

**City of Mill Valley
Community Vitality Working Group
Meeting #1**

Meeting Summary

June 13, 2012

Working Group Attendees:

- John McCauley, Chair
- Ken Brooks, Vice-Chair
- Shawn Marshall (Absent)
- Josh Deitch
- Ann Aversa
- Dan Kelly
- Stephanie Witt
- Stephen Burke
- Lynne Klein
- Jason Michaels
- Bob Burton

City Staff:

- Mike Moore, Planning & Building Director
- Danielle Staude, Senior Planner

Members of the Public: 2 community members in attendance.

Meeting Overview:

I. Call to Order: 7:05 pm

II. Public Comment

Barbara Ford: More information on when and where meetings will be.

III. Community Vitality Work Program

- Addition of August 15th Meeting Date
- Review of Overall Process
- Selection of Arts & Culture Subcommittee

Community Vitality Working Group members that will be on the sub-committee:

Dan Kelly
Bob Burton
Lynn Klein
Ken Brooks

Community Members on the sub-committee:

Jasson Minadakis, Artistic Director, Marin Theatre Company
Megan Wilkinson, Executive Director, O'Hanlon Center for the Arts
N. Theresa Rea, Mill Valley Art Commission

IV. Review Existing Conditions & Trends / Workbook

Working Group Comments on Economic Vitality:

- Balance tourism, local businesses and sustainable economy.
- Not capturing or encouraging tourists in the local economy
- Central information area needed – kiosk and/or website for advertisements and calendar of events
- Local business
 - Disconnect between what businesses want to do and what the community thinks they want; also between landlords and tenants
 - Entrepreneurial spirit in Mill Valley; entrepreneurs think big—not just opening one local store, they are thinking bigger.
- Rents
 - Downtown high, Miller Avenue lower
 - May be high downtown, but lower than the malls; still need business to be profitable.
- Downtown
 - Locals, not tourists, are spending high dollars on dog toys and women’s clothing,
 - Boutiques to serve upper middle class local citizens
 - Protect the “village”
 - Mix should be market driven.
 - “Recreational” shopping; focus more on the experience, not the goods
- Miller Avenue
 - Very disconnected visually and as a shopping/service area
 - Provides services for everyday needs that you can’t find online (e.g., car repair, gas station, doctor offices)
 - Gentrification now slowly happening along Miller
- Local business/Local arts connections
 - Arts activities downtown also help shops and restaurants; improve connections
 - Local trust to preserve arts organizations; important sites that define the community
 - For-profit and non-profit businesses benefit from one another. The more successful and profitable the businesses are, the more they can contribute to non-profits and the community (donations, sponsors, advertisements, so on).
- Economic vitality = vibrancy and change
 - Embrace technology
 - Service providers must match changing demographics (elders and young)

- New economy that focuses on experience not products that you can buy on the internet. New successful businesses sell only their product and/or service so you can't go online and get it for a discounted price.
- Things will change and grow within commercial areas, and that is ok and appropriate for these areas.
- Planning Process
 - Can be difficult and frustrating
 - Permit process and parking requirements
 - Friendlier approach to foster new business ideas
 - Role of Chamber; possible ombudsman; clearinghouse for arts programs and events
 - Possible incentives for local residents to make it easier for them to operate a business in town.

V. Public Comment

- Barbara Ford: Interested in Historic Preservation component of the Working Group and would like to be kept informed.

9:10 pm Meeting Adjourned