

DSA Meeting

January 12, 2012

7:00pm-10:00pm

Main Street 4-Point Approach: The Pathway to Success for Seymour
& Strength, Weakness, Opportunity, Threats (SWOT) Analysis

Presentation by: Kelly M. Shaner, DSA Director

Presentation Summary

The presentation covered the Main Street 4-Point Approach to downtown revitalization. This approach was the result of the National Trust for Historic Preservation's Main Street Project in 1979.

A group of National Trust employees set out to begin to find a way to stop the alarming trend of suburbanization that had been rapidly spreading across the nation during the post WWII era due to the popularity and prevalence of the automobile. City centers were quickly becoming places of work alone, not the center of work, life, and play as they had been for decades. AS the population began to move to the outer fringes of the city, businesses such as grocery markets, restaurants, and other retailers began to follow their client to the now ever-present strip center with its lack-luster architecture and acres of parking. The downtown districts became derelict and forgotten.

To solve this problem and once again bring back the vibrant beat of city hearts, the Main Street Project emerged. By 1980, the three communities in which it was implemented were already boasting new businesses, higher sales tax revenue, new jobs, and a return to the historic charm of their downtown districts.

It quickly became apparent that 4 focuses were essential to the success of a downtown movement. These are Design, Organization, Promotions, and Economic Restructuring. Each must be implemented successfully for a downtown to once again thrive.

For Seymour, Promotions will be the key to getting the ball rolling. By promoting existing businesses through a shop-local campaign, events that are focused on ringing cash registers, and increasing traffic downtown, the customer base and impact of each business will be significantly broadened.

By supporting a strong Organization, Seymour can be assured that the Downtown Seymour Association will be able to provide high quality services for years to come, and that the organization will be able to adapt with the changing needs of the district, as well as transition smoothly through board member rotations and executive directors. This means the donation of time, ideas, creativity, and other essentials to the downtown organization itself, as well as providing support by participation in events.

In establishing Design guidelines for downtown, it can be assured that future projects to beautify the district and its structures will highlight and focus on what is beautiful and important to the history of Seymour. DSA is working on the creation of a Design Matching Grant that will start in 2012 at a 50/50 match of \$500 by DSA and the winning business.

Lastly, through a sound Economic Restructuring plan that supports our existing businesses and works to recruit businesses that can fill a niche not yet satisfied by businesses in the downtown district, the DSA will be able to ensure a vibrant, diverse district that has something to offer everyone. This means helping our businesses downtown attract their target market, as well as beginning to recruit complementary businesses to the district that will encourage the expansion of the customer base.

In conclusion, the Main Street Approach has worked and continues to work in communities of all sizes across the nation, and across Missouri. Washington Missouri has had a downtown program in place since 1989 and is nominated for the 2011 Great American Main Street Award by the National Trust Main Street Center. Chillicothe is an accredited community with a fabulous design program and beautiful mural projects. Glasgow, a community of only 500 households and about 2,000 people, began their revitalization journey last year and has already welcomed many new businesses and given several of their historic buildings much needed façade rehabilitation. This approach to bringing life back to downtown districts can and will work in Seymour with the support of the community and proper guidance.

SWOT Analysis

A SWOT Analysis is a tool used by many businesses and organizations to find out the best way to tackle new projects by evaluating their current position as compared with where they would like to find themselves. It allows for an in-depth look at obstacles in the way, as well as an examination of the opportunities they may be missing out on. Below is a chart of the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats identified by those that attended the meeting on January 12th, 2012.

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES	OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
The Square Our Citizens City Support Obvious need of action Partnerships w/in community organizations Sense of history Local Business Owners Good School System YMCA facility Library	Lack of Maintenance Lack of directional signage Lack of youth-related activities/attractions on square Economy Record of lack of follow-thru w/ past projects Absentee property owners Volunteer burn-out “Show Me” mentality causes lack of early participation Empty buildings Lack of interest	Attract new businesses Tourism Empty Buildings Prime location for growth (30mi to Spgfd) Creation of employment, excitement Can generate profit Increased sense community School partnerships YMCA partnerships Push for local economy Amish Existing businesses Off-Road Ranch History of area Apple Festival Area’s affiliation w/	Lack of vision Modernization Tendency to encourage gossip/rumors Negativity Reluctance to change People “too busy” Lack of concern Faith in big-box/chain stores not local Economy Apathy

Lack of jobs
Loss of Apple Orchard

Spgfd, history, etc.
Possible local tourism
Partnerships

Lack of
willingness
to work
together
Low income
area
Downsizing of
state resources

The analysis above will give the DSA direction as it begins to strategically plan its course for the foreseeable future. Some items appear in multiple categories. This does not reflect badly. It simply means that depending on the outlook of the community, these things can be seen as negative, or turned on their heads to be positive. An empty building, for example, can be seen as a threat. However, it is also an opportunity because it paves the way for something new and exciting. The economy is bad throughout the nation, but this can be helpful for encourages a shop-local campaign which keeps dollars local, instead of giving other cities and towns the tax revenue that could have been used in this community.

If this summary gives you questions, ideas, or you simply want to talk about what this means for Seymour, please contact Kelly M. Shaner via email at downtownseymour@gmail.com, or call (417)894-7946

Keep an eye on the DSA! Our website {downtownseymourmo.com} is under construction, and a luncheon is planned at the end of this month to welcome our Board of Directors. Details coming soon!