

# Lancaster City Downtowners

*(a special interest group exploring issues relating to retirement in downtown Lancaster)*

## Organization Meeting, September 27, 2004

**Community Mennonite Church of Lancaster, 228, West Orange Street, Lancaster, PA 17603**

1. **Introductions** – 35 persons in attendance introduced themselves with one of the following identifiers: city dweller for the long haul, city dweller for the time being, suburban committed to moving into city, suburban skeptical, country committed, contry skeptical, lurker. Most persons added 15 to 30 second additional comments.
2. **Welcome and background** – Rod Houser, who had called the meeting reviewed preceding events which led to this gathering. Rod had facilitated a forum at Community Mennonite Church on facing issues related to becoming older and had conducted a book study on *From Age-ing to Sage-ing* by Rabbi Zalman. He concluded his presentation with a description of the environment he would like to have in his retirement years and raised the question, “Is Lancaster City a place where I can find this environment?” (Notes for Rod’s presentation can be found at the Downtowners resource web page, [www.herrbrook.com/downtowners](http://www.herrbrook.com/downtowners).)
3. **Toward a shared Vision** – Darlis Myer facilitated a discussion using the following as starter questions:
  - A. What values are important to you as you think about retirement any beyond?
  - B. What qualities or characteristics of downtown Lancaster support those values?
  - C. What qualities or characteristics are missing for you in downtown Lancaster?
  - D. What questions come to mind as you consider becoming part of a downtown community?
  - E. How do you feel about a typical downtown house as a retirement home?
  - F. Would a network of intentional neighbors be important to you as you consider downtown as a place to retire? If yes, identify some characteristics of that intentional neighbor network.
  - G. What topics would interest you for future gatherings?

A very spirited discussion followed. A summary of that discussion is attached to this document.

4. **Next Steps** – Rod asked for volunteers to review the summary of the discussion and propose next steps for future gatherings or initiatives. Margo and Charles Lane volunteered to help. Rod will ask a few additional persons to assist. All persons in attendance accepted the invitation to become a part of a mailing list to share information and announcements. Fifteen persons who had been invited to the meeting but were unable to attend have also requested membership on the mailing list.

*(Note: I had intended to have a brief discussion to select an identifying name for the group but ran out of time. I’ve chosen Lancaster City Downtowners as a working name. – Rod)*

Submitted by Rod Houser, recorder

Attachment: Discussion Summary