



A collaboration of business owners, property owners, local officials and individuals dedicated to the revitalization and growth of Caro's downtown and the surrounding business area!

Blueprint Advisory Facilitation Board Meeting Minutes • August 12, 2009

1. Meeting called to order at 7:02 p.m.
2. Roll Call/Attendees

Attendance	Name	Position	Term
Absent	Mike Bauerschmidt	Member	Concurrent w/Position
Absent	Don Beavers	Member	Concurrent w/Position
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Present	Angie Farris	Member	Exp 10/09
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Present	Mike Henry	Chairman	Concurrent w/Position
Absent	Louise Hodges	Member	Exp 10/10
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Present	Rick Lipan	Vice Chairman	Exp 10/09
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Present	Kris McArdle	Facilitator/Secretary	Concurrent w/Contract
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Present	Jim McLoskey	Member	Exp 10/10
Absent	Bob Moore	Member	Exp 10/10
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Present	Susan Rickwalt-Holder	Member	Exp 10/10
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Present	Janice Schrader	Member	Exp 10/09
Absent	Tom Striffler	Member	Concurrent w/Position
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Present	Ed Volway	Member	Exp 10/10
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Present	Patty Volway	Member	Exp 10/09
Guests Present:	Cathy Cabala, Kid's Closet Bob Schrader, Sunnsational Tanning Margie Sylvester, Second Chance/Big Brothers Big Sisters		

3. Approval of Meeting Minutes
 - a. Secretary Kris McArdle distributed minutes prior to meeting via e-mail and then included them in the Board's meeting packets.
 - b. Jim McLoskey motioned to approve the meeting minutes from July 8, 2009, as presented, seconded by Patty Volway, and approved by all present. No objections were made.
4. Public Comments
 - a. None

5. Facilitator/Secretary Update

a. MI-SBTDC FastTrac NewVenture Results

- i. Secretary Kris McArdle reviewed the results of the newly launched FastTrac[®] NewVenture[™] business program:
 1. Program ended July 31.
 2. 3 out of 17 (2%) participants were in business at start, 4 of remaining 14 (3%) started their business while in the program, 3 of remaining 10 (3%) show signs of great potential – dedication, hard working, persistence, and working on the business planning process.
 3. 8 out of 17 (50%) are continuing to work with the MI-SBTDC business consultants.
 4. 2 of the 4 (50%) start ups were in Tuscola County – Vassar & Millington.
- ii. In addition to the positive results from FastTrac[®] NewVenture[™], McArdle reported having seen 4 new potential business owners in the last couple of weeks from across Tuscola County – 2 are potential Caro businesses.

6. Old Business

a. Michigan Main Street Program Update

- i. Secretary Kris McArdle distributed information regarding the networking visit with Clare Main Street on Aug. 7, 2009, including:
 1. Special Meeting Minutes
 2. Clare Main Street PowerPoint Presentation Slide Handout
 3. Clare Main Street Manager Job Description
 4. City of Clare Master Budget
 5. Clare Committee Work Plans
 6. Support Clare Survey
 7. Clare Main Street Brochure
 8. Clare *Street Talk* Newsletter
- ii. Discussion ensued about the visit with some remaining questions brought to light. The following questions were e-mailed to Lori Schuh for further clarification:
 1. Do you charge a business license fee? If yes, what is the benefit for the (a) city and (b) business?
 2. Do you offer any incentives to businesses moving into the area; especially, the downtown district (i.e. tax cuts/savings, free city services, etc.)?

3. Can you share with us your:
 - a. Welcome packet
 - b. Business recruitment packet
 - c. New business guidelines
 - d. Design guidelines (There was something discussed about Clare offering a \$250 allowance in regards to design ... can you clarify this?)
 - e. City ordinances
 - f. Financial statements for individual events
 - g. In the packet you provided there was a Support Clare survey, can you tell us:
 - i. How is it distributed and who receives it ... businesses, customers or both?
 - ii. Who's responsible for managing it ... who calculates the results?
 - iii. What do you do with the results?
 - iv. Who runs and administers the downtown art project?
 - v. Can you send us a few pictures of the art?
 - h. Can you also share with us Clare's:
 - i. Population (in downtown area and surrounding community)
 - ii. Median income level
 - iii. Traffic flow volumes in the downtown area
 - iii. The group asked Secretary Kris McArdle to follow up with Michigan Main Street to determine our next step in moving forward with becoming a Michigan Main Street Community.
 - iv. McArdle also share information from the nationwide campaign – the 3/50 project – which was shared at the Clare meeting.
 1. The concept of the project is to save the brick and mortars our nation was built on by supporting at least three area businesses each month with a purchase of \$50 or more.
 2. For more information, interested participants/supporters can visit www.the350project.net.
- b. Downtown Dumpster/Trash Issue Update
- i. Chairman Mike Henry reported that the signs are up.
 - ii. Henry reminded us we need to be the eyes and ears for the Village, but we're not supposed to enforce the law ... that is the Police Department's responsibility.
 - iii. A request will be asked of the Police Department to please keep reports and reporters of misuse confidential.

c. Tactical Action Plan Highlights

i. Key highlights include:

1. Work with and encourage downtown's existing businesses to enhance their curb appeal ...
 - a. Discussion ensued about taking an inventory of what looks best and what doesn't look good downtown, and then we can determine the where and how to make improvements.
 - b. Patty Volway is trying to get a list of owners for the empty buildings to approach them regarding the appearance of their windows.
2. Plan for enhancement of island triangle ...
 - a. Janice Schrader has spoken to Charlie S and Greg Cummings, who are interested in helping to support this project.
 - b. Schrader shared a rendering of the initial idea, which includes a clock tower. Some thoughts for raising funds include selling bricks and/or discount cards. Susan Rickwalt-Holder suggested contacting the Tuscola Community Foundation to inquire about the opportunities they may have to fund the project.
 - c. Charlie has stated that MDOT approved this idea; however, Patty Volway suggested getting something in writing before starting to fundraise to be on the safe side.
 - d. It was recommended that Schrader put together a work plan/proposal to be presented to the DDA and Village Council for approval before moving forward.
3. Adopt local standards for government support of new downtown restaurant ...
 - a. The question was proposed as to what's in it for a business to locate in downtown ... what incentives are there?
 - b. The suggestion was made to create a checklist of do's and don'ts which would be helpful for recruiting new businesses.
 - c. Another suggestion was made to add the Village ordinances to their Web site to assist new businesses.
4. Enhance two remaining parking lots ...
 - a. Contractor has been selected and work will begin around Aug. 17.

7. Caro Area Update

a. Downtown/DDA

- i. Reported by Chairman Mike Henry.
- ii. The new parking lot work will include using the new LCD lights, which will be more efficient and cost effective.
- iii. A brief discussion over the recent decision to go with the lowest bidder versus using a local contractor for the parking lot took place and Henry explained the reasoning of such a decision.

- b. Village
 - i. Village Manager Don Beavers and Village President Tom Striffler were both absent from the meeting.
 - ii. No report was provided.

- c. Chamber
 - i. Reported by Chamber President Susan Rickwalt-Holden.
 - ii. Sad news came of the lost of a strong Caro Area volunteer – Don Reed.
 - iii. Caro Chamber Bucks program is being revamped.
 - iv. Farmers’ Market is going well.
 - v. Looking at adding a virtual postcard to their Web site.
 - vi. Gingerbread Village is coming up in December and the planning committee is already busy working on things.
 - vii. Chamber is working collaboratively with the Tuscola County Pumpkin Festival Committee.
 - viii. Current membership is 167 members.

- d. County – Tuscola County Economic Development Corporation (EDC)
 - i. Executive Director, Jim McLoskey, was present at meeting but had to leave early.
 - ii. He had distributed the results of the business survey but no explanation was provided before his departure.

8. New Business

- a. Discussion took place over re-designing the layout of the Tactical Action Plan to better identify those project directly influenced by the Blueprint Advisory Board.
 - i. Based on the feedback, Secretary Kris McArdle will revamp the layout of the plan.
 - ii. Key tasks of focus include:
 - 1. Work with and encourage downtown’s existing businesses to enhance their curb appeal.
 - 2. Prepare design guidelines and offer design assistance.
- b. Discussion also took place about creating a welcome packet for new residents.

10. Adjournment

- a. Ed Volway motioned to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Janice Schrader, and accepted my all present. No objectives were made.
- b. Meeting adjourned at 9:15 p.m.

11. Next meeting

- a. Wednesday, September 9, 2009, at 7 p.m. at the Caro Municipal Building

Respectfully submitted by: Secretary, Kris C. McArdle