

**Meeting Minutes:
Door County "Smart Growth" Plan
Agricultural & Natural Resources Work Group – 3rd Meeting
April 2, 2008**

1. Open meeting/introductions.

The third meeting of the Agricultural & Natural Resources Work Group was held in the Sturgeon Bay Library, Jane Greene Room, 107 S. 4th Avenue, Sturgeon Bay, Wisconsin, on Wednesday, April 2, 2008. The meeting started at 8:02 a.m.

Present:

Last Name	First Name	Agency
Buchholz	Aaron	WDNR
Guillette	Gale	Union, Town Of
Heimbecher	Mark	Clay Banks, Town Of
Konkol	Dale	Door County, Soil & Water
Leonard	Steve	The Ridges Sanctuary
Miller	Annie	Liberty Grove, Town Of
Paitrick	Mary	Door County Economic Development Corporation
Plzak	Chris	WDNR
Schmiling	William	Von Stiehl Winery
Sigmann	Peter	Sustain Door
Skadden	Nancy	Town of Gardner resident
Volenberg	Dean	UW-Extension
Weidman	Dick	UW Peninsular Agricultural Research Station
Whitford	George	Nasewaupsee, Town of

Also present:

Mariah Goode, Door County Planning
Becky Kerwin, Door County Planning

2. Review previous meeting minutes.

The minutes were accepted with no revisions.

3. Review previous meeting visioning exercise results:

- a. Draft element vision statement.
- b. Issues.
- c. Opportunities.
- d. Draft goals.

Before the meeting, work group participants were to have reviewed the results from the work group visioning and other discussion exercises conducted at the 2nd meetings on-line at http://map.co.door.wi.us/planning/Comp-Plan/work-group_reading.htm.

Comments/discussion on the draft element vision statements, issues, opportunities, and goals/action items comprised the remainder of the meeting.

Vision statement discussion

The vision statement needs to include discussion of protection/preservation of the county's natural communities/ecosystems/biological diversity.

The vision statement needs to convey how unique Door County is:

- We have the most biologically diverse municipality in the state (Baileys Harbor)
- Biological diversity generally
- Shoreline
- Niagara Escarpment
- Lake/water and land/human interactions

Goals/actions discussion

- Door County Zoning Ordinance woodland regulations:
 - Don't match DNR managed forestry practices!
 - Should include an explicit "exemption" for managed forestry enrollees
 - Other rules for non-enrollees should be modified so as to coincide with sound forestry management practices
 - Reclaiming forested lands for agricultural use should be exempted, too
 - Work with DNR on re-doing regulations
- Tools that need to be considered to preserve agricultural/natural land: purchase and/or transfer of development rights programs
 - Research programs being done at county-level (Mission Peninsula, Michigan, for example)
- Education
 - How do we get it to people?
 - Local newspaper columns
 - Help people have a sense of responsibility to the land/community
 - Language used – beware of jargon, acronyms, words that don't really convey the broader meaning we're trying to convey (our responsibility to and interrelationships between the land and us and each other, etc.)
 - Educate land buyers/new residents/property owners through development/real estate community
 - Educating real estate community itself – some happens now, but need more. Plus, they can help buyers see land as part of larger community (biological, agricultural, geological, etc.)
 - Targeted, small meetings, such as with others who disseminate information
 - Businesses – need to include them in efforts as they themselves have an impact on water quality, not to mention an influence on their employees
 - People need information about what locally harvested timber is being used for
 - Schools – younger people need to be reached.
 - Food offered at schools – start using local
 - Highlight jobs/products that are here in the county
 - Need to find ways to counteract school funding issues with regard to environmental education (coursework, presentations, etc.) – it should not be seen as an expendable "extra"
 - Groundwater protection awareness has increased, but people still may not be sure about what is causing problems and how to remedy them
 - Many people seem to think agriculture is the problem/main threat to groundwater
 - Threats are perceived, rather than real, until something like the Log Den situation occurs
 - Groundwater quantity as well as quality is an issue – little or no discussion/focus here right now
 - Educational materials need to emphasize HOW to protect the resource and maybe incentives to do so
 - Send publications out with tax bills
 - County-wide newsletter (note: some towns have not had luck with people reading newsletters!)
 - Education of municipal officials – need constant, on-going
 - Property owner associations – we need to get on-going columns in their newsletters

- We need to go to the people we want to educate (i.e., attend “their” meetings/events rather than expecting them to come to ours) and tap into mail they’re already reading (i.e., newsletters from groups they’ve joined)!
- Newsletters that pose questions/interactive situations sometimes get more responses – people will call in with reports re: an issue/question posed
- For property owners, there are two different groups to try and educate, with two different sets of concerns, etc.:
 - Locals (who may be too busy working, with kids, etc.)
 - Absentee owners (who may just want to relax, be alone when up here)
- Real estate/development community want (or should want!) natural resource protection – clean water, healthy natural communities, etc. can only improve their sales ability
- Some see the main targets for education being newcomers, vacationers, seasonal residents. Others think some vacationers/part-time residents are more up on issues than “locals”
- We need to create a new mindset, a culture change, a language change – take/define/identify what is special, important about Door County, and make that the theme, the way things are – THIS is how you do things in Door County
- We should ask the Door County Visitor Bureau to get information on its website:
 - Links to municipal websites
 - Links to Door County Planning website
 - Links to environmental groups, brochures, information
 - Establish a new “looking to buy or build in Door County?” link – connect it not to the Board of REALTORS, but to general environmental information, etc.
- Should we require environmental impact fees/studies/”class” regarding resource protection issues for all new houses, developments?
- Funding education and conservation efforts is a huge issue – maybe environmental impact fees could help fund
- We may, unfortunately, need financial incentives to get people to do the right thing
 - Maybe, the more environmentally friendly the development, the lower the fee
 - Fines/permit fees should go toward educational efforts
- Fines/permit fees in some other fragile areas of the country are astounding, compared to ours (i.e., thousands and thousands of dollars)
- Maybe we need to establish “Focus on Environment” audits (like the “Focus on Energy” audits)
- The county needs a marketing/PR staff person!
- No one from the development community has been attending this work group (note: other work groups have had development community representation)
- Sanitarian on-going comprehensive study – need more staff. Towns could do what Liberty Grove did – they are paying to get inspections sooner than scheduled for systems that are 20+ years old and/or for which there are no records.
 - Sanitarian needs to be allowed to re-instate its part-time seasonal help (“LTE” position)
- Should we use watershed boundaries, issues, etc. to guide development, like other areas have done?
- We need to be careful of unintended consequences – of regulations, of marketing ourselves too well, etc.
- Should the county identify suitable areas for public sewer and water, determine where it could/should go?
- New staff could be funded with fees
- We need to ensure access to property for people to recreate – conservation and agency groups cannot afford to buy the amount of land we want/need for those purposes
 - We need to educate private landowners about hunting
 - Land is being sold and often new owners are then not allowing access where it was previously allowed – lands available for hunting are fragmented, declining
 - Deer populations – huge impact on natural resources (particularly plants and trees). We are not harvesting enough deer each year.
 - Absentee/non-resident owners need to learn about how disallowing hunting affects THEM as well as the county’s environmental resources
 - Crop damage
 - (Rare) plant damage
 - Tree damage

- Can we offer tax/financial incentives if you allow hunting on your property?
- Should all private land subsidized by tax dollars be open to the public for hunting? Given the problems/issues listed below with such a mandate, it is instead probably best to offer incentives and education.
 - Mandate would probably cause people to withdraw from or never enroll in the managed forest program
 - All farmland is subsidized by tax dollars
 - The state Stewardship Fund grants are now going to require public access to lands purchased with those state funds, except in certain situations (criteria are being set now at hearings)
 - Conservation Congress 2008 is looking at this issue

4. Review and discuss goals from completed municipal plans:

- a. Compare with initial draft of work group goals.**
- b. Identify goals to add to county plan.**
- c. Identify topics/goals not addressed by municipalities or work groups.**

Work group attendees and facilitators agreed that this topic/discussion would be undertaken at the next meeting.

5. Set next meeting date.

8:00 – 10:00 a.m., Wednesday, May 7, 2008

Location: Sturgeon Bay Library - Jane Greene Room

6. Adjourn.

Meeting adjourned at 10:00 a.m.

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