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## **Community News Agenda Takes Shape**

Open Space circle reveals passions of Peterborough Dialogues media makers

Story ideas shimmered, like diamonds in the rough, within a recent Open Space circle for the [Peterborough Dialogues media site](#).

Exploring the principles of “new economy,” which local businesses are already modelling them, the basics of eating locally and preparing healthy meals – these were some of the notions that surfaced, as participants considered who and what in the community piques their curiosity that they would like to make media about. The ideas will be discussed further in upcoming gatherings of the Peterborough Dialogues media working group.

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*Axiom News videographer, Amber Pula, declares her desired involvement in particular media streams using sticky notes.*

Many of the more than 40 ideas shared connect to themes for a new series of Peterborough Dialogues coming this fall. Those themes — new economy, neighbouring, local food and citizenship — emerged during the Peterborough Dialogues Core Conversations, as three different groups of citizens considered how to create a resilient and thriving Peterborough by awakening our gifts and possibilities.

The Aug. 4 Open Space circle also revealed other curiosities and passions people have for their community that media could illuminate — such as a “champions series” on who is doing good work in Peterborough and area, and the best adventures people can have in reconnecting with this place.

The sheer richness of possible stories was nurtured through the collaborative [Open Space process](#). Participants, including community members involved in the three Core Conversations as well as Axiom News team members, shaped the question they wanted to ask around media making and then, one by one, shared their specific ideas on sheets of paper. A number of times, the conversation within the circle sparked new ideas for stories. The ideas eventually covered an entire wall.

Related ideas were grouped by mutual agreement among those who proposed them, and then all participants voted to prioritize the ideas and signal where they want to be involved.

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*Michelle Strutzenberger, Axiom News generative journalist, shares a story idea for peterboroughdialogues.media via the Open Space process.*

As the three-hour session drew to a close, a number of participants said they were encouraged to see how the story ideas matched the themes that have organically surfaced through the Dialogues. It’s a validation of the whole community-building initiative to date. Others appreciated that the Open Space circle clarified where their passions lie and how they want to channel their skills and energy.

As one participant noted, the Open Space circle helped to create a “compass” for moving “into the wilderness” that is the next stage of new, community-building, learning and change initiative called the Peterborough Dialogues.

Lots of elements remain to be explored and shaped — new narrative forms that some of the media may take and how stories could be more widely distributed. Discussion is also ongoing around Generative Journalism, which is the co-creative and strengths-based approach to news narration pioneered by Axiom News and in

practice for the Dialogues media. A workshop on Generative Journalism is in the works as well — one of the learning opportunities arising from the Dialogues.

Sensing what is emerging in the Peterborough community and what matters most to community members, and illuminating those things, is critical to the media-making process for the Peterborough Dialogues.

This recent Open Space circle is one of the first attempts to cultivate the deep field of knowledge, inspiration and innovation that lives within the media makers in the Peterborough Dialogues community and could help shape its future. A jewel for sure that is beginning to shine.

*This story was originally posted on [peterboroughdialogues.media](http://peterboroughdialogues.media), the news site of the Peterborough Dialogues, a local engagement project designed and hosted by Axiom News.*

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