



## Middletown Master Plan Steering Committee Meeting #5 February 26, 2004

### Minutes

**Present:**

**Steering Committee:** Sam Ashworth, Valerie Back, John Civile, Dane Donham, Jim Ewers, Dee Florence, Wanda Glover, Larry James, Ted Karchner, Cathy Newkirk, Nancy Nix, Saundra Pearce, Virginia Ritan, Bob Wells, Wilma Wood, Gregg Russell, Steve Price, Noah Powers

**Staff:** Marty Kohler, Brian Forschner

**Consultants:** Caleb Faux, Brad Schwab

**Other:** Gregg Russell of the Middletown Board of Realtors, Dr. Steven Price, Superintendent of Middletown City Schools

- **Results of the fiscal analysis report**

- Mr. Faux presented the preliminary findings from Strategic Public Policy's fiscal analysis report. The preliminary findings suggest that over the past ten years significant alterations have occurred that have affected revenue streams available to support City services. The effect of these changes has generally been to constrain the ability of local governments to provide the high level of services expected by residents and required to attract new business investment. There are four reasons for this change: Elimination of virtually all Federal Grant programs to smaller cities; changes to State tax regulations; declining availability of shared State taxes and increasing requirements for local "matching" funds in order to have access to State and Federal grants.
- Middletown's income tax structure may need to be revised because currently the credits given are draining away a substantial amount of revenue.
- Middletown depends on income tax for only 54.5% of its total revenue. As some cities rely on income tax for up to 85% of total revenue, Middletown is in a position to handle economic stability issues.
- Middletown has handled debt, personnel costs and cash-on-hand very well helping to strengthen credit ratings and allowing for future lending possibilities.





- **Staff responded to the request to review the previous issue identification and planning efforts**
  - Mr. Faux presented some of the past planning efforts such as A.C.T.I.O.N. and MiddletOWN it! and mentioned that many of these programs lacked real direction and decision-making leadership. Sometimes these programs worked against each other.
  
- **Suggested revisions in the planning process.**
  - In response to Steering Committee (SC) concern, Mr. Faux proposed a revised public involvement process. Once the SC has established the key goals of the master planning process, the goals would be presented to the general public for feedback. The SC felt as though initial public input would be redundant since so many public efforts had been made in the past.
  - Mr. Faux presented the idea of a Community Stakeholder Forum where key decision makers could convene and be presented with the progress made so far in the planning process with the understanding that their buy-in in the process is important for success and any input they have would improve the effectiveness of the plan.
  
- **A discussion of the ongoing schedule.**
  - The SC meeting ended with an update to the ongoing schedule.

Next meeting set for March 22.

