

Housing Element Community Engagement and Outreach Committee



REGULAR MEETING AGENDA

Date: 6/3/2021
Time: 6:00 p.m.
Location: Zoom.us/join – ID# 851 3101 5361

All members present except Member Spaulding.

Link to June 3, 2021 Meeting Agenda and Materials:

https://www.menlopark.org/AgendaCenter/ViewFile/Agenda/_06032021-3623

Link to June 3, 2021 Meeting Video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rSvOfndhEXc>

The June 3, 2021 CEOC meeting was a continuation of the May 27, 2021 CEOC meeting. This meeting focused on the community engagement and outreach plan.

Community Engagement and Outreach Plan Presentation provided by M-Group

M-Group led a presentation that discussed how to engage with the community and the various channels through which outreach could be achieved. As part of the discussion, CEOC members asked questions and provided comments.

Summary of Questions from CEOC Members

- Who will design the focus groups and survey questions, and how will the responses drive the decisions?
- Will the survey reach underserved/disadvantaged areas? Will it target Belle Haven's population?
- How do we get the community involved?
- How do we reach people effectively and guarantee people to engage?
- Will the survey include people who work, but do not live in Menlo Park?

Summary of Comments from CEOC Members

- The committee expressed concerns that community members have felt intimidated to participate in events associated with City functions. One member of the CEOC emphasized that familiar faces are needed to build trust.
- It is important that people are heard. A variety of ways to provide feedback is key.
- Outreach that works in one community may not work in another. When considering outreach initiatives, staff will have to consider different methods that will effectively engage the different communities of Menlo Park.
- The CEOC noted a need for improved communications between the public and City staff. It was noted that there is fear for speaking out amidst all the change (building development) in the city. There is a need to make these meetings feel like a safe haven and where the public is heard. A door-to-door initiative may be the most effective method of outreach.

- A CEOC member raised a concern that the public may not know how much the work that is being done would directly will affect them.
- Underserved and/or underrepresented neighborhoods, such as Belle Haven, will require special, targeted outreach strategies that may be different than other areas of Menlo Park (e.g., outreach to persons where English is not a primary language, partnerships with schools to connect with families with children). It is important to hear from all community members, especially those voices that have historically not been heard from as much or generally have lower participation in civic affairs.
- The CEOC members discussed the possibility that participants should be compensated for their time. This could be an incentive for the public to engage with the project.
- Members of the CEOC liked the idea of creating subcommittees.
- The CEOC discussed providing clear expectations to the people being reached out to. The public needs to understand how their input will contribute to decision-making. A member suggested a brief “elevator pitch” that could be helpful in articulating main points to the public.

Comments from Public

- Looking forward to the Project Gallery, there should be one in Belle Haven.
Consider compensation for people or organizations that engage in or support outreach efforts.

Approved by the Menlo Park Community Engagement & Outreach Committee (CEOC) on
July 15, 2021