

**THE MEETING OF THE EDA BOARD HELD ON NOVEMBER 20, 2014, AT 6:00 P.M., AT
PRINCETON CITY HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS**

The meeting was called to order by Thom Walker. Members present were Mary Chapman, Genny Reynolds, Victoria Hallin, Charles Snustead, and Cindy Riddle. Staff present were Jolene Foss (Comm. Dev. Director) and Mary Lou DeWitt (Comm. Dev. Assistant).

Absent was Grady Clark.

AGENDA ADDITIONS/DELETIONS:

Foss said she would like to give a verbal update on the Mille Lacs County Economic Development Task Force. This item was added under Miscellaneous, Verbal Reports, Tab two.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM REGULAR MEETING ON OCTOBER 16, 2014

CHAPMAN MOVED, SECOND BY REYNOLDS, TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF OCTOBER 16, 2014. UPON THE VOTE, THERE WERE 6 AYES, 0 NAYS. MOTION CARRIED.

UNFINISHED / OLD BUSINESS:

A. Rum River Health Services Computer Update

A company was hired to sell the Rum River Health Services computers that were used as collateral on their Revolving Loan that defaulted. There were a total of 30 computers collected and now have 24 computers remaining after the sale. Those remaining 24 computers will be put up for sale again sometime in the new year.

NEW BUSINESS:

A. MN Design Team Presentation – Handouts

The PACC Downtown Committee asked to be on the EDA Board agenda to discuss the outcome of the MN Design Teams visit. The memo below is what they presented to the City Council at their November 13, 2014 and November 17, 2014 Planning Commission meetings, and wanted the EDA Board to have the memo also.

To: City Council

From: PACC Downtown Committee Members

Subject: PACC Downtown Committee requests and priority of the MN Design Team designs pertaining to Downtown and delegation of other aspects of designs to be supported by a joint effort between the Princeton Visionary Committee, Beautification Committee, Chamber of Commerce, Park Board, Planning Commission, and EDA.

Date: Nov. 13th, 2014

- 1. Requesting City Councils support of Mille Lacs County pursuing “Bumpouts” at the corners along Rum River Drive and along First Street.**

- *Bruce Cochran-Mille Lacs County Engineer has made the initial application for Federal funding. Richard Baker-Mille Lacs County Economic Developer and Genny Reynolds County Commissioner are campaigning at the county level.*
- *County has been given records from 96 accidents that have occurred on Rum River Dr. in the last 10 years both auto and pedestrian, three hospitalizations and one death.*
- *Police Chief Todd Fredericks can speak to the number of “near Misses” that go un-recordable due to lack of pedestrians able to get license plates.*
- *There are other avenues for funding and we request that the city work with the county to help ensure this safety and beautification of our downtown corridor. (See attached notes from Dan Anderson).*

2. Requesting instillation of “In-street Crossing Signs” on Rum River Drive starting at 3rd Street North (Hy Tech/Riverside Park entrance) and ending at 6th Street South. We are asking for two at each intersection: North and South crosswalks-crossing over Rum River Dr. in the center of the crosswalks.

- *We are asking the city to head this addition on the county road and look at funding the signs and work with county as they resurface and repaint crosswalks in 2015.*
- *In-Street Pedestrian Crosswalks Signs are the best way to get the attention of drivers on town streets. Put the sign right in the middle of the crosswalks alerting drivers to Stop or to Yield to Pedestrians.*
- *Available with fixed or removable bases for winter/snow months. Re-attached in spring when foot traffic is at its highest.*
- *When impacted by a vehicle each panel’s reactive spring gives upon impact and is designed to consistently return the post or panel to its original position.*
- *Panel dimensions are 12” Wide and 47” High double sided.*
- *For Minnesota state laws on these signs please visit www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/?id=169.21*

3. Remove the Wrought Iron fencing along Rum River Dr. west of Riverside Mall to visibly and physically connect our community’s public parking and with both the east and west businesses allowing for better access and aesthetics-connecting the community.

- *Installing concrete (etched or terracotta color stained concrete) to minimize the garden maintenance and increase foot traffic around town.*
- *Many of the fence panels need repair or replacement at this time.*
- *The benches and Prairie Restoration planting would remain/concrete areas would be installed around trees and where much of the day lilies are at present.*

4. Plant trees along both sides of 2nd Street North starting alongside Steven’s and Sherburne State Bank down to the entrance of the park per the drawings as a first phase of the “Front porch and Promenade”

FUTURE PLANNING TO ADDRESS OTHER ASPECTS and FUTURE PLANS AND EFFORTS

BEAUTIFICATION COMMITTEE: We ask the City to support the Beautifications Committees request for hanging baskets bracket placed on light poles and budget for hanging baskets along Rum River Drive starting at 2nd Street South to 2nd Street North and 1st Street from the Library to 6th Avenue and budget for winter greenery for 2015 holiday season.

PAVC: We ask the city to continue to support the PAVC of connecting Riverside Park with Riebe Park via a bridge and their efforts to expand the repaving and expansion of the camping sites and a trails through the park.

PLANNING COMMISSION: We make the request to have the Planning Commission research how other cities maintain city sidewalks and snow removal pertaining to sidewalks that are in front of businesses. Current state of affair regarding weed control and snow removal need to still be addressed for the overall health of our business community.

EDA: We ask the EDA head or work on “Motor Vehicle Access” drawings/addressing how we enhance the entrances to the city. Adding gateway signage leading into Princeton working with MNDOT and both Counties to help direct individuals off the highway to enjoy what Princeton has to offer: Food, retail, parks, library, depot etc. Our committee has started this conversation with Sherburne County in February 2014 meeting with both city and county officials at Prairie Restorations discussing the median improvements of trees, grasses and signage. (remember: the city has one large “Princeton” sign in storage).

PARK BOARD: We ask that the park board strategically plan how we as a community can connect all our parks per the drawings designed by the MN Design Team and we ask the City support their efforts on moving forward with possible improvements, additions and maintenance of such future plans.

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE: We ask that we as a Downtown Committee of the PACC look to increase visibility of our businesses, with the creation of a “Shopping and Eating Guide” for the Downtown area. Secondly, establishing a Promotions Committee and looking at how we, united as a city, reach a broader market of customers/patrons that can strengthen our local businesses and additional new businesses.

Downtown Committee

Chair, Troy Minske and Co-Chair Kelly Guptil

*****End of Memo*****

Kelly Guptil (Downtown Committee Co-Chair) asked those present from the Downtown Committee to introduce themselves; Debbie & Thomas Trulson (Book & Bible Store), Elaine Hierlinger (Hierlinger Shoe Store), Shawna Tonn (Real Estate Connection), Troy Minske (Downtown Committee Chair), Carol Ossell (Ossell’s Department Store), and Scott Suhsen (Park Board Member).

Guptil started the presentation by saying that Carie Fuhrman presented them with the MN Design Team visitation idea. The Downtown Committee put in many hours to prepare for the

visit. The Central MN Art Co-Op did the community night where ideas were shared from the community. Over 175 people showed up for that and they gave the results of the survey to the MN Design Team. The ideas shared were those that could be envisioned for the next 20 years. Residents hosted those that were on the MN Design Team. Those on the MN Design Team came with knowledge of a vision that would benefit a community. They spent three days in our community and came up with the ideas that are on the posters displayed in this room.

Guptil said they are asking the EDA Board to head or work on enhancing the entrances to the city. They want gateway signage to help pull traffic off the highway to come into Princeton. We have food, shopping, parks, and a lot more where we want to bring people in to utilize. There is a large Princeton sign that is still in storage. There has been a lot of discussions on an informational board over the years to educate people on what is happening in town. How do we make a physical presence of this signage where events are displayed.

Carol Ossell said a couple who own a business in Cross Lake asked about the experience from the MN Design Team visit. They said they came up from Hwy #169 and there was no invitation that makes them want to come into town. Nothing that invites them to want to exit off the highway into town and the MN Design Team said the same thing.

Foss said she has met with Julia Espe, (School District Superintendent) and the community sign is still moving forward. The process has begun and bids for signage are year and a half old from sign companies and those will need to be quoted again.

Chapman said that she had been on the sign committee and they had wanted signage along the highway. There needs to be something that welcomes people into the city.

Guptil said they want both, signage in town and something on Highway #169. People have to eat and if they are driving along Highway #169 those signs could bring money into town.

Reynolds said it is a onetime fee for highway signage and she believes it is \$1,025 for the fee.

Minske said the smaller signs are approximately three and a half feet and would be \$350 for the application fee and the larger signs are around \$1,200.

Guptil said it would be good to have gas, food, and lodging on the signs.

Reynolds suggested listing the dog park as a rest area. People travel with their pets.

Guptil said it is a missed opportunity that we need to work on. There is a lot of money traveling up and down the highway that we need to capitalize on. They met with Prairie Restorations and the area by Coborn's and Shopko needs to be updated. There is another Princeton sign that needs to be placed in a location.

Walker said the other Princeton sign they are having a hard time to find a place to put it. It

would be nice to be placed on the outside of the town. We did have a property owner that was willing to have the sign placed on his land, but then changed his mind. We need to find a property owner that will allow it to be set on their property.

Guptil said she would love the EDA Board to help with drawing people off the highway to the downtown and also to the Walmart area. The MN Design Team said we need to make some steps showing a viable and beautiful city.

Ossell said signage could be placed also by the Rivertown Crossing area. We need signage directing them to the downtown.

Chapman said a simple sign is what should go there.

Minske said that the Chamber has a problem with the size of the sign. Why do we want to spend so much for a small sign instead of getting a normal size sign. He will have this put on the agenda for the next Chamber meeting.

Walker asked them to forward what they want. The EDA will do what will work and try to make it happen. The highway signs that show food and such would be up to the businesses to get.

Ossell said there is a big sign that says food, gas, and such. How would we get one of those.

Riddle said the businesses would have to contact MNDOT and tell them what they want and find out the fee.

Guptil said they are not trying to pass the buck, but is asking the EDA to do this signage for the community. Other listings that could be on it is the golf course, splash park, hockey arena etc.

Walker said we could see about some of those signs. It would be the brown DNR signs.

Scott Suhsen said the Princeton signage along Highway #169 is not that welcoming. It is a Chamber sign.

Elaine Hierlinger said it is a Chamber sign and they put up what they could afford at that time.

Reynolds said the Chamber also has a billboard sign by the ambulance location on the west side of Highway #169. It is an empty billboard. Some of the boards have blown off and are on the ground. It is in the right-of-way with MNDOT. The Chamber paid for it to be put up in 1999 or 2000. She suggest that the Chamber put something on it, Reynolds does not believe it would be a problem.

Hierlinger said it is something that could be worked on.

Ossell said the "Art Monkeys Design" could work on it.

Walker said if there is some cost maybe the liquor store funds could pay for it.

Guptil said that they tried to look at the drawings from the MN Design Team as a starting point. It took 490 volunteer hours to get the MN Design Team here. A lot of people participated and helped. We have the drawings and what can we do to make it happen. It is a shared vision. They are trying to solve the lack of communication with the public and private sectors. How do we make the town more inviting and prettier. They had asked the Planning Commission to help address the weed control along the sidewalks and streets and also to enforce the snow removal to the sidewalks. Deb Trulson could discuss the fencing. There is a lack of connection on the west and east side.

Debbie Trulson said complaints she hears from shoppers is that there is not enough downtown parking. She wanted to give a comparison between her land and an area downtown. She owns a pasture and they mowed down the grass and were surprised how nice it looked and then took out the fence. Her land looked so much bigger by doing that. This is the same aspect of what they are presenting for the downtown area with the black fence by the sidewalk and parking area being removed. The fence is a visual obstruction. With the fence being removed how do we maintain that area for the next 20-30 years. A possibility is cementing in the sitting areas, but keeping the flowers. The question is how we keep people from walking through the flowers. Big pots would stop that and make it look more inviting. In the summer, the stores have benches by their store fronts. It is inviting. Having hanging baskets on the light post is a great idea and Princeton is known for "City of Flowers". The fence on the south mall area is not holding any weight, yet know removing it could be a problem. The parking lot on the other side is a few steps down.

Guptil said part of the fence could stay where the Prairie Restorations grasses are. It is the bigger fencing that should be removed. Where the day lilies are should be stained concrete. A photo was included with the MN Design Team information and Guptil commented that the photo was taken in another town and she liked the bench alongside a tree with a grate around it would look great. Trees are welcoming. This would be by Steven's Restaurant and such. There are so many options for trees. A birch would be pretty. Walkability is the biggest item so people want to get to the business. The Pizza Barn owners would love to do outside eating. How do we make that happen. They know the mall is not looking good and what can be done to make that happen.

Ossell said she contacted Ken Ziek, (Hydrologist of the DNR) and he said there is no DNR regulations that prohibit our city crews from maintaining our street views. There is no reason our banks cannot be maintained. We are not using the river. She was in Milaca last spring for the Initiative Foundation meeting and after sat in their golf course dining area and seen how clear and maintained they kept the river area. She was so impressed. She asked about it and was told that the City can call to see how we can take care of the underbrush so we can see the river. She has never seen our river area cleaned out. She asked the Boy Scouts on helping clean up the area. The back of the library has a beautiful view and we are not utilizing this. We need a community cleanup day.

Genny Reynolds had to leave for another appointment at 6:51 P.M.

Guptil said that realtors could take pictures and this could help grow our community with having something good to show perspective buyers. We need to show off the river. Having places to eat is a big draw and showing off the river with that could attract people.

Debbie Trulson said the north mall has two entrances and make it where they are equally attractive and also make the back of the mall more attractive. The MN Design Team recommended extending the walkway from the library to enjoy the river view.

Ossell said she read in the 2014 EDA minutes that there was talk about an electric car charging station and would like to know where that is now.

Walker said the Princeton Public Utilities would kick in the power and the charging stations are approximately \$8,000-\$9,000 each. So we are looking for the funds.

Ossell wants one downtown and at Rivertown Crossing.

Walker said there are three types, 120 volts, then a mid-grade one that would take two hours to charge 70%, and then there is a higher volt one.

Minske said he was looking into it and it is much less money, more like \$1,500. He knows someone who has put one in and he is considering putting one in.

Riddle said if he is considering it, he is in the location of where it could be put in. Maybe the EDA could help with the funds. He could keep it up and pay for the electrical.

Guptil said the electric cars are awesome and we need to have a charging station for them, but we need the signage to pull people into town from the highway. She would like the big sign first to pull people off the highway to come into town.

Riddle said the City could not foot the bill for all of this.

Guptil said she would like to have a match opportunity. She would like to have Troy Minske get the charging station.

Chapman said if they review the EDA minutes that are posted online after the meetings, they will see the EDA Board is still looking into a charging station. Lots of Walmart's are putting these stations in their parking lot. We have been talking about it and it is not a dead issue.

Snustead said where do they go for two hours if they come into town and charge up their electric car. Businesses close at 2 P.M.

Chapman said they can go to the Book & Bible store and listed a few other businesses. She then said some of the black fencing is broken and the removal of it would be good. Chapman stressed to the group to push this through if the cost is minimal. Some items suggested from the MN Design Team is very high in the cost, but other items are not. She has been to cities that have the in-street crossing signs and it does slow traffic down. People won't be afraid to cross the street with the signs up.

Guptil said she gave this presentation to the Planning Commission Board and one of the Board members commented that they work downtown and that a neighboring business downtown has stopped parking by their business so the parking issue is better. The problem now is crossing the street because the snow plows is leaving behind icy streets and then the mounds of snow pushed up by the sidewalks that you have to try to climb over. Another Planning Commission member commented that the Public Works needs 24 hours to remove the snow and Guptil said she told them a business cannot take the loss of money in a 24 hour time frame. She had asked the Planning Commission to help regulate the snow removal on the sidewalks.

Ossell said the Princeton Union Eagle newspaper had an article on the proposed bump outs and this was also discussed at the Planning Commission meeting. Ossell had talked to Representative Erickson and Senator Brown and they gave her names of people to contact on this. Genny Reynolds has been talking to Bruce Cochran (Mille Lacs County Engineer) and Richard Baker (Mille Lacs County Economic Developer) to help the process move forward. They are trying to initiate this because of the safety. The MN Design Team recommended that we make the roads safe. Chief Fredrick gave her the incident numbers from pedestrians that were hit crossing the street, she does not have the numbers with her. She does not want to have another life lost or an injury with crossing Rum River Drive. The near misses do not count per Fredrick because they do not have a license plate number and they need that to make it a number count. She sent this information to Mark Karnowski, Jolene Foss, and a couple of other people. The City has to respond to this.

Debbie Trulson said Mille Lacs Country would hold for a bit on the resurfacing of Rum River Drive so information can be put together for the bump outs.

Ossell said Bruce Cochran said he would write the grant for bump outs and she welcomes that help.

Guptil said she wants to know why our Police Department does not issue City tickets. What is the cost to do the City tickets instead of State tickets.

Walker said it was "Administration Fines" that the Police were issuing and the State Statute says we cannot do that anymore. It is the surcharge that is the biggest money that is tacked on to the ticket and those funds go to the State.

Guptil said she had spoken to Chief Payne and he told her he is not in the business of giving tickets. Why aren't they stopping the person that is speeding. It is a greater loss to the

community instead of looking at the pocket book of the speeder. She lived in Edina and they had quotas that had to be met and they gave out tickets. She would like to know what the Police brought in for tickets for 2013.

Walker said the State and County gets most of the money. The Police Officer might have to go to court for a ticket and that could be overtime.

Hallin said they pull people over.

Guptil said you do not see Police downtown so they are not pulling people over.

Riddle said it ties into if there are tickets given out in town will they want to come into town.

Hierlinger said everyday when she goes home there is a Police Officer on County Road #4. Zimmerman hires someone from Sherburne County to do tickets there. How can they do it and we cannot. City of Zimmerman pays for it so they should be getting the fee and it must be worth the expense.

Chapman commented that if it slows someone down who cares who gets the money. It's about safety.

Ossell thanked the EDA Board for having them make this presentation. She would like to be made aware of the progress of what is happening with the items brought up tonight. The Princeton Union Eagle has a great article.

B. Community Calendar – Handout

Cindy Riddle wrote a memo in regards to the Community Calendar:

During the MN Design Team (MNDT) visit September 25-28 2014, the entire community was invited to critically think through the challenges and needs of Princeton. The MNDT concluded their visit with recommendations. With an overall theme of connections, they focused on communication and architecture.

The splashy artist rendering of projected architectural changes to the riverfront have already garnered the attention of many in the community, local groups are working to find money to move forward on those objectives. The second main recommendation was improved communications between groups, work, neighbors, etc.

MNDT lead Bruce Koprucki spoke about how this communication piece really just needs one person to bring it all together. Luckily for Princeton one person was willing to step in. The result: www.calendarprinceton.com strives to be the "communication connection" solution. This comprehensive community calendar combines the calendars of 35+ local organizations, churches, business, and clubs to promote all local events that are open to the public in one FREE easy to find place.

WWW.calendarprinceton.com is for the community and needs community involvement to succeed. You can get involved by using the calendar, look for activities, attend the ones that interest you, tell your friends, submit information on events you know about, shop with our advertisers. You can even save a shortcut button on your smartphone's home page for easier use!

This website is already live and being used daily. It has been privately funded and we are not asking the city for any funds at this time.

*****End of memo*****

Cindy Riddle said because of a lack of communication and connections that she took it upon herself to do a community calendar with the website as www.calendarprinceton.com. She got approval today that a handout information on this will go out to the students at the schools. She is averaging 56.8 items posted per week. She has privately funded it herself. She has linked to Explore MN site. She still needs county information and will contact Mille Lacs Tourism. This is smart phone friendly website. Everything comes through her that is displayed on the calendar. If information is missing she will contact them before putting it on the calendar.

Foss thanked Riddle for doing this community web calendar.

C. Blue Egg Bakery Possible Revolving Loan Application – Verbal

Foss said this bakery is out of Elk River and they would like to bring baked goods to the site next to the Princeton Meat Market where they have a site inside their building that would work for this. Steve Jackson, City Finance Director has a number of concerns and the applicant is replying to them. This will be on the next EDA Board meeting.

Snustead said that he has been reviewing their application and he also has questions that he has spoken to Jackson about. They have had losses for two years and what he has seen on their documents is really not good. The current liability and assets are not good. Snustead would like to know what the current amount of long term debt is and what the current amount of debt payments are.

Riddle asked what they need the money for if they are bringing the baked goods here.

Foss said for a vehicle to transfer the goods.

Snustead said they are requesting \$24,900 for equipment and a vehicle.

Walker asked why they need funds from the Revolving Loan for a delivery vehicle.

Riddle said the same, she does not like it.

Foss will have their application information and have them attend the next EDA meeting.

Riddle had another appointment and left at 7:34 P.M.

MISCELLANEOUS:

A. EDA Balance Sheet

The EDA Board had no comments.

Foss commented that she did go over the current/on-going Economic Development Projects list from what the EDA Board ranked what they thought was important. She has that available if any of the EDA Board would like to review. She also has received the presentation of the Regional Housing Study and will share it with the EDA Board once it is broken down. She has a meeting setup with Rick Prescott on the Robotic Program. Courses are available for free for some of the machining and she will keep the EDA updated on it.

B. Verbal Report

1) Board Vacancies – Handout

DeWitt handed out a list of the City Board vacancies that are available for 2015. She encouraged the EDA Board that if they know of a City resident that is interested on being a board member to have them contact City Hall and we can give them the application. The deadline date is December 5, 2014 at 3:00 P.M.

2) Mille Lacs County Economic Development Task Force Update

Foss said that Mille Lacs County will be making some zoning changes that will have less restrictions and those should be completed by July 1st. They are trying to make life easier for land use owners. Princeton and Greenbush Townships have their own Zoning Administration. Mille Lacs County has a task force that is created for future growth and will help facilitate meeting that would pertain to the City and the townships in a two mile radius of the City. This might help the City and Township work together in a more cohesive manner.

C. City Council and Planning Commission Minutes for October, 2014

The EDA Board had no comments.

HALLIN MOVED, SECOND BY CHAPMAN, TO ADJOURN THE MEETING. UPON THE VOTE, THERE WERE 6 AYES, 0 NAYS. MOTION CARRIED. THE MEETING ADJOURNED AT 7:37 P.M.

ATTEST:

Thom Walker, President

Mary Lou DeWitt, Comm. Dev. Assistant