

MINUTES

LAKES TO LAND REGIONAL INITIATIVE LEADERSHIP TEAM MONTHLY MEETING

JANUARY 8, 2014

Attendees:

Brad Hopwood, Al Taylor, Betsy Evans, Ted Wood, Bruce Ogilvie, Connie Barnes , Kurt Schindler, Monica Schultz (via phone) .

Summary:

Agenda for this meeting was open. Participants set the agenda by naming topics they'd like to discuss. Topics named were:

- What you want to see come out of L2L? What is your vision going forward?
- How are our master plans used outside of our communities? (e.g., explaining to communities how our master plans are used to gain grants)
- M22 update
- Agricultural road development/round table (what is the status?)
- Multiple blue/green trailways– People contacted thus far:
 - John Ester – chairman of Benzie Trailways Commission
 - Barbara Sckerdahl – Vice Chairman of Benzie Cty Recreation Committee – primarily responsible for Benzie County committee
 - Meghan Olds – Al Taylor has contacted her from the Conservancy to talk about the water trails issue.
 - Comment: DNR probably needs to be involved with the trailways commission
- Zoning administrator (Feb 10 & 12th/ East Lansing Feb & March zoning admin certification) NOT online class – in person

Summary of discussions follows the action items & suggested agenda for February meeting below.

DISCUSSION of AGENDA ITEMS

- What you want to see come out of L2L? What is your vision going forward?

Need: One suggestion: we need someone who understands all these systems, how all these systems work, and can bring them all together. We need someone who can understand what are needs are, understand what opportunities are out there, etc.

Question: Is there value to collectively hire someone on a consulting basis? A: Yes.

Example of Charlevoix, instead of an hourly rate, they used a flat fee rate to hire resources. Advantage of pooling resources is that communities together can afford someone highly skilled and with more experience than one community could perhaps afford alone.

Question: Did Charlevoix use a common attorney? A: Not certain, but think it's for everything.

Comment that L2L communities could use legal help with more complex issues such as wind ordinances, medical marijuana, etc. Can see several ordinances with which communities need help.

Brad said we would need buy-in from communities, and some local ZA may draw in other communities based upon their expertise. But L2L needs a path to sustainability. We need a key person in that chair.

Comment: A lot of time is spent searching for grants to fund themselves. We need to be sustainable.

Al Taylor: If we look at our plans, we link to county plans and regional plans. Worried that these plans will go on the shelf and then we'll never get back to seeing how they link to these county and regional plans. Who is/how are we going to keep the linkage going? AND – how do we keep our L2L leadership team going?

A: We may need to have a formal plan to re-invite the county in – make certain that in some way we are tuned in to what they're doing and vice-versa. In regards to L2L team, we continue to have meetings regardless if we have a preplanned agenda (as we're doing today)

Question: Have we talked about developing 501C3 organization? Do you have to go for a 501C3 to be tax exempt?

A: Yes, 5013C has been discussed, and no, we don't necessarily need a 5013C to be tax-exempt. The Municipal Joint Planning Act allows a wide variety of organizations. Many examples in Michigan exist of such groups formed under the Act, such that joint planning can take place across several communities several communities.

Comment: Yes, but that type of organization suddenly becomes a function of government, and not a grassroots effort. If there's an upheaval in government, there's an upheaval in the organization. In a 501C3, opportunity is to keep people involved AND communities independent.

Explore the organizational structures that might exist, whether than create something new – should we join an existing entity? Should we look at municipal joint planning?

Question: How is a municipal joint planning organization funded?

A: It depends on how you set it up.

Comment: We set up L2L by promising each community individual autonomy. Communities may perceive that by joining joint planning may take away the autonomy of each community – with the history with Benzie County not wanted to do planning and zoning, some communities don't want to go back to Benzie County model (e.g. larger, joint planning function).

Comment: We need to work on getting to our small successes. We need to focus on our projects and get some successes .

Discussed potential use of a centralized ZA. Each community will need to decide if they want a centralized zoning administrator. However, communities would be able to afford a really good zoning administrator if one is centralized and dollars are pooled. Zoning Administration requires both education and practical experience. Examples of places that currently have the same ZA are: Arcadia & CLT, Blaine & Elberta – but these examples are

NOT centralized ; those communities happened to have hired the same person. (Arcadia & CLT hired one individual; Blaine and Elberta another).

Question: Who does enforcement? A: The zoning administrator.

One of the most important things in establishing a good zoning ordinance is a good zoning administrator – a ZA's job is to understand and enforce the ordinance (even if the ZA does not AGREE with the ordinance), and alert the PC to problems/inconsistencies/issues within the ordinance.

Question: Could zoning be a service provided by a service hub? Answer: Potentially.

USE OF MASTER PLAN OUTSIDE OF COMMUNITIES

Al Taylor discussed the challenge that most of his community's planning commission supports what they've seen, but question why reference materials deal with such a large area, and why one really needs a master plan. Group discussed that reference maps show what we have in the area (county) and in the communities, which lead to the question how are master plans used OUTSIDE of the community that creates them? The following reasons were named:

- Neighboring communities need to see master plan – it helps neighboring communities plan to incorporate and consider YOUR plan.
- Granting agencies want to see your plan, to make certain it fits with their mission and that you have community support.
- For most grant applications – you need to email the master plan itself. It's a grant requirement. You need to show the "big picture" and how the project for which you're applying fits into your picture.
- Much of the material within your master plan is source material for your grant application. You can use the data and info you have in your master plan in your grant application, and not spend a lot of time looking up information you already have.
- Potential businesses may request master plans to understand the demographics and market within a community. (Sometimes a business such as McDonald's or Meijer's will have MORE market and demographic data than the master plan.)
- Realtors and builders may also wish to use a master plan to show potential buyers about quality of life in a community.

M-22 Scenic Highway Project Update

Al Taylor reached the Michigan Council of Governments – willing to talk the M22 committee – Al also has people from MDOT lined up for a discussion.

BLUE/GREEN TRAILS – B. Ogilvie brought up the agenda item and had to leave so this item was not discussed.

AGRICULTURAL FORUM – It's something to keep track but no upcoming meetings. Date was tentatively is for January 14th need to check with Tim Ervin if agricultural forum is set. **UPDATE: MEETING POSTPONED DUE TO SCHEDULE CONFLICT. Will not be held 1/14**

Discussion of L2L "Hub"

What do you want from L2L as a resource? What would L2L provide?

- Executive director that has wherewithal to keep this momentum going forward
- Need someone with vision – other people can get back to the community, but you need someone with vision and who can work with many communities and expertise.

- Whoever has the most resources ends up carrying the load (move to regional planning part) – if those resources go away, then the org goes away too.)
- Economic promotion - promoting businesses in addition to economic development

Action item request to all from Monica: Please notice any frustrations, challenges, or questions you have as you work on your priority areas. Ask yourself “is this something I need more help with expertise, coordination, etc?” If so, please let Monica know via email at monica@integrationarts.org. You will help make a list of how an L2L “hub” could be of use.

Training Opportunity

Zoning administrator program – Kurt Schindler strongly suggests that if your ZA is not credentialed, please consider sending them to this program. It is the only one of its kind in Michigan. Info can be found at:

Brochure and registration:

http://www.landpolicy.msu.edu/modules.php?name=Documents&op=viewlive&sp_id=2425

More information: http://www.landpolicy.msu.edu/modules.php?name=News&op=viewlive&sp_id=176

Other questions:

Question: If I need more demographic data from B&R, who do I talk to?

A: Send email to Beckett & Raeder. Email addresses should include Tim Ervin, Leah DuMouchel, and John Iacoangeli.

Action Items/further follow-up:

- Double check on agricultural round table for Jan 14th - will it be held?
- **FOLLOW-UP: THIS MEETING HAS BEEN POSTPONED DUE TO SCHEDULE CONFLICT WITH ONE OF THE GUESTS. MUST BE RESCHEDULED.**
- Discuss revisiting involvement of county – how do we keep counties and regions informed of our projects/needs, etc.?

Suggested agenda for meeting February:

Review of next steps in master plan process, including a review of:

- o requirements for record keeping (of comments)
- o suggestions for public forum facilitation
- o commenting to neighboring community's regarding their master plans.
- o incorporation of comments
- o Update on Blue/Green Trailways & M22 scenic highway project

Next meeting: Wednesday, February 12th, 1:30 -3:30 pm, PVCC