Portsmouth Listens - McIntyre Project Public Input Process Meeting 2

Date: January 12, 2021
Group # 10
Facilitator: Dave Cohen
Participants:
- Alice Carey
- Ann Cummings
- Andrea Daly
- Kyle LaChance
- Ed Mallon
- Byron Matto
- James Mulhern
- Sarah Nadeau
- Jacki Pitts
- John Stephenson
- Zoe Stewart

Notes:

1) Reviewed the Values determined in Meeting 1 (Jan. 5, 2021). Discussed that two of the top values were similar enough that they could be combined. This allowed the 6th value: Sustainable Economically/Practical to Taxpayers to be the 5th.
   a) Value 1 rewrite: Preserve the nature beauty of the area maintaining a sense of the environment using the working waterfront and seasonal planting unique to Portsmouth.

2) Discussed Opportunities vs Obstacles. Opportunity example: Farmers Market; Obstacle example: economics of the final design
   a) We don't own the property yet (Obstacle)
   b) What does the GSA want? What are their conditions? (Obstacle)
   c) What was problematic about the initial plan (Obstacle)

   Assumption that it can be developed so that the process can move forward.

   d) Types of plantings based on existing and future buildings and limited light (Obstacle)
   e) Walk through the area (opportunity)
   f) Dead block. It is windy and ugly; we can make it much better (Opportunity)
   g) Create something vital and active close to water (Opportunity)
   h) Area can be congested (obstacle)
   i) We can do something now that we can't now do in Portsmouth (Opportunity)
      * Art museum
      * Carousel
   j) Unique space for entertainment that is _not_ commerce or high end residential (Opportunity)
   k) Terrain/significant elevation changes – (both Obstacle and Opportunity)
   l) Create a reason to go there; make it a destination (Opportunity)

3) Discussed "What would make McIntyre appealing"? What would I like to use the space for?
   a) Indoor space AND outdoor space leveraging terrain elevations
   b) Park for kids with things for them to play on, e.g. tugboat tying in the waterfront theme
   c) Natural amphitheater toward the water; entertainment
   d) Something that's linked to the identity of Portsmouth. Something cool, e.g. Restaurant startups, Test Kitchen concept.
   e) Quincy market style concept but applied to Restaurants / Eatery. Possibly glassed in.
      i) Faneuil Hall provides historical aspect to that area

f) Something that feels like the inner cogs of downtown but is open to the public
g) Something like the button factory - but also celebrate artists and nonprofits
h) Farmers market celebrating local anchored by a historical landmark
i) Affordable Housing / Eclectic Housing
    i) Conversely should not be Affordable Housing due to the value of the property
j) Attractive to the arts
k) Attractive to the culinary arts
l) A space for people to work and live in Portsmouth; amenities that they can walk to rather than having to drive somewhere
m) Attractive in the winter months where people can gather inspiring community
n) Chelsea Market in Manhattan
    i) Covered Market with restaurants
    ii) The reason they go there is because it's an important spot along the "High Line" walking space combined with the Whitney museum
    iii) Incorporates the surrounding spaces
o) Taking advantage of the vertical delineation of the property

4) Broke into small groups to discuss Visions

5) Larger group reconvened where Visions were presented by each group – See Whiteboard in separate document.

6) City Council Meeting presentation on January 20th. It will be each of the 20 groups presenting their Values and Visions. Each group will have 5 minutes.
    a) Presenter: Kyle LaChance

7) Although the top 5 of each will be presented, values and visions will be provided for review. Important for the Principle Group to see all views>
    a) Affordable Housing – realistic or not? High End Condos not desirable.
    b) Copy historical architecture vs not doing the 'same old'.

* Affordable housing x2
* People who work in the restaurants
* People who are in the arts
* Would tie in well with a market
* Traffic
* Post office was there, and the government was there it was a problem for traffic. This is because the people who were there were not living there.
* It would be hard to have a mark without the affordable housing - it would be problematic
* People avoid walking through there - having something more than just a dense block of buildings -
* Something for the kids to climb on
* A place to play
* Post office
* People would congregate there - a place to see and meet people
* Important to have postal services downtown
* There is need for mostly personal mailings and business
* Portsmouth lacks places to congregate … can we incorporate that in a modern way.
* Pocket parks
* The bays could be used as shop space or popup restaurant areas
* Huge potential on the old post office side where the glass area is
* Is there something like Prescott park but in the winter that could be a destination.

Ed / Sarah / Byron / James

Summary of Top 5 Visions from dot voting:

1) Something for the kids to climb on
2) The bays could be used as shop space or popup restaurant areas

3) What are the shops and amenities for people who live downtown? Hardware store, market, etc.
4) SUSTAINABILITY - Does the development scream sustainability? Consider LEED, Netzero
5) Preserve space for indoor public activity: performances, shops, etc

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Andrea/Jackie/Kyle/Alice
Space that is attractive to families, good places to stop
•Interactive sculpture, related to Portsmouth identity. Outdoor furniture, street art that is climbable
•Interactive childrens museum
•Carousel
Landscape space, amphitheater with multiple use
Preserve space for indoor public activity: performances, shops, etc
Complementary open space to existing parks
•Mix of hard and green streetscapes
Not a big block building, permeable/broken up
•More cool and funky spaces and buildings
Landscape/streetscape on Post office side – urban garden feel, doesn't need to be large
Bring back the post office! Community building, connector
What are the shops and amenities for people who live downtown? Hardware store, market, etc
Different than other developments on the ground floor:
SUSTAINABILITY - does the development scream sustainability? Consider LEED, Netzero

Destination
all seasons, all ages
Quincy Market
Arts
Tilted or aimed at the people of Portsmouth
Size of buildings, keep in perspective
don't lose sk
match buildings around them
Post Office - was the reason to go downtown

Issue of housing is tricky. Not entirely supportive of affordable housing idea - prime real estate
people who work in NYC don't live on 5th ave
but don'e need more expensive condos
right up the hill from the working port can we relate the development to the working port

John/Zoe/Ann

Don't forget about the history tie-in
What's special about Portsmouth, what's unique, it's the history. With a lot of it remaining. A big draw, needs to be accounted for in the development.
We also want to think about history as what is modern today, will be considered historical by following generations.
Murals! Public art displaying history.
We don't necesarily need to recreate historical draws, but draw attention to existing ones.

Comments captured from the full group discussion following the breakout