

# Heart of the City

January 9, 2006, Café Carpe

Present: Anders Yocom, Greg Misfeldt, Kathy Misfeldt, Mary Gates, Lue Ehinger, Paul Hable, Ron Zimmerman, Cathy Zimmerman, Jill Ottow, Michael Klish, Leslie LaMuro, Bill Camplin, Kitty Welch, Roger Martin, Margaret Martin, Carol Endl, Stacy Endl, Joan Callan, Walt Christianson, Jill Kessenich, Al Haukom, Wilma Haukom, John Foust, Greg Idzikowski

Meeting called to order at 7:00 pm by President Anders Yocom.

Last month's minutes approved.

## **Announcements:**

Andy: NY Times article: Be a Patriot: Live Green

Jill O: State Van Pool information to be posted on website

Mary L: PBS recently aired a Walmart program, she has it on tape if anyone is interested in seeing it. Looks at national impact of Walmart's business practices.

Kathy M: Talked to writers of Walmartopia about bringing it to Fort

## **Inspirational Moment:**

Andy: There is no limit to the amount of good a person can do, as long as they don't care who gets the credit.

## **Treasurers Report:**

\$544.08 current balance. Website has been paid for, stamps and envelopes have been purchased, but brochure printing has not been paid for yet.

## **Speaker: Bruce Haukom**

Bruce runs the Jeff. County zoning department. Has worked with Steve Grabow on Jefferson county plan. Suggested checking out Jefferson County website ([www.co.Jefferson.wi.us](http://www.co.Jefferson.wi.us)) as a source of good geographical information. Jefferson County was the first in the state to complete comprehensive plan. Bruce passed out a poster version of county plan. In 1976 the first land use plan was developed. In 1994 a second plan was developed. The agricultural industry was initially skeptical of the concept of a plan. Steve G & Bruce spent 1 year interviewing and collecting information. A steering committee of 30 people developed 7 scenarios. 2 polarized groups emerged during the process – environmental vs market driven. The resulting plan was a synthesis of the various scenarios.

The agricultural protection plan limits the number of divisions allowed on rural plots. In 1998 the plan went to county board after negotiations with interest groups. The environmental group wanted to purchase development rights, but no money was available. The plan failed 7 – 20 on the first go-around. At that point they got rid of private planner, went back to county board to find out what killed the plan. It came down

to rural planning, as a result the group came back with a simpler program, which was unanimously approved by the county board.

The plan consists of 4 components

### **1) Agricultural preservation area**

Every new house in Jefferson County has to go through public hearing process. Zoning regulations were written into the plan, which made implementation of ordinances easier, townships knew in advance what was going to happen. Realtors were concerned that larger lots would not be available for high-income market. The current plan requires smaller lots, so less agricultural land is used. Previously lots were being sold at 35 acre lots, now 1–2 acre lots. Prices for farmland has stabilized. The plan encourages intensification of agriculture. State of WI allows agricultural expansion regardless of zoning concerns – agricultural use is priority.

### **2) Urban service areas**

Limited growth in rural areas drives development to urban areas. Extraterritorial planning authority: the City has considerable control over surrounding area. Fort has natural open space around city. Carnes park, Hoard farm, Jones farm, wetlands on east side, Hauz Bros. hunting preserve, flood plane areas. Cannot fill wetlands in WI, can fill flood fringe areas.

### **3) Environmental corridor**

Wooded areas, wetlands, no development on slopes over 20%. No more than 1 home per 10 acres in wooded area.

### **4) Rural hamlets**

Since the plan was adopted in 2000, 16,000 acres have been protected. There is much interest around state in Jefferson County's plan. Other counties are having lots of difficulty, people see their rights being taken away.

As supply of lots becomes limited, future plans are uncertain.

### **Q&A**

*How do plans hold up against DOT?*

Land use plans don't have power against DOT plans, although sometimes compromises may be worked out.

*How does the city's master plan relate to the county plan?*

A city's master plan is a detail inset into county master plan.

Successful plans develop from the people working together providing input.

*What was the county's involvement in the controversy over Wal-Mart's desire to develop in the Northwest corridor?*

The City of Fort Atkinson has master planning authority giving control outside city limits. Plans can change based on annexation, county does not have authority once city annexes.

*What is the expected population growth rate in Jefferson county?*

Approximately 1% per year.

The county is currently buying land for parks, which causes controversy – people object to government buying land.

Jefferson County's advantage was that there were already land use regulations in place and people saw that it worked.

Purchasing development rights works well on a small scale.

*In the LaCrosse area taxes on small lot development have gone up dramatically, how might this affect rural development?*

Dept. of Ag. is looking at these issues.

*How quickly could county plan be reversed?*

In theory it could happen in 1 meeting, but not likely in Jefferson County. Bruce sees good support on the conservative side of the county board because there is support for agricultural expansion to balance restrictive aspects.

*What is Bruce's involvement with the Land Legacy program?*

Bruce is not involved, but Joe Nehmer is.

*"The Greater Good" is this the principle that is held up?*

Not necessarily, but compromise often results in good outcomes.

### **Committee reports:**

#### **Outreach/Education**

Brochure delayed at printer, hopefully ready later this week. Ready to mail once we get them.

Several people are already signed up for Speakers Bureau.

#### **Projects**

No formal report, but Mary Linton and Jill K. have met informally about Bark River Day and will be scheduling a planning meeting soon with committee

#### **Public Policy/Govt**

Plan to contact outside groups that are working on goals we have in common.

#### **Next Meeting**

Monday, February 13; 7:00 pm - Café Carpe

#### **Steering Committee**

Jan 23 6:00 Andy & Ann's house

#### **New business**

None

Adjournment 8:20