

Fostering Communities that Attract Young People

February 20, 2012 – The Grove, New Haven

CMSC Staff Forum Notes

- Redeveloping Torrington – want to bring in young people. What would be a draw?
- In Bridgeport Kutchma has a large development with 84 units. 60% are rented by people 20-35 years old.
 - o It's close to bars, things to do, NYC
 - o Convenient to school and work
 - o Grouping – people go to schools (colleges) nearby
- Sidewalks are huge – less expensive
- Having young people there will attract other young people
- How do we start the magnet (attracting young people)
 - o Walking, things to do
- How do we get them (young people) out? Does something like The Group With No Name work?
- Just start something and people will begin to attend
- Event in Willimantic – How did they contact people? Put it on Facebook.
- Towns need to put things on Facebook
- Bring in events with a following. New Britain Museum has Museum After Dark (MAD). Had event with burlesque entertainment that has their own following that followed them straight to the museum.
- Social media needs to supplement advocacy and traditional marketing.
 - o Otherwise events need to be cheap and inexpensive.
 - o Connect to a cause – people will pay more
- Is it better to build an incubator (for commercial use) or housing?
- Why do we (young people) live where we do?
 - o Price, location, housing
 - o Taxes are a factor. Price of rent – if it's the same as a mortgage, why rent?
- What's so good about West Hartford? Good music, restaurants, bars
- Young people (YP) are willing to travel for work but want their personal amenities close.
- The cool factor means something different as you get older. Not interested in the same thing?
- Homeownership is where you want to live/rent. What's a young person's thought process regarding housing? Do they plan to be there for a while?
- This is a generation that is willing to be an activist. They want diversity and open-mindedness. Don't need a perfect neighborhood, if it has "good bones" they're willing to work to improve it and make it what they want it to be.
- Mobility is part of the thought process now.
- YES Survey – A lot of young people want to own a home in 5-10 years, but not in the suburbs, in an urban area.
- A lot of older people want to get out of their house too and be somewhere they can walk – they want the same amenities.
- How do we incentivize our communities so young people want to return after school? Should we (planners) start talking to high school students so they're engaged in the process?
- Young people move around a lot but don't feel committed to one place. Feel like they have to go somewhere else to pursue their dreams. What will it take to make them think they can accomplish those dreams here?
- Transit for young people who travel a lot. Connections with other major cities – NY, DC, etc.
- On personal time want to do anything other than drive.
- New Britain doing bike routes and sharrows.
- Bus routes are great because if you break down you're not isolated.

- There's a stigma to bus ridership.
- In CT the bus is very inconvenient. Don't go to local towns.
- CT does poor job of getting from the bus/train station to the job. How do you fix that?
- Have we developed land near our transit station to its fullest purpose?
- Are outer towns without transit hubs destined to never attract young people?
 - o No, just make them livable. Link them to attractions – biking, walking. Make the small town center walkable. Market yourself as a small Colorado.
 - o Think locally – like Tuscany. Self-sustainable for the townspeople who also work there (on farms, etc). Don't try to get people to Hartford.

Jobs & Businesses

- Lot of young business owners
- Job HUB started by Governor Malloy. Accelerator/ incubator program. Four hubs in CT.
- Social enterprise – social cause with a sustainable revenue
- Leadership Greater Bridgeport – through Bridgeport Chamber of Commerce. Once a month meeting – all day topic. Program the length of the school year.
 - o Mentoring for new, young businesses
 - o Work together
- Be an ambassador for your town
- Is a Chamber of Commerce still relevant? Do young people still use them?
- Is manufacturing still viable?
- Concern regarding availability of a workforce
- Advocate for the type of land use you want.
- Read your local Plan of Conservation and Development and town's Comprehensive Plan
- Young people want to live, work and recreate in the same place = mixed use.
- But of lot of towns were zoned so you can't work where you live.
 - o Americorp Vista – people got jobs here and stayed
 - o Hlreland- government challenged private sector to hire someone, even if it's at a lower wage for someone who would otherwise volunteer.

Retail/Social

- How do you mesh the problem residents (drug addicted, homeless, etc) with young people?
- Keep the cops on the ground. Walking police presence.
- Keep safety up.
- When you're out on the street you get to know people. De-mystify the characters.
- Downtown Stamford – Interesting community policing model.
- Landscaping – Walnut Hill Park. Create public spaces where responsible people hang out and that can exhibit the type of behavior you want emulated.
- Eyes on the street.
- Encourage diversity, especially with business owners. In Willimantic, 34% of the population is Latino, but they're not in the bars or restaurants.
- What do you do about public restrooms and the homeless?
 - o Park(ing) Day – Make an outhouse
- Partner projects (Knox Park) with schools. Have free music outside.
- Could/should government subsidize young people living in ethnic neighborhoods?
- Need to revise our property tax system.
- Income and property tax need to be resolved because it keeps young people away.
- Yale University has a program to help their employees live where they work.
- Bridgeport – St. Vincent and People's United have a similar program.

Moderator Notes

Housing

- Want young people
 - o Feet on the street
 - o “Cool factor”
- Affordable
 - o Close to bars
 - o Close to trains
 - o Convenient/school/work
 - o “Grouping” in same situation
 - o Other young people
- Sidewalks – being able to *walk*. Less expensive.
- How do you start the magnet? How do you get them out?
 - o Group With No Name (social events)
 - Meet and greet sessions at area restaurants
 - Show them what is there.
 - o Future Project (coaches)
 - o Use charity to engage
 - o Draw them in with events and fun for young people
 - o Who might help?
 - o Make them comfortable
 - o Facebook
 - o Can you engage the young people to *inspire* them?
 - o Artist(s)
 - o New Britain Museum of Art
 - Museum After Dark (MAD)
 - o Find the “groups”
 - People self-select
 - Not just “point & click” – Need advocacy
 - o People 25-34 twice as willing to participate if it its personal/supports a cause
 - o Needs to be cheap/inexpensive
 - o What are young people willing to compromise?
 - o Figure out what they value.
 - Price/proximity
- Why do you live where you live?
 - o Hometown
 - o Jobs – close to work
 - o Money
 - able to buy-in
 - close to amenities but not too close
 - o Schools
 - o Amenities
 - o Transportation
 - o “Home”
 - o Open-mindedness
 - o Diversity (of people, housing stock)
 - o Mobility/ability to move
 - o Investment
 - o Inspired/empowered

- Faith
- House vs. Home – Commitment to a space/place
- Future Project
- Incentives – What might we do? ENGAGE
 - Food
 - Music
 - Incubate ideas
 - Translates over time to some permanences
 - Is there a change here?

Transit

- Bike paths and sharrows [sharrow = a road that is shared with bicyclists and is marked to indicate so]
- Bus Routes (back up strategy)
- Long-distance connections to other places (Train/Bus hubs)
- Prefer not to drive (personal time)
- Bus stigma
- Inefficient
- Last resort here
- Buses do not link well to rail
- Investments not linked to transit (office parks)
- Need better connections of where people live and work
 - Express buses as an example
- Who fixes it?
 - Part zoning
 - Part bus co.
- What is our potential if we don't have it?
 - Most expensive to least
 - Air
 - Rail
 - Bus
 - Car
 - Bike
 - Walk
 - Couch

Jobs/businesses

- Social enterprise trust mixes profits with a purpose
- Reset
- Business accelerator
 - Mentor/support
 - Guidance
- Leadership Greater Bridgeport
 - Mentoring
 - Work together
 - Ambassador
 - Value-added component
 - Where?
- Somebody makes something
- Workforce doesn't exist for some manufacturers
- Rail lines for industrial uses
 - Many have been converted to bike trails.

- Nuts and bolts needs
- Advocate for land use
 - Goes back to “good bones”
 - Mixed-use eliminated from many towns
 - Americorp Vista
 - Put it out there
 - Partnerships – business and universities, link to jobs

Social

- Urban “challenges”
 - Addiction
 - Homeless, etc.
 - What might we do?
- Safety
 - Walking police presence
 - Community policing
 - Model – Stamford BID
 - De-mystify the characters
 - Public spaces where people can hang out
 - “Eyes on the street”
 - Vibrancy/activity
 - Diversity – get them out!
- Restrooms/Alleyways/Garage Staircases
 - What are towns doing?
 - Park(ing) Day – outhouse
- Reach out into the ethnic groups
- Could youth be the bridge for diversity?
- What might we do?
 - Cheap homes
 - Fix property taxes in the cities
 - Yale’s program as a model
 - Bridgeport – St. Vincent & People’s United
 - Case study?