

Economic Development Committee members present: Marty Krueger, Dennis Polivka, Nathan Johnson, Brian Peper, Donna Stehling, Dave Riek.

Others present: Keri Olson, Brian Simmert, Jenny Erickson, Caitlin Shanahan, and others.

At 6:30 p.m. Chair Krueger called the Economic Development Committee meeting to order and certified to be in compliance with the open meetings law.

Adopt Agenda: Motion by Peper/Polivka to adopt the agenda. Motion carried, all in favor.

Public comment: Allocated to the Questions and Facilitated Discussion item on the agenda.

Participant Introductions: All in attendance briefly introduced themselves.

Welcome: Dr. Tracy White, Dean, UW-Baraboo/Sauk County. White spoke about the mission of UW-Baraboo Sauk County and access to education with the UW system. The campus primarily provides the first 2-years of instruction, after which students typically transfer to a four-year campus. White spoke about essential skills employers seek including being able to think critically, work collaboratively, and solve problems. White spoke about the Bachelor of Applied Arts and Science degree program at UW-Baraboo. This degree is designed for nontraditional students. White concluded by talking about the value education facilities provide to the community.

Introductory Remarks: Marty Krueger, Chair County Board of Supervisors/Economic Development Committee. Krueger spoke about a new approach for the intergovernmental meetings to focus less on the budget and for tonight to dedicate time to discussing Placemaking and attracting Millennials to Sauk County. Krueger spoke about using our assets to attract people and business as a county and not just within individual communities. The focus should be to market Sauk County as a collection of communities with unique assets. Krueger spoke about the projected declining millennial population and the need to increase this population to be successful. The Economic Development Committee is working with a Millennial Task Force on the effort. Krueger noted that there is a proposed fulltime position in the 2016 budget to further the placemaking initiative.

Placemaking 101:

- a. Prof. Greg Wise- Director/Community Development Specialist, UW-Ext. Center for Comm. & Econ Dev.

Prof. Greg Wise presented on Placemaking 101 and Millennials. The presentation defined Placemaking from different perspectives emphasizing that Placemaking is multifaceted. It is a process (discovering what we want) and it is a product (actions for achieving what we want). Process is as important as implementation.

- b. Kristin Runge- Community Marketing Specialist, UW-Ext. Center for Comm & Econ Dev.

Kristin Runge presented on Millennials and the differences between the Millennial generation and other generations. Runge's presentation presented statistics on each generation and highlighted some different ways of thinking from the perspective of life stage effects, cohort effects, and media use. Runge spoke about essential community elements to attract and retain millennials such as quality schools, affordable/quality childcare, affordable housing, basic services are a must, recreation, good reliable high speed internet, etc.

“Next Generation Sauk County” Initiative:

- a. Caitlin Shanahan, Initiative Facilitator

Shanahan introduced herself as the Millennial working with the Millennial Task Force. Shanahan introduced the overall initiative goal which is to “Attract and retain adults age 25-35 to live and work in Sauk County, growing the percentage from 11.8% (based on 2010 census data) to 13% by 2020 and by 15% by 2030.” She also spoke about the task force’s goal of producing two strategies. One strategy is to develop a place brand for Sauk County and the second strategy is a ‘wild card.’ Shanahan then spoke about a survey of Millennials and background of the members.

Questions and Facilitated Discussion:

Keri Olson and Jenny Erickson facilitated the discussion.

**What do you like about placemaking?**

Jim Anderson. It’s a cooperative effort throughout the county.

Ed Brooks. It is telling our story.

Donna Neuworth. It is asset based and active.

Ed Geick. It is a common positive focus.

Tom Kriegl. It is forward thinking.

Brian Peper. We have a chance to put the ‘Aww’ in Sauk.

**What makes you uncomfortable about the concept?**

Peper. It is new.

Bill Stehling. Don’t just focus on Millennials, think about others.

Peter Vedro. Make it nice for all who want to come here.

Kriegl. Have finite resources and need to be smart about how we use resources.

Tom Wermuth. Expect a decline in children in the school district. Wermuth spoke about a demographic shift.

**How are you already utilizing Placemaking concepts in your individual communities?**

Jenny Erickson. Noted Fermentation Fest and the Great Sauk Trail.

Joan Fordham. Baraboo wine walk

Bill Stehling. We are investing in education and health care.

Jim Bowers. Village of West Baraboo has a new canoe and kayak launch. Encouraged other communities along the Baraboo River to do the same. Restoration of the Al Ringling theater in Baraboo.

Tut Gramling. Library programs.

Donna Stehling. River Arts Center

**What are we doing collectively?**

Anderson. Last year the Sauk Prairie Chamber combined events from multiple communities together rather than advertising what specific communities are doing.

Dennis Polivka. Fermentation Fest and its expansion into neighboring communities.

Donna Neuworth. A lot of it (Fermentation Fest) is to celebrate farming.

Ray Bolton. Sauk County just got a grant to look into heroin addiction.

Jim Bowers. Fall Art Tour.

Donna Stehling. Mid-Continent Railway Museum, Clown Museum, Crane Foundation, Bald Eagle watching days, the future Great Sauk Trail, etc.

Kriegel. Clean Sweep, ag plastics recycling-- portraying that the place you are living is trying to protect these things. Solar at UW-Baraboo and pending county solar project.

Bill Stehling- Continuum of justice (low crime rate).

Peper- Have multiple FFA and 4-H groups.

**What are additional opportunities for us to work collectively?**

Neuworth. Tours and trail as places to connect and allow people to travel between places.

Ed Geick. Baraboo River traversing our entire county and an asset we don't take advantage of.

Polivka. Make better use of county land and areas along Lower Wisconsin Riverway.

Eric Peterson. Make more commitment to upgrading (county) parks.

Donna Stehling. Every municipality has a unique story to tell.

**How do you see the Next Generation Sauk County initiative playing out in Sauk County?**

Cliff Thompson. When looking at the Sauk Prairie school referendum we have a natural 10% growth pattern. The rest is up to cooperation. Spoke about collaboration between the Sauk Prairie and River Valley School Districts (always working together).

Jim Huebsch. Look at it as an improvement to our school systems (attracting children).

Bowers. City of Baraboo and Village of West Baraboo work in partnership with the Grow Baraboo program. Also partnership between village, city and chamber to welcome new people to the community.

Vedro. Have three school superintendents present and take a moment to honor them and the challenges schools face in the state. High quality education is one of a number of factors the millennial families will look to when choosing a community. Spoke about state funding for schools.

Kriegl. Spoke about great recession and supporting quality education.

Keri Olson asked if those in attendance see a role for Sauk County with Placemaking. If so, how and if not, why?

Rich Marks. Younger people should be running for office.

Erv Borleski. Millennials need to come to the town board meetings.

Eric Peterson. Millennials are not active in government.

Gramling. We don't know how to reach Millennials. Likes the county being involved as it will keep it a place to love, work, and visit. If the county were not involved, concerned that Placemaking will become a vehicle for more tourism.

Vedro. The county can assess where obstacles are before we start doing stuff and this is where active engagement is important.

Anderson. Thinks the county should be involved to alert Millennials about the discussion

Jim Huebsch. Need to continue to be involved in intergovernmental meetings. Need to communicate and collaborate (between units of government). That is where things are going to get better.

Anderson. Sauk County facilitation of a task force with Millennials is key to moving this forward. Also tap into the SKIL program.

Jay Salinas. Spoke about moving obstacles. Be cautious-- nothing can squeeze life out of a concept as running something to many committees and boards. Be careful of bureaucracy.

Keri Olson spoke about the upcoming Sauk County Development Corporation Leadership Forum.

Items for next meeting: Update on Millennial Task Force Outcomes.

Adjournment: Motion by Johnson/Polivka to adjourn at 9:06 p.m. Motion carried, all in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Donna Stehling  
Economic Development Committee Secretary