

Washington Island Economic Development Committee

Regular Monthly Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, October 22, 2013

7:00 p.m.

The Rutledge Room

1. Meeting opened at 7:03 p.m. (Present: Chairman Rader, Stayton, Nikolai, Maiers, Sorenson, Gunnlaugsson, Engstrom.
2. Chairman's remarks: David Brukhardt, member of University of Wisconsin Board of Regents, Associate VP of Economic Development is a possible speaker for the future. Also, minutes from the September 24, 2013 regular meeting were unanimously approved.
3. Project updates: Stayton and Nikolai have no input to offer regarding the marketing brochure. There may be input ready for the next regular meeting. Re: Plum/Pilot Islands connections, Stayton will follow up w/FOPPI on their plans and report information to the committee.
4. The Door-Tran presentation from Frank Maxwell will be scheduled for a future date. Rader is to contact Maxwell for information re: Community Van operation/system.
5. Trolley Discussion: Formerly, Glacierland did a study discussing the feasibility of a trolley service for the island. Nikolai offers a brief synopsis. Rader comments on the current Viking and Cherry Train services and that Door-Tran funds a regularly routed transportation system. It is noted that the taxi service on the island is different from public transportation. Audience member Helene Meyer notes that 2 trains could enable customers with day/date tickets with easy access to island locations. Stayton comments that the island trains are not "transportation systems" per se, that train size is important to the number of passengers who can be serviced at a given time. Rader suggests formation of a subcommittee to explore the trolley issue further.
5. Trolley discussion continued, re: Town issues. Gunnlaugson added that the term "trolley" is misleading. Possibly Door-Tran will be the key to truly identifying such service. Town should set a clear goal before getting into the project. Islanders and day-trippers should be fully able to use the service with defined routes and attention to seasonal demand. Engstrom questions if there might be a room tax application for a trolley service. Nikolai reinforces idea that guidelines are needed at the outset of planning. A 4-person committee to define guidelines for a "trolley" project includes, Nikolai, Gunnlauggson, Engstrom, and Tim (Garland? — correction requested).
6. Fragrant Isle Business-Zoning Request: Discussion and/Motion. Fragrant Isle is represented by Helene Meyer, Martine and Edgar Anderson, all of whom discussed the lavender growing project as an agritourism business. An agritourism business can succeed when the retail segment is located at the site of the growing /harvesting segment. Actions taken by the date of this meeting included site plans submissions, identifying the existing barn for processing and storage, early-stage planting of a possible 30k lavender plants, plans for a new building housing office as

well as retail space, identifying goals of "soft tourism" or agritourism, introduction of a possible July Lavender Fest after a 3-year growing period. Stayton commented on equipment needed for the business that could include drying facilities incorporating drying, cutting, sifting elements. A still could be utilized to extract lavender oil. Helene Meyer responds with remarks regarding job creation: 7 retail jobs, 3 field positions, and 1 consulting hire are existing or envisioned. Possibly, 18 indirect jobs could be created over time.

Maiers asks how the committee can advise the town to support the Fragrant Isle rezoning request. Chairman Rader presents a draft memo for support; Stayton makes minor change. Committee is in unanimous agreement to support zoning change. The memo is to be sent on to the Town Board with approval. The committee votes unanimously to support the Rezoning and Conditional Use request, which will be forwarded to the Town Board for approval.

7. Committee Comments: Maiers observes that economic development seems to be at loggerheads with the core development plan. He notes that the island is different because people/ tourists want to be by the water, which could lead to the possibility of small core areas around the island rather than just one large designated core for businesses. This comment led to a discussion about zoning rules, with or without economic development as an element. Maiers may present information on rural agritourism collected from other communities Also noted: The winner of the island August barbecue event has gone on in competition to become Reserve Grand Champion in the KC Masterpiece American Royal Invitational. Stayton reported that collected room tax for August 2013 is down 2.5% over 2012.

8. Public Comments: Stayton remarks that agritourism business ventures such as Fragrant Isle could require the town to revisit zoning, variances, and conditional use regulations in the future as they are defined in the comprehensive plan and county ordinances. Edgar Anderson suggested a future visit to the committee by a representative from the Sequim lavender growers in Washington state. An invitation to this representative may be extended for the May 2014 regular meeting.

9. The committee agrees that the next scheduled meeting will be held on November 19.

Respectively submitted,
Susan Ulm
Committee Secretary
Nov. 2013