

Community Participation: Organization and Individual Responsibility

- I. Right and responsibility to shape our communities
 - a. Specifically discussing urban and public landscapes
 - b. Democracies offer more opportunity for public input
- II. Citizen Involvement
 - a. Citizens should be involved in their community's planning and design efforts
 - b. Being informed is our own responsibility
 - i. Participating in public meetings
 - ii. Understanding when meeting dates are and the processes to get there
 - iii. Meet 1:1 with local officials to share your view of a given project
- III. Organization Involvement
 - a. Combined voices have greater influence
 - b. Community organizations can lead the way to enhance the aesthetics of a neighborhood
 - i. Garden Clubs
 - ii. Community enhancement plans
 - iii. Beautification Committees
- IV. Planning and Design Process
 - a. Most projects follow the same basic 5-step process
 - i. Site Selection
 - ii. Survey – both site and citizen surveys
 - iii. Analysis
 - iv. Exploration of Alternatives
 - v. Site Plan Development
 - b. Each step is an opportunity for Community Participation

- c. Community design build projects (Kids Space in Huntsville, Alabama)
 - i. Grass roots effort
 - ii. Partnership with local parks and recreation department
 - iii. Assembled design professional to help guide the process
 - iv. Distributed citizen surveys throughout the community
 - v. Solicited financial support from private companies and individuals
 - vi. City and community collectively built the project
- d. Other processes for citizens to engage
 - i. Site selection for parks and other public facilities
 - ii. Transportation Planning organizations
 - iii. City/community-wide initiatives
 - 1. Appointed committees
 - 2. Volunteer days

V. Planning and Design Decision-making

- a. Design principles are guidance for the design process but not always the best way for citizens to ask questions
- b. Design Decision-making Principles
 - i. Everything must have a purpose
 - 1. WHY must be answered
 - a. E.g. Why is this project happening here
 - ii. Design must be for the people
 - 1. Must satisfy the needs of humans
 - iii. Both function and aesthetics must be satisfied – Form and Function
 - 1. Efficiency – how well the space can be used

2. Experience – how humans feel in the space
- iv. It must provide a Substantial Experience
 1. What is the experience?
 2. Line, form, texture, color, dominance, and enclosure
- v. It must provide an Appropriate Experience
 1. Why is it the experience?
 - a. Personality of place
 - b. Personality of the user
 - c. Personality of the function
 - d. Project Scale
- vi. Technical Requirements must be satisfied
 1. Code Compliance
 2. Minimum standards
 3. Program needs met
- vii. Short- and long-term funding must be considered
 1. Sustainability
 2. Balancing needs and budget
 3. Vision matters | Shoot for amazing, and settle at no less than good
- viii. Administrative and educational responsibilities must be determined
 1. Maintenance and operations, have they been factored into funding
 2. Is the site going to meet the needs of the end user
 3. Have safety and security been considered