

WASHINGTON COUNTY SITE REVITALIZATION STEERING COMMITTEE

MINUTES

October 28, 2013

The meeting was called to order by Ray Heidtke at 2:35 in 2024 of the Washington County Government Center. Those present included:

COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

Ray Heidtke
Paul Ustruck
T J Justice
Justin Drew
Lisa Maylen
Curt Pitzen
Christian Tscheschlok – Director EDWC

STAFF/OTHERS:

Debora Sielski, Deputy Admin. – Planning & Parks Dept.
Joshua Glass, Planner – Planning & Parks Dept.
Joanne Wagner, Office Manager – Planning & Parks Dept.
Deborah Reinbold – EDWC
David Holmes – Stantec Consulting
Jolena Presti – Vandewalle and Associates, Inc.

ABSENT:

Jessi Balcolm

FIRST ORDER OF BUSINESS

Review of Agenda – Ray Heidtke

Mr. Heidtke confirmed that there were no changes to the agenda as posted to the media.

SECOND ORDER OF BUSINESS

Introductions

Mr. Heidtke gave those present the opportunity to introduce themselves.

THIRD ORDER OF BUSINESS

Election of Chairperson and Vice Chairperson

Mr. Heidtke called for a nomination for Chairperson. Mr. Ustruck nominated Ray Heidtke as Chairperson with Mr. Tscheschlok seconding the nomination. There were no other nominations. Motion by Mr. Ustruck, seconded by Ms. Maylen to close the nominations. Motion carried. Mr. Heidtke opened the nominations for Vice Chairperson. Motion by Mr. Heidtke, seconded by Ms. Maylen to nominate Mr. Ustruck as Vice Chairperson. There were no other nominations. Nominations closed. Motion carried.

FOURTH ORDER OF BUSINESS

Discuss Roles and Responsibilities of the Site Revitalization Steering Committee – Deb Sielski

Ms. Sielski provided those present with some background of the work that has been done over the last couple of years (see attachment). Discussion ensued regarding different types of grants available. Two \$200,000 single grants are possible (petroleum and hazard brownfields). Also discussed the possibility of a coalition grant whereby the County would need at least two other municipalities to partner, offering the potential to apply for approximately \$600,000 in grant funds. Ms. Sielski cautioned that the EPA has not released any of these details yet, so we do not know exactly what the fiscal year 2014 grant funds will be.

FIFTH ORDER OF BUSINESS

Presentation of US EPA Brownfields Grant Program – David Holmes

Mr. Holmes provided a PowerPoint presentation, reviewing the definition of a Brownfield site, the brownfield assessment grant, and showing examples of previous projects and outcomes. Following the presentation, Mr. Tscheschlok asked if a coalition has been done in Wisconsin before. Mr. Holmes stated that this would be the first County led coalition in Wisconsin. Ms. Presti stated that a coalition would appear to be favorable in this County. Mr. Ustruck questioned whether there are any coalitions within the State of Wisconsin other than the one we would be creating. Mr. Holmes stated that he does not know of anyone in Wisconsin other than the DNR who has tried. Mr. Ustruck questioned whether we would be looked at favorably by the EPA if we have a coalition for these particular grants, and stated that he would like to firm up that favorability prior to going through the work it would take to form the coalition. Mr. Tscheschlok stated that there are three tiers of collaboration, and part of this is just functionally how the grant program is awarded. It really boils down to a matter of points and there are a lot of different criteria across different points that the reviewers and graders can apply. The coalition concept is a formalization of the collaboration amongst at least three local governmental entities. Mr. Ustruck questioned whether the County would be “point man” for the grant application. Ms. Sielski stated that yes; the County is the grant administrator. Ms. Sielski further stated that even though we would have certain municipalities as partners, we would look at all potential redevelopment sites within the County. Ms. Presti will facilitate a site selection process with the Site Revitalization Committee to determine the best redevelopment sites. Mr. Holmes reviewed the grant application point process and stated that these grants are highly competitive. You need to score 95 or higher to be awarded. A coalition could score get one or two extra points, and that by itself can make the difference between getting funding or not. Mr. Heidtke inquired as to what would happen if the grant application didn’t go through. Would we be done at that point or do we apply again? Mr. Holmes stated that there have been a few who have applied for these grants up to three times. Ms. Sielski stated that this Committee would have to decide what the next direction would be. No further questions or comments on this item.

SIXTH ORDER OF BUSINESS

Site Revitalization Nomination Process – Deborah Reinbold

Ms. Reinbold handed out a copy of the letter that was sent out to each of the municipalities for reference purposes. The second page is the Site Nomination Form. (see attachment). We received one response, and that was from the Village of Slinger. The third page indicates who the letter was sent to and what their responses were. Ms. Sielski stated that during the 2012 meetings, local entities were all able to come up with a couple of sites. Mr. Tscheschlok stated that there is a disconnect between the meeting with the local entity and the act of submitting the site. Ms. Sielski stated that her experience with the Towns is that you need to meet with them to discuss what is going on. Mr. Holmes suggested there was the possibility that not only local governments could nominate sites, but commercial real estate firms might know of some properties that are sitting out there and not moving for various reasons. Mr. Ustruck inquired as to whether someone who writes up a nomination tells us what they intend to use it for. Ms. Sielski stated that we will be looking at the municipalities' future land use vision for each site. In the grant application, we are looking at target sites and would be telling a story about these sites. This would include how they got that way, what are the potential future uses of that site, what does the municipality envision as a use for that site, and how we could potentially use those funds to get there.

Mr. Holmes stated he thinks the rural sites are ideal for this.

Mr. Justice stated that if we are successful with the grant application, it would be a good idea to conduct an educational outreach event to the Towns to generate other potential sites that may exist in each jurisdiction and provide this information to the Committee to be discussed and evaluated to determine how we want to prioritize them.

Mr. Tscheschlok stated that this is a very informal phase right now as we work to secure the grant. When the dollars are there, people move differently too. Stated if we could do a combination of Mr. Justice's suggestion on education to timing adjustments to try to facilitate the logistics of the communities, we might be able to move this forward with enhanced results.

SEVENTH ORDER OF BUSINESS

Discussion of Next SRC meeting – Deb Sielski and
Jolena Presti

Ms. Sielski stated that once we have a list of sites, we will complete some statistical analysis, looking at the demographics of the area, and looking at the environmental condition of some of these sites. This preliminary information will be provided to Ms. Presti.

Ms. Presti stated that once the grant announcement is released, we need to figure out the best way to sell this coalition, and for this County grant to be successful. To do that, we need to "sell the story" of our target sites. For the next meeting of this group, we should discuss the sites that we know have the highest priority. We need to gather information on the sites and figure out what the issues are.

We need to understand where people have visions in place for what they want to see happen in the various communities. The challenge is to prove the demographic or community need. We have to figure out areas where there may be challenges that we can talk about in the grant applications. There are three main areas: Community plans and visions, selling the community need for either individual communities or County-wide, then partners or potentials for collaborating.

Ms. Sielski stated that after we get a good list of nominations by local governments, we will go back and look at the Comprehensive Plans that have been adopted by the local governments, and analyze the demographics. Mr. Holmes will look at the environmental conditions of those sites. At the next SRC meeting, Ms. Presti will go through this information and provide the criteria that will help this Committee determine our target sites.

The outcome of that meeting should be a list of a couple of target sites that will provide a good “story” for the best revitalization. If we get the grant, we will go through a full-blown site selection process with all of the brownfield sites in Washington County. For the next SRC meeting, we will just be focusing on getting those couple of target sites for our grant application. Therefore, it is really important that we have local government involvement. Ms. Sielski stated she agrees with what Mr. Justice suggested about going out there and talking with those local governments. Doing this over the next couple of weeks is going to be critical because it will take some time for Mr. Holmes and her to do that analysis. If we can engage the local governments in the next couple of weeks, we would probably be looking at another meeting possibly in the first week of December. It would not be appropriate to set a date for the next meeting until we have these nomination forms and we know how long it is going to take for us to proceed and get everything prepared before we have our next meeting.

Discussion ensued regarding how many sites should be selected. Decision was approximately 3-5 sites would be best.

Mr. Heidtke asked if there was anything else anyone wished to add. Hearing no additions, Mr. Heidtke stated that we will wait for the information discussed previously before setting the date of the next meeting.

Ms. Sielski thanked everyone present for being able to attend today.

Discussion ensued regarding the process of creating a coalition. Ms. Sielski stated that one of the things she wanted to get out of this meeting was the direction from the SRC as to whether we want to pursue a coalition. Right now, it is more of a partnership. To form a coalition would require local governments take action in the form of a letter or resolution, stating that they are officially in partnership and in support of this grant process. Stated she is looking for direction from this Committee as to whether it is worthy of our time to ask municipalities to be a part of this coalition.

Mr. Ustruck asked who would be the voting members of the Committee and coalition. Ms. Sielski stated that everyone here is a voting member of this Committee. The SRC could open membership up to other partnering governments. It is up to this Committee to decide if that is something you would like to do. At this time, Ms. Sielski asked if this Committee was interested in having staff pursue a coalition. We will need three municipalities for a coalition. We have one, the County, now.

EIGHTH ORDER OF BUSINESS

Adjournment of Site Revitalization Committee

Motion by Mr. Justice, seconded by Mr. Drew to adjourn. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 4:10 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Debora Sielski
Deputy Administrator
Planning & Parks Department

Approved by: _____
Raymond Heidtke, Chairperson

Dated: _____