

Longboat Key Town Center Master Plan

Steering Committee Meeting - #1

Meeting Date: February 19, 2015 – 1:00PM – 3:30PM

I. Introduction

On February 19, 2015, Town of Longboat Key (LBK), along with its Project Consultant, Tindale Oliver Design hosted a Steering Committee Meeting Town Center Master Plan Project. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the project, scope of work, schedule, the market analysis, and to allow for Steering Committee input through the completion of a visual preference survey and open discussion. The format of the workshop included a short presentation by Tindale Oliver Design staff and Florida Economic Advisors followed by question/answer by the Steering Committee and community members present.

This document serves as a summary of the community comments received during the meeting. These comments were received either verbally during discussion or in writing using comment forms provided.

II. Project Challenges

- Gaining consensus and early collaboration
- Identifying financing for the development
- A need to develop an environment that encourages walking and mobility
- The Town Center should be designed to be inclusive of all age groups
- Maintaining quality
- Identifying what the customers need
- Limited development opportunities – most of the properties are already owned with buildings
- The project could easily get too complex

III. Project Opportunities

- The Town Center can create a central location
- Make the Library more of a community asset
- Give Longboat Key an identity through the development of the Town Center
- Create a plan that works
- The Town Center should serve multiple generations
- Let's actually do something and make something happen
- Sense of place and community
- Unify as Longboat Key, not disjointed pieces

IV. Brainstorming the Possibilities

- The pub left, and now there is no longer a bar here anymore. Maybe hosting a homebrew event would start to bring interest
- The Town Center should be a gathering space, where people naturally gather and where there is always something going on
- Start slow with a gathering space that evolves over time
- Need to have shade
- Coffee Shop
- Amphitheater
- Use library to support the gathering space
- One Screen movie theater
- Destination more for residents, minimize the amount of visitors from far away
- More restaurants (2-3 max)
- Facilities that accommodate seasonal tenants
- Arts and Cultural building
- Adult education, art and lectures
- The current arts center on Longboat key is not open all the time – it only operates seasonally
- If there is more to do on the island, then traffic could be less because people aren't leaving to meet their needs
- Some stores closed in the recession and may survive better now that its over
- What people want now is important, but many may not be living in Longboat Key by the time it is develop, are they still going to be living here?
- Consensus that the civic space/green space is a key component to the Town Center concept.

V. Visual Preference Survey Results

A Visual Preference Survey was completed by the Steering Committee and community members present using electronic polling devices. The survey covered a number of topic areas including:

- Desired land uses and building types
- Desired overall development character and feel
- Public spaces and recreational facilities
- Streetscape and public realm design

The individual image results to the survey have been attached to these notes. In addition a summary is included below.

Desired Land Uses

The top three desired commercial/office/retail uses included the following:

- Bars/restaurants/coffee shops
- Medical offices/doctors' offices
- Gift shops

These uses are consistent with those received during Workshop #1 and the stakeholder interviews. There is a strong desire among residents and stakeholders to cluster a variety of daily uses on Longboat Key.

The top three desired residential uses included the following:

- Apartments
- Condominiums
- Assisted Living Facilities

These uses were largely consistent with the input received during Workshop #1 and the stakeholder interviews. Generally the idea of new residential uses haven't received the support of non-residential uses for the Town Center, and this was reflected in the voting. There were 56 total votes for residential uses and 75 total votes for non-residential uses (participants were allowed to vote for multiple choices).

Multifamily Preferences

Participants had the most positive response towards the image of townhomes for multifamily residential. The second and third most positive responses were images on slides 20 and 21 which contain three and four story multifamily buildings that have some density, but also maintain a human scale. Both buildings have a street presence and some architectural variation in their facades.

This input is consistent with the stated desire from many community members to have a variety of smaller scale multifamily residential that due to scale/orientation will enhance the Town Center feel.

Office Preferences

The most positive response was given to the image on slide 26 which showed a two story office building with street presence and a significant amount of glass and fenestration in the facade. The building with the second most positive response was on slide 28 which was a four story building with a significant amount of variation both

in architectural style and facade fenestration. This building is more urban with outdoor seating areas, angled parking, and minimal setback.

Retail Preferences

The two images with the most positive response were the two most urban shown. The image on Slide 30 was the most popular by a large margin with a two story street wall of retail establishments along the sidewalk with awnings, outdoor benches and creative signage. This image gives a very strong "urban village" feel. The second most popular image was on slide 31 which was a modern one story town center. This development included a large pedestrian realm, with ample outdoor seating, landscaping, lighting, and awnings and overhangs.

Mixed-Use Preferences

The most positive response was given to the images on slides 33 and 37. The image on slide 37 received the most "very positive" results but both images received similar positive responses overall. Both images are of mixed-use buildings at 2-3 stories, with street presence, awnings, porches, and a well designed, comfortable pedestrian environment along the bottom floor.

Overall Character Preferences

The most positive response was given to the images on slides 39 and 48. The image on 39 is of the current Publix shopping center on Longboat Key. The image on 48 is an urban street frontage with a variation in building size and style (between 1 and 2 stories) and a large protected pedestrian area. The buildings are adorned with awnings, creative signage, landscaping, and umbrellas are placed in the outdoor seating areas for shade.

Public Spaces & Recreation

In general, almost all of the public space images received positive responses which is consistent with the community's stated desire to have a well designed public space built as part of the Town Center development. The most popular images were 55, 62, 60, and 57. Images 60 and 57 are focused on programmed activities more than physical design showing an outdoor concert and market respectively. Images 62 and 55 were tied for most popular, and both images show an urban park setting with adjacent buildings surrounding and spilling out onto the park area. In addition, image 55 shows a water feature integrated into the park space with seating, while 62 shows a terraced seating area with shade and a central lawn.

Streetscape & Public Realm

Bike/Pedestrian Amenities - Image 66 was the most popular of these showing a bike rack that has been placed adjacent to the sidewalk in an area similar to an on street parking area. This placement allows for minimal obstruction on the sidewalk giving more room for outdoor dining, etc.

Wayfinding/Signage - The most popular signage image was from slide 74 which shows a large entry sign for Hilton head Island. The second most popular image was on slide 71 and showed a large monument entry sign surrounded by substantial landscaping. These choices speak to a desire for attractive entry signage into the Town Center.

Streetscape / Public Realm - The most popular image from this group was on slide 80 which showed a heavily landscaped area of the existing Publix shopping center on Longboat Key. This image mixes heavy landscaping, pedestrian scale lighting, large sidewalks, and outdoor covered seating. The second most popular image was on slide 84 which shows a row of shops with outdoor seating, a large unobstructed sidewalk, and landscaping islands and shade trees acting as buffers between the pedestrian realm and the street.

Summary of Results

Images from the visual preference survey are not meant to serve as a literal guide for urban design and architecture, but instead are intended to capture preferences for certain aesthetic approaches and elements. The results of the survey can be used to guide conceptual decisions about look and feel which will ultimately be codified through development regulations. The major takeaways from this survey include the following:

- 1) If residential is to be included, it should be smaller in scale and integrated seamlessly into the Town Center.
- 2) Strong desire for active pedestrian spaces, including outdoor seating and wide open sidewalks.
- 3) Desire for variation in architectural style, fenestration on the facades, and building massing. Strong preferences for buildings with awnings, porches, outdoor seating, and creative signage.
- 4) Building scale should be no more than 2-3 stories, and buildings should be oriented towards the street to create an urban edge.

- 5) There should be a significant amount of landscaping, and it should be used to help buffer pedestrian areas from the street where feasible.
- 6) Bike infrastructure is desired (bike racks, bike lanes, etc.) and placement should minimize conflicts with pedestrians.
- 7) Wayfinding and entry signage for the Town Center is desired.

VI. Project Vision Statement

Based on results of the facilitated discussion and visual preference survey, the following Vision Statement was developed for the Town Center Area:

The Town Center will include aesthetically pleasing, safe, and connected community open space, and cultural and leisure facilities and programs to provide the opportunity for our residents and visitors to gather, to recreate, to learn and be entertained. To limit trips off the island, we seek access to grocery stores, coffee shops, a pub, restaurants, banking, medical care and other neighborhood services. We seek to create a sense of place and community.