

Imagine Maryland

Date: July 11, 2008
Location: Maryland State Arts Council
175 W. Ostend Street, Baltimore
Forum: County Arts Councils Forum
Facilitator: Morrie Warshawski, Theresa Colvin
Scribe: Janel Cohen

Summary of Major Themes:

In their visions, the County Arts Councils see:

- Arts infusion/integration into every aspect of life: everywhere, connecting many different people, and highly relevant/valued
- Funding is easier to get
- Stronger organizations
- More involvement with youth
- Maryland has an identity as “THE CREATIVE STATE”

Other Themes:

- Councils appreciate MSAC’s leadership
- Need for comprehensive resource guides
- To depend less on MSAC Funding by increasing other sources of support.
- Help with promotion needs
- Continue block formula
- More professional development workshops
- To celebrate - celebrate that MD is a model

SOME QUOTES:

“MSAC does great job, but County Arts Councils rely too heavily on you. CAC’s should become more independent and strengthen their own [fundraising] in case of budget cuts.”

“MSAC provides us with a lot of leadership. As CACs develop their programs, we use MSAC information and best practices. We depend on that leadership.”

“MSAC is wonderful and has made a difference on the community level and in building great partnerships with other community organizations.”

“We appreciate that MSAC is here and everyone is friendly and accommodating and nice. Not stressful.”

“This is the place to turn to see how bright the future can be.”

“MSAC is the hub of the wheel and is central to keeping us all connected.”

Raw Transcript

Theresa Colvin welcome –

Hello and good morning, I am Theresa Colvin with the Maryland State Arts Council. Welcome back, I know you were just here recently.

On behalf of Governor O’Malley and the Maryland State Arts Council I am pleased to welcome you to one of many *imagine Maryland* forums across the state. *imagine MARYLAND* is a broad-based and inclusive planning process to help guide the Maryland State Arts Council’s (MSAC) work in the coming years. The plan will be completed and published early in 2009 and you can track the process on the Maryland State Arts Council’s website www.msac.org under Strategic Planning: *imagine Maryland*. Please visit the site.

Thank you Kevin and Andy for the Western Regional meeting we had the other night.

I would like to introduce Council member Abby Hoffman, who is on our management team.

This visioning session is part of our environmental assessment and should be ready by 2009

I’d like to introduce you to the staff with us today: Janel Cohen, Pamela Dunne, and Chris Stewart.

Thank you for being here today and participating in *imagine Maryland*.

And now for a few housekeeping items: First of all, could you please fill in your name and contact information on the sign in sheet so we can keep track of who came to our meetings and also to keep you updated with the process.

We also have some printed material for you: Frequently Asked Questions, a Press Release introducing *Imagine Maryland*, a Timeline of the process (including other forums you may be interested in attending), our Annual Report which will have all the information you'll need to know on the Arts Council.

At this point I'd like to introduce Morrie Warshawski, our consultant for this planning process.

- I'm happy to be at this meeting because I'm fond of local arts agencies, and you've been going through a tough time across the country.
- Happy to have you with us today.
- Around the room for introductions.
- ***What are some things that are cooking at your agency?***
 - 501c3 Agency and multi purpose agency. Concentrating on summer camp.
 - Fund and promote for the arts. 2 days ago hosted a huge fundraising concert event. Now doing a lot of reports
 - Excited about being 13 months away from opening high school for fine arts
 - Opening community arts center and gallery
 - Opening new facility soon which will enable us to expand and anchor down the a/e district
 - Committee working to ensure funding is getting to underserved communities; report had good suggestions and is getting worked on during the summer.
 - Lots of kids in for summer camp, launched public art project with baseballs on display downtown.
 - Excited about finishing a film that we started 2 years ago through Maryland Traditions and a Challenge America grant
 - Hosting Southern Rock Woodstock – 2 day event with 11 cover bands
 - Unveiling public art project with local artists
- Theory/Planning/Process
 - Planning without action is a daydream; action without planning is a nightmare.
 - Spending time to gather information
 - Will do some visioning today
 - There's a way to get to action powerfully and not as powerfully
 - How do you "do"? In my business, it's easy to get ideas, but which to choose and follow through with?
 - Picture
 - Come up with problem statement – for us it's a 5 year plan
 - Design a process
 - Choice of going to 2 bases (need to resolve before you move on):
 - Vision – if you could have what you want, what would it look like? Important to have strong consensus that that's where they want to be, and

have to go into that vision and prioritize. This helps you to become strategic.

- Problem – what’s the problem, cause, what’s holding us back? There isn’t always agreement on this. Have to agree to get to other bases. Need to understand the underlying problem.
- Now – Goals, Strategies, Objectives
 - Action Plan
 - Evaluation – you have to keep evaluating, and restate the plan – it’s a circular process. Every once in awhile, have to start over (usually about every 3-5 years)
- We’ve been having series of meetings. In each meeting, we’ve had a mini-version of this process. The questions have moved toward the last parts of the process.
- I’m going to throw you into the vision space to help us with imagineMaryland:
 - There are many ways to do a vision. We’re going to pretend we’re travelling 5 years forward. What would your communities and MD look like in 2013 if things went your way (practical and positive)? After those visions, we’ll break into 2 groups. We’ll come back together and present a newscast about what this place looks like in 2013.
 - ***Pretend its 2013 and you’re on your way to the office...***
 - How does your city look different?
 - How changed in last 5 years?
 - Are you seeing works of arts in the city?
 - More public art?
 - More people doing arts related activities?
 - Are there newer or different/changed spaces?
 - How are those spaces changed?
 - Buildings?
 - Are there more public spaces for people to interact?
 - At your office, open the newspaper. What do you see is happening in town?
 - How has that art scene changed?
 - More events?
 - Change in type of events?
 - Openings of galleries, performing arts, community theater?
 - Where in town are these things happening? Location changed?
 - Who’s coming?
 - Has the nature of audience changed?
 - Are the audiences larger? Different reactions?
 - How did those people find out about the events?
 - How has that changed? More buzz? More internet media?

- How active is the press in helping get the word out?
Locally and regionally/
 - Are you getting attention outside?
 - Which part of arts sector are you really proud of?
 - What about the youth and school?
 - How much more/less involved are the kids?
 - Here is that happening? In or out of school?
 - How has that changed your community?
 - If you went to a party and you asked them how they felt about arts and culture what would they say.
 - Are they aware?
 - What do they value?
 - Has their attitudes hanged?
 - Legislators?
 - How do they feel about arts/artists in their town?
 - Look at the balance sheets/books
 - How have they changed – in the black? Deficits?
 - Where are they getting their money from?
 - More earned income?
 - Where is the money coming from?
 - How do you feel about the sector now? Are you still excited? Proud of accomplishments?
 - What are your new challenges?
 - Assign note taker. In your group, go around your group and each person says one thing they see in that future. Keep doing that until you run dry.
 - Look at the lists and talk about them. Ask people questions about visions.
 - Figure out how you're going to turn this into a newscast.
- **GROUP 1**
 - Vision List:
 - Arts integration in all schools
 - More retired people (arts supporters)
 - Arts integrated with all aspects of society
 - Local people supporting local arts (in cooperation with state)
 - Interactive arts opportunities/family friendly
 - Accommodate/adapt to rising Hispanic/Latino community
 - Santa Fe
 - Better stewardship of donor dollars (a comprehensive funding resource guide – companies)
 - Revitalized downtown – 'art town' fee; public art/nightlife
 - 100% accessibility to arts for public school students

- Further collaboration/utilization of education and arts in community (environment)
 - Arts partnering – social issues (hospice, gang violence)
 - After school enrichment programs – more arts
 - Maryland taking lead on arts in healing programs
 - Public embracing art as a way of life (value/validity of the arts)
 - Eastern Shore as arts destination
 - Stable advocacy group – despite changing administrations
 - Younger donors and participants
 - Cooperative state plan/guide for arts offerings (state trail)
 - More regional cooperation between counties (websites)
 - Newscast – Arts Infusion: Arts No Longer a Separate Issue
 - High school student - Arts education/integration is the norm, core curriculum
 - Mayor of town/economic development –
 - Revitalization of downtown
 - Public Art
 - Night Life
 - Interactive family friendly arts opportunity
 - Services for rising diverse community
 - Social issues/environmental issues
 - Arts Professor – Resource Guide and local support
 - Doctor – Arts part of the healing program
 - Artist – Good place to live
- **GROUP 2**
 - Vision List:
 - Connectivity
 - Better census numbers – Poverty 27% to 10%
 - Vibrant activities = People
 - New performing arts facility
 - Outdoor theater
 - Art campus – Retail – Condo – Theater
 - Arts school grads = Julliard!
 - \$ = No Issue
 - Government leaders value arts
 - Teens/20-somethings are engaged in Arts/Community
 - Gallery Row – Square to Diamond
 - Greater diversity of art participants
 - More art in smaller municipalities
 - People = No fear and capable of writing grants
 - Larger audiences = Arts tips of tongues
 - MSO coming back – 1st National Tour
 - Pay staff = More arts money

- Color Vibrancy
 - Board knows how to fundraise
 - Public Art Program – Fabulous Art
 - Requiring new technology
 - Grantees are technologically savvy
 - No empty buildings downtown
 - Arts organization having more staff capacity
 - Better branding/marketing/recognition
 - Arts = Higher priority as core curriculum (S+EM needs to be turned into STEAM)
 - Arguments about which arts event to attend
 - Diversity in Audiences
 - Gaming Commission – better assessment
- News anchor Channel 25 Cumberland Valley
- Good news out of Hagerstown – Census data
 - Mayor: In Hagerstown, proud of arts and support. Deceased poverty. Revitalization a/e
 - Arts center: excited – began renovation to art center and tripled space. Artist in residence. Larger staff. Able to pay staff. Level of talent able to bring in. merging of community as a whole. Meshing of population. Creating community through the arts.
 - Visitor: where is the public art? Glad you asked - its right there. I'm not from around here, but art is everywhere. I love this place. Everywhere you turn there is art. There are so many options in this town.
 - New resident: just moved from New York City. Because of all the art buzz in Columbia, Maryland, I had to go there. Replaced Merriweather Post Pavilion and have new performing space, anchored with Toby's dinner, children's theater. Best musical Broadway in country. Moved to Shakespeare towers that has its own theater. Best schools with arts as a core part of the curriculum. Emphasis to include the arts. Wonderful place to be.
- Thank you for being such good sports. That's a taste of the vision space.
- ***As you heard and saw the newscasts, and listened to what excited about, what was the cross over? Similarities/ major themes.***
 - Arts infusion/integration into every aspect of life – arts everywhere
 - Arts is relevant to life and has value to the community members
 - Getting support for the arts is no longer such heavy lifting – support for the arts is easier
 - Organizations' seem to be stronger with more staff and better pay
 - Arts has moved from being an issue to being a tool and resource
 - Art is critical to the development of our young people.
 - Arts revitalize town/life. It's not passive.
 - Art connects people from all walks of life

- Maryland has an identity to the creative state.
- You can see why I like the space. What happens to you?
 - Lot of fun
 - Positive space instead of complaining
 - Can be creative
 - Take vision and turn into a story
 - It's the pictures and the story that gets people excited
- Questions?
 - ***In terms of getting there (to that vision space) – how can MSAC help you?***
 - Resource centered stuff. Comprehensive resource guide to funding/artists.
 - Everything we need is out there and we need to know how to get it. MSAC needs to help get the word out there. Pull it together in a guide. Supplemental guide to teach how to cut overhead.
 - Comprehensive guide for artists/students for their resources and we could then distribute.
 - MSAC does great job, but County Arts Councils rely too heavily on you. CAC's should become more independent and strengthen own incase of budget cuts.
 - MSAC provides us with a lot of leadership. As CAC's develop their programs, we use MSAC information and best practices. We depend on that leadership.
 - Help with promotion needs
 - I would like the State Council to continue to encourage the county network.
 - Continue block formula so we all have access to programs.
 - Like the professional development workshops for us to strengthen local organizations.
 - To celebrate. Celebrate that Maryland is a model.
- Around the room – how did you feel about the meeting?
 - Appreciate the opportunity, and hope to make it to a regional meeting
 - Great opportunity to engage every stakeholder
 - Helps us move forward
 - Always welcome the opportunity to be with all of you, experience the camaraderie and see what everyone is going through.
 - MSAC wouldn't know about these things we listed if MSAC wasn't already doing a great job.
 - Community arts develop. Program is ingenious and worthwhile.
 - Grateful and we profit from it.
 - Tremendous source of enrichment, don't tamper with it
 - I think we're doing a great job and doing a great thing. I had fun today and am enjoying this experience. Good example for County Arts Councils to engage in same process

- This meeting has been valuable in the sense that we're starting our own strategic planning
- MSAC is wonderful and has made a difference on community level and building great partnerships with other community organizations.
- Appreciate that MSAC is here and everyone is friendly and accommodation and nice. Not stressful.
- This is the place to turn to see how bright the future is.
- MSAC is the hub of the wheel and is central to keep us all connected. Connectivity. Good to have the center be in place and connected. Important part of CAC existence.
- Please encourage people in your community, local media, etc. to attend the upcoming regional meetings, and thank you for your time.

-Close of Meeting-