



COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN

Pillar Team Members Meeting

Tuesday, May 10, 2022 at 11:30 a.m.
City Hall Council Chambers

Members Present:

Mayor **Mike McCann**, Past City Mayor **Rita Kissner**, DDVB Executive Director **Kirstie Mack**, Defiance County Health Commissioner **Jamie Gerken**, City Planner **Niki Warncke**, Chamber of Commerce Executive Director **Sarah Tackett**, MVPO Housing Coordinator **Liz Keel**, United Way Executive Director **Abby Wolfrum**, Defiance Area Foundation Director **Chris Yoder**, Defiance College President **Richanne Mankey**, Executive Assistant **Debbie Stevens**

Members Absent: Defiance County Economic Development Executive Director **Erika Willitzer**, Dream Center **Guiseppe Blanchard**, Defiance City Schools Superintendent **Bob Morton**, Councilman **John Hancock**, Next Gen **Luis Rivera**, City Finance Director **John Lehner**, Defiance Public Library Director **Cara Potter**

PILLAR PROGRESS REPORTS:



ABBY WOLFUM and ERIKA WILLITZER:

CONNECTIVITY PILLAR
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ABBY WOLFRUM:

- **Transportation:**

The Executive Director for the Henry County Transportation Network Brad Booth resigned; which unfortunately, halted the 53/10 funding application that is due this Friday and most likely will not happen.

MIKE McCann

- **Broadband:** An update will be given at the next meeting.

NIKI WARNCKE:

- The Buckeye Trail signs have been installed throughout the community. The Pontiac Park Trail board is installed and the same board is also located at the Reservoir Trail. The City will be featured in the National Sign Board magazine. Other cities will be using Defiance's sign design for the rest of the trail.
- The sidewalk projects will go on Council's Legislative Agenda for review at tomorrow night's meeting.
- The City received notification of \$1.3M from ODOT to extend the Ottawa Avenue corridor improvements. This is great news! This is to finish the trail on Ottawa Avenue for sidewalks to Second Street. Securing funding for a stretch of Karnes Avenue sidewalk is next. The Cleveland to Ayersville Avenue connection is also next on the list. The entire triangle for that area will be connected soon. Figuring out other sidewalk gaps to connect the community is being reviewed as well as researching the funding.

KIRSTIE MACK:

- A City Park-to-Park map listing the miles between each will be developed.

MIKE MCCANN: A small group from the City visited Tiffin, Ohio yesterday, which is comparable to Defiance, to talk to their CIC, Downtown Manager, and Administration. The group toured the downtown area and Tiffin shared how they proceeded with their downtown updates. The downtown wayfinding signs were very helpful. Tiffin's downtown has a theatre that fits 1300 people that is very similar to the old Defiance Valentine Theatre. Tiffin has a \$1,000 grant program used for perpendicular business building signs, and a \$50,000 Façade Grant Program for up to \$10,000 a year used for updating the building façade or roof. It has been increased to \$100,000 now due to gained interest of adding vibrance to the downtown area. A similar Defiance Plan will be developed this summer.

NIKI WARNCKE:

The Mannik and Smith Group is working on a feasibility study for the downtown for pedestrian safety. The Group will be reviewing impacts and costs estimates on counter measures. Educational prospectus will be developed and videos shared on social media outlets as a reminder to pedestrians and drivers on their responsibilities in the downtown.

KIRSTIE MACK:

The wraps around the downtown traffic boxes will have maps on the wrap with points of interest in the downtown.



RITA KISSNER (CULTURE), RICHANNE MANKEY AND BOB MORTON (EDUCATION)

CULTURE & EDUCATION PILLAR

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EDUCATION: RICHANNE MANKEY

- Community-based items were shared. Defiance College's Board of Trustees approved and hired a faculty member for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI). This will allow DC to provide workshops and training related to DEI to bring interest to the College and the Defiance community.
- The Disc Golf Course on campus that also runs through the woods will be ready by August. The community is welcomed to use it.
- Defiance College is celebrating its 175th year for the 2025-26 year. Founder's Day, March 23, 2025, will be the kick off of the celebration. Bringing the college and community together for this event is currently being planned.
- The City of Defiance, Defiance College, and Senator Sherrod Brown worked together to secure funding to form the Ohio Tri-River Research Alliance (OTRA) in Defiance. The Alliance will receive \$500,000 in government funding to research systemic problems associated with the Upper Maumee River Watershed.
- Moving forward, Defiance College is focusing on STEM in Career Services, added a Superintendent Licensure Certificate, developing an engineering degree in combination with the University of North Dakota, developing a Cyber Security major. Enrollment is looking better for the fall. A 419 Scholarship is being discussed to help keep local students in the 419 area.



ERIKA WILLITZER and JOHN LEHNER

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PILLAR

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ERIKA WILLITZER and JOHN LEHNER

- Both Absent



JAMIE GERKEN, RICHANNE MANKEY

HEALTH & WELLNESS PILLAR

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The Wellness Focus is on 4 Key Areas:

1) The Farmers Market, 2) Walking Program/Trails, 3) Research, and 4) The Health in all Policy

JAMIE GERKEN:

- It is slowly getting back to normal but there is a slight uptick in COVID cases, but nothing alarming.
- A new Health Promotion Specialist Jamie Fisher was hired to expand that division.

- Socio-economic development is a large part of an individual's overall health. For the Defiance Health Department, socio-economic development items include the rent smart program, housing affordability, physical activity accessibility, active transportation, make healthy choice an easy choice, social mass media promotion, mental health, risky behavior, health literacy, work force shortage, thinking outside of the box to help community, in school programs, etc.
- The Defiance County Health Improvement Plan will focus on goals and action steps in the next three years. Priority areas are community conditions: affordable housing, early childhood education on home visiting, workforce, obesity, access to health care, transportation, family service guides, dental, workforce shortage, and mental health and addiction. They will be partnering with the Public Library on Health Literacy.

Kirstie: The Farmers Market at Northtowne Mall started yesterday. The downtown market starts Thursday, May 19, 2022 through the end of August from 4-6:30 pm and is moving back to Triangle Park with 20 vendors signed up. Funding for the Farmers Market is provided by a grant through ProMedica.



LIZ KEEL AND RITA KISSNER

HOUSING PILLAR

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MIKE MCCANN:

HOUSING:

- Tonight, City Council will have the first reading of the rezoning and the Planned Unit Development (PUD) for the 390 market-rate apartment development behind Walmart. At the next Council meeting, there will be the 2nd reading to pass it.
- The Housing Development on Carter Road is currently under discussion. The housing demand is growing in Defiance. A residential development is in the planning process to develop 30-50 single family homes and duplexes/villas and most likely be market driven and built to suit.
- The 300-302 Clinton and Second Street Building re-development should start in June with apartments upstairs and a restaurant downstairs.
- In the 1918 Building, items are being removed such as boilers, old desk, and anything leftover to remove. Vaughn's Salvage is cleaning out the building for scrap. The wooden furniture will be removed, then cleaned to show potential investors. Renovations for the gymnasium and restrooms will be worked on.
- Garmann-Miller will be developing conceptual plans for the 1918 building. The Garmann Miller Contract will be through the Defiance Area Founding (DAF) and the City for 3D models and conceptual drawings.



LUIS RIVERA, JR., KIRSTIE MACK, CHRIS YODER, SARAH TACKETT

PERCEPTION PILLAR

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KIRSTIE MACK:

- There are 115 Vendors for the Lilac Festival.
- The Civic Pride Workshop with Jeff Sigler is on June 16, 2022 from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. to combat apathy. The location is yet to be determined. It will be a reservation-based workshop.

Niki Warncke: The Comprehensive Plan Survey is online. Take the survey, pass it on, and encourage others to take it. Getting a 33% response rate would be a viable response.

Sarah Tackett: Sarah and her husband Jeff will be new Executive Directors for the Stroede Center for the Arts and Defiance Community Cultural Council (DCCC) since the current Director retired.

Chris Yoder: Project 2030 is raising money for the next decade. The DAF Annual Meeting on September 29, 2022 will be at Tinora Performing Arts Building and will be youth led.

Next SPC Pillar Team Leader meeting: Tuesday, July 12, 2022, at 11:30 a.m. at City Hall Council Chambers.

Submitted by Executive Assistant Debbie Stevens