses
- Small Businesses: 2 responses
- Immigration: 1 response
- Parking: 1 response
- Inter-Ethnic Communication: 1 response
- Inequality: 1 response

Number of Responses
Outreach Recommendations from Interviewees

• Contact Service Agencies – clients & clients’ families
• Public Service Announcements TV & Radio
• Give as much advance notice as possible for meetings and events
• Many groups were interested in partnering with the Town to share information with members either through staff presentations to members or via listservs and websites
• Embed videos in emails to convey critical info to the visually impaired and illiterate
• Talk about issues in concrete terms
• Ensure that various ethnic groups are participating in all meetings
Outreach Recommendations from Interviewees (Cont)

• Set up tables at high school and middle school sporting events to recruit parents
• Burmese Community – Habitat has built a number of homes for this community
• Take the message door to door
• Be careful not to misidentify community leaders.
• Centro Latino and Chapel Hill-Carrboro Meals-on-Wheels are happy to survey members on behalf of the Town
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During the first 3 outreach meetings, 6 themes were developed to provide definition to the plan and a way to organize the community conversations about the future.

- Create a Place for Everyone
- Grown Town & Gown Collaboration
- Facilitate Getting Around
- Develop Good Places New Spaces
- Nurture Our Community
- Support Community Prosperity and Engagement
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Chapel Hill 2020 Goals
Goals and Action Items

Staff Analysis
Identify related elements; resolve conflicting goals. Analyze cost, timing, and policy implications. Recommend actions.

Council Deliberation
Set policy and priorities consistent with Chapel Hill 2020 goals. Authorize action.

Action
Staff and community partners take action, engage community, and assess results in terms of Chapel Hill 2020 goals.

Public Input
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Community Involvement in the Chapel Hill 2020 Planning Process

Maintain Public Engagement
- Ordinance Update
- Small Area Plan
- Strategic Planning
- Priority Budgeting
- Asset Management
- Workforce Planning

Council Preparation
- Initiating Committee
  - Council Appoints Initiating Committee
  - Committee Begins Process

Sustained Community Engagement
- 2020 Community Meetings
- Blog and Website
- Unconference
- Town Talks
- Talking to Community Groups

Timeline:
- Council Goals 2011
- Council Goals 2012
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• **CHALLENGES**
  – **Time** – a lot of information, short time to digest, real life kept happening
  – **Continuity** – some community members came to every meeting, but a majority did not (63%).
  – **Expectations** – keeping them realistic, defining “vision” vs. “reality”
  – **Nay-sayers** – how to manage uncertainty
  – **Accountability** – saying what you mean and meaning what you say.
Was it Successful?
Outside the Box

- 6 tavern talks at local bars/coffee shops, organized by theme
- Staff rode buses
- Engaged refugee population through religious leaders
Senior Participation

• 2 meetings at Seymour Senior Center
  – Carol Woods retirement community organized more meetings on their own
  – Uploaded their discussion summaries to the 2020 Buzz Blog
  – Remained engaged when provided tools to remain connected