

## Notes from Public Meeting April 28, 2015

After opening remarks, the group was divided into four focus groups representing four areas of interest/need identified in pre-meeting interviews: Access & Networking Space, Performance & Exhibit Space, Education Space, Integrated Space (“all of the above”).

The following notes were taken in the focus groups.

### ACCESS/NETWORKING

- Enable a film aspects to Frpt Arts – how to make it visible? (broader than just film)
- Engage participation
- Experience with studio and classes
- How to utilize resources? (like the Kendal barn)
- Focus for asking Questions, connecting and moving to accomplish our arts goals
- Some access elements are in place but no “Posting” site
- Move from disorganized to organized
- ❖ DEDICATE Art Information center
- Arts as a Community Knitter – bringing us together
- Engaging local focus
- Forming a knowledge base
- Sophisticated kiosk
- Someone to keep close track of info
- Pluralistic approach
- Relatively doable in short term
- Relative low cost
- Focuses on existing but hidden aspects
- Good starting point
- Could be comprehensive
- Drives on Cooperation
- ❖ Short term plan (action) leading to long term goal
- ❖ Central Hub (of arts information) could include
  - Website
  - Newsletter
  - Organization
  - Kiosk
  - Office
  - Database
  - Small core group of people to do leg work(?)
  - Leader/coordinator

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### PERFORMANCE & EXHIBIT SPACE

- Not much space currently – FCC, FPAC, restaurants, library
- No center
- FPAC limited due to school use for classes, concerts
- Freeport downtown is expensive Real Estate
- Existing spaces try to be too much to too many (Frontier café example)
- Need dedicated space
- Economics are key
- Local gallery failed – not many deals on low rent
- FUNDING – public? Private?
  - Public/private partnership?
- Collection of buildings vs one building
- Exhibition space as part of performing space or separate?
- Black Box Theater w/100 seats
  - Performance space
  - Seating
  - Storage
  - Exhibition space
  - Bathrooms
  - Support/hvac, kitchen, lounge
- Prof space vs amateur space
- Location – Route 1 south?

### EDUCATION SPACE

- Facility is key
- Participation guided by an experienced hand/manager
- Open to wide age group- youth to senior
- Lectures, demonstrations, workshops
- Workspace
- Within walking distance for youth to explore various arts
- Open beyond the Freeport Community
- Freeport Library coffee house model

### INTEGRATED SPACE

- Need a “really good” plan
- Mindful of costs – initial and sustaining
- Multigenerational, engage families, children focused
- Encompass many aspects w/broad reach – prioritize then add components as needed and affordable
- Year-round opportunities
- Committed Board and experienced E.D.

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- Local artists gathering Place, workshops, Master Classes, all types of arts, dedicated gallery
- Scalable performance space
- Relationship and coordination with other venues and arts organizations
- Focus on needs of artists
- Transportation considerations
- Location considerations – expensive downtown, parking challenges, access to ancillary businesses, tourist traffic,
- ADA compliant to bring EVERYONE into the arts
- Give Freeport a focus besides shopping – Arts destination
- How to govern and how to fund
- What groups need dedicated space?
- Multimedia space for education and display
- Rehearsal space for multiple groups both local and out of town (MSMT during the school year)
- Discussion of space needs – minimum size, all arts various needs (va workshops v. theater or music workshops, multi-use such as fundraiser events, etc.)
- Arts camps after school, summer, school vacation
- Education should be secondary as there are already programs that do that in town
- Communication about what already exists is lacking
- Spaces already exist but are too expensive and/or inappropriately managed, advertised

### AUDIENCE COMMENTS following report-out presentations by focus groups:

- Arts need a DEDICATED space/PLACE
- Leadership from Freeport but participants from a much larger community
- Involve ALL ages in workshops/education/performances
- Place for people to PARTICIPATE in arts, not just look or listen
- Arts info HUB is a place to start – DEDICATED ARTS INFO place, a place to form a knowledge base abt arts in Freeport (and beyond)
- A clearing house of arts information
- Need a GREAT PLAN mindful of cost to start
- Focus needs to be on artists and needs of artists
- Financing and governance are HUGE challenges
- Need to flesh out what already exists
- Create a Cultural Plan?
- Who are “customers” and what are their needs, must be answered
- Set priorities and doables so others can find a way in (into this conversation)
- Getting info OUT is important