

Iowa's Living Roadways Community Visioning 2016

Community: St. Ansgar
Minutes by Trees Forever Field Coordinator: Meredith Borchardt
Date and Time: Wednesday, January 6, 2016
Meeting Length: 2 hours
Location: St. Ansgar City Hall
Meeting #1, Kickoff meeting

Number of committee members in attendance: 9

Names of committee members in attendance: Bonnie Eustice, Barb Groth, Myrna Jorgensen, Daria Jorgensen, Tara Kramer, Bryan Mayer, Karen Robertson, Holbrook Schutjer, Devin Schwiesow

Meeting Summary:

Tonight's meeting kicked off the Visioning program in St. Ansgar and began with introductions. Meredith shared a power point presentation that overviewed the program, its partners, potential projects, meeting sequence, and final products. The final report from Tripoli's Visioning process was passed around, and the set of Visioning concept boards from Clarksville was laid on the floor in the meeting space.

Next, we created a local geography map by discussing and identifying on an aerial map, familiar places in the community such as neighborhoods, landmarks, trails, and parks. Names of businesses and places were added and revised. The city limits are correct and indicated by a white dashed line. This session was recorded and partners at Iowa State will update the map for use at future meetings. A few highlights that came out of the discussion included a new elementary school is being built near the High School. A use for the existing elementary school has not been finalized. There is a desire for a community center. At one time there were bump outs downtown but not currently. The town has struggled with sustaining healthy downtown trees- ginkgos have been planted but they haven't done well, particularly on one side. There is a new paved trail near the school and a desire to add more trails for walking/biking, such as out to the golf course and connecting the downtown to Clausen Park. There are two bike share stations and plans to add another. A buffer of prairie will be planted in the SE part of town on private property to help reduce storm water runoff from adjacent farm fields and help address flooding issues in town. Finally, the importance of Clausen Park in the community came up many times.

We talked about the importance of good communication with the broader public throughout Visioning, and some research done through follow up interviews with past Visioning towns that supports this idea. To help think through who and how to reach people in the community we revised a list of possible groups to communicate with and media outlets serving the community. That list is attached to the minutes. The top four ways the group felt would reach the most people are the digital bank sign, Facebook (City/Chamber of Commerce and Park and Rec. committee both have pages), school website, and local newspaper.

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Finally, we did some planning for upcoming meetings. Tuesday, February 2 at 6:30 will be the next committee meeting, focused on bioregional mapping. That will be followed by a committee meeting on Tuesday, March 1 at 6:30 to plan for a public input meeting in April. At this meeting, different demographic groups (senior citizens, parents, youth, active recreationists, and the steering committee) will discuss transportation assets and barriers and take digital photos of those things in the community. Partners from Iowa State will be attending to help with data collection and analysis that day. For now we are holding Saturday, April 2 and 9 for this date, and will finalize it soon. Meeting adjourned at 8:20.