

**City of Mt. Vernon, Illinois  
City Council Workshop Meeting  
Monday, July 23, 2012  
MINUTES**

The Mt. Vernon City Council held a Workshop Meeting on Monday, July 23, 2012, at 3:00 p.m. at the City Hall, 1100 Main Street, Mt. Vernon, IL.

Mayor Mary Jane Chesley called the meeting to order.

Roll call showed present: Council Members Ron Lash, Dennis McEnaney, Todd Piper, David Wood and Mayor Mary Jane Chesley. Also present: City Manager Ron Neibert, Programs Manager Nathan McKenna and City Clerk Jerilee Hopkins.

**PRESENTATION OF BRANDING PROJECT TO CITY COUNCIL**

City Manager Neibert noted that the Branding Study conducted by with Destination Development International (DDI) was performed to develop and implement strategies to enhance the quality of life and economic development in the City. The City implemented a Branding Leadership Team (BLT) to utilize the branding concept and to recommend branding projects and initiatives throughout the City. Branding is not just a slogan or a logo but an identity. A PowerPoint presentation highlighted the following:

1. Branding is the art of differentiation: what sets you apart from everyone else
2. A brand is a perception - and a promise that you will deliver on that perception
3. Logos and slogans are not brands - they are marketing messages used to reinforce the brand
4. You never use focus groups
5. A brand evokes emotion: it's a feeling someone has about you
6. All successful brands are built on product - not marketing
7. You never "roll out" a brand - it's earned over time.
8. You cannot do branding by public consent
9. You build your brand on feasibility - not just local sentiment
10. You build your brand through public relations. Advertising is used to maintain your position.

### The Ultimate Goals of the Project

1. To slow the leakage. Create reasons for local residents to spend more time and money in Mt. Vernon.
2. Revitalize downtown by creating Third Places and activities after 6:00 pm. The first place is where you live, the second is where you work, and the third is where you spend the rest of your time.
3. To create new small business opportunities (incubator, economic gardening by developing the old Armory into the Broadway Market)
4. To give overnight visitors places to spend time and money - and a reason to go more than 1/4 mile off the Interstate.
5. To attract regional residents into Mt. Vernon - even for day trips to start.
6. To make Mt. Vernon THE destination for multi-day stays AND a more-than-desirable place to live and raise a family.



### The 13 steps to a Successful Branding Effort

1. Brand Development Committee (BDC) and an outside facilitator
2. Education & outreach: "This is your chance to weigh-in on Mt. Vernon's future. The City received about 300 responses to the online survey.
3. Identify the markets. Who are we hoping to attract?
4. Compile what we heard - begin the filtering process
5. Create the Brand Leadership Team (BLT). The City's team is in place and ready to go to work.
6. Develop the product BrandBank
7. The Brand Promise was developed by the BLT as follows: Celebrate creativity through a series of festivals and a vibrant downtown market.
8. Create the look and feel of the brand.
9. DDI is developing a timeline Action Plan based on the results of working with the Brand Leadership Team (BLT). What we want to be known for; what we have to do to "own" it; how to tell the world; and the to-do list.
10. Make something happen & start the marketing process locally
11. Keep the energy high & don't fold to the naysayers.  
*Don't succumb to the Caver's = Citizens Against Virtually Everything.*
12. Tell the World!
13. Revisit the plan every year or two and NEVER, EVER give up!

One of the ideas that evolved from the Branding Leadership Committee is the development of a public market at the old Armory site. The public market will not be “just a farmers’ market.” It can be a central gathering place for the community to celebrate creativity through the arts, outdoors, education, music and automobiles - anything that people have an interest in can be celebrated at a festival in the new facility. Art at the Market, The Art Studios at Broadway Market, The Plaza at Broadway Market, Music on the Plaza are ideas to highlight the facility. DDI considers the old Armory as a perfect venue for the development of the “Broadway Market”, and the BLT feels strongly about developing the facility.



The Market will be open every Thursday, Friday, and Saturday from 11:00 am to 8:00 pm and Sunday until 4 pm— 49 weeks of the year with entertainment every day during the lunch and dinner hours. It is recommended that the City amend local ordinances to allow outdoor dining. It will feature:

- 50% locally crafted arts, goods, gifts, etc. (Arts Market)
- 25% locally grown/raised fresh farm goods
- 25% locally prepared foods

Mt. Vernon will be known as the Midwest’s Festival City — Artisans, Music & Creativity with a twist. Ten years from now when you tell someone you’re from Mt. Vernon will they say, “Oh yeah! I know Mt. Vernon! You’re that place with all those very cool art studios, festivals and that awesome market!”

The variety of events to be held at the Market is endless, for instance:

- Uncork Mt. Vernon: The Wine Festival
- Motorcycle showcase (twice a year)
- Classic cars & cruisers (4 or 5 during the year)
- The Cars & Cruisers Challenge
- Ice carving event
- Santa’s workshop (November)
- Winter Wonderland (and holiday celebration - December)
- Quilters Art Festival
- Pottery guild (with workshops)

- The Sculpture Showcase (all over town)
- The Southern Illinois Jazz Festival (multiple locations)
- Hook and Bullet Expo (fall event)
- Fishing Boat Show & Derby (spring and fall event)
- Soul Train Music Showcase (Gospel music & entertainment)
- The Nature Show (taxidermy, photography, outdoor art) I
- Woodworkers Show
- Spring Garden Show
- Balloon Festival
- Aeronautics show
- Auctions (various)
- Dog and cat shows
- Kid Fest
- Sips & Strokes (wine & painting)
- MicroBrew & BBQ
- RV shows
- Winter sports expo

A sample of the type of events and ads created to market the events:

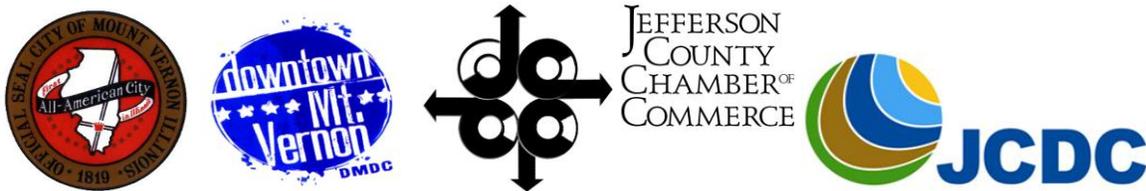


DDI indicated that the Broadway Market should be self-supporting within three years based on their experience in dealing with other communities and the development of markets. City Manager Neibert will obtain financial information on similar markets in other cities.

Wayfinding signs and the use of logos and slogans will be used throughout the City.



Currently the City has no continuity in symbols or logos that are used by different organizations associated with the City so branding continuity will be promoted. The BLT will also serve as the Brand Police. Anyone in the community wishing to use the City’s branding concept should first advise the City of their marketing ideas so they will be consistent with the message being sent by the City.



<u>Branding</u> —	What we want to be known for
<u>Development &amp; Marketing</u> —	What we have to do to “own” it & How to tell the world
<u>Action Plan</u> —	The to-do list is being prepared by DDI

Make something happen and start the marketing process locally; here’s to the VERY bright future of Mt. Vernon!

A list of members on the Branding Leadership Team (BLT): Randy Olson, Casey Cunningham, Mary Beth Mezo, Holly Kruep, Cortez Hodges, Nick Loafman, Rex Cusumano, Mark Hassakis, Sharon Bradham, Jim Hutchason, Debbie Greene, Bonnie Jerdon, Mary Ellen Bechtel, Todd Piper, Cyndy Mitchell, Laura Thacker, Russ Brown, and Mike Beard.

Council Member Piper commented that the reason for the branding project is to attract more visitors and residents to the City to import more and export less revenue making Mt. Vernon a regional destination and a regional art center while showcasing local organic and/or manufactured art in the City. The BTL wants the City to be known as the Festival Arts City capitalizing on The Cedarhurst Museum, local and regional artisans. The BLT will be taking this PowerPoint presentation to various clubs, organizations and churches throughout the community informing them of this project and asking for their involvement.

The BLT requests that the City Council accept and adopt the branding theme as designed including the *Mt. Vernon Illinois Creativity Redefined*. Ultimately the BLT will return to the City Council with formal

recommendations and suggestions for the water tower design, letterhead, stationery, business card design and the way finding sign system.

The Action Plan from DDI will be arriving DDI in the very near future. It is anticipated that the BLT will propose recommended projects very soon.

The Broadway Market is the catalyst to help revive the downtown area and reach the ten, ten, ten goal — ten places to shop, ten places to eat and ten places open after 6:00 pm so that the City becomes a regional destination.

**A motion was made by Council Member Wood to approve the “Mt. Vernon Creativity Redefined” branding concept as recommended by DDI. Second by Council Member McEnaney. Yeas: Lash, McEnaney, Piper, Wood and Chesley.**

### **Design Build Concept**

Brian R. Buchheit of HMG Engineers, Inc. appeared to present the design-build method of renovating the old Armory into the Broadway Market. Design-build is a method of project delivery in which one entity - the design-build team - works under a single contract with the contractor/design builder to provide design and construction services. One entity, one contract, one unified flow of work from initial concept through completion fosters collaboration and teamwork. Design-build is also known as design/construct and single-source responsibility. Design-build is an alternative to design-bid-build. Under the latter approach, design and construction are split - separate entities, separate contracts, separate work.

Design-build, design-bid-build and construction management are the three project delivery systems most commonly used. Over the past 15 years, use of design-build has greatly accelerated in the United States, making this delivery method one of the most significant trends in design and construction today.

City Manager Neibert noted that by statute a municipality can waive bidding requirements with a super majority vote of the Council.

Mr. Buchheit commented the Broadway Market is a unique project with certain esthetic qualities making it more complex than an infrastructure project and difficult to estimate the costs. This type of project lends itself to utilizing the design-build method. Bringing the contractor in at the beginning of the project becomes beneficial. The City contracts with one entity. Usually the contractor is the design-builder with general liability insurance to handle the construction, and the engineers and architects are sub-contractors to the contractor. Everyone works together from the beginning of the project. Using this method allows the base structural work to be started out in the field while finishes and architectural work are being completed. If the City decides to waive the bidding process and utilize the design-build concept then this method enables the City to request that local companies and workers be used. A cost savings is realized because the integrated team is geared toward efficiency and innovation.

Architects and Engineers give up their control to the contractor making the selection of the contractor hugely important. Council Member Wood expressed concern that this concept may prove to be more time-consuming for the City than the traditional construction method. Also will the workload increase on the City’s Engineer and staff as the project moves forward? There is a certain level (at least 50%) of completion of the drawings that must be accomplished before any dirt is turned, so to speak. Mr.

Buchheit stated it is possible to contract with HMG to act as the project manager so that the City's ideas for the project are carried out.

City Manager Neibert suggested meeting with HMG Engineers, Inc. (before July 31) to develop projected schedules/timelines comparing the traditional construction method to design-build along with rough cost estimates. He will make a recommendation after meeting with HMG.

Clayton, Missouri has a small municipally owned farmers' market at a cost to vendors of \$35. Kirkwood, Missouri has a huge three day event at a cost to vendors of \$100.00. Belleville and Carbondale also have markets that are not city owned.

The Mayor noted that since the beginning of the year the City Council has presided over 14 City Council meetings, eight workshops and three retreats showing commitment and accountability by the Council.

**Motion by Council Member Piper to adjourn. Second by Council Member Wood. Yeas: Lash, McEnaney, Piper, Wood and Chesley.**

The meeting adjourned at 4:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jerilee Hopkins  
City Clerk