

Town of Hammond Economic Development Committee Meeting

August 20, 2014

Hammond Village Community Center

Members in Attendance:

Erica Demick, YesterYear Vintage Doors
Mike Stock, Riverbay Adventure Inn
Shelly Youngs, Hammond Village Mayor
Howard Demick, Town Board Representative
Mary Hamilton, A Moving Experience
Ron Papke, Planning Board Representative
William (Bill) Denale, Cottages at Chippewa Point
Ron Bertram, Hammond Town Supervisor
Larry Foster, Schermerhorn Harbor
Nancy Williams, Christensen Realty USA

Members Absent:

Tom Weldon, Singer Castle

Others: *Lisa Sarfaty, Rosemary Demick, Val Johnston, Allan Newell, Scott Ouderkirk, Mary Ouderkirk, Lynn Foster, Jake Tibbles (Thousand Islands Land Trust- TILT)*

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm by co-chair Erica Demick.

OLD BUSINESS:

New Business Member: Trevor Garlock, Financial Representative at Northwestern Mutual

Paddle Poker Run

Erica gave an overview of the event. Talked about what people thought about the race. \$6600 was taken in and that included \$1300 of business donations. Still working on getting final expenses together before final numbers will be available. Many people commented on how well run the event was. Comments on what went well/ what could be improved included: having an alternate route depending on the weather, working on the bathroom situation, having more stops to break it up the long distances between some stops, organizing the communications between volunteers, making sure entrants understand rules, possibly having a non-profit group sponsor and/or be involved could help to better market the event. Jake Tibbles from TILT spoke about ways his organization could be more involved.

Regarding the event's economic impact, Erica explained it benefitted the Chippewa Bay Store and produced 1000 hits on the business group website. Hopefully people looked at the info of other businesses listed on the site while looking for registration information. Some of the business sponsors were promoted through the swag bags.

More volunteers are needed if the committee plans to do the event again next year.

Quilt Trail:

Lisa S. explained the newly formed Quilt Trail committee recently made a presentation to the Town Board. They are now making the St. Lawrence County Chamber aware of their idea as they may be able to provide funds that can help advertise and promote this idea in the area. Next plan is to have a press release and a community wide meeting to introduce it to the public. The group also plans to have a table at the Hammond Fair in September. The Art teacher at Hammond School is now involved. The group has permission to use the basement of the Town Hall to organize materials.

Small Business Class Update:

Small Business Classes are being scheduled for Oct. 2, 9, 16, Thursday evenings, 6:30 – 8:00 PM in the Town Hall. They will be advertised in September after Labor Day. Mike will talk to the Small Business people to get them organized.

Tourism & Attraction Info for Website:

Mike, Scott, and Erica will review and enhance this information. Goal is to more clearly explain to tourists what is available in the Hammond/Chippewa areas. Scott and Mike would like to create a map that will provide a visual of “Things to Do and See”, possibly creating an App that pulls up everything that is available. Lisa Sarfaty has a lot of info on her business website that could be duplicated and cross-referenced.

Comprehensive Plan Discussion:

Bill Denale feels 75% of the Comprehensive Plan contains items the committee can't affect on their own including: Land Use, Senior Housing, Agriculture, etc. He feels this will take time if we are serious about making progress on this issue. He suggested a separate meeting of a few committee members who will sit down with representatives from the Town, Village, and Planning Board where time is spent developing an approach that moves us in the right direction.

Jake interjected information about the Consolidated Funding Agency and opportunities available through the Region 10 Economic Development Council (<http://regionalcouncils.ny.gov/>) and explained how TILT takes advantage of these funding avenues. Might be good to look through the info first and see what's available before picking something to work on. Regional projects will get funded over local projects. Jake asked if the committee has developed a list of resources that already exists. It was done for the comprehensive plan. One approach could be to bring in the 1000 Islands Tourism Council or the Seaway Trails agency to help apply for grant money instead of the town trying to do it on its own.

It was decided the September meeting would be scheduled to bring the groups together. Town, Village and Planning Board will be invited. There was a group discussion regarding how to approach the meeting and narrow down items to work on. Mary asked if the committee has taken a look at the vision statement from the comprehensive plan that was developed to use as a guide for future development ideas. Bill read the statement to the group to reacquaint them with what had already been developed as part of the Comprehensive Plan.

Erica asked Nancy Williams if she could provide information to the group on properties available for development within Hammond.

RiverQuest update:

Ron told the committee RiverQuest has been transitioning from using the McClellan Group to their own internal staff so they have gotten somewhat behind in what they thought they would have done by now. He will let the committee know more when he knows.

New Business:

Business Promotion Card

Lisa S. talked about developing a card that promotes visiting businesses in Hammond similar to a “passport” that RiverQuest does now... possibly a “Shop Hammond” card. This can be conducive to the food & beverage industry but not necessarily other businesses. Could have a card that is punched when they visit participating businesses to be turned in when the card is completely punched for a drawing the Committee would sponsor. Have to think about having an end product that the businesses that participate can give out. There will be further discussion on this idea at a future meeting.

Lisa also mentioned she would like to see an Artist cooperative developed in town that would include a gift shop where their products and wares could be sold.

TILT Presentation

Jake Tibbles, Executive Director, explained TILT is a localized nature conservancy that concentrates on smaller tracts of land, focusing on tributaries and inland habitats. It spends time and money developing and maintaining recreational trails to engage children and adults and get them out on the land to enjoy the assets they provide and understand why conservation of these natural resources is important. Looking at it from an economic

standpoint, TILT promotes trails and host events that draw people in. It is interested in working with Hammond to bring awareness to what they have to offer and how it can be promoted.

TILT has just acquired 68 acres in Chippewa Bay. There is already a rustic trail on it but it will be enhanced and promoted so people are aware it exists. This land is located near Mike Stock's business and was walked by TILT workers to see what the preserve entails. TILT would like to see a parking lot created or make use of an existing one. This will require further discussion and TILT will work with the town to develop the best plan for all involved. They are thinking by next year things will begin to happen as the Chippewa Bay Trail is developed... a mile long walk featuring a wildlife lookout station. TILT has the potential to partner with other agencies to make this work. Part of the Comprehensive Plan encourages public access to lands so this attraction fits well with our plan. TILT will be footing the bill and will be advertising it to the region. Mike's business stands to benefit from it as well.

Jake stated TILT is interested in working with Hammond as long as they are interested in working with TILT. He talked about working together to possibly help bring a gazebo to the area. Regarding the Macsherry Trail, there is a full color map that has been developed describing it and Jake will make sure local businesses get copies of these. He offered to come up with a brochure box to that would include a place where town businesses could advertise at the source of the trail. Local businesses that want to partner with TILT could advertise. They plan to put a kiosk and 8 interpretative panels on each trail (at a cost of \$20,000).

Discussion turned toward possible Macsherry Trail signage on Rt. 12. Some members would like to see that improved so tourists can more easily find it. Jake feels he may be able to work with Seaway Trail to get a sign. He would have to work with Alex Bay to put a sign on the other side of Rt. 12. The support of the Hammond Town Board is important when it comes to signage, interpretative panels and leveraging monies for projects.

Currently in Hammond, TILT has the Chippewa Preserve, the Blind Bay Preserve (where TILT is working with Ducks Unlimited and the US Fish and Wildlife Service to enhance and maintain the 23 acres) and the Smith Family land (68 acres) that drains off Pitcher's land and funnels through Chippewa Creek providing a filter for all the ag lands in that area. TILT's next goal is stewardship of these lands. Jake offered to come back periodically to update the committee and keep the lines of communication open regarding ways of work together in the future.

To review the specific ways TILT has committed to helping Hammond:

- 1) Look into installing better signage along Route 12 that will encourage more public use of the Macsherry Trail
- 2) Place the word "Hammond" on all printed and online trail maps that show an overview of the River on the top left - for increased exposure/recognition of our area. [Go here for an example of their map](#)
- 3) Look into installing brochure kiosks at the Macsherry Trail head & Chippewa Bay Trail Head, which would allow individual businesses / attractions to place literature there if they wish.

Next meeting, September 17th at 6 PM

Meeting was adjourned at 8:50 PM.

Addendum:

September 2014 meeting was held via email responses by committee members.

Next meeting is scheduled for October 15, 2014 at 6 PM. Economic committee members will meet with Town Board, Village Board, and Planning Board members beginning at 6 PM in the Village Community Room.