

Imagine Maryland

**Date:** August 12, 2008  
**Location:** Creative Alliance  
3134 Eastern Avenue, Baltimore  
**Forum:** Small & Ethnic Organizations Meeting  
**Facilitator:** Morrie Warshawski, Elizabeth Carven, Shirley Howard, Cliff Murphy,  
Sharon Blake  
**Scribe:** Elizabeth A. Bentley-Smith

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**MAJOR THEMES**

What people appreciate about MD: weather, geography, quality of life, and Baltimore.

Major issues of concern:

- Funding
- Difficulty of making a living as an artist
- Lack of art in the schools
- Lack of a community vision for the arts

Future visions:

- Better branding and more advocacy
- More job opportunities for artists
- Regional initiatives

Things appreciated about MSAC:

- Staff is responsive
- MSAC's "seal of approval" when they get a grant

Suggestions for MSAC:

- Create more partnerships with businesses and communities
- Provide more technical assistance
- Be more proactive

**SAMPLE QUOTES**

"Come to my programs tomorrow"

"Help strengthen the role of regional arts councils."

"Thank you for caring."

“Baltimore is an ‘open town’ - not Northern or Southern...diverse communities...the bringing of neighborhoods together...great seafood...many ethnic backgrounds.”

“Work more on relationships with businesses and community development...leading to meaningful and sustainable jobs such as postcards by Maryland painters.”

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## Raw Transcript

Introduction by Elizabeth Carven, MSAC Deputy Director

- What is Imagine Maryland?
  - Strategic plan...provides details regarding timeline
  - As a note, the transcript from this meeting will be available on-line within 10 days.

Introduction of MSAC Staff: Shirley Howard, Cliff Murphy, Elizabeth Bentley-Smith, Sharon Blake and DBED representative Andréa Vernot

Morrie Warshawski, Consultant

- Thelonius Monk was reviewed and his music was described that “he is great because he plays all of the wrong notes,” to which he replied “there are no wrong notes on the piano”...this teaches us that tonight there are no wrong notes, so please be sure to speak up and contribute
- Student goes to a master artist to learn how to sculpt the perfect elephant
- Introduces the idea and purpose of strategic planning
- Process of today’s meeting
  - A series of questions that are constant for all meetings
  - This meeting is one in a series of meetings that focus on specific areas such as Arts Presenters, Disabilities and the Arts, and six regional forums
  - Don’t forget to complete the on-line public survey
  - All of these tools will be used to develop the strategic plan that will be distributed in February 2009

### ❖ 1<sup>ST</sup> QUESTION → WHAT DO YOU LIKE ABOUT LIVING IN MARYLAND? WHAT KEEPS YOU HERE? WHAT DO YOU VALUE ABOUT MARYLAND?

- Summer music festivals...warm weather...wonderful concentration of people from NYC to DC...cultural appreciation of the area...long history of music...art appreciation...but would like more political support of the arts
- Great accumulation of talent...unimaginable birth of art in students...potential of even more talent
- Beautiful environment that is unique
- Green grass, green trees, cheap real estate...tremendous resources with the nation’s capitol (i.e. Library of Congress, the Hill, etc.)

- Baltimore is an “open town,” not Northern or Southern...diverse communities and like the bringing of neighborhoods together...great seafood...many ethnic backgrounds
- Baltimore is small and big at the same time
- We have everything...mountains in Garrett County and the Eastern Shore...important to realize that Maryland is more than Baltimore
- All art mediums are available...beautiful weather...great mountains and great beach
- Better options here than in other states...great measure of stability...differences in geography...ability of arts and culture in both Baltimore and DC
- Good quality of life...an outer suburb of NYC...can buy a house with a low-cost of living

❖ **2<sup>ND</sup> QUESTION → WHAT ARE THE MAJOR ISSUES THAT CONCERN YOUR ORGANIZATION AND COMMUNITY?**

- Money
- Commitment of stakeholders (questionable strength of stakeholders)
- Lack of Baltimore County public schools...lack of art in schools in general...need more focus on elementary schools
- No arts infrastructure on building artists in community
- Decline of accessibility to the arts...attitude issues of who deserves art and who should get art
- Art is no longer mandatory for students...
- No sensibility within the government that something is missing with not having the arts
- Being lazy by allowing technology to raise children rather than fostering arts
- No community vision for the arts
- Funding to areas outside of both Baltimore County/City
- Don't understand the economic impact of arts in the area
- Hard for artists to work within the economy in relation to businesses...not as much foot traffic in clubs and support...competition of staying at home and watching TV via FiOS and Comcast
- Need to restructuring of how artists are making a living and what needs to be done to sustain self as a career
- Need to better the level of quality of life
- Lack of opportunity with specific emphasis on African-American film/job opportunities
- Only way for artists in Maryland to succeed is to teach
- Creation of “town centers = malls” where there is no sense of art and culture...perhaps regulate the creation of an arts center to visualize the relevance of art
- Lack of critical thinking skills due to no arts in the schools
- No cohesive vision of the arts as a collaboration tool

❖ **3<sup>RD</sup> QUESTION → WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE CHANGED/IMPLEMENTED IN THE NEXT 5 YEARS?**

- *(Divide into two groups to discuss)*
- Group 1
  - Advocacy Day for the Arts...need to work together and share
  - Identify intelligences in arts that are transferable...inter-disciplinary
  - Creating job opportunities for artists in Maryland and developing a resource that follows a business model
  - Developing regional arts initiatives
  - Creating diversity initiatives to lead to trickle down effect
- Group 2
  - Branding of communities to create identities that are marketable
  - Understanding the importance of the creative class to the revitalization of our communities, cities, and State of Maryland
  - Bridging barriers through the arts...regional sharing of the arts...acting locally, but thinking globally
  - Need more technical support...infrastructure development...development of physical space
  - Use of arts to express culture...understand our cultural differences and similarities
  - Present art across the state...those who work in Baltimore are shown in Prince Frederick, and vice versa...to promote understanding and cohesiveness across counties

❖ **4<sup>TH</sup> QUESTION → WHAT IS ABOUT MSAC HAS BEEN HELPFUL TO YOU IN THE PAST?**

- Shirley
- The recognition of what we do as a legitimate organization
- Programs like ARTvantage...good to provide opportunities for small groups
- Opportunities to grow both on a personal level as a panelist, but also as an organization by looking at other forms of art
- Support of the individual staff members

❖ **5<sup>TH</sup> QUESTION → WHAT ROLE SHOULD THE MSAC PLAN IN PARTNERSHIPS...DEVELOPING INITIATIVES...?**

- Be more activists and lobbyists for the arts
- Be more accessible for individual artists
- Create an artist development session...professional development
- Work more on relationships with businesses and community development...leading to meaningful and sustainable jobs such as postcards by Maryland painters
- Go to the artists and gather information, rather than making them access MSAC on their own

- Work with John Hopkins (large employer)...sense of learning about the sciences supplying exhibits
- Discuss civic responsibility of large employers to support the arts community
- More classes on grant-writing...more technical assistance
- Artist housing

❖ **5 WORDS SUMMATION**

- Emphasize intelligences and be artists
- I give my words away
- Give me a job please
- Come to my programs tomorrow
- Help strengthen the role of regional arts councils
- Legislation by funding from Annapolis
- Thank you for caring
- Art is culture
- Commitment to community building now
- Arts initiatives for business actions and promotions
- Freestyle movement create art promote unity

Thank you for coming...