

Town of Hammond Economic Development Committee Meeting

October 15, 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
Nancy Williams, Christensen Realty USA

Members Absent:

Tom Weldon, Singer Castle, Larry Foster, Schermerhorn Harbor

Others: Lisa Sarfaty, Stephen Sarfaty, Merritt Youngs (Planning Board), Jim Pitcher (Town Board), Doug Delosh (Town Board), Patty Belknap (Village Board), Corin Phelan (Village Board), Tom Chapman (Planning Board), Rosemary Demick

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 pm by co-chair Erica Demick.

A discussion of the Comprehensive Plan between Town, Village, and Planning Board members was main item on the agenda. Goal was to better understand what types of projects should be undertaken, who would be responsible for making it happen, and what funds are available for them. The Town Board has charged the Committee with a periodic review of the Comp Plan in order to determine what has been accomplished, what is in progress and what has yet to be explored. The committee has reviewed the plan over the past few months and arrived at a point where it felt it needed further information from the Town and Village boards to better determine the parameters.

Following introductions of those present, Bill Denale read the Vision Statement and scenarios from the Comp Plan to set the meeting tone. Audience member, Stephen Sarfaty, began the process by stating this document is extensive and felt it would be good for each person to specify the one idea they would choose that would make the most difference if undertaken. From that exchange, overlapping ideas could help determine a focus.

Nancy Williams- feels clean-up of the community would have the biggest impact and it would cost the committee the least amount of money.

Mike Stock – feels beautification is good but the committee doesn't have the authority to effect change in that area. It needs the help of the village, town, and planning boards to enforce this. He feels Hammond has a lot of farmland but no orchards. He would like to see someone explore using land for alternative farming and growing organic foods. Would also like to see the committee look at year-round promotion of activities that expand the calendar year to support current businesses and attract new ones, giving people a reason to visit here more than the 2-3 summer months.

Ron Papke – feels the Town Board could pass an ordinance to deal with clean-up and give the code enforcement officer more authority to effect the process. He would like to see the Town Board consider a town-wide clean-up day. Also spoke about the need to explore waterfront development possibilities; to look at surrounding local river towns who are part of the SASS project and already have local waterfront development projects to see how it has worked for them; to reach out to Morristown/Black Lake Chamber to see what we could do in conjunction with them; to join with other towns to develop a series of kayak ramps along the river and kayak trail.

Bill Denale – Feels the idea that could have the biggest impact is improved town-wide internet service. He feels if a town is going to attract any type of business today they need a good internet service along with a gas station, housing, and infrastructure, all of which would spur economic development. Small businesses could be attracted with this type of infrastructure. He stated it's an internet world today and there are many people who work from home and depend on computers to do so.

Stephen Sarfaty (audience member)– Feels broadband is the single idea that could make a difference. In many places 50 MB is not unusual today but 5 MB is the highest offered here and if a town is going to attract businesses, they need improved service. If businesses come, the housing will follow. He wonders if the town and village have the right to put out a RFP regarding broadband in this town.

Lisa Sarfaty – Feels beautification is the key and talked about several ideas for the town, particularly the trails she has already been working on: Quilt Trail and Village Walking Trail.

Ron Bertram – Feels a multi-pronged approach is needed. He would like to see the committee working to make more people aware of this area. He thinks Chippewa Bay has a lot of potential and the Town can benefit, that Chippewa may eventually end up with sewer and water and progress there will be low-key, growing slowly but in a tasteful way. He also feels the town and village can take the lead on the enforcement of cleaning up properties. He spoke of the property tax exemption that is in place and feels it can be better advertised. He would like to explore the economic potential of renovating the present Town Hall back into the opera house it once was and relocating the town offices. He feels if we start attracting more people, we will pave the way for a gas station and other businesses. He also mentioned the Chippewa Yacht Club would like to explore development of a launch ramp for kayaks and ways to become more involved in the community.

Shelly Youngs – feels several ideas would have an impact including beautification: a walking trail along with sidewalks on every street in the village; a village law that enforces cleanup of properties; development of Chippewa.

Shelly updated the committee on Hammond's brownfield issues. She spoke with Bob Santamore and Heidi Ames from the County who are writing an EPA grant to help with cleanup of properties up for taxes that will not sell until the situation is remedied. The list includes the Hammond Service Center on Main Street. If the grant is received they can then do research to determine what cleanup will entail.

Corin Phalen – feels beautification is an important issue. Also liked seeing events like the Farmers Market and Museum events that she attended this year and feels they help keep people interested in staying here to participate rather than going to another town's events. She feels broadband improvement would be good and would allow her husband to be able to work from home a few days a week.

Patty Belknap– feels housing and business rehabilitation are issues that would have an impact. She would like to see more investigation done to find grants for homeowners and business owners to help them renovate their properties, improve or get their business ideas off the ground.

Howard Demick– feels beautification is an important issue. Regarding tax credits given for housing renovations, he would like to see contractors and/or the Code Enforcement Officer provided with information that can be given to anyone who gets a building permit letting them know about the incentive for fixing up their properties. He also feels a conversation with the local broadband company and the Committee would be helpful as well as with state representatives to see what is available to help with broadband. He would like to see both boards utilizing the code enforcement officer more effectively in town-wide property clean-up.

Mary Hamilton – feels the Broadband issue is important if we are going to attract small business, entrepreneurs, and people who could work from home. She agrees that Chippewa Bay has a lot to offer and would like to see a kayak launch area developed in conjunction with any proposed waterfront park. Would like to see us join with other towns who have already created or are looking to create a kayak launch area and develop a regional kayak trail giving people a reason to spend more time and money in the area. Would also like to see more

regional promotion of the bike trail that has been established in our area. She feels the committee should spend more time working with consultants like the county planning department to explore grants that are available and to partner with other towns that have participated in the SASS project and are interested in working together in a regional approach to benefit many instead of one.

Doug Delosh – feels the kayak paddle event was very successful and it should be promoted. Also feels organizing more events that would be unique to the area mentioned two events he has attended

Jim Pitcher- feels beautification is the key. Our area is in the middle of two international bridges and has a lot of potential.

Ted Elk (audience member) – wanted to let people know Ridgeview Tel is another internet service in Hammond He feels infrastructure improvement is needed in the village to include water and sewer. Also wondered if the town could offer its businesses more tax incentives for improvement.

Rosemary Demick– feels we should encourage residents to shop locally to support the businesses we have here.

Erica Demick – feels beautification is the item that would make a large impact. Would like to see a town-wide rubbish pick-up. Feels we should form a town-wide committee to do small things to beautify the town. Feels signage is important to let people know what's here. Would also like to see broadband conversation scheduled with both Ridgeview and Cit-Tele invited along with other towns that may have similar goals.

Three main areas emerged as a result of the discussion and members volunteered to form committees to investigate and develop a plan of action each area:

- 1- Beautification Committee– Lisa Sarfaty, Mike Stock, Corin Phalen, Howard Demick, Nancy Williams
- 2- Broadband Committee – Bill Denale, Stephen Sarfaty, Ron Papke, Ron Bertram
- 3- Waterfront Development Committee – Ron Bertram, Mary Hamilton, Nancy Williams, Ron Papke

Assignment: Each group will have conversations prior to next meeting and will provide update on any progress.

Lisa S. informed the group about a meeting on October 16th at the Village Hall to form an artisan's coop for people interested in selling their wares locally. She also said at least 20 people have committed to place barn quilts on their properties by next year.

Next meeting: November 19th at 7 PM

Meeting was adjourned at 8:50 PM.