

Community Strategic Plan
Pillar Team Members Meeting
Tuesday, September 3, 2019 at 11:00 a.m.

In attendance:

Richanne Mankey Defiance College President, United Way Executive Director Carrie Wetstein, City Finance Director John Lehner, City Planner Niki Warncke, MVPO Housing Coordinator Liz Keel, Defiance ProMedica President Doug Bush, Past City Mayor Rita Kissner, Defiance Economic Development Executive Director Jerry Hayes, Defiance County Workforce Development Manager Carla Hinkle, Next Gen Luis Rivera, Jr., DDVB Executive Director Kirstie Mack, Defiance City Schools Superintendent Bob Morton, Councilman David Plant, City Executive Assistant Debbie Stevens

Absent: Mayor Mike McCann, Defiance County Health Commissioner Jamie Gerken

PILLAR PROGRESS REPORTS:

PILLAR 1: CONNECTIVITY: Carrie Wetstein

CARRIE WETSTEIN:

Connectivity/Broadband: This discussion is happening at the County level with as well. To make this topic more regional, Defiance County Commissioners are looking at a fall conference with Dr. Roberto Gallardo who met with the Commissioners recently. Dr. Gallardo is the Assistant Director of the Purdue Center for Regional Development and a Purdue Extension Community and Regional Economics Specialist. He has worked with rural communities over the past decade conducting local and regional community economic development, including use of technology. Internet speeds and connectivity throughout Defiance County will be examined. The cost for the study is \$25,000 which includes a public meeting and a goal of becoming a Smart Communities Imitative and promote improved connectivity in the county. The City is involved in this endeavor as well to address CSO issues with connectivity through the technology component of the Long Term Control Plan (LTCP). Real-time monitoring in creeks, streams, rivers, etc. to determine the highest level of nutrient runoff was one example of advanced connectivity and usage of internet connectivity in rural areas. The County and City will eventually work together on this initiative along with electrical co-ops in the area.

NIKI WARNCKE: The Defiance County Active Transportation Plan should be completed by the end of the year. Bob Morton stated that the Defiance City Schools will help in any way with the Safe Route to Schools Plan. A survey and several public meetings were held to develop this plan. The plan will also include Defiance College students. Water transportation was also mentioned in the recent survey. These connections are vital to the success of the plan.

Transportation:

A Mobility Manager was approved through ODOT, and Josh Junge is now working in that role at Triangular Processing servicing the Defiance, Henry, and Fulton County areas. He will be helping with grant proposals along with working with existing transportation networks in our communities and also connecting, expanding, and creating new resources in our communities.

Defiance County Commissioners met last week with several county entities regarding Henry County Transportation Network (HCTN) expanding into Defiance County. HCTN applied for a grant through ODOT's 5311 Program for public transportation for all in our community. A meeting is set for Friday with entities who will be asked to help offset the cost of the match for the grant. The grant is 80/20 with our local match being 20% or \$125,000 to offset the entire grant, if received. This grant is a request for vehicles for Defiance County and expanding to Fulton County in the future as a regional approach.

The Bridge Ride contracted with NOCAC to schedule the rides and is going well for those to get to and from work or medical needs who previously rode or walked across the Clinton Street Bridge. K&P Medical is involved with the transportation aspect.

PILLAR 2: CULTURE AND EDUCATION: Rita Kissner (Culture) and Richanne Mankey (Education)

CULTURE: RITA KISSNER

1918 building:

- The property transfer is getting close to being finished, just working out the fine details. The purchase agreement is in agreeable terms between the City and the School, but there are a few unique crossovers in boundaries, general maintenance, and storage needs being resolved. The city survey of the property is proceeding slower than anticipated due to area surveyors' busy schedules.
- On September 11, 2019, there is a meeting at City Hall to look at usage proposals for the 1918 building.

EDUCATION: RICHANNE MANKEY AND BOB MORTON

- Bob Morton will join the education pillar with Dr. Mankey now that he is on board as Superintendent of Defiance City Schools.
- Small Business Development Committee: Lisa Beecher and Brandon Gerken will facilitate a two-hour meeting soon to discuss goals and objectives for this committee to narrow down areas of concern and join efforts together. Jerry Hayes will join the next meeting for his advice and knowledge in the small business arena.
- Bob Morton: Culture and education go hand-in-hand and was glad to see that it's in one pillar.

PILLAR 3: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: Jerry Hayes, Carla Hinkle, and John Lehner

JERRY HAYES: Economic Development

- On August 23, 2019, the Masterton's 78-acres of property was transferred from the CIC ownership to the NAI Harmon Group ownership. Now Harmon can start on the infrastructure that they are responsible for developing.
- In the same area, Johns-Manville has a good start on their expansion project. This is a \$50 million dollar expansion with 24 additional jobs created. Two additional fiberglass production lines with room for a third line is planned. To tie Harmon Park and JM together, a street connection with Domersville Road and Carpenter Road via Commerce Drive will eventually happen.
- Keller Logistics is doing preliminary site work in that same area for an eventual 120-150,000 square foot warehouse building. There are no current committed users for this building, but Keller Logistics wants to be ready for opportunities that could arise, such as JM or other businesses, for development. This is in another TIF area.
- At the City Council meeting tonight, the Annexation Petition will be brought to Council to accept 91 acres into the City from the Roehrs Property for future development work. This property is West of Carpenter Road and North of Elliott Road.
- There is Northside interest but nothing solid yet.
- On the Northwest side of town on Latchaw Drive, Credit Adjustments, Inc. (CAI) is starting to build their headquarters with the anticipated finish of spring 2020 occupancy on the building
- J. Hayes spoke to the CIC Board about the possibility of hiring a consultant to promote and market the Defiance opportunity zone. It's a big area and strategically located through downtown and out to the Northside and wants to get expert help to promote this nationwide.
- Through the last eight months, the retail tax revenue is up and probably will exceed \$6 million for the year going into the county's general fund and is strong for 2019. The Northtowne Mall is a big driver for economics and helped us survive the last recession. Retail is very important to this community and is driven by demographics, income, traffic patterns, and population for businesses to invest in Defiance, Ohio.

- Jerry Hayes proposed a new project request for the MVPO Active Transportation Plan for a Two-mile bypass from North State Route 66 to near the Domersville Road interchange to remove downtown truck traffic. This would take years to develop and is only a request from Jerry Hayes.

CARLA HINKLE: Workforce Development

- A College Fair and Career Day at Defiance College is next Tuesday, September 10, 2019 at Defiance College Smart Center. For the first time, employers will be attending from 11-noon for an open job fair for the public and the students at Defiance College to seek. This is a great opportunity for our community.

PILLAR 4: HEALTH AND WELLNESS: Jamie Gerken and Doug Bush

JAMIE GERKEN:

- Absent

DOUG BUSH:

- The group met a week ago to narrow their focus. A lot of good ideas regarding health and wellness. Funding the plans is the next step in the process.
- Four areas of focus are:
 - 1) Health in All Policy: Jamie Gerken will be speaking to the City Law Director regarding a resolution for City Council consideration.
 - 2) Downtown Farmers Market: for healthy food options and promoting healthy lifestyle and wellness, sustain walking effort, other activities at and around the farmers market to promote health.
 - 3) A Walking Program: A community-wide walking program with designated walking trails, paths, routes, and build programming around those trail areas to engage people. It promotes good social activity as well. Doug Bush thinks ProMedica could get involved with some of the funding.
 - 4) Health Research: Finding out how the community feels about access to healthy options and assets in the community. They connected with the Defiance College McMaster Program to help with basic research around the quality of life and access to healthy options.
- With a lot of work being done in the City on water quality issues, this could be captured and reported on in this pillar.

JOHN LEHNER:

- Several improvements at the water plant are taking place in order to improve the product that comes from the plant.
- When ordinances are developed, the Law Director incorporates language from the SPC Pillars as it relates to the City's ordinances.

LUIS RIVERA: Suggested developing an app for the walking program with milestone rewards and indicating the walking trails. Need to figure out how to get this funded for the community. Doug is researching this currently, but needs expert assistance to create it.

DAVID PLANT: Neighborhood walk programs in your neighborhood was suggested to gather people together.

PILLAR 5: HOUSING: Liz Keel and Niki Warncke

LIZ KEEL:

- Housing discussions are still happening. September 18, 2019 is the next meeting. Agenda items are :
 - CRA expansion
 - Senior Housing: Angie Franklin and Guiseppe Blanchard is heading up a Good Tenant Program
 - Landlord Registration: completion time is targeted for the end of the year.
 - Downtown housing update: Bryan Keller or Jake Oberlin will join the meeting to develop protocol on how to develop downtown buildings
 - An update on the 1918 Building
 - Bridget from Health Department will discuss the training she received on healthy living in communities
 - Land Bank Update: officially in place for Defiance County
 - New Home Development: Granite Ridge Builders has us on their radar for new home development.

- Update on Senior Housing expansion at Glen Park

There are a lot of housing strategies in the works, but there is very little we can do to force action. It's a builder's decision.

NIKI WARNCKE: Land Bank Update: Defiance County officially has one in place now. The Resolutions have been passed. Five people are on the board: Commissioners Ryan Mack and Gary Plotts, County Treasurer Vicki Myers, Real Estate Agent Kurt Sigg, and City Planner Niki Warncke. The Brownfields and old houses are included with the top priority being the Brownfields.

PILLAR 6: PERCEPTION: Luis Rivera, Jr. and Kirstie Mack

LUIS RIVERA, JR.:

- Suggested moving the Farmers Market to the reservoir. There is a lot of walking especially with the new trail open now.
- *Embrace Defiance* and *Big city appeal, small town charm* is the marketing slogan and is working with Yvonne Dale on this logo design.
- A Focus Group is being developed on Facebook and are creating questions for a survey for the community to gather input on perception.
- The survey will be distributed at the Ribfest again this year. Perhaps gathering information electronically with iPads was mentioned.
- A community collaborative event with college and community will be happening in September. Planning it is in the works now.

KIRSTIE MACK:

- The Annual Rib Fest event is on September 28, 2019, that will include more security measures.
- Design a logo branding image for the downtown area to distinguish it from the rest of the city.
- Branding the city as a Festival City was suggested. We have the RibFest, Lilac Festival, Balloon Festival, Jazz Fest, Parish Festivals, etc. Perhaps renaming some of the other events to include the word Festival. An image/logo branding is being looked at to define the downtown area from the rest of the city.

DAVID PLANT:

- Quarterly updates from the SPC Pillar groups during City Council Meetings was suggested. These are taped and can be viewed on TV and YouTube by the entire Defiance community to show our community what is happening in the Community Strategic Plan as well as community initiatives. This is something to be excited about because of all the hard work this committee and others have put into it.

Yvonne Dale Graphics will be asked to return to the next SPC Pillar Team Meeting to present the updated SPC logo concepts to the group.

Next SPC Pillar Team Leader meeting: Tuesday, November 5, 2019 at 11:00 a.m. in Council Chambers.

Respectfully submitted,

Debbie Stevens, Executive Assistant

for Mayor Mike McCann and City Administrator Jeff Leonard

City of Defiance