1

Activity 3

Community Dialogue 4 - June 24, 2013

Project Website

Your table facilitator will lead a discussion about the potential of a project website as a tool for civic engagement. Your facilitator will select a Recorder to write down your table's response below.

How can the community and the City use this tool to increase public knowlege and participation in City projects?

1. How can a project website be used to support community networks?
2. What are the advantages and limitations of a project website?
3. Develop clear steps for using this tool, defining roles and responsibilites for both community members and the City.
4. What would it take to create a sustainable citywide system of community engagement using a project website?

ONE Alexandria App

- Pot holes (see & report)
- lights out

- Flyer w/ meals on wheels

- Gamification
  two Qs on website which are more important
  2 Things

Call-Click-Connect to get through bureaucracy

746-HELP!

Time & effort considerations

We don't want to overwhelm staff

- Create wards w/ community ambassadors
- Old fashion petitions to prioritize issues
- Transparent place online to follow the process

1

* QR Code for phones
  development pages etc
  (incorporate in training)
  - standard operating procedure of City
  - tourists would love it @ old town building
  Army of citizens to help process

* Geo fencing — Registers when you are in the area of interest
  Alexandria City App
  alert when near something interesting

  push out

Online Forums

- Advanced algorithms are better than online forums

  eg. monitor Twitter and social network for mentions of Alexandria & then volunteer teams or staff follow up

- Downside is that they are not "event based"

- Webinar first with Q&A that brings people to

- HR directors to bring to workers

2

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4. What would it take to create a sustainable citywide system of community engagement using a project website?

1). One website with projects in subcategories
- easily searched by subject - have a search engine at the top
- Use comment boxes & comment threads
- Polling
- Make this a school project => engage youth

2. Limitation - people who don't have internet access - In multiple languges?
Advantage - 24 hour access
- everyone gets the same consistent info
- Instant responses
Limitation & Advantage - Staff time to update in a timely manner

3. Rules of engagement for online -> proper behavior
- No anonymous comments => Community members
- City - update, monitor for appropriateness & provide facts & not opinions
- make it clear where we are in the process for each project
- Have a calendar that shows important dates i.e. meetings/forums
- Have metrics - evaluation tools - feedback area on site

Project Website (2)

4. Evidence that it has helped to open up lines of communication
- community members know about it and are using it
- City staff update & use consistently
- Good example - Action Alexandria
  - Patch.com
- Managed by Communications department
  - Get assistance from TC marketing class
- Committee made up of City staff AND community members who monitor

Activity 3

Community Dialogue 4 - June 24, 2013

Social Media

Your table facilitator will lead a discussion about the potential of Social Media as a tool for civic engagement. One participant will select a Recorder to write down your topics, responses below.

How can the community and the City use this tool to increase public knowlege and participation in City projects?

1. How can Social Media be used to support community networks?
2. What are the advantages and limitations of Social Media communication?
3. Develop clear steps for using this tool defining roles and responsibilities for both community members and the City.
4. What would it take to create a sustainable citywide system of community engagement using Social Media?

1) Create an on-line group on linked in
- way for City to promote upcoming projects & gather feedback
- Create an app / mobile website

2. Advantage - no anonymous posting
Limitation - demographics - some people aren't on social media
Advantage - use different social media tools; different people on twitter & FB
Advantage - Reach individuals, not just groups - connects people with each other
Advantage - Reaching an active, established audience

3 - City staff to monitor
- create clear comm. plan around social media
- Committee of comm. members & City staff review & monitor
Advantage - easier to provide in multiple languages
- Identify community people willing to post / tweet / update
- No more than 1X / day for FB
- Twitter - multiple times
- Engaging games w/ prizes

4. Social media can be a good 2 way form of comm if responses/engagement is consistent

- ~~[illegible]~~ Social media is important, but should not be prioritized over project website => they should work together
- Someone would need to respond in a timely manner

3

Activity 3
Community Dialogue 4 - June 24, 2013

Printed Materials

Your table facilitator will lead a discussion about the potential of printed materials communication as a tool for civic engagement. Your facilitator will select a Recorder to write down your table's response below.

How can the community and the City use this tool to increase public knowlege and participation in City projects?

1. How can printed materials be used to support community networks?
2. What are the advantages and limitations of printed materials communication?
3. Develop clear steps for using this tool, defining roles and responsibilites for both community members and the City.
4. What would it take to create a sustainable citywide system of community engagement using printed materials?

Bulletin boards? - barely look at them.
↳ location
- noticed them on Mt. Vernon Street in coffee shops.
- in terms of management - not very managed
- Farlington ~~has~~ stores have them on windows, it catches your eye, having them at stores and windows is successful
- windows + bulletin boards should be distinguished → stole front should be seperate
- Sometimes out-of-date, should be maintained and managed
- Places to wait → bus stops
  metro stops
- Should be a band to know its a city process → maybe colors (IDENTITY, BRANDING)
- Each person can cause ripple effect, maybe we can put up the posters at places we frequent.

Content of Poster? - Medium length - enough to understand
- Repetition in Title
- Address why this is important and for who → "uncle sam wants you"
- Name, contact, possibly web address

Citywide distribution? - should every meeting be advertised at same frequency
↳ yes, no → maybe if it concerns only one neighborhood we don't need to know
- saving money, sustainability → circulating email
- Print media → very local (specific).

3

Activity 3

Community Dialogue 4 - June 24, 2013

Newspaper

Your table facilitator will lead a discussion about the potential of online/print newspaper communication as a tool for civic engagement. Your facilitator will select a Recorder to write down your table's response below.

How can the community and the City use this tool to increase public knowlege and participation in City projects?

1. How can the newspaper be used to support community networks?
2. What are the advantages and limitations of newspaper communication?
3. Develop clear steps for using this tool, defining roles and responsibilites for both community members and the City.
4. What would it take to create a sustainable citywide system of community engagement using the newspaper?

- In terms of time - should give you at least 2 weeks - month so you can plan.
- even though newspaper is online it features what's going on and highlights
  ↳ you don't have to dig like you do with print.
- Washington post thursday insert → time consistency
  Gazette packet
  Alexandria times
  Old town ayer
  ↳ Arlington/Alexandria post-thursday insert is good for disseminating information.
- let department head to write letter to editor to focus attention on new projects
  ↳ you can get two perspectives
- generational difference is now creating different groups, more effort to target

How to create excitement?

- Protest
- Branding → consistently composed
- Budgeting time is a good time to start creating comprehensive schedule/process
  ↳ set agenda of what to communicate w/ media.
- Timely communication → should let people know plans months in advance so people have a chance to read it before the vote.

4

Activity 3
Community Dialogue 4 - June 24, 2013

Online Forum

Your table facilitator will lead a discussion about the potential of a Online Forum communication as a tool for civic engagement. Your facilitator will select a Recorder to write down your table's response below.

How can the community and the City use this tool to increase public knowlege and participation in City projects?

1. How can an online forum be used to support community networks?
2. What are the advantages and limitations of online forums?
3. Develop clear steps for using this tool, defining roles and responsibilites for both community members and the City.
4. What would it take to create a sustainable citywide system of community engagement using an online forum?

① Quickly disseminates information to members of the online forum, and allows for discussion

② Advantages: Allows members of the community to participate from their homes, instead of having to gather in one space, and at any time of day, yet be able to participate.

Limitations: Who has access? Accountability and ownership over what is posted and said. Are all members of the ~~group~~ community/city able/willing to use the online forum. Need a way to keep conversation civil/constructive. Language/translation

③ → free internet access to everyone in the city (sponsored by city/gov't.
→ Determine different purposes for the forum, and create effective ways to collect and disseminate information. May need multiple forums. → Create effective search tools.
→ Consistent implementation
→ Support development of Wikis for different projects, with editors with balanced ~~points~~ points of view.

④ → Need a facilitator who can monitor the discussions and postings immediately.
→ timely responses to postings
→ User friendly format, and create an easy way to find on the city website
→ Training provided for all users/Neighborhood Ambassadors
→ Provide internet access to community members, and/or extend library hours.

4

Activity 3

Community Dialogue 4 - June 24, 2013

Group Announcements

Your table facilitator will lead a discussion about the potential of group announcements as a tool for civic engagement. Your facilitator will select a Recorder to write down your table's response below.

How can the community and the City use this tool to increase public knowlege and participation in City projects?

1. How can group announcements be used to support community networks?
2. What are the advantages and limitations of group announcements?
3. Develop clear steps for using this tool, defining roles and responsibilites for both community members and the City.
4. What would it take to create a sustainable citywide system of community engagement using group announcements?

time to ask questions to clarify
Peer engagement enforces subject

① When an announcement is made during a group meeting, then the message is taken back to various networks by individuals who were in attendance when the announcement was made.

② Advantages: face to face presentation works best for some groups in the city (usurps email, literacy, etc. issues), Some groups have higher percentage of members who attend mtgs. (ie. Church)
Peer discussion ensues
Limitations: size of gathered group, timing of the announcement during the meeting.

③ Email or utilize social media to prepare group for coming announcements (listserv), allows for people to know what to expect, or know even if they do not attend
→ Make announcements at beginning of meeting
→ Need a coordinator to get announcements to city groups
→ Have a prepared brief/short flyer about the announcement with contact information

④ Need to distribute announcements in formats that is able to be copied and pasted, or easily opened over a variety of software programs

1

Activity 3

Community Dialogue 4 - June 24, 2013

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4. What would it take to create a sustainable citywide system of community engagement using group announcements?

Adv - Known to group, have prior history.

adv. Face to face communication, relationship

Gives non-verbal context.

Disadv. if meeting is not well-attended.

adv - provides another mode of communication.

Disadv. - people dont have pencil + paper - inconvenient way to receive info - need multiple channels.

This is good ~~for~~ as supplemental tool, dosnt replace formal announcement. Could be used to point people to more info. eg central calendar

Clear steps - use ~~multiple~~ backup copy - eg bring flyers to hand out. Need some policy or rule about making announcements. eg has to be on agenda.

Lots of context ~~iss~~ + issues regarding this tool.

What does it take? Committed individuals, an inclusive city calendar.

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Activity 3

Community Dialogue 4 - June 24, 2013

Project Website

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How can the community and the City use this tool to increase public knowlege and participation in City projects?

1. How can a project web~~site~~ page from city website be used to support community networks?
2. What are the advantages and limitations of a project website?
3. Develop clear steps for using this tool, defining roles and responsibilites for both community members and the City.
4. What would it take to create a sustainable citywide system of community engagement using a project website?

L: ~~limitations~~ - access to internet.

1. Make it searchable (City website)

2. Inclusive, uptodate, informative, not a marketing or sales pitch. Well organized easy to understand.

3. Provide opportunity to post comments, AND BE RESPONDED TO.

4. Lay out the options

5. Has to be staffed. Format should be consistent thru all depts., all schools.

6. Show how decision making occurs - how community input is incorporated.

7. options should include surveys. + ~~what~~ ~~be~~ results of survey data + ~~what~~ how it is used.

8. ~~Link the~~ ~~Think about~~ ~~n~~ Orient to citizen point of view.

9. Make it easy to navigate.

City website is very difficult almost impossible to navigate. Its counterintuitive You cant find anything unless you know the exact name and what it is. Full of jargon + too many acronyms. Only works if its user friendly + up to date. More staff resources.

PROBLEM - Noone identified as responsible or cant find who it is. Not enough resources.

8

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Type of Information (e.g. qualitative, quantitative) depth

Non-Users (Access Barriers, Privacy Concerns, Choosing Other Communication Tools)

Language Barriers

Generational Differences (Especially Effective With Youth)
↳ Has Reduced youth apathy

Link to Substantive Sources

Timely Information (More often & cheaper than print media)

Specialized purposes, advantages in certain areas

One-Way v Two-Way Tool

Media Without Responsibility (?)
(you can plug in - like electricity - or not)
can be dangerous (?)

8

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Keeping dialogue constructive & from devolving

Regulation + monitoring is valid + important to ensure respectful exchange

Ensure balance

Redundancy - social media & online forums don't deviate "traditional" communication

City Staff role
- not dominate

Anyone should be able to start a thread and comment (?)

Pros + Cons of City being in charge

Emotion can have a place

Productive

City-created "app" → Community Engagement WNA App (smartphone + desktop versions)

Appropriate frequency
- has to be worth your time
- scale of project

Use online tools to cross-promote, advertise, interlink,

9

Activity 3

Community Dialogue 4 - June 24, 2013

Mail

Your table facilitator will lead a discussion about the potential of US mail communication as a tool for civic engagement. Your facilitator will select a Recorder to write down your table's response below.

How can the community and the City use this tool to increase public knowlege and participation in City projects?

1. How can mail be used to support community networks?
2. What are the advantages and limitations of mail communication?
3. Develop clear steps for using this tool, defining roles and responsibilites for both community members and the City.
4. What would it take to create a sustainable citywide system of community engagement using mail?

1. Useful:
   - Upcoming events, resources, that we can use;
   - should be inexpensive, can put on bulletin bd.
   - E.g. "cleanup" - postcards.
   - Put QR Codes on it for those who use.

2. +
   - Keepable to put in hands.
   - For people w/out computer access. ★

   —
   - We get too much mail that's not helpful.
   - Cost

3. CITY Should be topic of major importance or USEFUL
   CITY-WIDE; evaluate current use of mail in comm. w/ residents. Could also use in small area plan implementation projects, e.g. neighborhoods.
   RESIDENTS Read what City sends, e.g., City-wide clean up

1.

ALSO

4. See #3, e.g., what can + can't be recycled, clean/collection schedules.

9

Activity 3

Community Dialogue 4 - June 24, 2013

Phone

Your table facilitator will lead a discussion about the potential of phone communication as a tool for civic engagement. Your facilitator will select a Recorder to write down your table's response below.

How can the community and the City use this tool to increase public knowlege and participation in City projects?

1. How can the phone be used to support community networks?
2. What are the advantages and limitations of phone communication?
3. Develop clear steps for using this tool, defining roles and responsibilites for both community members and the City.
4. What would it take to create a sustainable citywide system of community engagement using the phone?

1. Useful when:
   - Contacting civic assns officers about upcoming impt. actions, e.g., when time is short.
   - For contacting property mgrs to get permission to call renters.
   - Contacting those w/out computers (by choice or otherwise). e.g. aging, disabled.

★ 2. Most people screen, don't answer, ~~or~~ + do not prefer to use phone for this purpose.
   - Many don't have landline.

3. Not to use as priority communications too
   - Ensure to target audience wants or needs this commn. approach.

4. "A backwards step in time..." type of commn.
   - Identify targets for this up front.
   - ~~Some people wants~~ Ask people how they want to be contacted.

- NOTE: Smart phone ≠ traditional
  - City to return calls if someone calls.