

Creative Construct: Building for Culture and Creativity

Note-taking guide for session rapporteurs

METADATA

Session title: Translating Creativity, Citizen Entrepreneurship, and Cultural Development in Rural and Small Communities

Presenter(s): **Patrick Overton**, Director, Front Porch Institute, Astoria, Oregon; **James Counter**, President, New Richmond Area Community Foundation, Wisconsin; **Bill Buell**, VP of the Community Foundation, New Richmond, Wisconsin; **Joe Kerlin**, Director, Parks and Recreation, New Richmond, Wisconsin; **Phil Carlson**, University of Wisconsin, Madison, Wisconsin; **Paul Larsen**, Director, Economic Development, Brigham City, Utah; **Roger Manning**, VP, Incoming President of the Academy Square Foundation, Brigham City, Utah

Day: Wed. April 30

Time: 1:00 to 2:30

NOTES

1. Short overview/summary of presentation

- eroding sense of cultural values in rural communities across the United States – as those underpinnings disintegrate the cultural bridges between rural regions and urban areas collapse
- people are overwhelmed – virtual intercommunication is destroying human connection and contributing to the ‘numbing-down’ of American culture
- communities are developing a new sense of regionalism (New Regionalism) – not by county or city line but forming out of a need to be in a relationship, whether social or commerce driven – causing great relations but pose problems of governance
- this contributes to a strong emergence of New Localism
- Ruralism: without ‘us’, people from rural areas can’t function- results in loss of self-determination
- sustainability based on civil engagement – lecture titled “Engaging the Democracy of Civil Discourse” – community is not a noun, it is a verb
- when a community doesn’t share its own stories, it cannot sustain itself

Patrick Overton, Front Porch Project, Oregon

- proposed connection between waterway corridors throughout the town of New Richmond, Wisconsin – create gathering space to encourage connectivity (i.e. amphitheatre, sculpture garden, footbridges, proposed pedestrian mall)
- park became catalyst for communication between 4 townships which, prior to the project, were not in communication – prompted discussion of making the library on the existing park into a regional library (affects other amenities)
- rural suburbanization – erosion of the original core of the town
- township decided on building funds through private donations
- important to alter nomenclature around the issue – began referring to the collective 4 townships as the New Richmond Region – communal benefits
- in Brigham City, Utah the Academy Square Project is focused on revitalizing a 1904 dance hall into a performance centre/communal town space, including a new, extensive plaza
- in small communities you will find people who desire to be stewards of the places they live – it is crucial for these people feel as if they own the projects
- metaphor for re-development of heritage dance hall: helping an old lady into a dress and she will dance again
- the process of getting there (putting on the dress) is equally important as the actual final project – community dialogue
- “The Poetry of Place” – how the physical geography impacts the people who live there is known as ‘Sense of Place’ while the ‘Poetry of Place’ is about *people* and their interaction informs the geography

Note taker: Nancy Burgoyne