

Active Living La Crescent

Minutes from 2/09/2009

Those present: Wayne, Michelle, Eileen, David, Joe, Chris, Bill, Sean, Linda, Sue, Chuck

Mn Dot Landscape grant

Application was submitted. We're told by MnDot that we'll receive \$9,300. The City of La Crescent is cautious about making commitments for sidewalks and other investments for this project until the Mn budget comes out. Planting date is May 16th (Saturday). We need about 65-75 volunteers. We'll organize teams of 4-5 and have some back hoes, chipper and trucks. The city maintenance crew will maintain plantings. Trees need to be purchased soon and MNDot has suppliers they'd like us to use. The focus of the May 16th event is on Celebration. We'll try to organize music, provide some light breakfast food, juice and coffee and have speakers (Mike P. and someone from our group).

Mark Fenton Events

Sue, Linda, Sean and Chuck have been working on a committee to organize activities around Mark's visit. Mark will be with us from noon on Monday, March 2nd to noon on March 3rd. The afternoon of March 2nd will involve a small group of people (approx. 12 people—folks from our coalition with other key community leaders/planners) touring the city in a Van and on foot to look at our community from a biking/walking and active living perspective. There will be an invitation only 5:00 p.m. dinner in the evening for key community people before a 7:00 p.m. meeting that is open to the public (place and caterer to be determined soon). The morning of March 3rd will be an 8:30 to 11:00 meeting for business and community leaders to learn more from Mark, take a walking tour and begin to develop policy and infrastructure plans. There will be personal invitations, phone calls, emails and advertising through various media outlets. Chuck and David will call ready's and see if Tom will provide a Van for us on March 2nd. Bill is checking on the MTU Bus, although Sean did have contact with Greg from MTU and Greg did not think a bus could be available. We can get a 15 passenger van from Enterprise for \$130. Brochures and letters will be available this week and letters will go out very soon. Total costs for Mark Fenton's visit will be \$1,100 to \$1,200.

Logo

Sue shared student contest submissions. We decided to offer three cash prizes (1st-\$75, 2nd-\$50 and 3rd-\$25). We thought we might not use submissions for our actual logo but rather use them for other promotions (posters, flyers, displays etc) and use the concepts/ideas from the submissions as we seek professional graphics help in coming up with a logo for ourselves. Eileen and Michelle volunteered to serve on a committee to select the three student winners. We thought we could display student winners and other submissions at our May 16th event and look for ways to publically honor students and get some good AL LaC publicity in the process. Sue suggested that before we move forward with help on our logo that we consider our name and change it now if we'd like to change it. People thought the word Coalition should go as it doesn't mean much to people. The group chose **Active Living La Crescent** as the official name for our group. Sean shared an example of a logo that he put together – It got good feedback and the group thought we'd like to seek some other ideas through some of the graphic arts contacts we have and see what other options we might have.

PEP Grant

Chuck is working with teachers and other community people to write a large federal grant aimed at building regular rigorous physical activity into the daily lives of kids through several school initiatives. The idea is to integrate P.E. classes and physical activity and related knowledge – (i.e. nutrition, making healthy choices and other health information) into other academic areas. The other idea is to shift P.E.'s focus from sports to building skills and habits for life long active living. The framework for the grant will be around the Active Living by Design Principles with which we operate as a Coalition. Our Coalition will be built in as an advisory council helping to make community connections which strengthen and sustain this new initiative over time.

Safe Routes to School Grant

The federal government has not yet released this money even though they tell us we've gotten the grant. However until we actually receive formal notice telling us we have the money, we can not move forward. And, given the planning time needed to implement the Safe Routes to School program effectively, we will likely begin the program next fall and implement it throughout the school year (that is assuming the feds release the money this spring or early summer).

Chris Kember from Mn Public Health

Chris, from the twin cities, will provide training on conducting Walkability and Bikeability Assessments. It will likely take place between March 23 and 25. Chris will invite Houston County Public Health people. We can make this workshop available to people from our community as well to people from other parts of SE Minnesota and people from across the river who may be interested. These Walkability and Bikeability assessments will be useful to us as we engage people in looking at what works and what might be improved in our community to be more walking and biking friendly. Chris also alerted us to a new grant source available to counties --called SHIP. We'll share this information as we receive it.

Budget

We have to use what we have in the budget by June 30th or we lose it. We also need to put together a new workplan and budget by this June for July 1-09 to June 30 -10. Two areas (promised deliverables) we need to address: Communications and Assessment of City Plans (Bike Ped, Parks and Rec and Comprehensive Plan).

Master Plans

Bike Ped will be updated with help from the La Crosse Area Planning Committee. There is a meeting this **Wednesday, Feb. 11th --- 5:30 at the Legion hosted by the La Crosse Area Planning Commission looking at the bike connections between La Crosse and La Crescent. Please show up and provide your input if you can.** We need to find someone to help us with assessment of our Parks and Rec Plan from an Active Living 'best practice' perspective. We're looking at the possibility of Interns who could help us with this. Chris said she'd help us identify someone who could help us. Sue and Chuck will explore Intern availability. The city is not ready to open up the Comprehensive Plan again at this time – but Blue Cross folks are telling us this has proved to be very useful in other communities and they're hoping we might consider this in future years as part of our AL efforts.

Communications

Wayne, Joe and Chuck agreed to begin putting together a communications plan which identifies strategies for Active Living La Crescent. The point was made that we need to think carefully about how we spend money, make sure we target our communications for specific purposes, identify who we want to reach and what will be really useful for people. There was talk about the importance of using newer technology. There was talk of the need to link with other organizations and their networks. It was suggested that we should put packets of information outlining the goals and activities of Active Living La Crescent to all City Council Township Board members.

Health Assessment Survey

Brenda Rooney, Jenna Johnson, Betsy Knowles, Chuck and Sue have been working on this. The planning process is going really well. A lot of careful thought is going into the questions to make sure we get information that is really useful to us. Chuck passed out some of the questions and the framework within which these questions will be posed. Wayne will order Forget-Me-Nots at 15 cents a pack. He needs to know soon how many surveys will be going out so he can send in an order for us. The Survey should be finished within the next few weeks. The survey should be going out in March.

Bike Racks

Sean asked our support to move toward the purchase of Bike racks for our community as part of a larger effort to put in bike racks throughout the greater La Crosse Coule area. The bike racks would be made locally by River City Steel, They would cost \$500 or less fully installed and includes a common logo. The idea is that we might see if Blue Cross will allow us to spend some money for bike racks on public land and ask businesses to purchase some to locate on their property – with the opportunity to put their name/logo on the racks. We would also participate in a broad fundraising effort in the region to help support this initiative.

Misc.

Wayne mentioned there is some new legislation proposed around the use of tobacco settlement money and wondered if this proposed change may have an impact on the Blue Cross money that is currently available to us. We should keep an eye on this and Chuck and Sue will talk to Blue Cross people about this.