Greening Main Street Project – Madawaska Valley

Steering Committee Meeting
June 13, 2013

Meeting took place at Chippawa Lodge.

In attendance: Linda Newman, Donald Dunn, Danielle Paul, Sarah Wills, Don Webb, Bernadine Roslyn, Don Isbister, Claudia Van Wijk, Marg Hayden-Palowski.

Meeting called to order 7:06 pm by Claudia.

New members of the committee introduced themselves. Linda is representing the Township Council, Danielle represents the Heritage Parks and Rec committee (replacing Anya Blake for her parental leave) and Marg looks after logistics for the project. Linda sees her role as facilitating process where the Township is involved.

Downtown Subcommittee Report (Sarah)

Sarah attended the Township Heritage, Parks and Rec Committee meeting to let the committee know what we are doing and will provide more details at their next meeting. She told the committee we are planning to plant trees and are looking at design possibilities for other elements. The committee received her report with enthusiasm and are looking forward to hearing more

The Downtown subcommittee has considered possible locations for planting of trees and has approached some businesses. But they have determined that funding will be necessary for the project and are proposing a sponsorship program. A value would be assigned to each item (bench, tree, etc.) that would more than cover the cost of that item. Surplus funds would be used for other aspects of the project. But there should be only one sponsorship program, so it needs to be co-ordinated among all parts of the project. Steering Committee agrees.

Downtown subcommittee are considering tree species and expect that people will donate the trees. Yantha Backhoe has volunteered to help with the work.

Possible locations of trees (some property owners are on board): beside Talk of the Town, Greg Kelly's yard, the Metro lot, Subway (in a planter), by St. Lawrence O'Toole church, Yantha law office, beside Remax. All locations will require agreement by the property owner, landowners will have to commit to watering the trees.

Sponsorship plaques will be small and tasteful – possibly made of wood.

People will have to be found to do the building of project elements – benches, signs, etc.

Bernadine asked if the Dairy Bar has been approached, because they have a lovely piece of property that abuts the Metro parking lot. Sarah reported that they have been approached and are open to taking part in the Greening project.

It was remarked that air and water are also assets we should promote – that there need to be signs (possibly banners) directing people to the waterfront. It was mentioned that perhaps this was something the Township would be able to fund.

Design (Claudia)

Claudia reported that three Carleton students have agreed to expand the designs presented earlier. She prepared a list of 20 applications that we would need – box, bench, walkway, signs, etc. – and gave them a deadline of June 28.

She also specified more closely what is meant by the "Rock, Wood, Green" theme: "rock" as in the stone fences (walls) that have been built on local farmsteads, "wood" as in big timbers, and "green" as in native plants which can survive here with minimal upkeep.

Signage (Don Webb)

Signage committee has looked at locations for the three signs at the entrances to Barry's Bay, but they are reluctant to recommend placement for those in Combermere and Wilno without substantial input from residents of those areas.

They determined that it would be possible to place the signs on rock outcrops in keeping with the "rock" of our theme. This would place the signs high above the highway for improved visibility and to avoid snow plows and save on the cost of constructing a rock base. The three locations are:

- on the east - near the vet's office
- on the west – where the Barry's Bay sign is now, west of the locksmith
- on the south – just before the sharp curve immediately outside of the village

Approval will be needed from provincial authorities for the two signs on Hwy 60, and the County will have to approve the one to the south on County Rd 62.

We will also have to ask that old signs near those locations be removed.

Discussion followed and it was pointed out that in Wilno one sign (at Heritage Park) might be the best solution. Service club signs were also discussed, but no solution was arrived at for them.

Communication (Bernadine)

A discussion of communication needs took place. We need to seek community input and it was decided a Facebook page would be the best vehicle for that. Opening the website up to comments would mean someone had to monitor for unwanted comments from spammers and such.

Claudia will speak to the papers about soliciting community feedback.

Timelines

It is hoped that trees can be planted this fall. We need a list of trees we need.

It was suggested that the first project be the area in front of the Mad Outdoors compound next to Talk of the Town. Getting people to help put that together will build enthusiasm and support for the Greening project.

Don Isbister pointed out that the first project has already taken place – the landscaping at the library. There will be a pamphlet about this project, and it was suggested a plaque be placed there to identify it as part of the Greening Main Street project.

So if trees can be planted this fall, benches and other elements can be put in place in spring of 2014, as well as the entrance signs for Barry's Bay.

Combermere Phase

This fall, Jim Mountain will bring another class from Carleton to focus on the Greening of Combermere. It is expected they will come shortly after Labour Day.

Billets are needed for the group for a week-end (Friday, Saturday, and Sunday).

There will be an Open House at the Radcliffe Hall.

Crosswalks

Sarah pointed out that obtaining permission for an officially-recognized crosswalk can be a problem. But there can be "courtesy crosswalks". It was pointed out the because of the 3-way Stop sign traffic in the downtown block moves fairly slowly, and people use the whole block as a crosswalk, so a courtesy crosswalk in this area is a possibility. A letter will be sent to the Roads Superintendent suggesting that two courtesy crosswalks be made – one in front of Cat Nap Lazy Dog and the other in front of Metro.

Momentum

We are maintaining momentum of the project by:

- Continuing to update the website
- Contacting the media
- Reporting back the Heritage Parks & Rec committee
- Calling for community involvement

Other Matters

Don Isbister pointed out that the Horticultural Society has small signs on all their projects and planters.

Linda reported that Brenda Sabatine has submitted our township to the Association of Municipalities of Ontario for a Danby award, given in recognition of working with community groups to beautify the community.

A paint company is having one of those voting contests and will provide paint for the winning beautification project.

Renfrew County, in the person of Craig Kelly, has applied for funding for a canoe project – 17 canoes will be decorated and placed throughout the County – along the lines of the moose in Toronto. He has asked for a letter of support. We can do this.

Meeting adjourned at 8:52 pm.

Next meeting will be Thursday July 25 at the Home Building Centre.