

Village of Empire - Master Plan Working Committee
Meeting Minutes from July 8, 2024, 6:30 PM
Meeting was held remotely via Zoom

Committee Members Present: Chris Webb, Meg Walton, Carey Ford, Maggie Bacon

Absent: Margaret Ellibee

Consultants present: Brad Longberger, Elise Crafts, Shannon Morgan (Renovare) and Dan Jankowski (Renovare)

1. Meeting was called to order at 6:40 - 10 minutes late due to a Zoom issue.

2. Community Questionnaire. The Committee made the following changes:
 - a. Question 3: Added "Vacation homeowner" and a reference to the Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore.
 - b. Question 9: Will be an optional question
 - c. Question 11: Should sidewalks be included? It was determined the next question would address sidewalks as a Public Works service.
 - d. Question 12: added Brush Pile, Recycling, Spring and Fall Clean up days.
 - e. Decided that visitors would be identifiable without separating having to them out a 2nd time.
 - f. Fairly lengthy discussion took place regarding the National Lakeshore. It was agreed (as stated above) to include the National Lakeshore in the list of reasons people "came to Empire".
 - g. Release date remains July 15, 2024 (online). Paper copies will be available a few days later. Recommended drop-off locations will be the Village Office and the Library. The post office may also be an option. Survey will remain open for approximately 4 weeks.
 - h. Committee members are encouraged to promote (word of mouth) completion of the survey. The link will be email blasted to the 140 or so "registered" individuals, included as a link on the website, posted on Overheard in the Leelanau County and added to the Leelanau Ticker. Brad and Elise will handle the "media" posting. Village will complete the email blast and website. We hope this will get picked up by the FB Everything Empire group.
 - i.

3. Stakeholder Outreach and Data Update
 - a. Stakeholder List Process
 - i. List of stakeholders will be given to the committee - most likely at the next meeting. Brad confirmed the list will include Housing North, Park Service, Township, Leelanau County.
 - ii. Shannon mentioned the National Lakeshore possibly having some documentation related to the Economic Benefit of having the Lakeshore in the Village. (Later in the call she confirmed one was done in 2017).
 - iii. Brad mentioned he has two reports he will share with the committee at the next meeting. One is a Seasonal Traveler Study. The other is a housing study.

- b. ABCD Committee Coordination - Brad will be meeting with this group as a part of the stakeholder outreach.

4. Timeline and Schedule

- a. Biweekly meetings set:
 - i. July 22, August 4, August 19 and in September (but we need to clarify Labor Day)
- b. Joint Work Session dates proposed (We are looking at back-up locations at this time)

A little explanation about these joint work sessions. These are joint Planning Commission (PC) and Village Council (VC) meetings. These came about as a part of the Village Council's continued work with Renovare. A portion of the funding was reallocated to fully fund the update of the Master Plan. This part of the process is in full swing.

In addition, Renovare is offering **three training opportunities** for the PC and the Village VC. These joint meetings focus on various economic development/redevelopment tools available to the Village working with developers. A portion of those meetings will include updates from the Master Plan committee. This will also be a unique opportunity for the public to hear about the Master Plan process directly, stay informed, and get news about upcoming public open house events through the summer. These meetings will be open to the public.

The tentative dates for those meetings are:

- i. Thursday, July 25
- ii. **Thursday, August 1 (following the Open House)**
- iii. **Thursday, August 29 (following the Open House)**
- iv. Thursday, September 19
- c. Public Open Houses Date Proposals
 - i. **Thursday August 1 (4:00 pm)** prior to a joint PC/VC meeting
 - ii. **Thursday August 29 (4:00 pm)** prior to a joint PC/VC meeting

5. Next Steps

- a. Continue Data Collection and graphic formatting
- b. Questionnaire preparation for release: Monday, July 15
- c. Finalize calendar of meetings/milestones

6. NEXT Meeting, Monday, July 22 at 6:30 via Zoom.

- a. Prepare for Joint Work Session #1, review materials.

