

Harvard Square Kiosk and Plaza Working Group – Notes

Tuesday, September 12, 2017, 7:00 – 9:00 P.M.

- Attendees:
 - Working Group: Janet Si-Ming Lee, Abra Berkowitz, Peter Kroon, Frank Kramer, Sarah Rosenkrantz, Ken Taylor, Abhishek Syal, John DiGiovanni, Daniel Andrew Schofield-Bodt, Robyn Culbertson, Bertil Jean-Chronberg
 - Staff: Daniel Wolf, Stuart Dash, Kathy Watkins, Charlie Sullivan
 - Project for Public Spaces (consultant): Meg Walker, Angela Moreno-Long, Alessandra Galletti
- Presentation (Meg Walker)
 - Concept of Placemaking; what is place
 - Discussion of ideas brainstormed at last meeting
 - Discussion of community engagement approach
 - Criteria for survey, public meeting, Call for Ideas
 - Starting broad and will be narrowing down; thinking about what are the benefits this space will provide to the community. What are the placemaking goals?
 - Create a vision for the future of the Kiosk and Plaza by engaging with the public, engage and serve a diverse population, develop recommendations for governance, develop recommendations for the governance of the Kiosk and Plaza to support the selected vision, develop a budgeting plan.
- Discussion:
 - How to achieve diversity of survey respondents?
 - Call for ideas: stressing programming and uses not necessarily a design competition
 - Would make more sense to have architect who have their own more specific processes be part of this?
 - Criteria for evaluation?
 - Finding balance between expertise and Working Group feedback, keeping process democratic.
 - Consider unstructured or semi structured interviews.
 - Risk of analysis paralysis
 - Importance is being able to adjust and evolving the programming
 - Would like to go deeper into methodology
 - At the end of the process—what is going to the City Manager, what is City Manager doing with that and how long before that is implemented.
 - Concerned about how to identify which constituencies are speaking on the survey
 - Have an understanding that the emotional is valid
 - Making sure we standardize the survey questions—multiple choice
 - To what extent is the answer people give defined by what they already know – make sure the space/method for collecting isn't defining who is contributing feedback.

- Break-out discussion
 - Each group was asked to present 5 top words which convey the qualities and feelings desired for the Kiosk and Plaza:
 - Group #1:
 - Timeless
 - Adaptable
 - Open/Public
 - Accessible
 - Vibrant
 - Gathering Space
 - Group #2:
 - Welcoming to everybody
 - Informative
 - Community centric (hub)
 - Historical Identity
 - Group #3:
 - Welcoming
 - Gateway to all of Cambridge
 - Navigable
 - Safe
 - Dynamic
 - Engaging
- Public comment:
 - Make sure if people are not connected to digital-should be considered important. Reaching people who are experiencing homelessness but also older people, quirky academic people who may not be reached in usual information gathering
 - Commend using plain English in surveys, triage of how things connect 1. How does the Kiosk fit into the Plaza, how does design fit into the thinking (not separate out), question of how Halverson and their landscaping is going to fit into this process. Sharing all the information more openly and transparently about what everyone is doing.
 - Harvard Square Neighborhood Association: important to cultivate the connections with ideas of the working group—make the clusters of common themes and ideas visually communicated. Can start drawing connections between these ideas and then people can start to develop ideas further
 - Everyone has common desire to improve the space-make is more powerful, useful and meaningful. Not addressing yet what isn't working currently in the space. Focus and target conversation around what isn't working
 - This process is fascinating and overwhelming-the words are nebulous and mean different things to different people. What is the tipping point? Photos shown by PPS are interesting. But this is a very small space so keep this in mind. Don't want the preservation and the importance of the details of the building don't

want them to get lost in the upgrades and businesses of new designs. Tourism-accommodating volume of groups

- Don't forget the children