

**Village of Mariemont  
Committee of the Whole Meeting  
October 3, 2022**

Vice Mayor Dr. Lewis called the meeting to order at 6 p.m. In attendance were Mr. Bartlett, Mrs. Brownknight, Ms. Geldbaugh, Mayor Brown, Mrs. Rankin, and Mr. York. Also in attendance was Tax Administrator Chuck Barlow.

Dr. Lewis welcomed back Mike Hinnenkamp for the follow-up meeting from the presentation of the Strategic Planning Session that he led us through on August 29, 2022. He provided members of Council with a Request for Professional Services. He noted that he wouldn't consider this an official proposal as he kept it in draft form, but it is close to what he would recommend. Council needs to come to a level of commitment. This is a complex and costly process that will take time. If the commitment is lacking and some of the members feel like they are getting dragged along then he wouldn't recommend that we go forward. This should really be something that the Village views as exciting, something that is embraced, and that the community can get behind and involved in to create some excitement. Getting residents involved is difficult, whether it be in Mariemont or in any part of the country right now, but he thinks it can be done.

This builds on the Strategic Planning Session. They talked about plan components and that there needs to be additional study. The next piece is how do you move forward? It boils down to preserving the fiscal health for the community. There are some items that could be addressed, as outlined in the Request for Professional Services. Comprehensive Plans are important but typically they talk about the physical environment. What is recommended here is not only do you do that but also look internally, including your day-to-day operations, the cost of those operations, the infrastructure, and the strengths and weaknesses in those particular areas. This would get into the capital and operational aspects in your departments. For the housing component, we need to look at every parcel in Mariemont and ask what is the property being used for, what is it zoned for, and what is the development potential. The infrastructure plan is critical. We need an inventory of everything the Village is responsible for from streets to all facilities, what shape is it in, and what is it going to cost to bring it up to the standard that it needs to be. Once you see what the list is and what you've got to do, then you need to ask if the current structure of government can handle it.

In the methodology, Mr. Hinnenkamp recommends taking the internal 5-year and 10-year plans for the departments, the land use plan which is the most time-consuming, and the infrastructure study concurrently. There needs to be some coordination between your consultant, your staff, and your participants. Those should be followed up with the five-year financial plan. The last piece is the structure of government study. This is going to be highly dependent on who is involved, the level of commitment, and the frequency to meet. The entire process could probably be done within 18 months if everything was timed perfectly but it would likely be more like 15-24 month time period.

There is a lot of flexibility within the draft. The steering committee could be 2-3 members of Council, Village Department heads, and 8-12 members of the community. The most important part of the process would be communicating to the community. The Plan Component Planning Team is more your staff and individual teams made up of Department Operational Plans, Land Use & Housing, Infrastructure Plan, Financial Plan, and Structure of Government. You'd want to have a few public hearings and open houses which are more effective because it is more one on one.

What we would bring to the table is overall coordination of the process. There would need to be assistance, particularly on the Land Use, that we would bring in. That and the financial component are the only two areas where we might need to bring in some individuals from the outside. The biggest cost is time

when you look at the fact that there would be about 58 meetings, each 2-3 hours long. Many of these could take place during the day with staff. Those would just be internal meetings for building that plan; that doesn't include any public hearings you would want us to attend. The deliverables, timetable, and fee structure are laid out in the proposal. You can view the components there and you can stop at any time at any step.

Mayor Brown asked about the mayor not being mentioned at all in any of the steering committees. It was an oversight, and "Council Members" should be corrected to read "elected officials." Mr. Bartlett asked for clarification on why some components are 5-10 year, but infrastructure is 20 years. Mr. Hinnenkamp explained that typical life of a road is 20 years. Mr. Bartlett asked for further clarification that we are not the ones finding the experts and whoever is leading this process is the one who is setting up the meetings and taking notes and summarizing it out for all the participants. Mr. Hinnenkamp confirmed they would do the entire process and obviously coordination would be with Council, the Mayor, and a point person in the admin staff.

Mr. Hinnenkamp envisions the comprehensive plan as something that is used on a daily basis. The action steps need to be direct, and the plan should be referred to at all meetings on a day-to-day basis. The process should be inclusive but it is important to avoid pie in the sky ideas because that will drag the process down. That is the biggest challenge about putting these committees together; finding the right balance. Ms. Geldbaugh asked about which communities have seen this process through. Not many in the area have been through a similar process. Mr. Hinnenkamp has worked with Springfield Township and West Chester. The key for the success of both was they had a long-term vision but as noted by Dr. Lewis, those areas have land that was not utilized and was ready to be developed, unlike Mariemont. The advantage that Mariemont has over other communities is the demand and high interest in living here. The infrastructure, and paying for it, remains the biggest challenge for Mariemont.

Mayor Brown was curious how a plan, instituted by one group, transitions into a new group as elected officials change over time. Mr. Hinnenkamp pointed out that is why it is so important to keep everyone informed about the plan and involved with the plan. When the residents embrace the plan, they can act as gatekeepers and will elect officials who support the plan. Mayor Brown noted the difficulty in getting residents to volunteer their time and much of this plan seems to be dependent on the community being actively involved. He thinks they might be excited initially but sees a challenge in keeping volunteers involved over time. Dr. Lewis thought the community involvement was more with the schools or sports associated with the school. Mr. Hinnenkamp explained to Mrs. Brownknight that we could split the plan up by components and stop at any point, but he recommended doing it all at once over the course of about two years.

Mrs. Brownknight has been in touch with a contact at the Center for Community Planning who would be willing to put a proposal together. Dr. Lewis asked the group what our top priorities are other than infrastructure if we can't afford to do the entire scope right now. Mr. Bartlett suggested waiting until we know all the costs but to focus on the three components that Mr. Hinnenkamp called out which were the five- and ten-year operational plans, land use & development strategy and housing plans, and the five- and ten- and twenty- year infrastructure plan. Ms. Geldbaugh thinks we need to get at least 3-4 bids. Mr. York said we essentially already have the RFP from Ohio Plan.

Mrs. Brownknight suggests starting with a common RFP. Mr. York and Dr. Lewis agree that we may not have the resources to go forward with this now. Fiscal Officer Richard Ford has said that we can't afford this. Tax Administrator Chuck Barlow brought up the possibility of putting a plan together in-house. He pointed out that we already have experts like Gerry Stoker from XPEX and Village Engineer Chris Ertel. Mr. York feels we owe it to the residents to have a plan in place to deal with long-term projects like the pool and the tennis courts. Mr. Bartlett thinks we could maybe do this in-house, but he thinks we need

to also look externally. He is concerned on if we have the internal expertise for all the infrastructure, particularly for storm water and land use plans, and should put out bids to make comparisons. He thinks we need to do an RFP to gather individual prices and compare to see if we can do this in-house or not, but we need the data to make the decision. We could get the prices from Mrs. Brownknight's contact at Xavier, and Ohio Plan, and McBride in Fairfax and then have a conversation based on that data and go from there. Ms. Geldbaugh suggested giving the Request for Professional Services from Ohio Plan to Mr. Barlow and Fiscal Officer Mr. Ford as well for their feedback. Mr. Bartlett wants to also give the full RFP to the other people to see what the level is going to be, and we need to pull in outside resources for a true comparison. Ms. Geldbaugh questioned why send it out if we already have people in-house who know how to do it. Mr. Bartlett wants to understand the skill base of the people providing the service. Mrs. Rankin did not see the harm in getting more information.

Dr. Lewis concluded that next steps would be to get a bid from Ohio Plan and two other sources which would be McBride and Xavier's Center for Community Planning. Mr. Bartlett will reach out to McBride, Mrs. Brownknight will reach out to Xavier, and Mrs. Rankin will reach out to Mike at Ohio Plan and ask how long we should allow for responses.

Mayor Brown shared his draft of a vision and mission statement and asked for revisions from everyone in the next few days. The Executive Summary from Ohio Plan will be posted on the website after Dr. Lewis has time to provide feedback on the cover page.

The meeting adjourned at 7:33pm.

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William A. Brown, Mayor

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Richard D. Ford, Fiscal Officer