



## Capitol Area Architectural and Planning Board



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### Community Vitality Task Force Meeting January 30, 2024 1:00 p.m. – 2:30 p.m. Agenda & Meeting Minutes

## AGENDA

### Housekeeping & Progress Update

- o Minutes Approval – January 16th
- o Community Voices Process: Creation in Common
  - o Updates on stakeholders, surveys, interviews, etc.
  - o Preliminary takeaways and ideas

### Vitality Grant Development: Research by SDK

- o Updates on Subgroup meetings
- o Other updates

### Purpose and Governance – CAAPB staff/Creation in Common/SDK

- o Advice on how to craft Legislative package
- o Legislative language: “Subd. 4. Duties; report. The task force must consider and develop recommendations for the administration, program plan, and oversight of the Capitol Area community vitality account established by this act...”

### Defining “Vitality”

- o "How can you /(can you at all) describe a community where vitality is present?"
- o How do you construct vitality from resources present (plus \$5M)."

### CAAPB Staff Updates

- o Other discussions
- o Feb 13th, 9:30a-1:30p League of MN Cities - Please join in person if possible

Adjourn 2:30PM

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## **PRESENT**

In Person: Erik Dahl, Peter Musty, Cindy Kue, Hannah Hills, Carlo Cuesta<sup>^</sup>, Jay Kuvaas<sup>^</sup>

Virtual: Gloria Contreras-Edin<sup>\*</sup>, Emmanuel Donaby<sup>\*</sup>, Senator Sandy Pappas<sup>\*</sup>, Representative Isaac Schultz<sup>\*</sup>, Senator Julia Coleman<sup>\*</sup>, Stephanie Devitt<sup>^</sup>, Lindsey Burdick<sup>^</sup>, Jenie Gao<sup>^</sup>, Josh Bergeron<sup>^</sup>, Noel Nix, Tony Johnson, Luis Pereira

(\* Task Force Members, \*\* Task Force Chairs, ^Consultants)

## **MEETING MINUTES**

**Meeting called to order: 1:05pm**

### **Housekeeping & Progress Update**

#### Approval of Meeting Minutes - 1/16/24 Task Force Meeting

Motioned by Hannah Hills; seconded by Gloria Contreras-Edin

#### Community Voices Process: Creation in Common

##### *Updates on Community Engagement*

Carlo Cuesta, Creation in Common (CiC), informed everyone about the success of the project team's Capitol area tour on January 16th and set of community interviews on January 17th. Carlo emphasized the need for continued data collection, particularly through the online survey - which is live and available in multiple languages. Meeting attendees were encouraged to share it among friends, colleagues and community members before the next scheduled meeting on February 13th. Jenie Gao, CiC, discussed her upcoming community engagement trip - sharing she will spend February 9th at Frogtown Community Center and attending the Good Neighbors Group at Christ on Capitol Hill Lutheran Church, and will conduct interviews at Hmongtown Market on February 10th. Task Force members were reminded about video interviews taking place at the MN History Center on Monday February 5th, and were encouraged to sign up.

##### *Preliminary Takeaways and Ideas*

Jenie provided a brief overview of themes that have emerged from the first round of interviews, including: Hmongtown Market's role as a home for local businesses, not as an incubator for them; concerns about drug use in the area, especially amongst young people; and deeply rooted community resident loyalty.

### **Vitality Grant Development: Research by SDK**

#### Updates on Subgroup meetings

Stephanie Devitt (SDK) reminded attendees of SDK's purview in this work - shaping out the \$1.5 million grant program. The subgroup is in the midst of researching case studies of local and

national example programs, plus a variety of interviews, to help scope how resources can best be used congruent with public investments. Examples of case studies being reviewed include Lake Street Reinvestment, Motor City Match in Detroit, and Downtown Boost in Baltimore.

The other area of focus the Subgroup has been considering is the governance for the grant structure and grant review process. Stephanie outlined three scenarios: 1) CAAP Board directly administering the funds and working through the State's department administration - causing some of the State contracting and procurement regulations to apply to grants in those instances; 2) Working through the City of St. Paul and their grant program - City-related regulations would come into play need to be considered with this option; 3) A financial vehicle such as a donor-advised fund - a community foundation or the like would take over administrative management in terms of dispersing grant dollars and facilitating the approval process. Preliminarily, the Subgroup sees strong potential for the third option due to the opportunity it could provide CAAPB to set the granting criteria and process.

### **Purpose and Governance – CAAPB staff/Creation in Common/SDK**

#### Advice: Crafting the Legislative Package

Erik Dahl asked Task Force Senators and Representatives for input regarding the level of detail the Task Force's recommendations should have regarding administration, program, plan, and oversight of this Vitality Account. Stephanie and Senator Sandy Pappas engaged in discussion of the types of questions the recommendations should likely address in relation to the grant program, including who should be a part of the selection process moving forward - should it be wide or narrow and staff driven and who will be in charge of making decisions about how the money is given in the future.

Tony Johnson offered further explanation for what requirements and restrictions would be in play if the grant program were administered by the City, such as specific compliance requirements. Erik added CAAPB doesn't necessarily have the capacity to oversee and manage a complex grant program at this stage, so a simple granting process might be most appropriate for the time being - possibly partnering with a foundation or the City in order to help get the money out the door more quickly. Jenie shared her experience in Madison, WI where she saw both the City and businesses/nonprofits administering federal COVID dollars - finding the community responded more positively to the straightforward process of city administration versus the less transparent process through businesses/nonprofits, where some of the money was also lost in overhead costs. Senator Pappas voiced support for CAAPB administration.

Hannah Hills redirected conversation back to the March 1 recommendations, clarifying it should be roughly eight pages long. Senator Pappas gave insight into how the post-CAAPB approval process would look, with CAAPB simply needing to ask for time on the agenda and then

readying a presentation to share. Senator Isaac Schultz added the recommendations should be very clear in outlining a clear process of grant management and administration. Erik asked if, because community engagement will continue after the March 1 deadline, the recommendations can be general principles based on community learnings to date. Senator Papps believes broad principles and ideas would be sufficient. Representative Schultz agreed framework and principles would work, as long as the grant program did have the management/administration process clearly outlined.

### **Defining “Vitality”**

"How can you /(can you at all) describe a community where vitality is present? How do you construct vitality from resources present (plus \$5M)."

Peter Musty and Erik offered a baseline definition for vitality in the context of this project - improving livability, economic health, and safety of communities in the Capitol area. Gloria Contreras-Edin shared vitality is going to mean something different to everyone and, to her, the difference is in how the community makes her feel when she comes home - the interconnectedness between all aspects of the community contribute to this. Jenie agreed with this and saw it as corroborating the preliminary interview data, with one interviewee defining a thriving community as a place where even the poorest can live with dignity.

Hannah brought forward the question of how should this Vitality Fund purposefully define itself as supporting certain values or purposefully remain undefined. Erik responded that when values are chosen, the question becomes about who did the choosing and who was absented as a result. Another possible route is to find core principles to align with. The conversation closed with Gloria and Senator Pappas sharing about the contagious and joyful nature of a vital community, and potential of gathering places like Frogtown Community Center to cultivate it.

### **CAAPB Staff Updates**

Task Force members were reminded about three items:

- The Task Force Retreat on February 13th, 9:30a-1:30p at the League of MN Cities. Please join in person if possible.
- Share and circulate the online survey link, which will be emailed following the meeting.
- Sign up for and participate in the Task Force video interviews taking place on February 5.

### **Adjourn**

Meeting adjourned at 2:28 PM.