March 15 & 16, 2013

Creative Orange: Call to Collaboration

Complete Notes

Making Orange Pop: How Can We Embrace Culture, Nurture Creativity, and Drive Innovation?

Creative New Jersey is dedicated to fostering creativity, innovation, and sustainability by empowering cross-sector partnerships in commerce, education, philanthropy, government, and culture in order to ensure dynamic communities and a thriving economy.

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Preface: Making Orange Pop!

The City of Orange Township, NJ has a powerful spirit that is fueled by its passionate, committed residents, nonprofit leaders, business owners, teachers, and local officials. Last Friday and Saturday, nearly 100 of these community leaders assembled for a Call to Collaboration to answer the question:

*Making Orange Pop: How Can We Embrace Culture, Nurture Creativity, and Drive Innovation?*

Following in the footsteps of Creative New Jersey’s other “creative communities” Creative Orange’s Host Team achieved great success in assembling an incredibly diverse group of participants. The folks who joined the Call to Collaboration represented arts & cultural organizations, the Orange school system, community development organizations, city government (thank you to Mayor Dwayne Warren for joining us!), healthcare, local businesses, financial institutions, higher education and a host of community nonprofits, and ranged in age from 16 to 86 years old!

The organizations represented included HANDS, Inc.; ValleyArts; Church of the Epiphany; Orange Board of Education; City of Orange (Mayor's Office and Dept. Of Recreation); New Jersey Institute of Technology; Rising Tide Capital; Arts Unbound; Investor’s Savings Bank; ORNG, Inc.; FAMILYConnections; South Orange Performing Arts Center; TerraNoble Design, P.A.; Hat City Kitchen; Luna Stage Company; Greater Newark LISC; Montclair State University; Catholic Charities; Millburn Public Schools; MBD Strategic Communications, and dozens of other companies, organizations and institutions. The cultural and racial diversity in the room was also very exciting as a mix of African-American, Latino, Caucasian, and Native American voices spoke in a unified manner about the future of this urban center.

The multi-cultural Church of the Epiphany, under the leadership of Reverend Miguelina Howell, hosted our convening. This center of community life was a perfect location in which to hold our Creative Orange convening. Over the course of two days, the participants created their own agenda, and 34 breakout sessions occurred. These intentional, action-oriented discussions focused on topics such as:

- The creation of an Arts Alliance for The Oranges;
- The development of meaningful, sustainable and engaged community involvement in program development, community solutions and political accountability is vital for the success of Orange and its exciting future. Lack of an informed citizenry perpetuates status quo as well as deprives those with ideas and a desire to participate in their community from any meaningful community engagement.
- The development of a robust branding and communications strategy for Orange.

There were also several discussions which embraced a cross-sector approach to solving challenges; one such example focuses on the health and wellness of Orange residents. Participants discussed a variety of ways to combat community health issues (not the least of which is a high rate of diabetes and obesity) ranging from establishing community vegetable gardens, to promoting healthy physical activity through the arts (i.e. dance and theatre), to insisting city officials enforce codes relating to freshness expiration dates, to establishing a Creating Healthy Families program using the creative industries to promote and champion affordable and accessible healthy food choices for all Orange residents.
Several sessions focused on the city’s youth and opportunities for bringing the youth together with the senior population. This multi-generational approach was present throughout the convening and it was exciting to witness the synergy between the generations as the conversations ensued.

Throughout the convening, several individuals expressed themselves creatively in haiku, sketches, and in song. One member played two songs on his harmonica for us during the opening session of day 2 while others left their creative mark on a large white canvas.

By Saturday afternoon, small teams coalesced around specific issues and immediate, short-term action steps were established. In the coming weeks, these teams are gathering to continue developing their strategies for effecting change in Orange in a creative, cooperative and sustainable manner.

All of us at Creative New Jersey applaud our Creative Orange colleagues. Personally, I feel very grateful to have worked alongside the members of the Creative Orange Host Team (led by our friends at HANDS, Inc. and ValleyArts) and am equally excited for the privilege of engaging with the larger group of Creative Orange participants. Their passion is infectious. Their spirit is overwhelmingly positive. We know they can create the prosperous, healthy, and sustainable future they deserve and we stand at their side ready to assist in whatever way we can. Congratulations Creative Orange!

~Elizabeth Murphy
Director, Creative New Jersey
Originally posted on the Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation Blog (1.18.13)

Creative New Jersey is dedicated to fostering creativity, innovation, and sustainability by empowering cross-sector partnerships in commerce, education, philanthropy, government, and culture in order to ensure dynamic communities and a thriving economy.
Summary Report #1: Engagement of Community and Political Groups

Convener: Leslie

Participants: Jane Mandel, Cheryl Katz, Karen ?, Neaeema ??, ??

1. **Highlights and key points from your discussion:** Promoting transparency and activism through enhanced community communication. The development of meaningful, sustainable and engaged community involvement in program development, solutions and political responsiveness is vital for the success of Orange Pop and its exciting future.

2. **What is your call for action?** Reconfigure an existing website for greater community interaction. The town has turned away from engaged community access to the political process. Entrenched incompetent politicians on the council stifle development. Lack of an informed citizenry perpetuates status quo as well as deprives those with ideas and a desire to participate in their community from any meaningful community engagement.

A current website called the Citizens For Responsible Government.com was developed by a current community activist, Barbara ?. Barbara has been working diligently to get better responsiveness from government, but with limited success. The problems are evident. Only 25% of the Orange population own homes and many of those home owners are not involved in community support activities. A fractured population is kept in the dark about the operations of government. There is no internet forum where individuals can express their views on issues facing the community or express their frustration with council members who do not provide any response to questions from constituents. It was also brought to the attention of the group that the Patch has decided not to provide Orange with a Patch site of the kind that is currently enjoyed by West Orange and South Orange.

A current concern was brought to the attention of the group as an example of political indifference combined with the lack of a meaningful venue for citizen commentary and community action. That concern is the ongoing neglect by the town council to take action to implement the “Main Street” designation of Orange. This designation is a difficult one to obtain. State funds are available that would be spent to hire a town planner who would bring innovations and modernizations to the Orange main street. Maplewood and South Orange have used their designations to significantly improve their main streets that have directly influenced the economies of each. The Main Street dilemma took the group’s conversation to the lack of any adequate public forum where people could learn about political inaction where something positive like Main Street improvements are available. In addition, there is no easily accessible way to inform the citizenry of action taken by the town council, agendas for all scheduled meetings, or any particular council member’s position on an issue before an action vote is taken.

The revised website should contain the following forum pages –

1. Youth Forum
2. Homeowner’s Forum
3. Renter’s Forum
4. Senior Forum
5. Latino Forum
6. Arts Forum
7. Kids Forum
8. Citizens United Forum
   1. Voter registration
   2. Getting to the polls
   3. Youth and Government
9. Questions to Council
   1. Defined by issue
   2. Responsiveness Grade per Council Member
10. Internet Development in Orange Forum
    1. Ways to expand internet access to neighborhoods
    2. Names of people who can help you get better internet access
    3. Cablevision, Comcast, Verizon interfaces with programs that each of these companies offer to provide internet access to low income communities.
Session Report #2: Establish multiple programs and outlets to attract promote Gospel Music and become a leader in the Region for such work.

Convener:

Participants: Richard Bryant, Lorraine Jones, Rennie Resalsingh, Susan Haig, Jamie Lasell

1. Highlights and key points from your discussion:

Brand Orange as a City of Gospel Music

2. What is your call for action?

Understand what is already here in Orange

Research High School and Churches etc…

Understand how they organize and how many members are involved

Create a Clergy Advisory Committee

Orange Gospel Task Force

Choral Leadership Advisory Group

1st Meeting scheduled for April 2nd at 5pm Valley Arts Firehouse on Forest St.

Plan for showcase in early spring or late summer where a min of 3 groups and the High School can put on a show to highlight Gospel Music in the City of Orange
Session Report #3: Get together all of Orange’s arts organizations to form an arts alliance.

Convener: David Norwood

Participants: Darrell Berger, Linda Onorerole, Rosa Jackson, Mike Griot, Denise Stennett & Venetta B.

1. Highlights and key points from your discussion:
   - Build a list of arts organizations
   - Call the Arts Council of the Morris Area
   - SOPAC offers space for meetings
   - Identify cultural/arts leaders in the Oranges
   - Utilize online tools e.g. google docs
   - Should we include Edison Historical, libraries, science, etc.
   - Include schools
   - Build community amongst the Oranges

Goals for the Arts Alliance:
   - Centralized location (website) to notify the Orange community of events
   - Build partnerships between organizations
   - Shared services
   - Avoid event conflicts between organizations
   - Created a preferred vendors list

Council Leadership:
   - Determine who is qualified to successfully lead & inspire
   - What are the qualifications?
   - Be thoughtful & diligent when choosing leaders
   - Remember that there are people that we don’t know who are creative & inspiring
   - Consider people who haven’t worked together before – be bold & daring
   - School arts programs
   - Church / music leaders
   - Multi-generational representation amongst the members of the Arts Alliance

What is your call for action?

Have an event and invite arts organizations to brainstorm and talk about goals.
Mike has graciously donated a booth at the South Orange International Blues Festival specifically for the Arts Alliance.

Step 1: Conference Call amongst the initial group from Creative Orange

Step 2: Compile a list of the arts organizations in all of Orange

Step 3: Invite the organizations to a meeting at SOPAC to meet & greet / brainstorm

Step 4: **ESTABLISH A STRUCTURE FOR THE ARTS ALLIANCE!**
Session Report #4: Health and Wellness

Convener:

Participants: Tracye, Margaux Simmons, Gracie L., Becky, Michele

1. Highlights and key points from your discussion:

We need to find easy and creative ways of informing families of health issues and ways to address health and fitness issues. We want to provide our families with access to healthy food, information about how our bodies work and what they need to function effectively and remain healthy and how we can learn and implement this information/knowledge in family groupings. One topic of particular interest: ways to decrease the amount of toxin exposure that we experience.

1. What is your call for action?

- Healthy Living Workshop – 8 week program
- Family Fun Night- to cover topics on health and wellness, weekly meetings
- Social Dancing: Make Orange, NJ the “Swing Capitol,” by emphasizing swing dancing in the schools and other community locations.
- Garden Club/Farmer’s Market
- Engage the YMCA or YWCA in health and wellness activities for the community
- Engage the School System in health and wellness activities for the community
- Fitness- Why are recess and physical education being eliminated in the schools?
- After school music program for all children- within walking distance of schools
Session Report #5: Health & Wellness - Creative Ways to Communicate information to families & the community

Convener: Tracye Johnson

Participants: Beverly Hamilton, Robin Gordon, Tiffany Robinson, Laura Sacks, Michael Meggo, Leno Benjamin, Adrienne Wooten, Linda Schuman, Beth Toussaint

1. Highlights and key points from your discussion:

- General community is overwhelmed with information on health from t.v., friends – but need realistic info broken down in a way that is easy to absorb i.e. Dr. Oz
- Too many fast food restaurants
- Lack of access to healthy food
- Places that do carry “fresh” vegetables in our area carry rotten options
- Supermarkets carry expired food and there are no inspectors to enforce the code
- Lack of dental care or options for good dental care
- Need to frame the conversation so that it’s not pointing the finger; it’s about being healthy not losing weight
- Need to talk to people about decreasing the toxins in their diet
- Need to use “creative arts” to communicate the information – betterment of your “spirit, mind, and body”
- Larger fast food chains show you fat/caloric content but local fast food i.e. pizza, chicken, Chinese doesn’t have to

2. What is your call for action?

- Build the Brand: CreativeOrange.com
  - Under this umbrella would come Creating Healthy Families
- This initiative would include:
  - Flash Mob – create dance, teach dance, video dance, post to website
  - Creating Healthy Families Fair with Healthy Food vendors, healthy living presentation/demonstration
  - Developing a Creating Healthy Families Business initiative that partners with businesses that provide healthy food options and create a decal for the program that will be displayed in each vendor’s window. When people see the decal, they’ll know that the business is Creating Healthy Families-approved.
- Affordable Healthy Food Stores and Restaurants
- Push harder for a Farmers Market
- Creating a Holistic Medical Center that has dental care, ob/gyn care,
- For the City: Enforce Codes about expired foods, changing the mindset about what type of ratables are brought in for restaurants and actively pursue healthier business options
Use The Food Trust model to work with bodegas to have healthier food options that are reasonably priced and placed up front.
Session Report #6: How can non-profit organizations develop relationships with businesses & community leaders?

Convener:

Participants: David, Valerie, Darrell, Myra B., Linda, Rennie R. & Jimmy Mac

1. Highlights and key points from your discussion:

- Make sure the relationship between the business and non-profit is a good match and mutually beneficial.

- Align non-profit interests with corporate and community interest.

- Engage community business & culture.

- Group mentoring; matching high schools with local non-profits and businesses.

- How can non-profits help a business? (What can the non-profit offer the business?)

- Create a directory of businesses & non-profits in Orange.

- SOPAC offers a business breakfast, where they get to meet various businesses and make connections that are not always all about money.

- Non-profits must be willing to work with other non-profits.

- Creating a regional arts council.

- Possibly have a non-profit conference.

- Making sure the arts are more inclusive, and not just marketed to arts patrons.

2. What is your call for action?

Get together as many non-profits from Orange as possible to create a directory and talk about each group’s mission and needs – begin an Orange Arts Council. SOPAC is willing to offer their space for the initial meeting.
Session Report #7: How can Orange and higher education collaborate to nurture a creative economy?

Convener:

Participants: Mike Griot, Brandon Monnokian, Jamy Lasell, Becky Doggett, and Michael Meggo

1. Highlights and key points from your discussion: See Below

- **What is your call for action?** Engage institutions of higher education (Seton Hall, MSU, NJIT, Rutgers, etc.) into the enterprise of that is Creative Orange.
- Orange is often viewed as a source of labor rather than a well spring of creativity, despite the fact that there are many creative people residing in Orange. One example is Hat City, which proves that there were many very talented musicians living here.
- Design is what powers and what must power the economy and universities are a great resource for unleashing and developing design skills and expertise.
- Design is the driver of the economy.
- High Schools must teach design to their students or teach subjects that facilitate or develop design skills.
- Vision can come from higher ed.
- When universities and colleges engage their faculty, staff, and/or students in the community they must have a better understanding of the community it’s history, culture, demographics, etc.
- Campus/community partnerships must be based in equity and their must be an acknowledgement that expertise is also located within thye community. Higher eds should find a way to put that expertise to work.
- Free University of Orange is a good model for higher ed to emulate. Like doctors that provide free service to community clinics higher ed must act similarly.
- Higher Ed should be involved in support pk-12 education, but especially in the high school.
- Higher ed should offer college level courses @ the H.S. and allow H.S. students to enroll in classes on campus. This would be a great incentive to motivate students.
- Apprentiships should be developed for students not on college track so they can develop trades and skills to create.
- Community lacks funding for programs, perhaps higher ed can fill the gap
- Successful creative economies share common features, openness, tolerance, diversity. Another important ingredient is easy access to and partnerships with higher ed. Orange is surrounded by institutions of higher ed. This geographical advantage should be exploited by creative orange.
Session Report #8: How can we address the real issue of crime in our community?

Convener:

Participants: Cheryl, James and Karma

1. Highlights and key points from your discussion: the challenge of having police officers who are friends and peers with the people committing crimes, and the challenge of police officers not wanting to live in Orange for fear of retaliation for the police work.

2. What is your call for action?

1) Karma will look into whether or not an anonymous hotline exists. If not, create one that will be available through phone and tweet.

2) Karma will look into having the Mayor’s office create and distribute a welcome to orange package for newcomers. It would include municipal numbers, places of interest in orange, community groups, etc. These packets could also be distributed in public places.

3) James Hughes will investigate what lower mortgage opportunities might be available to encourage law enforcement officers to purchase homes in Orange.

4) Cheryl will speak to Richard and Valley Arts about initiating a neighborhood watch. There are existing successful neighborhood watches in Orange that could be used as models. James Hughes can also be consulted to get names and addresses of certain blocks and neighborhoods.
Session Report #9: How can we recognize and empower our arts and culture leaders to cooperate -as opposed to compete?

Convener: Mike Griot

Participants:

1. Highlights and key points from your discussion:
   - CROSS POLLINIZATION OF BRANDS THROUGHOUT RESPECTIVE NETWORKS
   - SHARE CREDIT FOR CREATION and EXECUTION
   - IDENTIFY AND AGGREGATE RESOURCES

2. What is your call for action?
   - AS YOU SEEK OUT ARTS PARTNERS, “BE CLEAR ABOUT WHAT YOU WANT…AND EVEN CLEARER ABOUT WHAT YOU DON’T WANT!” (i.e. defend your base agenda w/o guilt)
Session Report #10: How can we support our young and future leaders (children) to becoming more involved?

Convener:

Participants:

1. Highlights and key points from your discussion:
   - There should be more outreach to the youth of Orange to highlight the resources available.
   - Mentoring Programs available for the youth targeting elementary schools on up to college
   - Communication (Surveys to get an idea of what’s out there)
   - More focused view on the academics instead of athletics.
   - Getting more youth involved in community service.
   - More programs in place to teach youth what it takes to becoming better leaders.

2. What is your call for action?

Have a youth counsel to band together so their voice and needs can be heard.

Proposals for Programs:

Engaging the youth and seniors

Business Shadow Programs

School board and businesses in the city of Orange should pair up to create a connection and build a learning experience for future leaders.

Parents being more involved

More leaders should come talk to students in the district to see what is going on and what else can be done.

Getting the programs that are already in place to better market themselves so they will be able to reach out to the youth by using platforms such as social media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Tumblr etc.)

Hosting more events geared to attract children in the city.
Session Report #11: How do encourage participation by kids and seniors in creating and attending the arts?

Convener:

Participants:

1. **Highlights and key points from your discussion:**

*Collaborate with other nonprofits to promote each other’s offerings that relate to kids or seniors

e.g. health and wellness

e.g. SOPAC partnered with the American Heart Association and distributed materials at a performance

*Develop activities that join families – intergenerational programming

Family Fun Night

Use entertaining format for education

Grandparent-Grandchild activities esp since many grandparents are also the primary parent

*Provide affordable opportunities

*Establish a centralized list for area churches, community groups that serve seniors

*Utilize “Creative Orange” website for venues and organizations to announce free and discounted tickets

*Create a phone hotline that announces events and offers (for those without internet access)

*Engage in meetings with senior building residents

*Address transportation challenges

*Have a senior breakfast program

*Be present at area farmers markets and other locations where the community gathers

*Provide Kids and Family programs that are reasonable in cost. Look at existing models, e.g. Newark Museum, etc.
*Bring programs TO seniors (e.g. SOPAC On the Road)

*Collaborate with other nonprofits

*Provide opportunities for continuing education and artistic outlets for seniors

2. What is your call for action?

KNOW YOUR AUDIENCE AND DO YOUR RESEARCH

Tailor materials and programs to your intended audience. Use large print for seniors, provide “tweet zones” for young people. Have senior programs in the daytime. Bring shows to those with transportation challenges.
Session Report #12: How do we build on Orange’s food culture to attract people, businesses and create jobs?

Convener:

Participants: Linda o, jimmy mac, Karma, Leslie d, candage g, merle, Patrick m, Vinnie mazzi, david (theatre), Denise dancing goat, jody

1. Highlights and key points from your discussion:

There are a multitude of food venues: wholesale food processing, greenhouses, ethnic restaurants. But not a big farmers market. No cooking school. No food trucks, vendors.

Annual Italian festival.

There is no central site for food destinations.

No unified brand for food, arts, culture.

There are lots of wine makers in Orange.

No Welcome Wagon to introduce newcomers to restaurants etc.

Regulations prohibit food vendors.

University of Orange is a site for winemaking classes.

No brewery Orange since 1977.

No financial incentives to attract new businesses.

Hot Bread Bakery in Harlem is a model.

2. What is your call for action?

Greenhouse to wholesale to restaurants

Tell the story

Promoting existing

Zagat of orange
Expand farmers market
Branded
Welcome wagon /welcome home wagon
Call to action
Zagat of Orange
Expand/promote farmers market
Welcome wagon
Use of vacant kitchens/commercial
Annual food event
Talk to Hot Bread Kitchen
Signage on main street and at train station, train map
Create a food ambassador, celebrity chef
Adult schools from region, 4 weeks restaurant tour
Brewery
Existing Italian festival
Destination
Change orange restrictions
Dancing goat
Session Report #13: How Do We Celebrate Orange History and Use It to Drive Culture, Creativity, and Innovation?

Convener: Karen Wells, Vinny Mazzi

Participants: Robin Gordon, Beth Toussaint, Toni Abrams, Jody Leight, James Hughes, Pat Morrissy, Judith Morris, Candace Goldstein, Michele Racioppi, Rosemary Aversen, Naeema Campbell, Mike Malbrough, Molly Rose Kaufman, Paula Brent, Maulin Mehta, +1 person whose name we couldn’t read

1. Highlights and key points from your discussion:

Orange has a very rich history and culture. We need to do more to promote this, especially in schools and with youth in general so that they know their history and are proud of it and of being from Orange, so that they want to stay here and come back here to live.

We also need to do better with preserving historic buildings, especially in the Main Street area, and we need to give support to small business owners.

We need to hold the city government more accountable for being stewards of Orange’s history.

2. What is your call for action?

- Collaborate with teachers, school board, Orange Library, and other city organizations to incorporate more aspects of local history into the school curriculum and everyday life of Orange youth and citizens

- Work with real estate offices to hold walking tours to promote historic homes in Orange and increase knowledge among real estate community about Orange history

- Advocate that the city government pass a Historic Preservation Ordinance, establish an Historic Preservation Commission, and make Orange a CLG community

- Encourage people to hold the city accountable and pay attention to what is going on with zoning and codes, ordinances- signage on Main St, etc.

- We need to consider ways to improve the infrastructure of the city – for example, parking in downtown, use of historic buildings, finding ways to promote different modes of transportation

- Update and make use of technology that can help support these efforts, such as Green Maps, Murmur, Orange credit card, getting the city to have more updated system

- Other ideas: museum/gallery/exhibit dedicated to Orange history, Lego project, preserve and restory parks and other green spaces in the city, “make noise”- i.e. attend city council meetings, hold a demonstration/protest,
talk to your representatives, archeology department, 2014 is 350th anniversary of NJ – be part of the state efforts to celebrate this
Session Report #14: How do we change the perceptions of Orange that surrounding communities have & how to welcome visitors to live, work & play in Orange?

Convener: Naeema, Tim DeLorm

Participants:

1. Highlights & key points from your discussion:
   - Orange has a lot of resources that already make it a great place to be, but residents & outsiders are not aware of them.
   - Think about how residents see Orange as well how others perceive it.
   - Make an effort to dispel the myths about the city by telling “what's good in Orange!”
   - How?
     - Welcome wagon education
     - Friday night arts loop with all the galleries open
   - Address negative media by:
     - Getting the good stories out is difficult because Orange lost beat writer from Star Ledger & Orange Path site doesn’t exist
   - We created a list of ideas the media channels could cover
     - Art – new business, cafes, galleries, young designers, art communications, affordable housing, school arts, innovation, honors program
     - Renovate playgrounds, pools, etc
     - Featured restaurants
     - Transportation – accessibility, walkable Orange, 2 trains stations
   - Creativity is the condition sought
     - Artists/crafts/guilds some
     - Selectively recruit artist community
   - Remember that all efforts should be uniquely Orange – keep the energy & personality
   - Need a place for family entertainment
     - Could we revitalize the Movie theater/bowling for families & kids?

2. What is your call for action?
   - Advocate for the creation of Orange Patch
   - Create a local media outlet that tells or “OUR” good stories
   - Find out if DiscoverOrange is still active & can it be used
   - Take control of local political agenda
     - Get assistance from the Citizen’s Campaign – Wendy Liscow
     - Forming shared vision – think city benefits
       - Art events generate $29/visitor in the State of NJ
   - Make arts visible city wide
• It’s important to promote predictable events programs, festivals in a centralized & shareable resource
  • Setup individual council person tours of arts district
  • Could we create an Orange Arts slogan
  • Work with the city gov’t to create or revitalize the BID
  • Make Main St. welcoming with seating, signage, arts, benches & banners
    • Analyze the best mix
    • Attract regional & national?
Session Report #15: How do we consciously brand Orange as a center of Culture and Innovation?

Convener:

Participants: Pat, Iya, Rennie, Scott, Jennifer, Edna, Vinnie, Khemani, Vanetta, Tracy, Maulin, Karen, Jane, Linda, Cheryl

1. Highlights and key points from your discussion:

Perception drives Change.

Pride in Orange will motivate youth/students.

Can we brand the Oranges as one “creative place”? No, Orange needs to distinguish itself first. Orange is “the original”.

There is a small “buzz” about Orange’s creative sector.

Negative perceptions dog Orange.

The story about Orange’s positive momentum is not widely known

There is no unified location for info about Orange.

Pride in Orange begins from within.

Residents’ Pride in Orange is affected by how outsiders perceive Orange.

2. What is your call for action?

Create a unified collaborative PR structure.

Tell “people centered” stories to convey the message.

Collaborative site for all “creative orgs” e.g. Mlpwd on-line

Need a logo and brand

Creative Orange is the brand

Rebranding models: Oakland, Temple Univ, Harlem
Use a social networking consultant to maximize the effectiveness and to link to the maximum related sites

Create a user friendly map to on-line resources about orange

Hoot Suite is a good tool

Virtual education is a resource

Create links between the destinations e.g. dinner and theater

Create a culture of innovation in the schools – will improve student achievement and the overall image.

Creative Orange signs on businesses

Market to empty nesters

Let the kids lead the way
Session Report #16: How do we get the youth active, interested and involved in the community?

Convener:

Participants: Tori Abrams, Amanda Edwards, Brandon Monokian, Fran McClain, Margaux Simmons, Lorraine Jones, Eleanor Howell, Violet Carly

1. Highlights and key points from your discussion:

- Bridge City Hall + Board of Education - increase communication
- Parental input
- Get people to come to churches
- Council people enter schools
- Door to door campaign
- Police department community program - research how to re-start (Ms. Jackson @ OPD) (City Hall)
- Places for block associations to meet and spread the word
- Establish standards and organization
- Create a united orange and erase ward conflict
- Create Oratory Society or Toast Masters for youth
- Mentoring seniors/ youth, establish neighbor connections for people to remain in Orange
- Reach out to Hispanic and Haitian community
- Teach History of Orange (tours, church history, other activities)
- Inter cultural activities. Literacy classes, English/ Spanish
- Inter cultural cooking classes
Session Report #17: How do we loosen our grip on the status quo (habits, patterns, attitudes, perceptions) and allow transformational change to emerge?

Convener:

Participants: Rev. ?? From Unitarian Church, Cate Lazen, Lois Saprastein, Robin Gordon, board member from Luna Stage and 2 others

1. Highlights and key points from your discussion:

Identify areas of “stuckness” be honest about fear, impediments, comfort in status quo

Replace old habits with NEW habits

Examine possibility that “being stuck” is central to identity.

Let go of a “plan” based strategy and allow period of experimentation with creative ideas, exploration of possibilities. Let go of concern over potential for success to encourage risk-taking and multiple solutions to be tested.

Change can happen with a “spark” but for meaningful impact… commitment must be applied.

2. What is your call for action?

Address fears/impediments:

Beaurocrats: extra work/responsibility. Residents: deportation, inability to understand language, work schedules/financial pressures—focus on survival

Change attitudes about what is possible/what Orange “deserves” (“poor us—we’ll take whatever we can get”) Identify what we want. Create a vision for what we need, want, deserve and document it. Example: train station development.

Vote for government representatives that commit to change, innovation, accountability to residents. Get residents to talk about lack of teamwork and work patterns rooted in old ways of operating.

Incentivize outsiders to move to Orange—housing, arts support etc. Ressurect “settlement house” concept that welcomes new residents and gives orientation/support.

Invest inYouth- encourage youth reps in local government. Tap Orng Ink as representatives.
Establish new HABITS that promote positive change. Regular, weekly/monthly/yearly meetings, events that feed the vision for change.

Entice youth who have left for college to come back and raise families in Orange.

Create Orange pops or Orange sparks of change “blog” that highlights anecdotes about change. Transformation. Hope. A newsletter of “transformational storytelling”.

Use Youth to diminish fear of deportation and get people involved and out of hiding. Hiding is a habit. Replace habit with new habits of participation/engagement. Must be REGULAR to become habits.

Build more collaboration with surrounding towns. Stop “habit” of isolationist behavior.

Plan yearly multi-cultural music/food/dance/art event that surrounding towns can come to… that fosters pride in those “in the habit” of feeling shame- being marginalized by language/socio-economic and legal status.

Re. Orange train station project. Shine a light on the reason why the development contractor pulled their proposal and took their business elsewhere: Town hall did not demonstrate teamwork/commitment to timeframes/deadlines. Conveyed obstructionist attitude/inability to work through red tape.

Highlight success/relationship with local police with Hispanic population. He built trust, community and partnership between police and residents in spite of the fact that they are not voting members due to legal status.

“Stuckness” status quo is also COMFORT ZONES. Make “discomfort zones” rewarding, meaningful—send message that change is good. That extra work is rewarding. That coming out of hiding is safe. That engagement/participation/giving is affordable.
Session Report #18: How do we make trains stations catalysts for Econ. Dev. and centers of activities in order to draw people into Orange? How do you make 280 less divisive to unity of city and help reconnect our town & region to itself?

Convener:

Participants: Robin Gordon, Karen Wells, Margaux Simmons, Janet Mandel, Rona Freeman, Becky Doggett, Chris Mobley, Tim Deloron, Richard Bryant, Denise Stennett, Francesca McClain, Catherine Lazen, Judith Morris

1. Highlights and key points from your discussion:

Need to make stations and environs safer, train station 1st portal to introducing community, need more services at the stations ie. Concierge, coffee/newspaper stands etc, issue of walking across bridges over I-280 need to make experience better ie. green, pedestrian friendly, need ways to mitigate I-280 and frontage roads must deal with I-280 look/feel, use corridor around train stations and bridges as connectors, put murals /mosaics at stations use effort to engage community, use recommendations of Heart of orange Plan as a blueprint, need permission form NJ transit to get permission to do murals, need more commuter service/jitney vans at stations, use media to increase awareness Highland Ave Station key to development of Valley neighborhood, station needs to more handicap accessible, more parking, better train schedule, pedestrian friendly, do small performances at train stations ie. poetry, music etc . Rahway “Between the Trains” program, need way finding signs and maps for attractions in Orange, link special train discounts to services in Orange, utilize billboards to educate people about not littering, rename Highland Ave station ie. “Valley Arts Station”

2. What is your call for action?

Create more advocacy around transit equity issues for Orange and adjacent communities
Session Report #19: How do we protect, include & improve lives of vulnerable, non-English speaking students (public education), poor, people who are hungry and/or in danger of losing homes and empower them?

Convener:

Participants: Kimi Wei, Jane Mandel, Joy Simeon

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1. Highlights and key points from your discussion:

TOPIC

Hard to reach non-English speaking community residents and youth / Community Diversity Inclusion

CHALLENGES

Luna created Spanish materials but pulled little audience

How to reach? How to integrate into existing offerings?

SOLUTIONS

Multi-lingual materials

Find projects that relate to issues important to youth (like Haiti program Luna ran after earthquake)

Get word out to kids: kids tell each other and guidance officers help

Identify the communities you want to reach. In East Orange there are many Haitians and some Latinos. Who are the go-to people: church leaders, trusted community leaders

Reach out to youth programs both funded and volunteer-driven for participants

Do not insist on obtaining parental permission. Let youth make their own decision about attending a program

TOPIC

Increase sustainable access for arts programs

CHALLENGES
After funding runs out for programs they end. Don’t grow organically and are not self or community funding, so arts programs are not sustainable.

SOLUTIONS

Space can be flexible. All you need are bathroom, water, space and temperature control (esp heat in winter)

Start programs that are independent of outside funding

See building a volunteer base

Reach out to youth programs both funded and volunteer-driven for partners

TOPIC

Make volunteer, parent and community engagement more accessible

Challenge

Hard to get volunteers engaged in volunteering, donating, sharing

SOLUTIONS

Need a big volunteer database so people don’t feel they must make a big commitment – their commitment of a small amount of time will be put to good use too and will move the project forward

Offer brief hour rotations that come up every few weeks or once a month

Offer well-defined roles and functions for volunteer activities so volunteers can rotate without new people needing too much training and orientation

Offer low-impact volunteer opportunities for events and activities, like: 30 minutes to help set up a meeting space; donate bottles of water

TOPIC

Career development, door opening opportunities,

There are free programs that can be life changers, but few students are engaging with them. They can get free training, coaching, skills and exposure from experts mentors and coaches to participate in competitions and awards programs.

Non-traditional activities lack proven value but can lead to fabulous career opportunities

So what’s the hook? How get youth involved with these opportunities?
SOLUTIONS

All New Jersey counties have School Based Youth Service Program (and SPACE Program). They work in conjunction with school but have some autonomy from the schools and have their own space.

They can host ongoing activities in their own space

This program can serve as an ally by pitching an activity to a school in a partner or sponsorship capacity

They can host an activity in their own space as a pilot/incubation program to see how well it works before taking it into the larger school environment

TOPIC

How to create a better education experience for students, especially in terms of academic achievement

CHALLENGES

Parent involvement

Parents are tired and stressed, have little time & energy to address academic barriers but students NEED that push outside of the classroom

Curriculum may be irrelevant in terms of modernity, literature subject matter may be depressive

Some students are hungry and hunger inhibits learning

Parent participation in school support activities may be limited

PTA meeting attendance is typically low.

SOLUTIONS

Nurture/encourage student success

Read to kids often

Support their interests

Supervise homework

Get to know school environment and staff

Attend extra-curricular and special school activities like shows kids are in
Get food for hungry students through grant programs and donations

Find ways to engage parents in PTA activities outside in non-traditional ways to include and inform more parents:

Give parents easy opportunities to give of their time and resources

Invite parents to volunteer at activities and events for brief periods

Suggest other limited time engagement opportunities

Share meeting minutes with all parents

Inform parents about meeting times

Can include info about meetings and proposed activities in the back-to-school packets students receive before school starts

Send out information via email blasts, text and on paper for those who need paper

**TOPIC & CHALLENGE**

Find ways to overcome roadblocks put up by old guard authoritarians and established procedures

**SOLUTIONS**

Make more opportunities for people to volunteer and make a positive difference

2. **What is your call for action?**

Build community relationships and engagement through networking and open communication channels. Identify community stakeholders willing to engage and share
Session Report #20: How do we weave a tangible web of connectivity among the existing businesses, organizations and educational institutions in our communities?

Convener:

Participants: Cheryl, Mark, Darryl, Valerie, Toni, Brandon, Matthew, Lois, Mike

1. Highlights and key points from your discussion:

Obstacles to overcome: divisiveness, real and perceived, of Oranges. Political environment of Orange that can be impediment to change. The fact that block associations have fallen by the way side and should be reinvigorated (Luna Stage and Unitarian Church offered space).

2. What is your call for action?

1. Contact key players in other areas that have successfully reinvented their communities through the arts. Invite guests speakers and make site visits. Suggestions: Millville (contact Mark Packer of SOPAC for contact there). Red Bank. Asbury Park. Note: in all of these cases, there was an enlightened and organized director of community development in local municipality.

2. Create a regional arts council
Session Report #21: How Do We Welcome Newcomers to the Orange Community?

Convener: Bill Rack and Cindy Solomon

Participants: Tiffany Robinson, Timothy Delorm, Leslie Duval, Georgiana Hart, Grace Livingston, Alfred Johnson, Patricia, Denise Stennett, Carrie Washington

1. Highlights and key points from your discussion:

Need a central place for communication

Need a central place to visit/hang out/bring the community together

Main Street needs to redesigned as a place and bring visual beauty

Need to build community habits of events – ice cream socials, poetry slams, community book readings

Create programmatic activities to highlight/embrace Orange’s history i.e. Hat City Night

ESL residents need to be able to feel like they are welcome too

There’s a need to welcome strangers but also residents. Many of us are not aware of what is happening in our own town

Need to get people out to connect with their friends, neighbors, and town – using a space like a promenade, Metcalf Park or the triangle in front of Hat City (needs to be redesigned to be ped-friendly)

There are no signs, banners or other visual identifiers to identify Orange or its district as a destination

Highland avenue station is unsafe

How do we get the confidence to say “these streets belong to me. I’m a part of this environment.”

Need more eyes on the street

There’s more to orange than the valley district – need to build up Orange as a whole

Underpasses need to be better lit

If everyone abandons the streets, you leave it to the thugs

Need to build capacity on Main Street
Need to be a destination/need to identify destinations

Parking is an issue

Need to build foot traffic so people will spend $

2. What is your call for action?

- Create a Patch (or some other electronic newsfeed) for Orange that identifies events, projects, and other happenings going on in Orange. This will keep residents and potential visitors plugged in to various happenings, especially free events
- Need a central location such as a community center or café/bookstore for residents to be able to congregate.
- Build annual programming for all ages
- Promote/create bicycle network as a way to bring residents of Orange and towns nearby to our home
- Welcome Wagon for new residents i.e. packet of info/coupons; coffee with new residents
- Sign at train stations that say welcome to Downtown or Arts District
- Sign on 280/off-ramp identifying location of Orange’s Arts District
- Need to have a separate BID to clean up Highland station; have police sit at station
- Need to have gateway plazas identifying Orange and Arts District
- Build bicycle network to bring residents together and out on the street
- Mini-community contests among students to create murals for underpasses
- BRANDING!!! Orange Pop! Promotion of Orange needs to relay that we are hot, current, safe and should be aesthetically pleasing, and promote engagement
- Maybe utilize “Slice of Orange” branding to introduce the various districts/neighborhoods in Orange
Session Report #22: How to bring more attention to youth based activities/centers.

Convener:

Participants: Ray Sykes, Joy, Candace G., Ashley R., Leslie, Fran, Grace, Jermaine

1. Highlights and key points from your discussion:

Use Press to bring more attention our youth center OrngInk along with other aspects of communication such as social media.

To use networking through various means such as the high schools by talking to the students and teachers in the form of assemblies and by word of mouth through art directors and music directors.

Engage in widespread promotion through activities and shows such as film festivals and poetry in different venues such as SOPAC, Hat City and Lunastage.

To try to build a perfect sales pitch through the help of Rising Tide business school.

2. What is your call for action?

My call for action is to sustain and build attention for OrngInk through various means of promotion.
Session Report #23: How to Expose Our Youth to Successful Leaders to Create a Better Community And How Do We Become the Village to Raise a Child?

Convener: Karma Warren, Jane


1. Highlights and key points from your discussion:
   - How to fix the disconnect from our youth of today
   - Ways to make easier avenues to connect youth to our community
   - Ways to engage the youth

2. What is your call for action?
   - Create mentorships/internships
   - Alternatives to schools with internships
   - Summer programs that help place students in businesses
   - Addressing the Chamber of Commerce with any concerns or questions
   - Proper preparation for the youth (grooming professionals at an early age)
   - Fixing the challenge that business owners have with connecting the schools and the youth
   - Extending the internship programs so that the students have a chance to properly learn and perform the jobs with confidence and success
   - Start the youth at an early age (middle school) in engaging them to become successful professionals
   - Having an established network with businesses, schools and youth
   - Creating different programs for the youth such as “Community Role Model Day,” “Mayor’s Circle of Excellence,” “Orange Youth Council”
   - Establishing a website of leaders for access to different internships available throughout the City
   - Learning entrepreneurship skills at an early age to prepare and expose students to different professions and how to be successful; teaching proper etiquette for the workplace
   - Breaking down the negative stereotypes that the youth may carry and have learned growing up
   - Expose the students to positivity and encouragement to boost self-esteem and character morale
   - Replicate Orange Ink in other areas of Orange
   - AAA (Athletic Arts Academy) is willing to donate space for community youth events
   - Create Citywide school event to expose the youth to professionals on a frequent basis in the schools
   - Get more schools involved with the City government and meetings, etc so that they know they are welcome to participate and can also learn how local government operates
   - Need more social media to advertise different events/organizations directed toward the youth for participation and engagement
   - Provide computers for every home or provide internet access to everyone
   - More cohesion with the organizations or business units that have similar functions
Session Report #24: How to Bring the World to Rahway

Convener:

Participants: James, Karma, Cheryl

1. Highlights and key points from your discussion:

- Increase police presence
- anonymous tip line
- initiatives for Orange Police to live in Orange
- friendliness with the officers and those who commit crime
- gangs and crime prevalence
- visitors will not feel safe when the crime statistics are high
- known assaults that are occurring in the Valley Arts district

2. What is your call for action?

- James: check on the current programs and initiatives that exist or that can be put into place to encourage Orange police officers to live in Orange
- Karma, James: work with City Hall to create a Welcome Wagon package. Package to include Municipal numbers with contacts, City points of interests and neighborhood watch information.
- Karma: Investigate/create hot line or tweet for residence to inform about crime, update the chief of police about crime concerns
- Cheryl: help to create a Valley Arts Neighborhood watch

A conference call will commence next week
Session Report #25: Organic Orange Gardening Club

Convener:

Participants: Becky, Merle, Brandon, Naeema, Jessica, Grace, Rennie Paula, Ivan, Vinny

1. Highlights and key points from your discussion: Establishing community gardens in Orange to promote sustainable and organic food resources, nutritional education and incentives for farming.

2. What is your call for action?

The Orange Organic Club’s mission is to educate, encourage and mobilize residents of Orange to start their own gardens as a source of fresh, organic, healthy, and free fruits and vegetables.

The Orange Organic Club will meet once – twice a month to conduct research and formulate action plans to implement outdoor community gardens, rooftop gardens, indoor/window gardens, building a sustainable outdoor ecosystem, composting and public space beautification initiatives. In addition monthly events, monthly field trips to successful urban farms, (Jersey City, Maplewood, Orange, and Newark) and large scale farms will be held.

The Orange Organic Club will research and develop literature – electronic and print – for all ages in proper nutrition, benefits of healthy living and gardening, DIY projects, and events.

The Orange Organic Club plans to create relationships with homeowners and City of Orange to acquire backyard space and/or empty lots, respectively, to utilize for outdoor growing space. We propose that land donated by homeowners will be used for seasonal gardening. Produce yielded will be sold at an Orange farmers market and a percentage derived will be given to land donor for compensation.

OOC will encourage homeowners interested in participating to test soil for contamination before gardening in addition to vacant lots donated by the City of Orange. If soil is contaminated, above ground grow boxes will be utilized.

Because gardening and composting goes hand in hand, OOC will also advocate for Orange residents to learn and begin composting. Compost collection systems are another topic of interest to be developed.

1. Form committee and hold first meeting in April  
   1. Committee members: Jessica Mathelier, Vinny Mazzirisi, Becky Doggett, Jamy Lasell, Kimi Wei, Brand Mckoy, Grace, Ivan Wei.  
   2. First Field trip will be held April 24th in Fairlawn for Composting

1. Start a 4H Club with a local club
1. Research backyard habitat and funding by Sustainable New Jersey

1. Identify resources and partnership opportunities
   1. Maplewood Garden Club
   2. Maplewood Community Garden Group
   3. Master Gardener’s Program
   4. Growing Green in Morristown
   5. Garden State Urban Farms in Orange
   6. Senior Home gardening seminar

1. OOC will encourage participation with youth by Showcasing and encourage implementation of widespread school vegetable gardens

1. Civic Engagement Initiatives
   1. Apple seed planting
   2. Lemon Tree Planting
   3. Harvest Festival
   4. Holding Community Meals

1. Create relationship with local restaurants to provide fresh and organic seasonal vegetables/fruits
2. Research composting programs for local institutions and see if a company exists to collect compost for large scale commercial gardening.
Session Report #26: Solving the litter problem in Orange.

Convener:

Participants: Francesca McClain, Mike Malbrough, Molly Kaufman and Joe Landy

1. Highlights and key points from your discussion:

To begin a community and business anti litter campaign. Start a green initiative or recycling system.

Increase trash cans in the business districts and expand to residential areas.

Increase town trash pick up frequency.

Designate community groups and block associations to clean neighborhoods in addition to city workers.

Begin to raise awareness in the schools with poster campaigns and PSA creation in the upper high school level from the media departments. K-6, 7-9, and 10-12

2. What is your call for action? Recruit churches, block associations, and community groups.

Create a theme: “Clean more litter less”.

Tie into the national program Clean To The Curb.

Other resources Book by Malcolm Gladwell—The Tipping Point discusses the broken window theory and how that begins neighborhood deterioration.

Create a “Trashathon” neighborhood and business activity to clean an area and reward the area with Tee shirts and coupons to area stores.
Session Report #27: Swing Dance Initiative

Convener:

Participants: Richard Bryant, Rev. Miguelina, Myra Burks-Davis, Chalandrea, Rennie Resalsingh, Margaux, Wendy Liscow, Kris Wenger

1. Highlights and key points from your discussion:

The goal is to develop a 3-year intergenerational program that targets 4th grade students in Orange, NJ to engage in an afterschool arts program that will teach classic swing dance.

Partners in this initiative will be secured from public and private school administrations, churches, ValleyArts, Orange Township Park and Recreation Department, Health Department, Get Moving, YMCA, Orange Housing Authority, Investors Bank, JP Morgan to be members of the Creative Orange Swing Dance Task Force.

Stage 2 of this initiative will incorporate a complete family participation component and stage 3 will add a one week summer camp component.

The overall program will encourage health, wellness, fun, socialization, family participation, contests (i.e. “So You Think You Can Dance”) for friendly competition between cell groups that will be located throughout the township. While funding will be sought, there will be a minimal revenue requirement from participants perhaps for registration.

It will be walk up friendly, decentralized throughout the neighborhoods. Potential dance instructors will be researched and secured to lead training.

A call to local township swing dancers will be made to create a community event celebrating the art form across age groups.

2. What is your call for action?

Research the following:

Organize Creative Orange Swing Dance Task Force from identified sectors

Set next meeting time (Richard) Thursdays at 5:30pm within the next 30 days

Identify potential meeting places (Firehouse Gallery, Current church)

Get actual statistics for student population in target age group and grade (Chalandrea)
Identify host programs (Rennie)

Map out school and potential site locations for feasibility of students walking to sites (Richard)

Identify dance teachers to participate i.e. Sharon Miller Dance, Dance NJ, Young Audience (Chalandrea)

Locate community swing dancers (Myra)

Create budget

Research other towns with similar programs (Rev. Miguelina)

Guinness World Record for largest swing dance group participation event
Session Report #28: Unified Branding and Communications

Convener: Pat Morrissey

Participants:

1. **Highlights and key points from your discussion:**
   - Gather the stories
   - Sell Orange to inner stakeholders
   - Make it cool to be proud of Orange
   - Which are you bitter v optimist
   - Link to advocacy
   - Ottawa multi media message (Mosika) screening on the library as a screen/ from the train- Monroe Building Banner connected to [www.](http://www.) Light the bridges over 280
   - Powerful words

2. **What is your call for action?**
   - Organizational structure?
   - Monthly meetings where stakeholders co-operate not compete with infied release to media outlets within 30 days
   - Buy-in from major institutions: City Hall, OBOE, Chamber, Valley Arts, HANDS, Library, Churches
   - Theme connects to good stories
   - People centered stories
   - Multi layers segments
   - Creative Orange Op-Ed
   - Public portion of City Council
   - Multiple public venues
Session Report #29: What can be done to support inter-generational and multi-cultural use of public spaces throughout Orange?

Convener:

Participants: Naeema Campbell, Robin Gordon, Rosemary Ivere, Molly Kaufman, Michael Malbrough, Iya Karade, Cameron Jones, James Hughes, Gary Williams, Jamy Lasell, Tiffany Robinson

Highlights and key points from your discussion:

- Perception is important
  - For Example entering Orange from I-280 isn’t very pleasant.
- How do you get Orange to come back?
- How do we get the various groups to build community in public spaces and take ownership?
- Has diversity lead to division instead of understanding?
- Things to do/ Issues to address
  - Safe biking
  - Music
  - Arts
  - Health

- Hat City Kitchen and Public Library are good examples public/private spaces that are heavily used and need support to continue to thrive
- Does Orange have a historical society to document the Past and Future
- Renters’ Paradise? The barriers to home ownership are prohibitive (high property taxes and negative perception of the community by outsiders)
- Emphasize the things school system is doing
- How can we include healthy things people can do
- Make sure residents have access have to public spaces
- Connect Orange to places like Montclair and South Orange and assimilation? Could regular programming of cultural events help

What is your call for action?

- We need to identify the spaces can use
- We need to define what can be done around the space
- Encourage people to take ownership of the spaces
- Do outreach to include the Latin population but translating signs and inviting them to be part of the community
- Re-brand Orange through the use of technology, blogging, positive stories
- Address negative perception and promote the positive stories inn Orange by promoting them on PR Web
- Write our own stories and press releases
- Showcase the improving educational system
- Add lighting to tunnels & bridges
  - Brighten it up with LED lights, solar powered lights and artwork
- Get City Government to do main street improvements
  - Install Bicycle lanes and bike parking similar to European cities
  - Make Main St a place to congregate before and after 8pm
- Encourage re-developers and apartment owners to create dedicated bike parking for residents in their properties
- We identified spaces that people can and should use
  - Public library
  - Orange Park, Central Playground
  - Public Schools through joint land use
  - Abandoned store fronts
  - Ironworks 304 Thompkins
  - Hat City Kitchen
  - Athletic Arts Academy 23 S. Essex Ave
  - YWCA
  - Churches
  - Luna Stage
  - Sidewalks
  - I-280
Session Report #30: What makes Orange Special? What does the world need to know about Orange?

Convener:

Participants: Joe, Molly, Fran, Karen

1. Highlights and key points from your discussion:

Orange is (or was?) 2nd or 3rd busiest main street in NJ

HANDS renovating homes & buildings block by block

Arts District – Galleries and Living/Work spaces for artists

Greenhouse / Earth Oven – Garden State Urban Farms

ORNG Ink Youth run arts collective

University of Orange

Luna Stage Theater

Hat City Kitchen

League of Neighbors

Overall growing sense of improvement, pride & community

HISTORY

Stetson Hats and overall Hats district

Bush family financed built Grace Episcopal/Epiphany

Stickler Library – Mead, McKinnon & (Stanford) White

Carteret Academy – Watson family
Seven Oakes – Colgate family

New England Society

Upsala College (closed)

J&J and A&P started in Orange

RISD started by Metcalf Wool money of Orange

Peppermint Lounge – jazz & music legends (torn down)

Thomas Edison originally lived/worked in Orange when

All of the Oranges were 1 Orange.

2. **What is your call for action?**

   Following models of other rejuvenated historic towns

   Gather smart, passionate group to plan a vision for the future.

   Return building to former grandeur. Recreate downtown as

   Safe place where residents can walk to quality establishments.

   Reduce dollar and similar stores. Clean to the Curb beautification.

   Improve train stations and surrounding areas.

   Harlem turnaround can and should happen here.
Session Report #31: Work Creatively With Youth By Creating A Youth Theater Ensemble

Convener:

Participants: Jane, Brandon, John McEwen and Naima

1. Highlights and key points from your discussion:

How to identify interested kids, possibly through rec. dept. they run a summer program and there may be kids who want to do something besides athletics

Another way is through kids involved in The Space at the HS

Having an open audition/interview at Luna

Discussed what the ensemble would do. The participants would decide what they want to do (work with a playwright, created a devised work, work with existing scripts to do page to stage readings, rehearse and perform a play, collaborate with other artists etc.)

Possible collaborations are with Orng Ink and NJTA especially their Stages Festival which is in March every year. John stated that funding would be available for this through NJTA.

Another source of funding may be from a local bank interested in youth education.

Discussed possible summer 4 week intensive to generate interest in the youth ensemble that would then continue into the school year.

What is your call for action?

Jane will follow up by attending the playwriting session at Orng Ink on Tuesdays at 3pm at Ironworks.

Hold discussions at Luna about how we can incorporate a youth theatre ensemble into the schedule