

Heart of the City

December 11, 2006 – Café Carpe

Present: Beth Gehred, Kimberly Wenger, Mary Linton, Kitty Welch, Bill Camplin, Karen Reinhart, Mary Gates, Joan Callan, Jill Ottow, John Ottow, Kathy Kaufmann, Leslie LaMuro, Ivan Davis, Chris Davis, Cathy Misfeldt, Joanne Moon, Ann Bemis, Elaine Johnson, Ann Engleman, Jose Gobel

Meeting called to order at 7:00 pm by President Beth Gehred.

Last month's minutes approved.

Truth to Power Moment: Karen Reinhart – "How to build community" from Northern Sun Publication.

Speaker: Connie Barbian of Inn Development & Management LLC

Specialize in developing & managing boutique hotels in downtown areas. Generally less than 150 rooms, unique atmosphere. In order to ensure success of hotel projects, they develop community partnerships – work with local businesses, local artists, etc, and utilize locally made furnishings where possible.

Example Projects:

- Eagle Harbor Inn in Ephraim – 48 room Bed & Breakfast/Condo Inn.
- Beloit Inn – Styled after older buildings on Beloit campus. Helped to fund promotions to revitalize community.
- Jefferson Street Inn – Downtown Wausau, mixed use, hotel/restaurant/offices.
- Currently working on project in Mount Carroll Ill. – Campbell Center. Restoration of 150 year old college campus – Education training and Conference center.

Sponsor "Recapturing your Downtown" - Conferences held in Wausau every year, usually October. This year had 170 attendees.

(www.uwsp.edu/conted/conferences/downtown)

Currently in the process of converting lightbulbs to florescent in all hotels, upgrading insulation and heating systems to be more efficient.

Discussed proposed hotel projects in Fort – Feasability study was done on a downtown hotel, came back very favorable. New hotel project developing in South Industrial park may preclude downtown hotel for now, but consultant believes that Fort could sustain 2 hotels.

Green building is becoming more important to hotel development.

Treasurers Report:

None

Committee reports:

Projects:

Community garden at Mason farm – working with Jefferson County parks dept. Next step is to get back together with Joe Nehmer and John Mollanaro. Have identified several groups to partner with. Will be needing publicity for January/February meeting. Also want to do some kind of event (hike, etc) at Bark River to continue momentum of last years event.

Public Policy/Govt :

Working to find another candidate for City Council. Need papers filed by January 2. Report on Ad Hoc committee and City Managers meeting in Whitewater last week. Steve Tesmer circulated nomination papers for his City Council run.

Education & Outreach:

Have been getting lots of good press recently. Leslie is writing an article encouraging people to consider running for city council. Speakers bureau will become active after first of the year.

Website:

New software being considered for website did not work out. John Ottow is in the process of expanding current system, he expects to have it together in the next month or so. Leslie asked about the HOC email address. John Ottow will setup a gmail.com account for Heart of the City.

Old Business

2nd annual Big Heart award nominations:

- Everybody's Café (Restoration of old building, creation of local business that houses owners above)
- School District of Fort Atkinson (transition to Geothermal heating system in 4 schools)
- Fort Atkinson Youth Soccer Association (Soccer shoe exchange)
- City Council led by Steve Tesmer for the discussion of Mayoral Climate Protection Resolution and ensuing Ad Hoc Committee)
- Fort Atkinson Garden club (prairie restoration, community plantings)
- Jill Kessenich/Dale Karau (participation in Rural Leadership Program)
- Ernie & Barb (Can recycling)
- Doug & Tish Erdman (Downtown revitalization efforts)
- Fort Community Credit Union (giving dollars back to the community)
- Blodgetts Garden Center (clean up of land abutting bike trail)
- AAUW (long standing book sale)
- Michael Clish (media support)
- Chris Spangler (media support)
- Dack Wanie (long standing ecological and wildlife-focused efforts)

- Tom Sabota & Greg Greenhalgh (developing & maintaining plantings in parking lot behind Humphreys)

We will need to vote at January meeting for February 14th presentation.

Shop Local Day – Bill Camplin reported on the event held on Saturday (12/9), very important for local merchants to know that HOC is supporting them. Ann Engleman said that the Chamber noticed this event. Will this be an annual event? If so, we should document what worked. Future events should be done a bit earlier. Bill is willing to take it on next year. We can also encourage local merchants to stock sustainable items.

Glacial Heritage – Kitty attended a meeting last week. Looked at maps, identified potential destination spots. Several spots were identified.

New Business

Sustainable Times – printed in Madison. Paul Moderacki will pick up, Beth can get them from Johnson Creek to Fort. Several spots were identified for local distribution.

New study circles starting in January 2007. Kathy Kaufman facilitated Fort circle this fall. Looking for a Facilitator(s) of next session.

Purchase of videos for library – Motion to purchase 3 videos to be donated to library: "The End of Suburbia", "The Power of Community: How Cuba Survived Peak Oil", "The New Intervale". (Jill Ottow/ Leslie Lamuro) passed unanimously.

Joanne Moon: State journal had an article about Madison decorations. They have switched to LED lights as an energy saving measure.

John Ottow: Met with Environmental club – they are interested in putting on an auto tire air pressure clinic in the spring. Most autos have only 80% pressure, which generates 1.5 ton of additional greenhouse gasses per year per car. Bill C: publicize gas stations that offer free air.

Bill Camplin: Al Haukom approached Bill about combining Beautification Council with HOC.

Next Steering Committee Meeting date TBD (normal schedule would place it on Christmas)

Next General meeting January 8, 7:00 Police Station.

Announcements

Literacy Council is moving next week, help is welcome.

Adjournment: 9:00 pm

Respectfully Submitted,
Steve Tesmer