

MINUTES

LAKES TO LAND REGIONAL INITIATIVE LEADERSHIP TEAM MONTHLY MEETING

MAY 14, 2014 PLEASANT VALLEY COMMUNITY CENTER

Present: Ted Wood and Betsy Evans (Joyfield), Tim Ervin (AES), Al Taylor (Onkama Township), Barb Farfsing (Bear Lk. Village), Tamara Buswinka and John Iacoangeli (B&R), Sharron May and Monica Schultz (CLT), Connie Barnes (Gillmore), Charles Beale (Blaine), Kurt Schindler (MSUE), Sarah Lucas (NWMCOG).

Presentation: Regional Prosperity Plan, Sarah Lucas

NWMCOG's work with Framework for Our Future or next steps with the Grand Vision corresponds with the governor's regional prosperity plan. He wants to streamline investment and incentivize economic development, especially workforce development and regional planning, especially a regional prosperity plan. Our region is in a position to set the bar for the rest of the state.

NWMCOG is spearheading the development of a regional prosperity plan for the 10 county area. The plan will be a platform that provides resources, communication and regionalizes best practices vs. a prescriptive policy. Lucas thinks that L2L has done a lot that others can learn from. A guide will be created to cover key issues/priorities: land use and economic development as well as arts, culture, community health, housing and transportation. The process has a short time line which limits robust public input; however there are community meetings scheduled and an online venue at www.LetsDecideHow.org for those who can't make the meetings. Drafts will be presented in July/August for public review and input before the October roll out. This will be a working document.

Related efforts include a user-friendly data portal and target market analysis for housing as a resource for developers and realtors, drawn from the region's cities and Villages. The impetus is a regional concern for losing younger populations, who even if they find the right jobs are unable to find affordable housing. Transportation will be included in that conversation, as the inevitable commute from rural areas with more affordable housing results in combined housing and transportation costs that absorb over 50% of income.

The Guide will address talent/workforce development, fiscal prosperity and social issues by providing a list of solutions, strategies and actions communities can take.

For more information, contact sarahlucas@nwm.cog.mi.us.

L2L was invited to attend the input meeting occurring at this same day/location or other similar meetings in TC and Cadillac.

Discussion: The focus on Strategies and Solutions was appreciated. There has been enough visioning and people are ready for action. On the subject of Transportation, Bruce Ogilvie shared that at a recent Benzie Bus meeting it was disclosed that a disincentive to work together with other regional carriers was creating inefficiency and inconvenience. As for short grant windows, Ogilvie suggested the need for Grantors to conform to the bottom up process and civic engagement takes time. Iacoangeli offered that's what consultants are for.

Community Updates

- Crystal Lake Township's public hearing is scheduled on 5/21/14.
- Bear Lake Village is in the process of scheduling their public hearing.

- Onekama Township's Special Assessment District passed and everyone in the watershed pays something, not just those on the shoreline. There was a 99.5% acceptance rate. With the funds they were able to treat and wipe out phragmites last year.
- Onekama Village is working on blight issues, a big issue everywhere. Tomorrow night is a Special meeting for the renewal of a special use permit for the Portage Point Inn.
- Monica suggested that L2L create an asset list of expertise per township.
- Joyfield is meeting tomorrow night and May 29th is the Public Hearing.
- Frankfort thinks they have a new Zoning Ordinance to be submitted to City Council for a vote and is starting their MP review next month. Dredging has started in the bay and boat channels.
- City of Manistee visioning session and online survey are done. They were awarded Redevelopment-Ready Community certification, which has certain criteria to be met, so they have temporarily put a hold on their MP.
- Blaine is having a June 24 Public Hearing.
- Arcadia is being dredged.
- Gilmore Public hearing is May 27th.

Sharron May and Connie Barnes complimented Leah for her smooth handling of revisions.

Discussion: It was noted that Lake Township and other units who have completed Master Plans haven't been participating without a Convention of Communities to draw them in. A Glossary will be put in Tabs 1 and 2 for all townships. Bruce Ogilvie offered that there is one in their Master Plan and Zoning Ordinance that may be useful.

Non-Profit Formation Update, Tim Ervin

The formation of non-profit to drive the implementation process has been started. The governor's office will be designating a liaison for L2L from each department. Tim and John will be meeting with them in Lansing to brief them. The bottom up process is still hard for them to grasp.

Tim met with the Land Trust and is looking to find grant possibilities.

Other Topics

Al Taylor warned Manistee, Frankfort, and Arcadia that he is taking photos of their beaches. Onekama is looking at increasing visual access to Lake Michigan. For community support he was referred to bike groups. He reported that Onekama's Long board contest attracted participants from other states and outside the U.S. He has been reaching out to Chamber and Visitor's Bureau to find out what the M-22 Heritage route's increased traffic has done to the economics of the area. There is no data.

Denise Blakely reported that Rob Carson is redoing the Manistee Recreation Plan with a focus is on trails. The Non-Motorized Trail Committee is looking outside of the city boundaries and Rob has expertise with putting together a 17-county trail system in another state. The next big thing will be Blue Trails.

L2L Requests/Future Presentations

Social Media by Al Taylor - Onekama's FB site gets 240,000 hits/yr. and their Website gets 98,000 page views per year.

Monica wants to put together a Calendar of meetings throughout the summer on different topics, including how to best to handle committee formation. (Suggestion was to focus on one committee, get that going, then move on to the next.) Again it was stressed that the way committees were handled in the past was a turn-off. The list of people on those committees should be notified but the Leadership team will also need to identify and reach out to community stakeholders by topic.