

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MINUTES

County Board Gallery, West Square Building,
Baraboo, WI

Thursday, February 03, 2011

Members present: Marty Krueger, Joel Gaalswyk, Don Stevens, Peter Murray, Kathy Zowin, Dave Riek, Gerald Lehman

Members absent: Kathy Zowin

Others present: Kathy Schauf, Mike Long, Rob Sinklair Steve Koenig, Jim Shernecker, Gene Dalhoff, Jenny Erickson, Gene Robkin, Steve Schneider, William Mertens, Mark Steward, Jeremiah Tucker, Jeff Seering, Bill Stehling, Bill Wenzel, Fred Halfen, Tom Kriegl

The meeting was called to order and certification of Open Meeting compliance was given at 6:30 p.m. **The agenda was approved on a motion by Murray, second by Gaalswyk. Motion carried.**

The minutes from the prior meeting were approved with a motion by Murray, second by Riek. Motion carried.

Public Comment

William Mertens spoke in support of the Community Forest and the retention of the forest in its existing form.

Communications

Letter from Baraboo Range Preservation Association regarding concerns over ATC line and that it not go through the Baraboo Range.

Page 5 of Spring Green Community Forest Study was distributed.

Business Items

Update: Hillbert Communications build-out. Steve Schneider passed out a sheet that summarized actual to projections. Metrics are in broadband subscribers, roaming sites, mobile subscribers, and fiber optic circuits. Plan is running with fewer towers than originally projected due to a lack of stimulus funds. Hilbert has employed seven persons. Bug Tussel Wireless, LLC has thirty broadband Sauk County sites. They have targeted marketing toward areas they are able to serve.

Update: EDA grant application. Three part site certification is being prepared. Ellis is working on the permits, environmental and detailed diagrams of route. Next steps are to prepare construction bid documents.

Discussion regarding the Community Forest in Spring Green.

Citizen study sponsored by the Town of Spring Green. The study was included in committee member packets.

Process for researching and exploring future use opportunities. How to go about the process, who to include and the timetable. The forest is not zoned. Any process of development would involve rezoning. A re-zone process is initiated at the local level. The County does not have to go through Town approval, even though public notice and hearing are required. The vacancy rate is 60%. Only 40% of vacant lots are developed. Next steps will be to compile research on the property and then to include the town in discussions regarding the future of the property.

Rail and Trail update.

Progress on rail economic impact study. Provide information to local officials regarding the impact of rail so that they have needed information for making decisions about local match requirements for acquisition of the rail. J. Erickson reviewed the results of interviews with the committee.

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Next large stakeholder meeting. Krueger gave an update on where the stakeholder process is at. The Villages, United Coop and Wisconsin Southern Railroad met to see if they could arrive at an initial compromise. United Cooperative and Wisconsin Southern were assigned to do some research and respond to the Villages. A follow-up was held, and a compromise was reached. A stakeholder meeting was scheduled. Due to concerns from local village officials the larger stakeholder group was postponed, and is set to be rescheduled when there is progress to report. Parties continued discussions to ascertain if points of consensus could be arrived at. The discussions revolved around the potential of a shared use corridor. The villages have indicated that they will be considering resolutions that do not agree to the shared corridor concept. It was recommended that the committee hold a final stakeholder group meeting to conclude discussions on the topic.

Consideration of a resolution submitted by Supervisors Robert Sinklair, William Wenzel, Fredric Halfen, and Donna Stehling expressing support for rail banking and a rail to trail conversion for the railroad right-of-way through the villages of Prairie du Sac with the continuation of that conversion through the Badger Army Ammunition Plant property, and connection with the Lower Wisconsin River Recreational Area. Rob Sinklair introduced the resolution and provided background on the studies and processes to date, and why he believed that it is expeditious to consider this resolution at this time. **Motion by Gaalswyk, second by Murray, to support the resolution supporting conversion of rails to trails and move it forward to the County Board for consideration. Motion failed on a three to three tie.**

Consideration of goals and objectives for upcoming year. Tabled.

Consideration of a joint meeting with the Sauk County Development Corporation to discuss joint strategic planning. The committee discussed having a June 20, 2011 joint meeting at the White Farm.

Motion by Stevens, second by Lehman, to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Donald Stevens
Economic Development Committee Secretary