

# COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT CULTURAL FACILITIES TASK FORCE FACILITATOR TRAINING

Mary Margaret Schoenfeld – February 28, 2018

# Task Force Charge

- “formulate a framework that will help guide Arlington’s future investment in and management of cultural facilities,” and “develop criteria and make recommendations that will guide the location, type and management of cultural facilities in the near and long term.”

# Community Engagement Meeting Design

- Complement other forms of input to the task force
- Gathering input – NOT planning particular facilities or solving problems.
- Soliciting the input of residents who may not define themselves as artists, who may not be engaged with any of the Arlington-based arts organizations, and who may not be on the radar of the Arts Commission, AED, or Arlington Cultural Affairs.

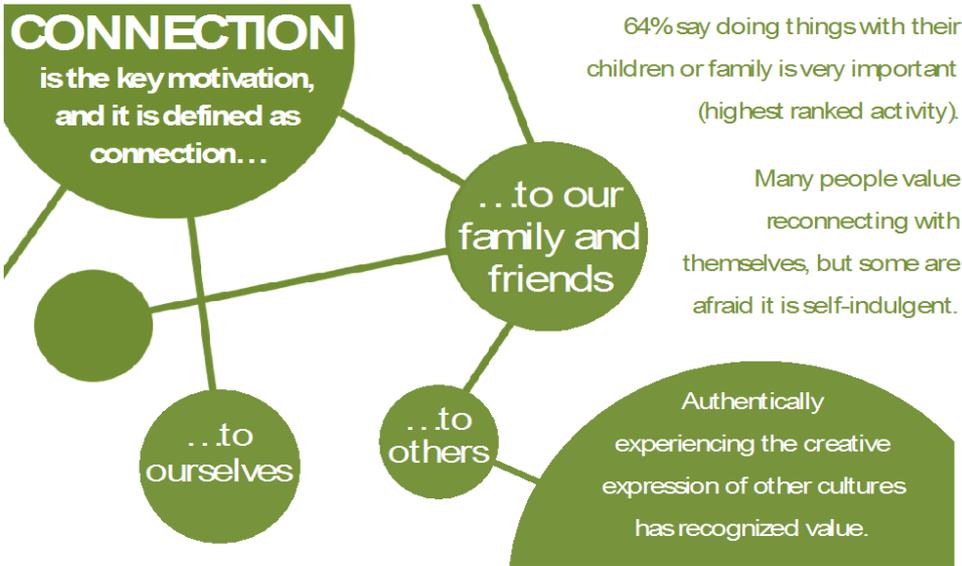


Photo: Sara Yousefnejad

# Creating Connection

## RESEARCH FINDINGS SUMMARY

**CONNECTION**  
is the key motivation,  
and it is defined as  
connection...



### CREATIVE EXPRESSION

...is a more engaging and powerful frame than "arts & culture" for most audiences.

...brings more people into a conversation about arts & culture.

"Just part of who I am."



ART is a product of creativity, like a painting or piece of music.



CULTURE is art, but also part of lifestyle connected to heritage and tradition.



### CREATIVITY

is defined broadly to include everything from problem-solving to artistic inspiration and expression.

Most people say they would be happier, healthier, and less stressed if they were more active creatively.

Deriving meaning in life from creative expression is valued by fewer people.

### BENEFITS

Benefits of arts & culture to children & youth are valued most highly.

### AUDIENCES

Younger people, women, parents of children under 18, and people of color are more likely to say that creative expression and creativity are important in their lives.



- People under 40 value arts & culture, creativity, and creative expression more than older people by about 10 points.
- Arts & culture community—and traditional arts enthusiasts—are other important audiences.

### BARRIERS

ARTS ARE VIEWED ASA "NICETY" OR LUXURY.

People want to engage with arts & culture, but are still finding mostly opportunities to passively observe.



Some existing constituencies push back against defining arts & culture more broadly as "creative expression."



Time & money are the biggest barriers to both formal and informal engagement.



# Agenda Design – Two Conversations

- MM introduces the topic
- Table Facilitators share brief instructions
- Participants think and make notes notes individually
- Tables share their thoughts, which will be documented on large pieces of paper
- Large group re-convenes, with individual tables sharing highlights from their conversations
- After the two conversations MM will offer some summary comments, and ask participants to share summary thoughts
- The meeting will end with Marsha outlining what happens with the information gathered at this meeting, and next steps for the task force.

# THE VIBE: POSITIVITY!

## WE ARE:

- talking about what arts, culture and creativity do for people
- celebrating creativity, arts and culture, and placing people's concerns on equal footing with people's hopes

## WE ARE NOT:

- making decisions about county investment
- planning (or eulogizing) any particular cultural space

# CRITICAL POINTS FOR FACILITATORS



- Every voice around the table has equal value
- Every person at the table is an expert regarding their own actions, ideas and preferences
- No one is right – no one is wrong
- Your table conversation is providing you with assets – material that will be helpful to you in moving forward with the tasks at hand

# BLOW BY BLOW NOTES

## PRIOR TO START

- Arrive no later than 12:40PM - 20 minutes before start.
- Familiarize yourself with the room.
- Pick up your large note sheets, note pages, pens and markers
- Find your table
- Greet people as they arrive
- When it's time to start, encourage/help people get to tables
- As people get to tables, smile, welcome them, point out the “cultural space” handout on table. Just chat!

# BLOW BY BLOW NOTES

## OPENING

- Marsha Semmel will welcome people and introduce arts commission/task force members, any VIPs, MMS
  
- Mary Margaret Schoenfeld
  - ▣ agenda overview
  - ▣ participant introduction activity
  - ▣ review groundrules
  - ▣ topic overview of the broader topic – what is cultural space, a few relevant trends, contextual comments for Arlington

# BLOW BY BLOW NOTES

## CONVERSATION ONE

### **Arts, culture and creativity in our lives**

What do we do that is creative, and why is it important? How do we participate in the arts? How do we experience and perpetuate culture?

- Working individually, and then at table level, participants will outline their activities and articulate values re: their participation using a large-format chart and facilitated by table leaders.
- Groups will then share their observations with all participants, and notetakers will chart responses re: arts, culture and creativity participation.

# BLOW BY BLOW NOTES

## CONVERSATION ONE: Facilitator Role

- Smile – ask people if task is clear.
- Give people a few minutes to make a few notes about what they do and why it's important to them.
- Ask someone to take notes on the large piece of paper, and another volunteer to present the table's notes once the large group reconvenes
- Ask someone to begin to share their activities and why they are important.
- Document points on big sheet of paper – make sure the note taker is getting important points

### **IF THE CONVERSATION DRAGS**

- Use examples from your background materials
- Use personal examples
- If people aren't coming up with *anything* or are being quiet – ask them what they do with their leisure time/engage in conversation about why they don't participate in arts, culture or creativity. Not aware of opportunities? No time? Expense? No one to go with? Friends aren't interested? Identifying barriers to participation would be another useful outcome to this task.

# BLOW BY BLOW NOTES

## BREAK

- Thank people at your table, and then encourage  $\frac{1}{2}$  of them to get up and move to another table – our goal is to have a different set of people around the table for the second conversation.
- Make sure Mary Margaret, Cindy (or another helper person) comes to collect your large sheet of notes, to post it on the walls.

# BLOW BY BLOW NOTES

## CONVERSATION TWO

### **Arts, Culture, Creativity and Civic Life in Arlington**

How do our connections to and our values about arts, culture and creativity relate to our current and future life in Arlington?

- Individuals will make notes on the following their hopes for Arlington in general, their hopes for cultural space in Arlington, their concerns for Arlington in general and their concerns about cultural space in Arlington.
- After table-level discussions we'll discuss observations and trends in the larger group, while notetakers chart responses.

# BLOW BY BLOW NOTES

## CONVERSATION TWO: Facilitator Role

- Smile. IF YOU HAVE NEW PEOPLE, WELCOME THEM, and ask people if task is clear.
- Give people a few minutes to make notes about their hopes for Arlington in general, their hopes for cultural space in Arlington, their concerns for Arlington in general and their concerns about cultural space in Arlington.
- Ask someone to begin to share their activities and why they are important.
- Document points on big sheet of paper – make sure the note taker is getting important points

### **IF THE CONVERSATION DRAGS**

- Use examples from your background materials
- Use personal examples
- If people aren't coming up with *anything* or are being quiet – refer back to first conversation. Ask what they articulated that they did. Ask if they look forward, do they imagine they'll still be able to do that? That their kids or neighbors, or future generations will be able to do that? If so – why? If not, why not?

# BLOW BY BLOW NOTES

## BREAK AND WRAP UP

- Make sure Mary Margaret, Cindy (or another helper person) comes to collect your large sheet of notes, to post it on the walls.
- **Final Conversation: What do you see/What have you heard?**
- Marsha will thank participants, review next steps for task force and say goodbye!

# Approximate Timing Sequence

- 1:03 Meeting convenes. Marsha provides opening comments
- 1:06 MM notes. Overview, ground rules, introductions, background
- 1:15 MM intro 1<sup>st</sup> conversation
- 1:20 First conversation starts
- 1:20 – table facilitators re-state task
- 1:22 – individual note taking
- 1:27 – begin to document notes at table level
- 1:37 – complete note taking
- 1:37 Groups report out
- 1:50 wrap up first conversation – mini break
- 1:55 MM intro second conversation
- 1:58 Second conversation starts
- 1:58– table facilitators re-state task
- 2:00 – individual note taking
- 2:03 – begin to document notes at table level
- 2:13 – complete note taking
- 2:13 Groups report out
- 2:25 Summary comments
- 2:30 Say thanks and goodbye

# A few more notes for facilitators

- Wait and listen. If people are not speaking up, share your impressions of what you have heard *from others*.



- Be sensitive to the fact that you will have multiple opportunities to share your ideas, but that this may be the only opportunity that these participants will have to share ideas
- Avoid value judgments
- Avoid “conclusion” type comments

# Questions?



Thank you!

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