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Group wants to revitalize downtown About 50 attend meeting to discuss goals, vision of village committee

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By Don Jovich

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MANTUA -- Preserving the past, protecting the present and preparing for the future are all goals the Downtown Mantua Revitalization Committee wants to achieve.

Committee President Edie Benner said Wednesday's community meeting at the Mantua-Shalersville Fire Department was designed to educate the community about their revitalization effort. More than 50 village and township residents turned out for the presentation.

"We want to garner the support from all of the citizens of Mantua," she said.

Prior to the meeting, Benner said every business and resident was invited to share their thoughts on the future look of downtown.

"This is an excellent project for the Mantua community," Village Mayor Donna Hawkins said. She and her husband, Councilman Roger Hawkins, both attended the meeting.

During the presentation, revitalization consultants E. G. & G., Inc. Showed preliminary sketches of possible downtown improvements and solicited further input from those in attendance.

"Downtown Mantua has many assets -- historic buildings and its location to the Cuyahoga River -- makes Mantua an attractive community to live and work," project manager Rod Garrison said.

He said by establishing a stronger downtown image, Mantua could enhance its economic opportunities and improve the quality of life for residents.

"Improvements would add to the historic downtown appeal and create a stronger sense of place," Garrison said.

The committee's idea is to make downtown more "walkable" and "bikeable" with more spaces for people to gather.

Additional beautification plans included using more planters, flowers, trees, green space and natural materials like brick, stone and wood.

Other goals are to renovate historic buildings and fill them with businesses and services the area needs, as well as attracting jobs.

"We want to make downtown reflect the unique character of the area, serve the community and maintain and promote a 'Mayberry' type of lifestyle," Benner said.