



Team Design Platform
Strategic Leadership Team Meeting
Notes
Friday, December 11, 2009

Attendees:

Larry Thompson, Ringling College of Art & Design – Chair
Jim Shirley, Sarasota County Arts Council
Russ Crumley, former SCAC
Dwight Currie, Historic Asolo
Jean Trammell, EDC Board and The Venice Company
Katie Klauber-Moulton, EDC Board and Colony Beach & Tennis Resort
Scott Heaps, GravityFree
Wanda Chaves, Ringling College of Art & Design
Suzanne Atwell, City of Sarasota
Kathy Baylis, EDC
Jeanne Corcoran, Film Commission

- I. Larry Thompson welcomed all attendees and introductions were made.
- II. Kathy Baylis gave an overview of the Strategic Plan commissioned by the EDC for new and better ways of driving economic development in Sarasota County, which includes the “Platforms” concept of which Design is one of three focuses in addition to aging and sustainability. She discussed the need for “big, bold” ideas (BBI) that will have a major impact on the community, driving new ideas and fresh approaches in large scale, transforming ways.
- III. Jeanne Corcoran spoke briefly of design opportunities across a broad spectrum, and touched upon the wide variety of “NAICS Codes” that define types of businesses which apply to design and creative sectors and shared the flurry of activity surrounding sound stages in particular as an example of an area of focused nterest in the community.
- IV. Larry and Russ Crumley spoke of the role of the strategic leadership team, and how Jim Shirley will be stepping into the co-chair position on the Design Platform strategic leadership team. Russ addressed the need for unbridled creative input and brainstorming without restrictions, with any and all ideas and suggestions needed to make the team dynamic and productive.
- V. A period of OPEN DISCUSSION followed, and the “short term/long term wins” were set aside for now, to instead get a stream of general brainstorming underway about numerous topics including:

BBI: SOUND STAGE FACILITY

- The existing Ballet/Soundstage at the FSU Performing Arts Center, and what possibilities there might be for repurposing (or repurposing it back to its originally intended use). The ballet has a need for rehearsal and performance facilities, and should they relocate it would offer an opportunity for the space to revert to such soundstage type use.
- Discussion about sizes of sound stages, different sizes and applications from the basic 'box' to specialized uses such as motion capture, green screen and the like. Issues to make it a "real" sound stage such as thorough soundproofing, adequate size in the 8,000 to 20,000 range, etc. Estimated costs could range from \$2 million to \$20 million, depending on various elements including technology, scale/scope. Besides obvious use for production of film, television, video, commercials and other productions, benefits would include:
 - Job Creation, Training of students
 - Attracting High Wage/High Skills people and businesses
 - Support infrastructure, goods and services springing up

BBI: CREATIVITY DISTRICT / COMMUNITY - CREATIVITY INSTITUTE

- Creative communities were discussed, where people would work/live/play, i.e., "districts" of concentrated arts, design, etc. The U.K.'s "Pinewood Studios" development was given as an example, although much larger than what Sarasota County would pursue.
- SC should be the epicenter for Teaching/ Leadership in design and the arts, with possibly a **creativity institute or learning center** where people are attracted from around the world.
- Serious actions needed to "Brand" this as the Creative Coast and establish infrastructure and activities that support that claim.
- Transportation Design could be huge for us – more discussion needed.
- Necessity for incentivizing - \$, Land, Zoning, Taxes.
- Also logistical needs such as direct flights and the SRQ airport, access by other transportation from highways to trains, mass transit, between North Port all the way to the Tampa Bay area, etc.
- "Virtual" worlds/tools could be groundbreaking in Sarasota County as well as physical sites/facilities.

BBI: DIGITAL FILMMAKING LAB

- Larry spoke of the upcoming **Digital Filmmaking/Teaching Lab** program being developed by Sam Logan with Ringling College, to not only bring in notable film, television and other media directors to mentor/lecture/teach students at RCAD, but to make actual feature films and create content under the hand of these professionals integrating students, building

infrastructure, creating local funding resources, and more. **OFFICIAL ANNOUNCEMENT OF THIS SLATED FOR 1/14/10.** Speakers such as Werner Herzog and Paul Schiff are already being scheduled to come to the campus after the first of the new year.

BBI: REPURPOSING NORTH TRAIL TO AN "ARTS PORTAL"

- North Trail in Sarasota was discussed as a corridor that is a strong candidate for repurposing to physical sites geared to education and the arts in addition to the branding of the corridor because of its high saturation of educational facilities currently in place.
 - the "vintage" hotels could be both visual assets for location filming as well as
 - converted/adapted to affordable housing, business and office space for artists, producers, creative businesses and individuals.
 - N. Trail- living "RETRO" RENOVATE.
 - North Trail - Rename for current and future recognition – What about "portal" to play off of new media, new age of communications?

OTHER GENERAL DISCUSSION:

- How to establish Us as the authority, trendsetting community in the platforms. "LAB" concept for Sarasota County to become the design Petri Dish
- Points were made that we need to get ahead of the curves - "Leapfrog" to NEXT BEST NEW technology, tools, concepts rather than chasing whatever is the trend of the day or trying to modify old or existing methodology.
- Can Sarasota County claim various specific components/elements that relate to the coming economic drivers of aging, sustainability and design as very specific and already in development in our area moreso than elsewhere? Take ownership of unique opportunities?
- Exploration of Private/Public Partnering to drive new enterprises and ventures is needed.
- Tools, Talent and Innovative Distinction exist here in abundance.
- Do we have / do we need nationally/internationally renown Digital Artists in Residence? Producers in Residence?
- Our strength will come from building on our existing assets including seeking to retain "Human Capital".
- Necessary to identify industries' crossovers between design and others such as medical, military, bioscience and others.
- How do we battle mediocrity and complacency and waken the community to the reality that we must go **far beyond where we are** in the arts and design?

- Time to “Re-mold” public opinion of what’s new and that diversification and freedom will provide new ideas.
- “METI” as example of new approach thru design to solve a problem or need. Where are more and other “Prototype/Experiment” concepts taking place and developing in the area?
- Stemming the tide of lost talent streaming away from our area will rely entirely on creating OPPORTUNITITES – opps existing here will be the only way to help retain talent. Making the opportunities come into being is goal one.
- Seek input/Representation from education K-12 thinkers, students?
- Expand upon newest methods of doing business – The HUB as an Example.

VI. Next Steps:

- Scott Heaps and Russ Crumley will speak in more detail off line about creative a “private brainstorming site” electronically where strategic leadership team members can post comments, have interchange and feedback, etc.
- Each team member will give some consideration to “who is not here that should be here” in this strategic platform, sharing ideas both at the next meeting and on the private site when it becomes operational.
- The next meeting was not scheduled due to the calendar demands of the upcoming holiday season, but several dates will be suggested by the EDC and a consensus determined.