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a program that savagely tortured people for nearly 10 years.

Mike Scott writes in the *New Orleans Times-Picayune*: "The U.S. government did torture prisoners of war in the name of its so-called war on terror and, by extension, in the name of all Americans. What Bigelow and [screenwriter Mark] Boal seem to be arguing is that such actions take a deep cosmic toll on the people responsible – whether directly, in the case of Chastain's character, or indirectly, in the case of you and me."

James Oliphant of the *National Journal* writes: "Sequences of brutality pile upon one another, America's moral choices are laid out before the uncomfortable viewer. Yet, Bigelow intercuts them with scenes from other terrorist attacks.... While she and screenwriter Boal are right when they say that the film itself doesn't take a position with respect to torture, its protagonists

clearly believe in its value right up the point where bin Laden is killed. And since the film, despite what its detractors insist, refuses to draw a straight line from torture to critical intelligence, the viewer alone must supply the necessary context to fill in the blanks....

"While critics maintain that Bigelow has stacked the deck, that the telescopic nature of the story conflates torture and the end result in a way that endorses its use, it's not that clear-cut.... [H]er unflinching willingness to make us, as viewers, feel the pain inflicted on the detainees... makes all of us accomplices in the act," argues Oliphant. "The film is about the way our national choices, expressed through our elected government, make us feel as citizens, and about our concepts of justice, security, and revenge. Unlike most politicians and pundits, Bigelow refuses to reduce those concepts to abstractions."

Writing in *Time*, film-maker

Michael Moore also defends the film: "I guess where I part with most of my friends who are upset at this film is that they are allowing the wrong debate to take place," writes Moore. "You should NEVER engage in a debate where the other side defines the terms of the debate – namely, in this case, to debate 'whether torture works.' You should refuse to participate in that discussion because the real question should be, simply, 'is torture wrong?' ... You will be repulsed by these torture scenes but, make no mistake about it, this has been done in your name and mine and with our tax dollars. We funded this."

Are we safer now that bin Laden is dead? Was he still central to the leadership of al-Qaeda and all of its spinoff organizations? Did we sacrifice our own integrity in this long, cruel process?

I left the theater wondering if the years of effort and suffering were worth it after all.

**MCTV Update**

MCTV's Owen Weaver and Cindy Tarail recently filmed an interview with Staff Sergeant Chris Williams of the Montague Police Department, kicking off a new series: *Get to Know Your Local Police Department*. Williams describes his work and some current events. Upcoming interviews will include: Montague's planning for a school safety code in response to the Sandy Hook school shootings, the community policing program that began in the fall of 2012, and public education about domestic violence.

MCTV welcomes viewers' questions for Sergeant Williams or about local police work and public safety issues. Call (413) 863-9200 or visit MCTV online at montaguetv.org to contact the station.

MCTV has been filming events at the Greenfield Savings Bank Community Room including a recent presentation by the SHINE Program that featured health insur-

ance for seniors.

Community producers continue to be active at MCTV, helping to create local programming. Brett Leighton filmed local bands, including Tawdry, at the Rendezvous and at the Arts Block in Greenfield. Oren Clark caught footage of some of the music and activities at the Pumpkin Fest and Weaver created a video with it. Laurel Facey faithfully videos the monthly Discovery Center's Coffeehouse. Janet Masucci films the Gill Selectboard meetings. In September, volunteers helped MCTV staff capture all the excitement of the 2012 Montague Soapbox Derby. Highlights are now being aired, and complete coverage is available to anyone who would like it.

To find these productions, check the program schedule at montaguetv.org. Locally produced video is available on the MCTV website or at vimeo.com/mctvchannel17.

LIVABILITY from page 1

idents. This, in turn, spawned a larger "Working Group" of about 30 stakeholders who have been meeting regularly. The result has been the identification of six focus areas: Avenue A businesses and buildings; Improving Avenue A streetscape; Parks and Recreation and their connectivity to residents; Priority Development Sites; Destination; and Building Community. He said that evening's workshop would allow the attendees to weigh in on each of these focus areas.

Ted Brovitz next addressed the

crowd. He stressed that this was an opportunity for the planner and the consulting team to hear directly from those who live in Turners. "We're here to take notes and listen to you." He also noted that so far the group had identified several areas for potential growth. Those enterprises with the best potential included medical and professional businesses, specialty clothing stores, and general merchandise shops and food services (perhaps niche or ethnic restaurants). Shops for furniture, electronics and appliances, gifts and novelties and sport-

ing goods were seen as having limited potential.

He also stressed the ideal location of Turners. "More than 12,000 cars travel Route 2 each day; about 40,000 vehicles roll up and down Interstate 91." This definitely has the ability to be a destination for some of folks who now just by-pass the town.

Following these presentations, Flinker divided the attendees into small groups of seven or eight. For the next two-and-a-half hours, the groups rotated from table to table corresponding to the six focus

areas. At each table a consultant listened and took notes while the residents expressed their visions for the future of the downtown. There was definite excitement among the "stakeholders," and they quickly engaged the consultants in animated conversation.

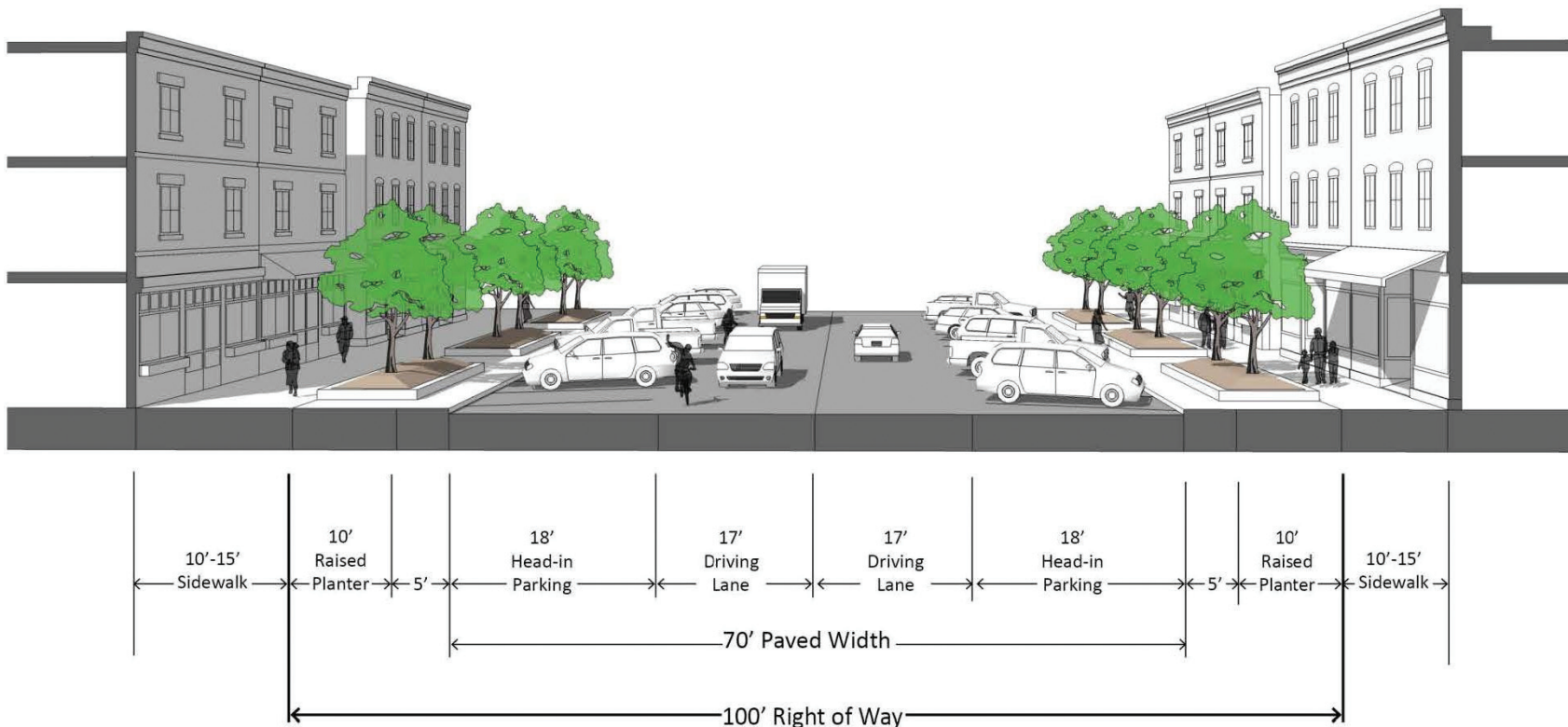
While ideas were different from group to group, a few major themes did seem to emerge. Of major concern was maintaining the population diversity, and that housing affordability not be compromised by "development." There was general agreement that there were too

many vacant downtown storefronts, and that businesses of all types should be encouraged to start up or relocate to Turners.

A number of possibilities were put forth for the reuse of the former Strathmore Mill and the rapidly crumbling Railroad Salvage Building. Among the proposals for the Strathmore was the creation of housing and artists' spaces, a museum, and community center. For Railroad Salvage, suggestions ranged from using the site for building mixed-income housing to high-end condos.

Concern was also expressed about the need for Turners to be more responsive to the Latino population that, according to Brovitz, now amounts to 15 percent of the population of Turners Falls. Similar views were expressed about the need for creating more community places for teenagers. The skate park, originally slated for the final phase of the Unity Park renewal, was stressed as being extremely important.

By the end of the evening, the consultants had volumes of notes to ponder, and they assured the participants that they would take all the ideas into consideration. They will continue to meet with the Advisory Committee and the Working Group to develop the possibilities further. By June they aim to have a full set of data and a large number of recommendations for the town. The consultants emphasized that increasing livability is a long process, but that vision is necessary for positive change to occur.

Turners Falls Avenue A Schematic Section | Prepared by Dodson & Flinker, December 2012

COURTESY OF DODSON AND FLINKER

Attendees were treated to a slideshow of data and schematics, in preparation for the group discussions.



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