

Southern Maryland Regional Meeting – June 27, 2008

Date: July 24, 2008
Location: College of Southern Maryland
115 J.W. Williams Road, Prince Frederick
Forum: Regional Meeting
Facilitator: Morrie Warshawski, Theresa Colvin, Chris Stewart, Sharon Blake
Scribe: Elizabeth A. Bentley-Smith
Councilor: Barbara Bershon

MAJOR THEMES

About Maryland, people appreciate: proximity to water, accessibility to urban centers, affordability, creative energy, sense of history

Major Arts Related Issues & Dreams:

- Tri-County Arts Alliance: cooperation, communication, collaboration
- Multi-use venue for the performing and visual arts, accessible and affordable with rehearsal space
- Make art more accessible – transportation and cost issues
- Integrated calendar, regional websites with links, better marketing
- More funding
- Better audience diversity

Re MSAC:

- Appreciate local arts councils support
- Find MSAC very receptive, user-friendly, and supportive
- Thanks for the Cultural Data Project

SOME QUOTES

“Water...lived in 18 different homes...have a beach house on the bay, but like the people who are delightfully wonderful...love neighborhood...the talent is just abundant in this area and now have friends who are artists.”

“Affordable down here...could get 2 acres with lots of trees...but stay because of the artists...amazing synergy with the artists...wonderful community...took a little while to fit in, but love the area.”

“Grew up in the Southwest...but like the cultural diversity that is like no other place in the world...access to the monster museums in DC, but also enjoy the indigenous museums in the area...”

“[There is a] lack of synergy amongst all of the tri-county...need an awareness that is outside this community...lack of marketing plan within the area...need more community-based research. Marketing research to determine what potential audiences want/need...need a central core for communication... centralized source of info...via website perhaps.”

“Need to focus on getting the arts to those people who do not have the resources to get to the arts events...whether it be transportation or cost.”

“Need to recognize that arts is not a luxury but rather an investment.”

“[I’d like to see that] Grants for Arts in Education would not require a matching aspect; eliminate match requirement for schools.”

“If it weren’t for the state arts council, the local arts councils would not exist

“Thank the arts for MD Cultural Data Project...it is a value to the state and other funders...allows for needed data to prove the need for the arts.”

RAW TRANSCRIPT

Introduction by Barbara Bershon, MSAC Councilor

- Discusses the purpose of the strategic plan
- Introduces Andrea Vernot and MSAC Staff
- Introduces Calvert County and St. Mary’s County staff
- Introduces Delegate McCullin
- Thank you for attending this meeting
- Discusses conversation with Governor O’Malley and her experience at the retreat
- Housekeeping items: sign-in, flyers, schedule of forums
- Introduce Morrie

Morrie Warshawski

- Thank you to pianist
- Chinese proverb
 - If you want to be happy for a day get drunk, if you want to be happy for a year get married, if you want to be happy for a lifetime grow a garden
 - The Arts Council is here to garden, to ensure its fruition in the process and to get feedback
- Today’s process is to gather feedback via a set of questions

- Can get this information on-line along with other forums
- ❖ **1st question: What do you value most about living in Maryland? What brought you to Maryland?**
- The water! The bay, the Patuxent rivers, rural nature
 - Never lived anywhere else...can go from the shore to the mountains...green everywhere...diversity
 - Water...lived in 18 different homes...have a beach house on the bay, but like the people who are delightfully wonderful...love neighborhood...the talent is just abundant in this area and now have friends who are artists
 - The general east coast location of the State of Maryland...makes everything accessible...can still get to various urban centers and world class cities
 - Chesapeake bay country is a never-ending source for the visual artist
 - Affordable down here...could get 2 acres with lots of trees...but stay because of the artists...amazing synergy with the artists...wonderful community...took a little while to fit in, but love the area
 - Like the old-world feel of the state especially being born in Germany...love a place with seasons
 - Creative energy of the community...more and more kids who are interested in arts...like to get involved in programs and workshops supported by MSAC
 - Grew up in the southwest...but like the cultural diversity that is like no other place in the world...access to the monster museums in DC, but also enjoy the indigenous museums in the area...
- ❖ **2nd question: What are the major arts related issues in the community...as an artist...as an arts org...etc? [Made clusters to determine “answer”]**
- All groups determined that a desirable and accessible and affordable performing and art venue for performances and gallery location...studio space...workshop space...preferably one that has a community
 - Model of Rogers’ center in Bethesda or signature theatre in Virginia
 - Agreed to for Charles, St. Mary’s and Calvert County reps
 - However, there is a problem to get people to the smaller shows...so need to work on audience problems...
 - Then need to work on how to get audience by determining what they want
 - Must have a venue that is fully multi-use...conventions, performances, visual shows...a conference center
 - Lack of synergy amongst all of the tri-county
 - Need an awareness that is outside this community
 - Lack of marketing plan within the area
 - Need more community-based research...marketing research to determine what potential audiences want/need
 - Need a central core for communication...centralized source of info...via website perhaps

- Would like to determine this area as an A&E district
- Competition for dollar and time amongst all area groups
- How can these three counties be better for artists to both live and work
 - Space doesn't exist, not affordable
 - Can also use website to link artists together via a directory for artists and artist space
- Need to focus on getting the arts to those people who do not have the resources to get to the arts events...whether it be transportation or cost
- Have completed a needs assessment for Charles County and there is a strong need for more tri-county communication
- Tri-county council opportunity via economic development if couched in specific terms to allow for coordination
- Need to recognize that arts is not a luxury but rather an investment
- Calvert County did an economic study but found that people were not interested in the arts...however need to complete an impact study of the arts
- Need for greater advocacy and communication...more cross-pollination
 - Arts councils are working on it
- Clearly need a tri-county council to help further the area's development
 - MSAC can help encourage this council to work and organize this development
- Also need to focus on the small areas within the county...if north Calvert is doing something but live in Solomons, we have to plan accordingly but don't always know within county events

❖ **3rd question: What do you see the arts community looking like in 5 years? What do you want to see in 5 years?**

- Group 1
 - Tri-county arts alliance that meets at least twice a year
 - Multi-use arts centre
 - Grants for Arts in Education would not require a matching aspect; eliminate match requirement for schools
 - Integrated calendar for tri-county
 - Transportation, consumer, tourism issues
- Group 2
 - Website
 - Each county creates either a Maryland Hall or Torpedo
 - Road signs for arts locations
 - Establish A&E district
 - Ask MSAC to organize a field organizer (i.e. area organizer)
 - Tax credits for space use for arts that are empty
 - Business plan for tri-county arts
- Group 3
 - Regional website with links
 - Performing arts center for 10,000+

- Performing/visual arts HS
 - Tri-county advertising
 - Transportation (similar to Van Go bus in other places)
 - Group
 - Multi-discipline arts center
 - Website, with unified marketing scheme in week-end section
 - Southern Maryland arts
 - Dedicated stream for funding in the arts to include economic incentives to nurture professional artists
 - Educated public in value of arts
 - Need more diversity, so need to reach out more
 - Group 5
 - Performance center for community performances
 - Website
 - Tri-county council...need to help schedule coordination
 - Each counties coordinated council produce weekly digest in local newspapers and visitors centers
 - Group 5
 - Arts center...torpedo factory
 - More venues of places to go
 - Galleries of visual artists, etc.
 - Directory of what is available in Southern Maryland
 - Publications, marketing
 - Quality of life for large corporations
 - Funding from government
 - Group 6
 - Multi discipline arts center
 - Self-sufficient
 - Sustainable
 - Tri-county from the State
 - Bond from the arts
 - Show mobiles
 - State bond supported by local government
 - Traveling stage via Wenger
 - More audience education
 - Employers via BRAC
 - Additional airplane hanger for the arts
- ❖ **4th question: How has MSAC helped you thus far? What suggestions do you have for MSAC for new programs and initiatives?**
- If it weren't for the state arts council, the local arts councils would not exist
 - Block grants for area
 - Like Jim Backas for saying: "we offer enhancement not entitlement"

- MSAC doesn't want you to fail, they will help you tremendously and suggest ways to fix your grant apps to ensure success
- The grant process is very easy to complete, very user-friendly
 - Satellite groups that come out to help work with you on the grants is very nice
- To have a mid-level tier for artists in residency...more short-term
- Like the MSAC in that they receive support via the government for Arts in Education that the school system does not receive
- Good communication from MSAC
- The MSAC supported the design and building of carousel horses
- Thank the arts for MD Cultural Data Project...it is a value to the state and other funders...allows for needed data to prove the need for the arts

❖ Thank you for your comments and participation.