

Plainwell Public Workshop #2 Meeting Notes

Plainwell Mill Redevelopment Plan

Public Meeting

Plainwell Community Center
Tuesday, March 11, 2008
6:00-7:30 PM

Facilitators:

Erik Wilson –Plainwell City Manager
Cheryl Zuellig, Steve Buck – JJR
Gene Hopkins, Tamara Burns – Hopkins-Burns Design Studio

The goal of the second public workshop was to provide residents with an update on the Plainwell Mill site planning process and obtain community feedback on the future development of the site. Updates were provided the development process from both a site design standpoint as well as a preliminary preferred architectural option.

6:00-6:15 pm: Welcome

6:15-6:45 pm: Powerpoint Presentation (Erik Wilson, Steve Buck, Cheryl Zuellig, Gene Hopkins)

6:45-7:00 pm: Q & A

7:00 pm – 7:30 pm: Community Feedback Exercises

A. Citizen Questions from Q & A

1. What is the “critical mass” (estimate) needed to ensure the feasibility of an arts incubator on the site?
2. Can a citizen group be formed to purchase the property to control what types of development can occur on the site?
3. What are the remaining environmental concerns (liability issues) that need to be addressed before the site can be developed?

B. Community Feedback Exercises

Following the question and answer session, attendees of the meeting participated in series of community feedback exercises. The exercises encouraged residents to actively participate in the continuing evolution of the property’s future by expressing their opinions concerning the future development of the property. A group of three response stations were displayed, each with specific parameters to direct responses to a particular issue. In addition to the response stations, boards were displayed from the previous public workshop to reiterate the main ideas and concepts from the previous meeting. The facilitators of the workshop were also present to answer additional questions during this time. The following pages summarize the responses to these exercises.

1. City Hall: What's missing now?

One of the primary elements of the preferred architectural concept includes relocating the current offices of the Plainwell City Hall to a portion of the historic mill building across the Mill Race. To address the concerns of the existing city hall and to respond to its current space needs, this station prompted residents to reveal what they believed was missing in the existing Plainwell City Hall. The presentation board was separated into six distinct categories, each with a specific prompt to focus responses on particular issues. Sticky notes were provided for participants to record their responses and post them per each category. The following list contains the responses.

- i) Environment (Light/Temp/Noise)
 - smells
 - better open front window/more visible
- ii) Quality of Space (Materials/Volume/Color)
 - more bright colors
- iii) Space Needs (Public)
 - public computer use
 - big bathrooms
 - more visible
- iv) Space Needs (Staff)
 - break room
 - more natural light in office
 - elections at city hall
- v) Convenience & Accessibility (Parking/Circulation/Security)
 - signage
 - better access to parking lot from M-89
- vi) Other
 - energy
 - life
 - upbeat feel
 - The building does not do justice to the quality of the staff or the future of Plainwell. It reflects a tired out, good enough to get by attitude.
 - Need a city hall for the 21st century but sensitive to our history

2. Best of Plainwell: What is on the tour?

Another feedback exercise revealed the sources of pride residents of Plainwell have in their community. Participants were given the following hypothetical situation: "If a developer came to Plainwell looking to invest in the community and you were selected to

give a 15 minute tour, what would you spotlight about the community? This open-ended prompt allowed residents to critically respond to the things that make Plainwell a great place to live. As in the previous station, sticky notes were provided for participants to record the comments.

1. The Ransom District Library
2. Schools
3. Island City (surrounded by water)
4. Flower program
5. Bridge St. Homes
6. New homes being built @ SW corner, along M-89 and Richland
7. Parks
8. Airport
9. The riverwalk connecting the parks
10. Industrial park
11. Variety of restaurants
12. Cultural happenings: KSO, summer music, Play 'n' well Players
13. Historic homes on W. Bridge St.

3. Civic Priorities

The previous public workshop measured the community reaction to different development types for the Plainwell Mill property. The second workshop expanded upon the results of the previous exercise, focusing on the civic potential of the site. A presentation board was divided into four options: A new city hall, an arts incubator, a public service building, and an indoor recreation center. Participants were given three colored stickers, each labeled with a number 1, 2, or 3. The numbered stickers represented the rank of what participants believed should be prioritized on the site. The sticker with the 1 was placed on their perceived top priority, the sticker with the number 2 as the second priority, and similarly fit the sticker with the 3. A total of 21 sets of dots were placed on the board, and the results of the exercise follow:

City Hall – Highest Civic Priority

	<u>Votes</u>	<u>% of Total</u>
1 st Priority	11	52%
2 nd Priority	6	19%
3 rd Priority	3	14%
Total Votes	20	95%

Based on the responses, relocating Plainwell City Hall to the mill should be the highest civic priority on the site. This use received both the most total votes as well as the largest number of 1st priority votes. Out of 21 possible votes, it received 20, or 95% of the total vote, and 17 of these votes were either for the first or second priority. Relocating the Plainwell City Hall is also a prominent concept of the preferred architectural concept.

Indoor Recreation – Second Highest Civic Priority

	<u>Votes</u>	<u>% of Total</u>
1 st Priority	5	24%
2 nd Priority	4	19%
3 rd Priority	7	33%
Total Votes	16	76%

The indoor recreation building received 16 total votes, equaling the total number of votes of the arts incubator. In contrast to the arts incubator, the indoor recreation facility received a higher proportion of first and second priority votes. Overall, it received the second highest number of first priority votes of all the options. Based on these responses, an indoor recreational facility is the second highest civic priority for the mill site.

Public Safety – Supported Civic Use

	<u>Votes</u>	<u>% of Total</u>
1 st Priority	4	19%
2 nd Priority	4	19%
3 rd Priority	2	10%
Total Votes	10	48%

The public safety building received the lowest number of total votes - 10, meaning only 48% of the participants believed this is should be a priority to build on this site. Out of the 10 votes the public safety building received, 8 of the votes were for the first or second priority, implying those who voted for the public safety building believed it to be a relatively significant priority.

Arts Incubator – Supported Civic Use

	<u>Votes</u>	<u>% of Total</u>
1 st Priority	1	5%
2 nd Priority	7	33%
3 rd Priority	8	38%
Total Votes	16	76%

The Arts Incubator received a total of 16 votes, or 76% of the potential vote. While the arts incubator did receive the 2nd highest number of total votes (along with the indoor recreation center), it only received one first priority vote. This was the lowest number of first priority votes of any of the options presented. While an arts incubator would be a supported use on the site, the participants of this exercise did not believe it to be the most urgent of all potential civic uses.

