

**December 15, 2015 Orleans Downtown Planning Workshop
Breakout Group Discussion Summary**

Part One: Vision Statement Review

Instructions: Review attached Vision Statements, briefly discuss & record suggested modifications, if any. Then take straw poll among the members & record levels of agreement with **bolded statement**.

<p>Statement A accurately conveys our vision for the Village Center.....</p>
<p>Suggested modifications, if any:</p>
<p><u>Group 1</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Without wastewater infrastructure provided, the vision is not attainable. Adequate parking is also needed.• Historically, there was more density in the Village Center; we should honor the past and make the center a dense, walkable community. Increasing density could lead to a conflict between residential and commercial uses, so special consideration needs to be given to compatible uses.
<p><u>Group 2</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Had issue with the words “small town” – thinking more of Norman Rockwell type place than as a vibrant community – might prefer “market town”. Also not comfortable with the word “seaside”.• Statement should not include unattainable goals – such as parking.• Group wants a lively, more densely populated Village Center.• Add phrasing like “art-based cluster with boutiques and specialty shops”• Group agrees with the intention of the statement, but thinks a true vision statement should be more concise; few sentences at most.
<p><u>Group 3</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Liked first paragraph, idea of providing housing, and placement of utilities underground (as long as opportunity to do so at a reasonable cost).• Liked Idea of traditional village, but often traditional village done piecemeal. Challenge will be to have homogeneous village with what could be rapid change.
<p><u>Group 4</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Vibrant Community should be a strongly stated “Goal”• Lack of wastewater impacting downtown growth.• Don’t be like a Nantucket or Chatham.• Make Village Center more welcoming to visitors.
<p><u>Group 5</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Utilities should be relocated belowground.• Add a community mobile broadband, modern telecommunications; public WiFi hot spots.• Creation of homes over stores really hasn’t been happening in the Village Center; broaden the vision; i.e. the homes can be free-standing; don’t need to be on top of some other use.• Question: “What are the jobs that are going to bring in the young population?” In order to bring in young people, need to provide for 3 needs: socializing, housing, and wages.
<p><u>Group 6</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Statement should reference need to maintain environmental sustainability, support local businesses, and attract young people.

Statement B accurately conveys our vision for the Town.....

Suggested modifications, if any:

Group 1

- Focus should be on the residents first, and then attract seasonal visitors / vacationers.
- Overly zoned for commercial use as compared to residential use; redevelopment is needed.
- Need to have a social draw to the downtown; mentioned another movie theater would be nice.

Group 2

- Group took issue with “semi-rural seaside character” and would like to see revision reflecting desire to become a marketplace for the region – a “mini-urban area”.
- Group wants Orleans to enter the 21st century – high-speed internet with WiFi hotspots throughout the Town – creating places for people to gather.
- Need an action item for creating good paying jobs in order to attract young people (and so they can afford homes).
- Group members would delete the sentence “It will maintain its maritime heritage and traditional occupations” as they see this as salt mining and other activities no longer done.
- Group member wants to strike the sentence “Orleans will be a family vacation destination with ready access to its open spaces, recreational facilities and beaches.” Would prefer to see phrasing where year-round residents are at the forefront.

Group 3

- Liked idea of family vacation destination – access to beaches, water resources, etc.
- Concerns there are not enough jobs and affordable housing for the young, so they are moving out.
- Town boards need to organize, coordinate, and change philosophy to help businesses grow and not throw out roadblocks.

Group 4

- Lack of wastewater infrastructure is impacting natural resources.
- Make Orleans affordable year round.

Group 5

- Bring in businesses that pay more than minimum wages (e.g., educational, medical).
- Some concern expressed with the “status quo” elements of the vision; i.e. need change rather than “maintain”.

Group 6

- All strongly agree; no wording changes.

Vision Statements

Statement A: Village Center Vision Statement (2009)

“The Orleans Village Center is, and will continue to be, a vibrant commercial and community center for the town, and will develop into a focal point for community and cultural activities and services for residents and visitors. The small-town character of the village will be maintained and enhanced. Mixed-use and other appropriate development will be encouraged through changes to the zoning bylaws. Street trees and decorative landscaping will be encouraged. Improved sidewalks, lighting, street furniture and the placement of utility lines underground will be pursued.

Consistent with a traditional village development pattern that will be safe and attractive for pedestrians, it will be desirable to have small shops lining the streets with parking provided to the rear of the buildings where possible. Sidewalk cafés will be encouraged. The scale and materials used for new construction in the village will be in keeping with the village character, and property owners will be encouraged to improve the appearance of existing buildings. Residential units above storefronts will be encouraged. Provisions will be made to accommodate the flow of vehicular traffic, but not at the expense of providing a safe and attractive pedestrian environment. Appropriate parking to serve businesses and village residents will be provided for.

Statement B: Town Vision Statement (2006)

Orleans in 2020 will be a thriving community that has preserved its semi-rural seaside character, maintained the health of its abundant natural resources, and carefully managed its residential and commercial growth, thereby enhancing the quality of life for its citizens and visitors. It will maintain its maritime heritage and traditional occupations. It will have an attractive, readily accessible business center, and a business and professional community that provides diverse year-round employment and a wide variety of goods and services. Orleans will be a family vacation destination with ready access to its open spaces, recreational facilities, and beaches. Orleans will be a desirable home for people of diverse backgrounds and a good place in which to raise children. Its people will continue to participate in town government, civic activities, and be generous in their support of education and the arts. It is the policy of this Town to ensure that future growth is at a level and in such a manner that will have no or minimal adverse effect upon semi-rural character and environmental integrity of the Town. Tracts of land that are currently developable should be preserved permanently through public and private action to attain a goal of at least 400 acres of additional open space. Future residential housing development should be designed to preserve open lands where practicable, should be away from environmentally sensitive areas, and should contribute to meeting the needs of the community for affordable housing. Future business activities should be oriented primarily in village areas and strip commercial development prevented.

Part Two: Discussion of Selected Strategies

Instructions: Review strategy recommendation, briefly discuss & record comments or qualifiers, if any. Then take a straw poll among members & record levels of agreement with **bolded statement**.

A. Encourage increased density in the Village Center. Concentrate businesses & community facilities/ activities in the Village Center that will be compatible, add vitality and establish a critical mass. Possible actions: land use/zoning policies to encourage density, multilevel, mixed use in VC, create three strong business nodes (VC, Shaws Node, Stop & Shop node) and limited intervening business

Comments or Qualifiers, if any:

Group 1

- All generally agree.
- Need to have a commitment to wastewater infrastructure to achieve this.
- Need to be considerate of aesthetics (setbacks, height, etc.) and conflicting uses.

Group 2

- In general agree with recommendation, but don't make it too small.
- Encourage the 25-45 year old demographic with better paying jobs and more affordable homes.

Group 3

- All strongly agree.
- This topic is an area with great differences of opinion. People and decision makers need to be open minded and not fight change.

Group 4

- All agree.
- No "big box" stores or "chain" stores.
- Maximum two story development.
- Set back stores for outside activities with parking in the rear.
- Provide wastewater infrastructure but need to control development by reasonable rules and regulations.
- Create residential via rentals (2nd floor) and condos via back lots.

Group 5

- All agree.
- Allow for free-standing multi-unit homes in Village Center (i.e. don't necessarily need to restrict homes to 2nd/3rd floor of shops, restaurants, offices).

Group 6

- All strongly agree but have couple of suggestions:
 - Provide parking in the right locations.
 - Current zoning sometimes constrains use and needs to be modified to allow greater density but limit footprint.

B. Prioritize first floor space in the core of the business district for retail and restaurant uses that have similar operating hours and generate walk-in trade.

Possible actions: prioritize uses in planning documents, consider implementing zoning restrictions.

Comments or Qualifiers, if any:

Group 1

- All generally agree.
- Workforce is limited; many store owners do not have enough staff to keep stores open later or year-round.

Group 2

- Generally agree.
- Want independent businesses – no chains / franchises.
- Evening hours should be encouraged for businesses in this district – perhaps an ordinance requiring it?
- Disagree that uses should be limited to retail and restaurants – professional offices should also be encouraged to develop a “one stop shopping” location (lawyers, financial planners, etc).

Group 3

- Not addressed.

Group 4

- All strongly agree.
- No offices.
- Promote more shops, restaurants, pubs, etc.

Group 5

- Not addressed.

Group 6

- All strongly agree, but think clarification on professional use vs retail use would be helpful.
- Thought clarification on policy on hours for opening would be helpful (retail versus other businesses).

C. Explore and recruit destination “magnet uses” that would attract customers to the Village Center. Encourage increased density in the Village Center.

Possible actions: Explore potential for recruiting educational institution/college satellite, movie theater/entertainment use, attractions (e.g., aquarium, museum, etc.)

Comments or Qualifiers, if any:

Group 1

- Strongly agree.
- An educational institution would be a great addition.
- Other good draws would be a movie theater and an activity / recreation center that can be used year-round.

Group 2

- Group generally agrees with this.
- They all would love to see a cultural or community center (similar to the Cultural Center of Cape Cod in Yarmouth or the space in Harwich).
- Would love to see a continuing education space, but currently no building is suitable.
- Movie theater would also be encouraged.

Group 3

- All strongly agree.
- Movie theater and medical offices.

Group 4

- All strongly agree.
- Bring back the movie theater.
- Establish small college campus.
- Develop the high speed internet – “One Cape” via CCC.
- Create poor weather locations / attractions.
- Attract music venues.
- Longer business hours during the summer.

Group 5

- All strongly agree with concept, but wish to clarify that some, but not all, of the above would be desirable (no objection to any individual use, but concerned that if *all* of the identified uses were to come, it would be ‘too much’).

Group 6

- 2 strongly agree, 3 agree.
- All voiced support for restoring the old movie theater.
- Suggested developing a “Learning Center” which would provide life time opportunity for additional education (college courses, et c.).

D. Attract more residents in and near the Village Center.

Benefits: increase market support for businesses, bring vitality, with more people on the street, area may be perceived as livelier, more inviting.

Comments or Qualifiers, if any:

Group 1

- All strongly agree.
- More public restrooms are needed; cleanliness is important.
- Social engagement and green spaces are needed (mentioned Depot Square Park, Parish Park, and Village Green as good examples).
- Bring in street vendors.

Group 2

- In general all agree.
- Would all like to see more residential property in the Village Center – both affordable for the younger professionals as well as high end for the older people looking to downsize and for low maintenance.
- Would also like to see rental properties which would encourage young professionals.

Group 3

- All strongly agree.
- Need to coordinate growth between the Village Center and corridors outside the Village Center such as Shaws, Midas to Tedeschi's (Zoned Limited Business).

Group 4

- All strongly agree.
- Shut down (foot traffic only) Main Street (and others) 1 night per week during the summer.

Group 5

- All strongly agree.
- Concern that residents of a "senior living community" do not utilize downtown; recognize the needs of an aging population, but don't necessarily aspire to be the destination for retiring seniors.
- Need to emphasize affordable rentals.
- Emphasize rental homes to attract younger people (who typically start first in a rental unit, rather than purchase a condo/house).

Group 6

- All strongly agree.
- No additional comments.

E. Increase Housing Options for Year Round residents.

Potential types: Smaller maintenance-free homes (condos/townhomes with communal maintenance), rental units, workforce/entry level housing

Comments or Qualifiers, if any:

Group 1

- All strongly agree.
- There is a need for down-sizing, low maintenance options.
- Workforce housing is important.

Group 2

- All agree in theory. Think this is a noble ambition, but how to execute?
- Would like to see new residential and commercial properties as mixed-use and combined, not separate. This would encourage a vibrant community.

Group 3

- All agree.
- Need for spectrum of housing. Housing for young families with lower income, not just high end housing.

Group 4

- All strongly agree.
- Create more rentals and condos, but need jobs to support it.
- Additional affordable housing, but Orleans currently above 9%.

Group 5

- All strongly agree.
- Emphasize studio apartments (targeting younger population), emphasis on affordability.
- Consider ensuring that the housing include exercise facilities (again, presumed to be on the 'must have' list for younger people).

Group 6

- 4 strongly agree; 1 agree.
- Recommend having bracket housing to provide sufficient variety to attract wider range of potential renter/owner (both income and housing type).
- Recommend greater number of rental units.

F. Increase outdoor/sidewalk dining options.

Possible actions: Explore inhibiting conditions, review and amend permitting procedure as appropriate.

Comments or Qualifiers, if any:

Group 1

- All strongly agree.
- Need to have adequate setback requirements that allow for sidewalk use.

Group 2

- All agree.
- Think number of seats should not be limited due to resources.
- Don't limit number of outdoor seats or put restrictions on the way food can be served (imposing more a "take-out" approach than an actual outdoor dining experience).
- Need to be creative about the use of resources (i.e. water and wastewater).

Group 3

- All agree.
- No strong opinions or comments.

Group 4

- All strongly agree.
- Lack of wastewater infrastructure is negatively impacting restaurants (total seating interior and exterior).
- Create locations with a view of the water.

Group 5

- All strongly agree with the strategy, but recognized that there are some challenges that may not be easily overcome (e.g. where would Land Ho! expand to...there is no adjacent space/sidewalk available).
- Acknowledged that adding such dining options is inhibited by "self-imposed" (and some state) regulations.

Group 6

- All strongly agree.

G. Facilitate business development/expansion that will provide year round employment.

Comments or Qualifiers, if any:

Group 1

- All strongly agree.
- Need to invest in wastewater infrastructure.
- Additional housing is also needed to support business and employment growth.

Group 2

- Group agrees – and thinks this key.
- Would like to see a “pool” created to assist with economic development.
- Would encourage the creation of an economic development committee, agency, board etc. that would support businesses.

Group 3

- All agree.
- Need to apply to all business districts.
- Believe best if Town incrementally changes zoning.

Group 4

- All strongly agree; see previous comments.

Group 5

- All strongly agree.
- But it has to be in the right place, and has to pay the right salaries.
- In general, the group questioned “What do we have to offer”; i.e. why would a business (re)locate here?
- Group was concerned that ‘cost of living’ is an impediment without a solution.
- Recommended that employment options need to be sought/championed by a regional approach (i.e. Orleans can’t do it alone).

Group 6

- 3 strongly agree; 2 agree.
- Need right mix of people to support year-round businesses.
- Provide moderately priced housing; this will attract people who would be more likely to stay year round (as opposed to the high income people who leave for warmer climates for winter months).
- Moderate income people would shop year round.

H. Other (may be identified during session) . . .

Comments or Qualifiers, if any:

Group 1

- None.

Group 2

- Group feels the Town needs to be ready to change zoning laws to reach goals.
- Strongly want mixed, combined uses and not separate zones.
- WiFi hotspots STRONGLY encouraged.
- Need a plan for the future.

Group 3

- Need to balance and coordinate changes to Village Center and Business Center. Will not work well if only pay attention to one area or the other.

Group 4

- Require a consistent architectural look that fits into the Cape aesthetics.
- Restrict Village Center in type of development – no “box” or “chain” stores.
- Change planning bylaw with regards to number of parking areas required – reduce as well as to modify existing “paved” areas to “green” areas.

Group 5

- None.

Group 6

- None.