

Core Values Steering Committee Summer Workshop a Big Success

By Diana Lobo
for The Damascus Boring Observer

Twenty of the twenty-one neighborhoods in the Damascus-Boring Concept Planning area attended the initial workshop in the planning process held Tues., June 24, at the Damascus Assembly of God Church. Dee Wescott, Chair of the Committee for the Future of Damascus (CFD), opened the meeting, which was attended by 49 representatives of neighborhoods and locally active Community Planning Organizations (CPOs).

People introduced themselves by telling what motivated them to choose to attend a meeting about growth in our area on a beautiful sunny evening. Responses ranged from “wanting to have a positive impact on the future” to wanting to deal with “feeling like the Powhatten Indians selling Manhattan Island for a bunch of beads.” Attendees were a mixture of women and men spanning a forty year age range and a wide variety of length of residency.

Following the introductions, Greg Dardis, Chair of the Planning Sub-Committee of the CFD, guided participants through a discussion contrasting values, a person’s basic beliefs and priorities, and visions, literally how one sees the future. This was the primary point of the evening as the goal of the Core Values process is to create community-wide consensus on five to ten Core Values which will become the foundation of the Concept Plan which is required by law. Greg’s presentation included examples of both a town and a neighborhood which had recreated themselves by beginning with their values and a visioning process.

Next, CFD Vice-Chair John Hartsock gave attendees the “big picture” in a power-point presentation covering the opportunities before us in the Core Values/Visioning/Concept Planning process. This included a time line showing the three Fall workshops for Community and CPO Representatives, followed by a workshop for Interested Parties (representatives of surrounding cities, water and fire districts, employers and industrial developers and others), and two Community-wide Forums and a final workshop in early 2004.

Using the idea of greenspaces, Virginia Bowers of the Three Rivers Land Conservancy, showed the participants how State and Metro land use requirements for environmental protection and the community’s values about the land need to be contained in our visions and Concept Planning.

During a break, participants munched cookies and posted their values on sticky notes to create a “map” of the first two values that came to them.

After the break, Tim Smith of SERA Architects Inc., inspired those present with examples of how different communities have achieved sustainability in their economy, energy, water and food production. He encouraged the participants to think “interdependently” and offered examples of small towns surrounded by farms where residents’ leaves were used as mulch by the farmers. In another example of local resource use, he showed a town which created jobs by digging the clay around them and making bricks from it, which were then used in local construction. This was a particularly resonant example for us as Ed Pedigo, one of the founders of Damascus, sold pottery from his shop on Sunnyside Road made with clay he dug from the Clackamas River.

Kirstin Green, of Cogan Owens Cogan, offered a final overview and explanation of the summer homework assignment for the representatives. Their assignment is to collect images from wherever they may be of designs that they would like to see in the future of our area. These could include residential, agricultural, commercial, business or public spaces which are of a caliber which they would like to see maintained in Damascus and Boring.

Members of the CFD expressed their appreciation for the donation of professional time from Tim Smith, Virginia Bowers, and Kirstin Green and Pam Pickins of Cogan Owens Cogan, as well as the donation of materials for the event by Committee members Greg Dardis, John Hartsock, Chuck Kisselburg and Diana Lobo. New Clackamas County Commissioner Martha Schrader and Metro planner Ray Valone were acknowledged for their participation and commitment to the process. Barrett Lobo and Leena Brown were also thanked for collating the packets of information and maps of the Concept Planning area which were handed out to representatives at the conclusion of the evening.

The next step, this Fall, will be for Community Representatives to gather input from their designated neighborhood areas. Following this article is a list of the committed volunteer Representatives for each neighborhood in the Concept Planning area. Space does not allow the printing of the map in full at this time. However, it is hoped that area residents will contact representatives whom they know with input on their personal values for the future of the Damascus-Boring area. Blank spaces show opportunities to become part of the future by volunteering to be a Community Representative or Alternate. If you are interested in volunteering or if you want to know who is your Community Representative, you may call Diana Lobo at 503-658-8169.

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