

**Village of Bellaire And
Village of Bellaire Downtown Development Authority
BELLAIRE COMMUNITY UNIFIED ACTION PLAN STEERING
COMMITTEE**

- Louise Wenzel, DDA Member • Joe Short, DDA Member • Mark Irwin, DDA Member •
• Dave Ciganick, Village Council • Trish Drollinger, Village Council • Eldon McPherson, Village Council •
• Nicole Essad, Village Clerk • Terry VanAlstine, District 5 County Commissioner •
• Robert Joyce, Chamber of Commerce Representative •

COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

**Monday, January 25, 2021
5:00 PM**

I. Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 5:00 PM.

II. Roll Call - Attendance:

Present: Dave Ciganick, Tricia Drollinger, Nicole Essad, Robert Joyce, Eldon McPherson, Joe Short, Terry VanAlstine, and Louise Wenzel

Absent: Mark Irwin

Staff Present: Elise Craft, facilitator, Jennifer Hodges, engineer

Public Present: Brenda Fink, Dave Gajda, Doreen McGuire, Tracy Muscat, and Caller 02

III. Approval of Agenda: The agenda was approved as presented.

Motion by VanAlstine, seconded by Wenzel to approve the agenda as presented. Motion Passed by unanimous voice vote.

IV. Approval of Minutes – November 23, 2020: The minutes of the November 23, 2020 were approved as presented.

Motion by Ciganick, seconded by VanAlstine to approve the minutes of the November 23, 2020 as presented. Motion Passed by unanimous voice vote.

V. Conflict of Interest: None presented.

VI. Public Comment: None presented.

VII. Old Business: None.

VIII. New Business

- a. Review Community Survey Results:** Ms. Crafts briefly went over the results of the survey. She stated that there was feedback from Village Council, DDA, Buy Local, Paddle Antrim, the Chamber, Local Businesses, Antrim County, and the Library. She stated that there were four questions beginning with help us prioritize and ending with how can we work together. She stated that the top three were Tourism, Parks and Recreation, Community Infrastructure. She stated that the survey asked for comments as well, and the overall comment was that it was hard to choose, and that all of them were important. She stated that Trails, Tourism, Serving Residents and Visitors were priorities that the community partners noted. Ms. Craft stated that generally community partners thought that their priorities aligned with this Committee's

priorities. She stated that next the survey asked which project would be easiest- i.e. where is there funding, where is there community interest, what projects have been discussed at length. She stated that the community partners thought that improvements to Richardi park; tourism is a good place to start; and communication and planning is a good place to start. Ms. Crafts stated that there were specific projects that came up here as well. Those were downtown public bathrooms, completing the RRC, downtown WiFi, and from Buy local membership and their efforts. Ms. Craft then went on to explain question four- the survey results stated that involving the entire community, merging the groups that are planning and the ones that are living it, and provide volunteer opportunities. Ms. Craft stated that she sent the summary and the full results to everyone who took the survey. Ms. Wenzel asked about not getting any results from the townships. Ms. Craft stated that yes there was results from Kearney Township. Ms. VanAlstine stated that Ed Niepoth is from Kearney Township. Mr. Ciganick stated that communication is almost cost free. He asked if everyone is comfortable with how the information is being put out, but that everyone is welcome to attend these public meetings. Ms. Wenzel stated that she was shocked that people thought they were not communicating. She reaches out to the Buy Local group and people come to DDA meetings. Mr. Ciganick stated that making an emailing list could be made. Mr. Short asked about the communication method. Vice Chair McPherson stated that communication questions came out several months ago and some of those have been rectified. Ms. Essad stated that there are minutes on the website, and if a summary needs to be put in the paper, then it can be budgeted for. She also stated that people can subscribe to the minutes as well. Mr. Short stated that he got a fantastic email from the Elk Rapids Chamber that gave a snap shot of what was happening in that town. Mr. Ciganick stated that posting in the newspaper is not needed, a bi-monthly newsletter, or email of minutes can be done. Ms. Craft stated that people liked the survey and thought that was a good way to communication. She stated that it is always good to improve communication. Mr. Ciganick stated that once we have the plan done, it will be given out to the community partners showing them that we took their feedback seriously.

- b. Review, Discuss, and refine Draft Plan:** Ms. Craft reviewed the priorities from this Committee, that happened at last meeting. There were seven responses. The downtown WiFi, Downtown Bathrooms, Richardi Park, and RRC were the four most talked about. General discussion was held regarding the priorities. Ms. Craft asked if there were projects that were brought up in the survey that need to be reprioritized. Mr. Short stated that the RRC should be top priority, because it is an avenue to allow us to do the other projects. Vice Chair McPherson stated that the RRC needs to be completed so we can get grants. Ms. Wenzel asked is there anything that can be done to get it done. Mr. Short stated that Networks Northwest has fund to assist communities with the application. Ms. Essad stated that she is still working on it. She also stated that she is scheduled to talk to Pablo about it. Mr. Ciganick stated that he looked at it and it is a monster to get done. Vice Chair McPherson stated that this can be done in tandem with the other projects. Mr. VanAlstine stated that he thought that the Village would not qualify for the MDEC grants because of the median household income level. Ms. Essad stated she will be talking to Pablo about that questions as well. She stated that we can work on the other projects as well as the RRC. Mr. Short stated that he understands that the Village does qualify for the RRC. He also suggested to see if the Village is a low-mod community. Ms. Craft put the RRC as the first project in the draft plan. She then went through the draft plan. General discussion was held on each of the four projects: 1. RRC; 2. Downtown WiFi; 3. Downtown Bathrooms; and 4. Richardi Park Improvements. Ms. Craft stated that Ms. Hodges is working with her to find grants for each project. Ms. Craft asked about what needs to be done for RRC. Ms. Essad stated that she is working on it, and that one of the things is a zoning audit which is going through the entire zoning ordinance and master plan to see if they are in line with each other. Ms. Craft asked if there were volunteers to help with the RRC. Ms. Essad

stated that a lot of the tasks the zoning administrator needs to do a lot of it but volunteers would be welcome. Ms. Wenzel, Mr. Ciganick (between now and March 19), Ms. Drollinger, and Mr. Short all volunteered. Ms. Craft explained project 2 Downtown WiFi. She stated that Buy Local and the Library are very supportive of the project. She stated that we need to find funding and overall budget for the project. Vice Chair McPherson stated that we need to start getting quotes for this. Ms. Essad stated that she contacted Charter and is waiting for an email back, and she is going to contact True Stream about coming into the Village. Mr. Ciganick asked about this at the County level. Mr. VanAlstine stated that trying to get the administration on this and moving forward to get high speed internet in the county building and the airport. Mr. Ciganick asked if there was resistance to this. Mr. VanAlstine stated that there is a hurdle with finding grants. Mr. Ciganick asked if the Village does this, will it be replicated by the County. Mr. VanAlstine stated that if we get WiFi downtown, the Village can always go to the County if and when it happens at that level. Mr. Short agrees and thinks that we should look at other municipal models. General discussion was held about what needs to happen for next steps, including quotes, and specs for this. Ms. Craft then moved to project 3. Downtown bathrooms. Mr. Ciganick stated that the bathrooms would be put on the Village lot next to Short's. Ms. Essad also stated that the dream is to not only put bathrooms there, but have a covered area for tables and a shuttle stop. She also stated that the Master Plan mentioned the bathrooms, and we are at the point of getting it done. She also stated that the parks and recreation plan is in the process of getting redone and this project will be in it. Mr. Short stated that there are public bathrooms are in the community hall and in the park. Ms. Craft then moved to project 4 Richardi Park. Ms. Essad stated again that the Parks and Rec Plan is getting updated. This plan is a 5-year plan and needs to be done in order to get grants from the DNR. She stated that there will be a survey about all the parks not just Richardi. Ms. Craft stated that as a next step that a survey be done about Richardi only with the acknowledgment that a survey about the other parks will be forthcoming. Ms. Craft then asked about the backburner projects. Ms. Wenzel asked to clarify to see if there is a need to separate Richardi Park from the other parks. Ms. Drollinger stated that we could re-do the entire park and re-organize the park. She stated that there is a lot that could be done there. Mr. Short stated that he would love to be part of the park redesign, and he thinks that we need to send a survey out about what people want to see in the park. Mr. Ciganick stated that this Committee's emphasis is Richardi Park, while the Parks Committee's focus is for all parks. Ms. Essad stated that there can be a survey for each park when the Village re-does the parks and rec plan. Ms. Crafts stated that the funding section will be more detailed at next month's meeting. Mr. Ciganick stated he talked to the Library about funding sources. Ms. Crafts stated that she will make sure that those are in the list.

- c. **Discuss and Plan Second Round of Community Partner Engagement:** Ms. Craft then asked how to engage the Community Partners again. She asked what this Committee wanted to ask the Community Partners. Mr. Ciganick that the only thing he can see is the survey regarding the parks. He stated that at some point we need to make a decision, and let them know what the plan is. Vice Chair McPherson stated everything is laid out nicely, but that we need a little more information on the Richardi Park improvements. Ms. Crafts stated that the projects are in line. She suggested to ask how the community partners will "plug-in" and asked how to communicate with them. Mr. Short stated that there were other projects that he thinks should be addressed. Mr. Ciganick stated that these projects were the priorities but there are other projects that we are still thinking about. Ms. Crafts stated that she will bring back a question list for the next survey. Ms. Crafts then asked how to engage the Community Partners. Ms. Essad stated that the online survey was a good way to get it out to them. Mr. Short stated that the online survey is more effective and that we should consider a way to have

everyone has access to it, to more than just the Community Partners. He stated that we should not limit ourselves to people who live here but visit here as well. General Discussion was held about getting feedback from more than the Community Partners.

IX. Correspondence/Reports: Mark Irwin emailed comments and a timeline to Ms. Crafts and Vice Chair McPherson. Vice Chair McPherson stated that these comments were encompassed in the discussion tonight. Ms. Craft briefly stated that Mr. Irwin wanted to re-engage the community in February; in March to finalize plan; in April to ask the community partners to sign on to plan; and then in May or June ask the DDA and Village Council to approve the plan.

X. Member/Public Comment:

Tracy Muscat: She thanked the Committee for the amount work and projects being put into this. She wanted to make sure the Committee branches out to engage the residents in a broader sense, not just the community partners.

Dave Gajda: He stated that if a downtown bathroom is put in, then vandalism and maintenance are things that need to be considered. He stated that there needs to be cameras to installed to prevent it.

Brenda Fink: She stated that she is impressed with the plan and the survey that was put out. She likes that communication and collaboration are important. She stated that seeing the next steps for the projects is good. She stated that someone should write a small background paragraph for the next survey to make sure people understand what the survey is for. She stated that there should be a balance be between groups and individuals or smaller groups. She thought that a quarterly newsletter stating what is happening in the Village would be a good idea. She also stated that an email list for various meetings is also a good idea.

XI. Adjourn: Meeting was adjourned at 6:47 PM to the call of the Vice Chair.

Minutes compiled by:
Nicole E. Essad, Secretary

Minutes are subject to approval.

Approved: _____

Date: _____