

Newaygo Economic Development Organization  
Networking Meeting  
Minutes Friday, October 6, 2017

Scott Faulkner called the Newaygo Economic Development Organization (NEDO) Networking Meeting to order at 11:38 am at The Stream, located at 1 State Rd., Newaygo MI 49337. Colleen Buckley acted as recording secretary in the absence of Kim Goodin.

NEDO Board Members Present:

Ron Armstrong, Jon Bumstead, Scott Faulkner, Mayor Ed Fedell, George Heartwell, Del Hirdes, Eric Johnson, Krista Looman, Cory Nelson, Larry Lethorn, George Suchy

NEDO Board Members Absent:

None

Introductions:

NEDO Board and Guests introduced themselves.

Faulkner discussed coasters located on the tables. An initial supply of 2,000 coasters will be available in downtown businesses to gather feedback from patrons.

Board Exercise: Newaygo SWOT

SWOT surveys were distributed for group to complete.

- What do you love most about our City?
- What would you change in our City?
- What are our “hidden” opportunities that need to be uncovered?
- What scares you about the future?

I Am NEWaygo! Kickoff – Theme Identification

Faulkner thanked Looman and Johnson for their work to publicize the “I am NEWaygo” campaign. The City’s Master Plan is 10 years old, and will be updated as part of the process.

- A. Facebook: “I am NEWaygo!” page has been live for approximately two weeks and has about 250 followers. Johnson stated this page is intended to be a channel for community engagement. They plan to offer surveys, post calendar events and eventually expand to # (hash tag) campaigns. Thus far, there has been good engagement from the community. Johnson and Faulkner are working to control topics and maintain positivity.
- B. PPS/Stakeholder Outreach: Faulkner stated public meetings will be held on October 14<sup>th</sup> at 9:00 am and October 16<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 pm at the old museum to launch “I am NEWaygo” campaign. Suzanne Schultz, former Director of Planning for the City of Grand Rapids will facilitate these meetings.
- C. Faulkner stated that Harry Wierenga, of Fleis & VandenBrink, who has worked with the City for several years, is continuing to be involved in process.
- D. Faulkner updated group on Speck’s work in Grand Rapids and Ada Township.
- E. Walkable City Action-Faulkner stated that Jeff Speck will be in Newaygo October 24<sup>th</sup>-October 26<sup>th</sup>. Speck is the author of Walkable City: How Downtown Can Save America, One Step at a Time). Speck will give a presentation on his thoughts in regards to Newaygo Walkability

Thursday, October 26<sup>th</sup>. Time and location are being determined and will be shared soon. M-37 is scheduled for repairs in approximately 2020. Planners will look to add bike lanes, safe crossing areas, etc. at this time.

#### Discussion:

- A. City of Newaygo Master Plan & Zoning Ordinances Project: Schneider stated that the City of Newaygo Master Plan & Zoning Ordinances will oversee project alignment of various initiatives to produce the Master Plan and expects the process to take approximately 6-12 months. He said that this process is rooted in State Law and encouraged attendees to stay involved with the process and invite others to participate.
- B. Role of NEDO in Master Planning Process: Heartwell stated that Kirk Steudle, Director of MDOT, who has developed a level of expertise on autonomous vehicles will do a presentation at the March 30, 2018 NEDO Meeting. Steudle will discuss how to prepare for a future of autonomous vehicles and traffic engineering to both walk and drive through M37 for vehicular, cyclist and pedestrian traffic.
- C. Development Opportunities: Group discussed many development opportunities for the future. Faulkner stated that most of the future investment of development is anticipated to be in the City. N. Looman stated that the PSD Board is working with Tesla about possibly installing three banks of six universal chargers for electric cars. Group discussed many ideas in regards to universal charges for electric cars. C. Lynema stated that the size and scope of Chamber events should be considered in future plans so that residential areas are not impacted. She said that the Christmas and Logging events are bringing non-Newaygo guests to the area and they both have the potential to grow if more space can be utilized. Chief Andres stated that it is easier to do things locally, within the City, rather than things that need State/MDOT approval, which can be lengthy processes. Armstrong reminded group that working with MDOT will necessitate compromise (i.e. giving up one lane of parking for bike lane) and that MDOT's goal is to move traffic through town as quickly as possible.

#### Comments

Mark Guzniczak recognized Magna for hosting student visits during Manufacturing Week.

Ortwein recommended that interested persons visit other regional cities for walkability and improvements, and suggested Rockford, Ada, Lowell, and Saugatuck as examples.

Schneider said that event space and a river view could be realized if the grain elevator could be relocated. Guzniczak suggested working with them in conjunction with the City Master Planning Process.

Johnson asked about a possible Master Plan Steering committee for oversight and Schneider said he feels that these checks and balances may already be in place.

Motion by Hirdes, supported by Nelson, to adjourn meeting at 1:01 p.m. AIF/MC

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NEDO Chair-Scott Faulkner