

City Manager, Mayor Gillmor & City council:

We were shocked and angered at the omission of the seven years of all-volunteer, citizen-led work and contributions of Reclaiming Our Downtown and OQRA in the "Downtown History" portion of the Precise Plan. This omission is unconscionable and needs to be corrected immediately. The reason these groups need to be included is not because of egos or individual recognition. Rather, the Precise Plan is a historical document, and it is imperative that future generations of citizens know that a citizen-led effort made the "impossible," possible. This knowledge could help correct future misuse of power that, in 1963, led this City into this mess. I and our team firmly believe in the words that Margaret Mead stated in the last century: "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has." These words must be passed on to those who live in the next century.

We have drafted our recommended wording that we would like included in this Precise Plan:

A major reason for the return of the Downtown has been a grass roots citizen-lead group named Reclaiming Our Downtown. The group led by Rod Dunham and Dan Ondrasek began with 5 citizens and grew quickly to 4000. This group of citizen volunteers have spent the last seven years educating and surveying the public on the Downtown. They researched the best practices of other American cities and their Downtowns, which led to their advocacy for a strong urban planner, a Downtown Task Force, Form-Based Code, and this very Precise Plan. Based on their own surveys of the public, they focused on 5 key visions: 1) return of the original street grid, 2) Connecting the new Downtown with the transit station through a historical trolley, 3) Protection of existing retailer rents, 4) Mixed-use architecture, 5) Recreation of two to three of the original Downtown facades including the iconic Santa Clara Theatre.

The efforts of this group along with Adam Thompson, past President of the Old Quad, were instrumental in the lead negotiation and eventual purchase of the easement of Franklin/Washington street by the city. He has been honored with a commendation by State Senator Weickowski for his ownership of this task.

We sincerely hope that you can rectify this egregious error and include these two paragraphs into the precise plans history section.

Thank you
Mary O. Grizzle
Donna West