



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 • January 14, 2009

1. Meeting called to order at 7:00 p.m.
2. Roll Call/Attendees

Attendance	Name	Position	Term
Absent	Mike Bauerschmidt	Member	Concurrent w/Position
Absent (city charter mtng.)	Don Beavers	Member	Concurrent w/Position
Absent (working)	Angie Farris	Member	Exp 10/09
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Present	Mike Henry	Chairman	Concurrent w/Position
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Present	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 (arrived late)	Janice Schrader	Member	Exp 10/09
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Present	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:	Steve McAlpine & Tyler Nickels, representing the Caro 150 – a MIRA professional snowmobile race		

3. Approval of Meeting Minutes

- a. Correction to the minutes was made – Kent's last name is Kukuk.
- b. Jim McLoskey motioned to approve the meeting minutes from Dec. 10, 2008, as presented and corrected by Secretary Kris McArdle, seconded by Louise Hodges, and approved by all present. No objections were made.

4. Public Comments

- a. MIRA Snowmobile Race
 - i. Steve McAlpine and Tyler Nickels introduced the Caro 150 Professional Snowmobile Races coming to the Tuscola County Fairgrounds in Caro on Feb. 21 – 22, 2009.
 - ii. This is the first time in a long time the races are coming to the area.

- iii. McAlpine and Randy Humpert have put up the funding to bring MIRA here to oversee the race, to build the track and to cover some of the basics of the race.
- iv. They are in need of financial supporters and volunteers.
- v. Deb Lipan has also gotten involved and is working to put together a group of volunteers to boost the weekend's activities.
- vi. This event has the potential of bringing 1,500 – 2,000 people to town, which can greatly affect/improve the local economy.
- vii. The Caro Downtown Task Force is also brainstorming ways to support the event as well.
- viii. Louise Hodges and Kris McArdle offered support as well. McArdle is also offering support from the Thumb Area Tourism Council.

5. Marketing/Communications Update

- a. Secretary Kris McArdle provided an update on marketing and communications.
- b. McArdle plans to put out two press releases in January:
 - i. Reminder of Advisory Board meeting schedule and public welcome to attend.
 - ii. A collective account of what business resources are available in the area; including: Tuscola County Economic Development Corporation, Michigan Small Business & Technology Development Center, Tuscola Enterprise, Chamber of Commerce, ThumbWorks and more.
- c. McArdle announced the Village renewed their membership to the Thumb Area Tourism Council. She will work on freshening up the listing; including, adding the industrial park as being a full and active business hub.
 - i. The industrial park is home to: Tuscola Behavioral Health/PIC, JD Motorsports, Medler Electric, Precision Cycle and NAPA.
- d. McArdle and Susan Rickwalt-Holder met to discuss the various means of Caro promotions from the Chamber, Village, local groups/events and Thumb Area Tourism Council.
 - i. The Travelhost publication is not printing a Feb/Mar/Apr issue. Therefore, we will work to recruit advertisers for the Caro spread in the next issue due out in May.
 - ii. Tom Striffler shared he provided a CD with Caro images on it to the Chamber. McArdle asked if she could borrow it or make a copy for use on the Thumb Area Tourism Council site and Caro's listing.
 - iii. Rickwalt-Holder said she would get her a copy.
- e. McArdle still needs to follow up on Warren Taylor's interest to get involved with the Blueprint Board/project. A packet will be mailed to him.

6. Caro Area Update

- a. Downtown/DDA
 - i. Reported by Chairman Mike Henry.
 - ii. Things look promising for the parking lot grant.
 - iii. DDA has agreed to cover the 40% match.

- iv. They are also working on purchasing a small lot owned by Rod Chambers, which is adjacent to the Adams lot and will help to improve the layout and use of the parking lots.
- b. Village
 - i. Reported by Tom Striffler.
 - ii. Don Beavers was absent due to attending the City Charter Commission meeting. The group is finalizing the draft, which will then be presented at a public forum to the community.
 - iii. The Village Council is also considering designating some funds to a revolving loan fund through the Tuscola County Economic Development Corporation.
- c. Chamber
 - i. Reported by Susan Rickwalt-Holder.
 - ii. Citizen of the Year dinner is coming up on Saturday, Feb. 28, 2009. They are working on developing a historical slide show of Caro to be shown at the event.
 - iii. Membership is up slightly to 155 members.
 - iv. A meeting is scheduled for second week in February to meet with a key representative from the Port Austin's Farmers Market.
 - v. The Caro Downtown Task Force has selected Margie Sylvester from Big Brothers Big Sisters as the new Chairperson to replace Lota Hartel.
 - vi. Other coming events:
 - 1. Cars & Craft, June 5 & 6, 2009
 - 2. Tuscola County Pumpkin Festival & Harvest Days, Oct. 1 – 4, 2009
- d. County – Tuscola County Economic Development Corporation (EDC)
 - i. Reported by Jim McLoskey.
 - ii. Recently visited the newly opened call center – Excel Group. They are very pleased to be in Caro.
 - iii. The EDC is working with Saginaw Valley State University on another economic gardening grant.

7. Old Business

- a. Reviewed Tactical Plan with Project Leaders providing updates.
 - i. Key highlights include:
 - 1. Discuss with MDOT the moving of the light at State & Burnside to State & Sherman:
 - a. Called MDOT to schedule a meeting to discuss options.
 - b. Tom & Don spoke to MDOT regarding the process for moving the light, which includes a request to MDOT to have it moved and then MDOT would perform a feasibility study to warrant the move.
 - c. Though, this isn't an inexpensive project ... cost could be \$100,000 with the potential to receive 80% from Federal dollars, another 10% from state and the remaining 10% from local dollars.

- a. The question was proposed – can we do the warrant study without a cost (YES).
 - b. A key issue may be that any new traffic light requires a left turn lane, which could significantly impact parking along main street.
 2. Mark pedestrian crosswalks and enforce Michigan's 'yield to pedestrians' law:
 - a. From the discussion Tom & Don had with MDOT, they are not in favor of mid-block crossings.
 - b. They also do not put up crossing signs since there is already a law in place.
 - c. There is some possibility that they would improve the existing striping at current crosswalks.
 3. Plan for enhancement of island triangle at Frank/State/Almer streets:
 - a. Charlie has a rendering done a few years ago ... Don presented a couple renderings - rough estimate for these is \$30,000
 - b. MDOT does not have a problem with doing something at the triangle as long as vision is not impaired.
 - c. Discussion took place over the importance of the improvement truly representing Caro and to be a strong focal point for the Village.
 - d. Patty suggested seeking funding from the Dow Foundation (administered by Midland Foundation) since many of the building in Caro were built by Eldon Dow.
 4. Work with and encourage downtown's existing businesses to enhance their curb appeal:
 - a. Patty share that it was discussed at the Downtown Task Force meeting and the new chair will send out an e-mail to business owners. Though, they'd like to first look into when they have typically held spring clean up with the help from the Boy Scouts.
 - b. Also looking at how they can utilize the community service hours local students need to fulfill.
 - c. Another aspect being looked at is cleaning up the windows and offering a class on window display.
- b. New Tactical Action Plan Worksheets
- i. Secretary Kris McArdle introduced two new spreadsheets to the Tactical Action Plan:
 1. Caro Area Business Directory
 - a. The purpose of this spreadsheet is to have an inventory of area businesses and their key information, which will help to monitor and improve our established benchmarks.
 - b. The information was compiled from a number of resources and may not be accurate. McArdle asked Board members to review the directory and to provide her with any corrections.

2. Grants & Funding Resource Directory
 - a. The purpose of this spreadsheet is to track where and when funds were sought and if they were obtained or not. It will also help to track the success of projects.
 - b. There is no information entered at this time since it needs to be provided to McArdle.
- c. Business Surveys
 - i. In an effort to collect data needed for the Caro Area Business Directory, two business surveys were created to obtain information from business owners.
 - ii. They were distributed and reviewed.
 1. It still needs to be determined which organization will use/distribute these surveys (i.e. Village, Chamber, Blueprint, etc.)
 2. The suggestion was made to add a 'comment' section or the question: "How can we serve your business needs better?"
- d. Task Priority Worksheet
 - i. Since it's been difficult to prioritize the tasks in a meeting, Secretary Kris McArdle created a worksheet for each individual Board member to rank their level of priority for each task.
 - ii. McArdle will then compile the results and distribute at the next meeting.
- e. Discuss missing businesses as indicated in Blueprint Report and discuss possible action plan
 - i. Tabled again due to meeting already running over.

2. New Business

- a. Volunteer Alliance Network
 - i. Chairman Mike Henry provided an introduction into a pilot program that is being offered through the Human Development Commission in regards to a central resource Web site for matching volunteers and projects.
 - ii. Henry and/or Susan Rickwalt-Holder will share more details of the program with Secretary Kris McArdle.
- b. Guest Speaker
 - i. Kathy Tenwolde from East Central Michigan Planning & Development will be present at our February meeting to share funding/grant opportunities we may be eligible to complete Blueprint recommendations.
- c. Trash Dumpers
 - i. Janice Schrader spoke of her concern for area residents dumping their trash in the downtown trash containers behind businesses.
 - ii. She has repeatedly seen individuals dumping, which she brought to the attention of Caro's police who informed her that she would have to press charges in order for them to do anything.
 - iii. Discussion ensued and we need to check on existing ordinance.
- d. Breakers After Hours
 - i. Janice Schrader shared that there has been a lot of activity and noise at Breakers after hours and it appears they may be operating as an after hours hall.

- ii. Schrader also shared that they have recently lost most of their pool tables and equipment to repossession.
- iii. Discussion took place also regarding the fact that the business was recently transferred to new owners and the impact this and the abovementioned active may have on the special usage permit they were originally granted.
- iv. This matter will be looked into further.

3. Adjournment

- a. Secretary Kris McArdle motioned to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Susan Rickwalt-Holder, and accepted by all present. No objectives were made.
- b. Meeting adjourned at 9:30 p.m.

4. Next meeting

- a. Wednesday, March 11, 2009, at 7 p.m. at the Caro Municipal Building

Respectfully submitted by: Secretary, Kris C. McArdle