

YES! House Futures Committee Meeting #2 March 23, 2023, 5 - 7pm at the YES! House building

YES! House Futures (YHF) is a community-led process to establish a 1-2 sentence vision statement for the future operations and stewardship of The YES! House building. A 7 member committee will meet 4 times between January and June of 2023 to establish the vision statement.

Present: Paul Drees (YHF Committee Member), Tamara Isfeld (YHF Committee Member), Melissa Peterson (YHF Committee Member), Crystal Johnson (YHF Committee Member), Autumn Cavender (YHF Committee Member), Beth Pullan (DoPT Board Member), Luwaina Al-Otaibi (DoPT Staff Member), Sarina Otaibi (DoPT Staff Member)

Absent: Harold Goedgedrag (YHF Committee Member) and Fern Cloud (YHF Committee Member)

Welcome & Introductions: we started the meeting with quick introductions and an opening question.

Revisit Group Agreement and YHF Process Overview and Updates

- Sarina provided a brief overview of the YHF process and revisited the group agreement
- Together we will:
 - Listen for understanding
 - Hold each other accountable
 - Speak honestly and from our own experience
 - Respect each other's experiences
 - Appreciate silence and processing time
 - Exercise self-care
 - Own our mistakes, our intentions, and our impacts
 - Respect the process and the people involved
 - Mess Up Forward Falling (MUFFING) - we all want to move forward and we are not trying to be rude with anything we say during these meetings.
- Luwaina provided an update from the Creative Collaborative Team (CCT)

YES! House Construction and Program Support Breakdown

DoPT Staff went through the Say Yes Capital Campaign and Report Narrative ([Click here to view our Campaign Financial Report and Narrative as of January 31, 2023](#)). YHF Committee Members asked the following questions. DoPT Staff provided some answers during the meeting and some answers after the meeting in written format below.

- Were any of the dollars used for the construction of the apartment in the CAIR program?
 - **DoPT response after the meeting:** No, there weren't any construction expenses included in the CAIR program. The grant program paid rent for the apartment when in

use. All other expenses went directly to the CAIR program costs in accordance with funder agreements.

- Where is Ashley Hanson's rent payment for when she stayed here?
 - DoPT staff explained during the meeting that Ashley is an employee of DoPT. DoPT does not require Staff and Board members to pay rent when staying at the YES! House.
- Where does the bank (local bank) donation fall under the different categories of donations?
 - DoPT staff answered during the meeting that donations are not itemized in the budget provided, but the local bank's donation is included in the budget presented.
 - **DoPT additional clarification response after the meeting:** FM Bank (formerly known as Granite Falls Bank) provided a charitable contribution in 2018 which was used for necessary and immediate roof repair needs. These funds are included in *The YES! House Renovations & Operations Support* in the provided report because these funds were designated for a specific renovation project.
- Is there a rough estimate of when construction will be completed? When will the main floor be completed?
 - **DoPT response after the meeting:** pending the ability to raise the necessary funds and contractor schedule/availability, our goal is to have the main floor mostly complete (able to be open to the public) by the end of 2023; and to have the entire project complete (including the basement) by Summer of 2025.
- What are the grant funded projects that cannot be changed versus space that is flexible?
 - **DoPT response after the meeting:**
 - The following spaces can not be changed due to restricted funds already secured and/or spent for the project:
 - Climbing wall area
 - Recording studio
 - Upstairs apartments
 - The following spaces are reasonably flexible, but do already have some equipment and furniture secured due to restricted funds:
 - Workshop and media lab in basement is flexible
 - Gathering space and performance venue space is flexible
- DoPT Staff agreed to provide brief construction updates at each meeting. Committee agreed that would be helpful.

Committee Discussion

YHF Committee Members took a few minutes to reflect on each of the following questions, and then shared their thoughts and ideas with the group.

In 5 years, Granite Falls is ...

- A beautiful vibrant and inclusive community for families to live, work and play in

- More housing options, growth, inclusivity and better amenities
- Leaning into artists identity/tourism
- Continue to grow instead of losing its population with more young families moving or returning to town with improved housing options.
- More retail and art space downtown and not as many offices
- A fabulous artistic downtown with a coffee shop!
- Artist retreat center that is beautiful and vibrant
- Tourism
- No more empty storefronts, growth in population, diversified community/population involvement, decline in corporate agricultural industries. Farmers who actually grow food supporting the local economy.

In 5 years, who do you see in and around the building (YES! House)?

- Community inclusion, inviting open door that people feel welcome no matter who they are
- Yes More Creative Arts (YMCA)
- Artists in upstairs apartments or vacation rental, theater and musicians
- Open door with music and chatter flowing out into the street
- Open space drawing people in
- Places for teens and young families
- People who are in here and working/shared work spaces
- For people who don't live here walking around and exploring
- Community attended events reference the opera house
- Events for the purpose of community engagement
- Art, theater, music community held events
- Meeting space that open door inviting being open to ideas
- Short-term apartment rental idea to bring people into community
- Visiting students and artists fill the building but not in a public way
- Hesitant locals
- Thrilled visitors- coming to space to see public events
- Core of enthusiastic local volunteers and staff
- We need more spaces for loitering, a space to hang where no one is going to bother you
- Place for visiting students nearby colleges
- Place where local organizations and people can be in - a third space for people who don't have another space to be in

In 5 years, what do you hear and feel when in and around the building (YES! House)?

- Hearing utterly alien ideas: ideas beyond what you can get out here to feel excited and confused
- Hearing conversations of The YES! House within the community

- A hesitant attendee welcomed
- Community starting to be more integrated
- Hearing that a place is restful for artists
- Where artists could feel calm “down winding” - where people can create without external pressures
- Hearing collaboration community working together
- Overall community understanding what the space is for, not having the confusion
- Hearing friendly lively chatter, music, kids, presentations
- Feeling the excitement everyone is happy to be in
- Feeling of concentration even if it's busy or loud that people are working on something
- Happy chatter, laughter, music
- Conversations about ideas, weird ideas
- I want to hear thoughtful questions
- I want to feel optimistic like a part of a community
- People working and concentrating, like they have a purpose to be here
- Hear conversations and voices being heard. Elders and children don't feel like they're being heard/valued. Love to see those voices being heard from multiple conversations.
- Creative welcoming space: making the whole space welcoming. Shouldn't have to just be creative to feel welcomed in the space.
- YHF Committee Member Melissa asked the group: What does it mean to be heard?
 - Noticed in particular in older generations. These community members say, “this is a problem and you need to do something about it.” If nothing is done about it, then they feel dismissed. And also being engaged with and being asked questions with discussion. But feeling heard should not necessarily mean that you need to do what they say.
 - How do we make everyone feel heard without always doing what they say?
 - Be honest about things upfront when you are listening to people's ideas (set boundaries).
 - Group agrees having upfront clarity makes a difference.

In five years what are some ways that different organizations or individuals could be involved (in the YES! House operations and stewardship)?

- This space being the parent of another space. Examples of partners: next door Thrift Store and Living At Home Block Nurse program
- Lots of collaborations with other businesses and organizations
- For profit coffee space
- Community members would be running the space and programming
- Community Board
- Monthly open meetings run by a local group of individuals

- Employee staff exhibition, volunteers, need people to manage the space
- Donors participants in different classes, vendors, recreators
- How do you reach out to unengaged people? People with different cultural backgrounds, how do you get them involved? How do you navigate people through that? Space smell, sound and look. Having inclusive space means hearing and smelling things you don't normally hear and smell. Meaning it would be different to people who are usually comfortable in the area.

When you think of the how, who are the organizations and individuals that come to mind?

- Lions Club
- Schools - middle school and highschool
- Granite Area Arts Council (GAAC)
- City, city staff, city council member
- Upper Sioux Community
- Local restaurants particularly downtown, snacks and events from local producers
- For external organizations and people, it's for the benefit of this place. We are not going to be used or exploited in certain ways
- Chamber of Commerce
- Businesses: reach out to smaller businesses who have not been engaged with before
- Individuals for the betterment of the community and space and not just get what they need and run

Other discussion and questions:

- YHF Committee Member Autumn shared concerns about the climbing rock wall with the group: the rock wall doesn't fit with the overall goals of The YES! House. Questions around its security risks. How does it fit into the greater vision of the place as a community open space?
 - **DoPT response after the meeting:** Increasing community health/wellness (in all of its forms) and connection is a hope for The YES! House; DoPT believes the climbing wall will reach a younger, active demographic, provide new indoor space to recreate during winter months, and add to overall health, wellness, and connection in the region. The idea for the climbing wall was proposed by interested community members during the public engagement process in 2019. We will work with our insurance company to ensure coverage and liability risks are addressed. We will work with other climbing wall spaces to ensure we have the proper equipment, waivers, and training/orientation for users. Climbing wall will only be open during certain staffed hours and those using the climbing wall area will need to attend a safety demonstration/orientation and sign a waiver (under 18 will need parent signature) prior to using the space.
- YHF Committee Member Autumn asked DoPT staff: Is there a need for an additional meeting after the 4th YHF Committee Meeting?

- **DoPT response after the meeting:** Committee members have only signed Letters of Agreement for four meetings. If the committee decides to meet additional times, it will need to be discussed and agreed upon by the committee and DoPT with the understanding that any future meetings would be above and beyond the current agreement.
- Revisit the idea of a “Vision Statement” or if there is an alternative way of communicating the intention of what the committee is discussing around the future vision of The YES! House. The comment was brought up in Meeting #1 that a “Vision Statement” is a Western idea and we may consider other options: YHF Committee ran out of time to discuss, but Sarina asked members to think about it for the following meeting.

The YHF Committee Meeting on March 23 concluded at 7:03pm.