

**Meeting Minutes:  
Door County “Smart Growth” Plan  
Historical and Cultural Resources Work Group – 2nd Meeting  
February 29<sup>th</sup>, 2008**

**1. Open meeting/introductions.**

The second meeting of the Historical and Cultural Resources Work Group was held at the Door County Library, 107 S. 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Sturgeon Bay, Wisconsin, on Friday, February 29<sup>th</sup>, 2008. The meeting started at 9:05 a.m.

**Present:**

Last Name	First Name	Agency
Kelsey	Brian	Door County Maritime Museum
Jinkins	Ann	Door County Museum
Kopischke	Allen	Peninsula Players

**Also present:**

Mariah Goode, Door County Planning  
Becky Kerwin, Door County Planning  
Rob Burke, UW – Extension

**2. Review previous meeting minutes.**

The minutes were accepted with no revisions.

**3. Review/discuss visioning work completed to date.**

Prior to the second meeting, the work group was to have reviewed the county visioning summary documents including the General Issues and Opportunities, the draft Vision Statement, and the County Visioning Summary – Parts A & B. The readings for the second work group are posted to the website located at [http://map.co.door.wi.us/planning/Comp-Plan/work-group\\_reading.htm](http://map.co.door.wi.us/planning/Comp-Plan/work-group_reading.htm). A desire to maintain historic resources/buildings/character and to preserve the county’s cultural assets ranked highly at the county-wide visioning meetings.

**4. Visioning exercises re: work group topic area(s).**

Goode explained that at this meeting the group would discuss the four questions listed below. She explained that an issue is a weakness that is internal to the county or it can be an external threat originating from outside the county. An opportunity is a strength that is internal to the county or it can be an external trend that could be capitalized upon within the county.

- What words or phrases best capture your preferred future vision for the county with regard to this work group’s designated topics?
- Within the context of your preferred future vision for the county, what are the key issues we currently face with regard to this work group’s designated topics?
- Again, within the context of your preferred future vision, what opportunities are available to or should be pursued for the county?
- What strategies or action items might be employed to address those issues or take advantage of those opportunities?

**What words or phrases best capture your preferred future vision for the county with regard to historical and cultural resources?**

- Ordinances re:
  - Preservation of existing historic structures
  - Design standards for new structures
- Design review boards at local level
  - County guidance/model ordinance/support of local design boards
- County-level historic preservation ordinance
- Strong design standards for commercial buildings, signage, and parking
- Limit sprawl/highway corridor development
  - Southern Door especially
  - Make existing highway corridor development more attractive
- Sustain the arts community that has been established here
  - Monies – private and government – are declining and boards/support/volunteering/membership becoming more difficult, too
    - More and more non-profits are being established
    - Donors are getting older; aren't being replaced by younger, wealthy donors
- “Cultural” fund/tax – see Naperville and Denver and State of Massachusetts
- county-level cultural board (“culture” = arts, history, and nature)
- estate planning to support arts and culture
- Door County Community Foundation more active
- Arts education industry – “Door County University”
- County-wide committee

**Within the context of your preferred future vision for the county, what are the key issues we currently face with regard to historical and cultural resources?**

- Aging supporters
  - Wealth and/or inclination isn't there with upcoming generation
- Some major supporters moving some or all operations/support out of county (e.g., BayLake Bank)
- Number of non-profits is increasing – efforts are sometimes not coordinated/aware of other efforts
- Tearing down old buildings
- No design standards for new buildings
- Decreasing government dollars for arts, culture, etc.
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers funding – money is going out of the country right now (Iraq and Afghanistan) rather than to U.S. infrastructure. Great Lakes infrastructure is seriously deteriorating. If Sturgeon Bay Canal is not fixed/dredged, freighters will eventually be unable to come into Sturgeon Bay – we could lose one of our largest/longest-standing employers.
- Housing and job issues – we are losing/not attracting younger population
- Demand for year-round cultural opportunities, being more of a year-round destination
  - Can we fulfill these requests?
    - Will people attend, if we do? (Attendance problem in winter already!)
  - Is it feasible or desirable to be more of a year-round destination?
    - i.e., would that solve some of our problems, or create more?
- DC's market overall (not just for arts) is aging and up-coming generation vacations differently
  - Families don't seem to come here as much as families did previously
    - Door County seen as a place with little for kids to do
    - Attitude used to be that parents picked where THEY wanted to vacation; now, parents seem to try and vacation in places they think their kids will like
  - Families don't “repeat” vacations as much as they did previously
- Conservation (of historical resources) frequently isn't happening, possibly because “outside” developers and younger generation don't have the ties/nostalgia others do for how Door County was or used to look

- Geography of county and arts/cultural event attendance – can't get people up north to drive down to Sturgeon Bay/south and vice-versa
- People need to be thinking more about the big picture
  - Partnering
  - New programs
  - County-wide marketing/programs
  - Arts education "system"

**Again, within the context of your preferred future vision, what opportunities are available to or should be pursued for the county?**

- There is a demand now for more year-round cultural activities
- Door County Community Foundation
- Interest from municipal officials in design/historic preservation ordinances and standards
- Birch Creek expansion
- Crossroads and Peninsula Art School – more activities lately for families
- Possible partnership with UW-Stout re: hospitality industry (discussions have occurred in past; re-investigate)
  - We still have major tourism compared to many other areas
  - County RFP re: fiber optic provision
  - Film Wisconsin project – could take advantage of filming occurring in Milwaukee and Madison and entice Hollywood up here
    - Bjorklunden expansion – great resource for the community; could (would they like to be) more engaged in community, too?

**What strategies or action items might be employed to address those issues or take advantage of those opportunities?**

- Interlochen, Michigan – look at town/school for ideas about year-round activities, etc.
- Emphasize arts education
- "Door County University" – not a degree program (although those discussions could happen again, too), but rather, coordinated education efforts crossing disciplines (history, culture/arts, nature) and organizations (PAS, Clearing, Birch Creek, Bjorklunden, Ridges, etc.) – families could come up here for set amount of time and "enroll" in coordinated course offerings
  - County needs to get better wired – internet, power, cell phones – better service and redundancy
  - Attract businesses here that we want
    - People want to be able to work from home
    - Younger people need to be enticed here
  - Identify historic points/places to promote/play up/preserve – things we don't want to lose and that make us unique
    - S. Door Belgian community/character
    - Refer back to notes from McMahon 2006 presentations for more, specific ideas
  - Upkeep of old buildings
    - Explore options (and problems) in funding, codes
    - Barns
    - Old buildings
    - Re-using parts, at least, if not preserving
    - Incentives to keep/maintain
  - Education needed regarding:
    - Value of being on state/federal historic registries
    - Design ordinances, (re)designing buildings
    - Value to county of having these design standards
  - Door County Historical Society sites list – make sure places on there that aren't already preserved are or will be (new lists every year or so)
  - County Historian is a good start, but think about a county commission
    - Commission would:

- Recruit potential sites, owners, etc. for preservation
- Support municipalities or others working on preservation
- Coordinate municipal preservation efforts
- Paul Lambeck-type project for all towns (identify/inventory places that have historical importance for the community)
- Possibility, rather than ordinances and permits: have all permit applicants go through a process/training regarding historic preservation and design standards – no zoning or building permit would be issued without certification that they had undertaken the training. Hopefully, after going through process, most would be inclined to (re)construct something in keeping with the community's character.
- Big Box Ordinance that includes:
  - \$ amount per square foot that goes into fund for tear-down/re-do/reclamation
  - \$ amount per square foot that goes into fund for historic preservation
  - See Wauwatosa and other areas that have done things like this
- County tax (or other) incentives for individuals looking to re-build current historical buildings, or if you donate historic structure to local historic non-profit
- Incentivize people to be conservationists!
- Historic/designated properties – if you make historically appropriate improvements, the increased value of your property will get some sort of tax waiver (or delayed tax increase) when property is re-assessed
- Make sure there are no major obstacles in county zoning ordinance re: expansion of the type recently pursued by Birch Creek (even though out of zoning), etc.

**5. Set next meeting date.**

**9:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m., Monday, April 7th, 2008**

Location: Sturgeon Bay Library - Jane Greene Room

**6. Adjourn.**

Meeting adjourned at 11:00 a.m.

*Minutes transcribed by Becky Kerwin and Mariah Goode, Door County Planning*