

Sauk County Comprehensive Plan
Steering Committee Meeting Notes
June 25, 2008

Committee Members Present: Blakeslee, Carlson, Davis, Gerdman, Godfriaux-Leystra, Green, Hausner, Iausly, Jones, Knight, Kriegl, Lanter, Ladas, Lehman, Murray, Olson, Robkin, Wenzel, and White.

Others Present: Steward, Tremble, Simmert, Vondra, Wenzel and others.

The meeting convened at 6:40 p.m. Mark Steward, Planning and Zoning Director, asked members to review the agenda. Mark Steward asked members to add time for a break at some point during the meeting.

There were no minutes from previous meetings to review.

Public Comment

Steward asked if there was any comment from members of the public in attendance. Bill Wenzel, a Sauk County Board supervisor, introduced himself and expressed support to the Committee for their efforts.

Communications

Steward reported receiving notification that Ron Churchill has resigned from the Steering Committee.

Nick Ladas requested that meeting minutes be posted on the County website.

Staff Report

Steward reported on the June meeting of the Technical Advisory and Review Team (TART) , which included a presentation by Raphael Carbonel of THRIVE, the multi-count economic development group working to identify and analyze economic development issues in the Dane County and surrounding area. Sauk County is one of the counties involved in the THRIVE project. Steward reported that THRIVE has relevance to the Sauk County Comprehensive Planning process, and that THRIVE will focus on an asset and opportunity analysis might shed light on Sauk County and inform the Committee's upcoming discussions of issues and opportunities. Steward suggested that Mr. Carbonel might be available in the future to present to the Steering Committee.

During the TART meeting, members suggested expanding representation to include more private sector people. Members stressed the need to build flexibility into the Comprehensive Plan, to reach out to local officials who are less enthusiastic about the County planning effort, and possibly to conduct some kind of survey of local government officials.

Continuing Business

Dave Tremble began a discussion of possible Committee rules and structure with a review of the previous discussion about decision-making models. Members considered the various consensus models presented at the April meeting. After a brief discussion, the members decided, by consensus, to adopt the consensus decision-making model that was utilized by the Badger Reuse Committee, which emphasizes a less rigidly formal process, but which recognizes that some decisions will require a “count”, and that in those cases agreement by 70% of the members in attendance (assuming a quorum) would suffice for a consensus.

Tremble then requested members consider the issue of managing communications. Tremble asked members to decide whether they preferred to have a single individual or committee serve as the focus for public communications. Members discussed the need to identify a spokesperson, and also whether to name a Chair for the Committee.

The Committee ultimately chose, by consensus, to not elect or appoint a chair, and to postpone creating any standing committees until a need arises. The Committee will create temporary, ad hoc committees to address specific issues as needed.

The Committee decided by consensus to assign the task of generating “run-of-the-mill” press releases to staff. Such press releases will be distributed to members by e-mail.

Steward distributed copies of the draft Work Plan that included recent additions to the original draft.

Ben Vondra, Planning and Zoning staff summer intern, addressed the Committee with a PowerPoint briefing on the County Profile. He addressed questions, and took suggestions about possible corrections to the draft. The Profile mentions the THRIVE project, and discusses the level of tourism spending in Sauk County. The Profile is currently available on the Sauk County website. Members asked that some of the files be broken down for quicker downloading, that paper copies be distributed to local libraries, and that the name “Blakeslee” be spelled correctly.

Brian Simmert addressed the Committee with a presentation of the proposed Comprehensive Plan website. Brian was able to project a draft version of the website for communal viewing, and walked members through the site features. Simmert discussed the interactive features extensively. These include a “blog” that would identify specific topics and invite for public feedback, and an interactive discussion forum, that would invite public input on a broad range of Sauk County issues.

Simmert made the point that, due to Open Meetings laws, neither Steering Committee members nor Sauk County Board of Supervisors members are allowed to post comments on either the blog or on the discussion forum.

Simmert also mentioned that the proposed interactive mapping feature would not be implemented because of the complexity of administering it and because licensing

arrangements would be necessary with Google, Inc. for the use of their mapping software. Members suggested providing a brief description of the various links (and a warning about their size, primarily for people using dial up email systems); that new technology options be utilized for the children's section ("Kidz Corner").

Generally speaking, members' comments regarding the website were enthusiastically positive.

New Business

Brian Simmert began a discussion of the Committee's shared Values by defining the term "Value Concepts". The Committee then engaged in an exercise to identify individual "value concepts" by writing their own ideas down on post-it notes. Members then began posting their value concepts on large posters that staff had mounted on the wall which were labeled with suggested Value-Concept categories. Members added five new value categories to those provided.

Staff collected the posters and will summarize the input for distribution to members with a memo of explanation. Members were asked volunteer for teams to help draft a Value Statement for one or two of the named categories of value concepts. Teams were asked to submit their draft Value Statements to staff by July 18. Staff will distribute the draft statements prior to the July meeting. The Committee will comment on the draft statements at the July meeting.

Agenda Building

Mark Steward asked members to identify agenda items for the July meeting. Items include:

Discussion of proposed 4-question email survey of key community members. Committee members are asked to generate ideas for survey questions;

The Inventory of Relevant Plans;

The County Profile – suggestions and recommendations;

A website update;

The Values discussion (to be at the top of the agenda)

A "Check-in" on members feelings about the process;

A legal opinion about the Open Meetings Laws and their impact on Steering Committee participation;

Public communications and proposed public events;

Steward suggested that members email addition suggestions to him. He also asked that members look at the November and December calendars to identify alternate dates for Committee meetings.

Public Comment

None

The meeting adjourned at 9:30 p.m.