

**MASTER PLAN STEERING COMMITTEE
CITY OF FORT ATKINSON
MINUTES
APRIL 30, 2007**

The meeting was called to order by Acting Chairman John Wilmet at 6:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers of the Municipal Building.

Members present: Mark Zastrow, John Wilmet, James Fitzpatrick, Jill Kessenich, Sandy Mayer, Sheldon Mielke and Jeff Woods

Members absent: None

Others present: Mark Roffers, LaVerne Behrens, John Mielke, Rudy Bushcott and Paul Pelnar

Item #1: Appointment of Committee Chairman

John Wilmet asked if there were any nominations from any of the Committee members. Sheldon Mielke nominated Mark Zastrow for the position. No other nominations were received and Mark Zastrow was appointed by a 7-0 voice vote.

Item #2: Appointment of Committee Secretary

Chairman Zastrow asked if anyone was interested in being Committee Secretary? Jeff Woods said that he would volunteer to be Secretary.

Item #3: Present Overall Planning Process, Scope and Timeline

John Wilmet suggested that the Committee introduce themselves and who they are representing.

Jim Fitzpatrick	-	Superintendent of Schools, Fort Atkinson
Jill Kessenich	-	Residential architect and citizen-at-large representative
Sandy Mayer	-	High Pointe Properties and Chamber of Commerce representative
John Wilmet	-	City Manager
Mark Zastrow	-	City Council representative
Jeff Woods	-	City Engineer
Sheldon Mielke	-	Fort Atkinson Industrial Development Corp. representative

Mark Roffers, of Vandewall & Associates, gave the Committee some background information on himself, including schooling, work experience, and his current work at Vandewall & Associates. While working at Vandewall, he has been involved in approximately 45 comprehensive plans. The plan to be worked on in Fort Atkinson will form the basis for the City's zoning and subdivision regulations. After 2010, the City will have to use their comprehensive plan as a

basis for making decisions on rezonings, conditional use permits, subdivision plats, and other items.

Mark Roffers then reviewed some information on what a comprehensive plan is. The handout reviewed the nine elements of a plan, the required content of each element, and additional planning that takes place within each element. The City's current plan is approximately ten years old and is in need of updating.

The meeting schedule and agenda items handout were then discussed by Mark Roffers. This is a draft schedule based on discussions with City staff and the Contract. It shows the six Committee meetings with the consultant, the community meetings, and meetings with City Council and Planning Commission. The dates are tentative, but show the process being completed in March, 2008. The first community meeting needs to be discussed to determine a date and location. This schedule will be revised during the process and a current schedule will always be sent to the Committee members. Mark Roffers said they are currently gathering data for the first community workshop and gathering information for a webpage so that people can track the process and be kept informed. Over the course of the summer, we will be assembling the background information and processing the initial public input that is received at the vision workshop.

When asked by Chairman Zastrow, Mark Roffers said the intergovernmental meetings are scheduled with adjacent Townships to initially compare notes on visions and potential conflicts, and then later in the process to review the draft plan.

Mark Roffers added there might be times when this Committee would like or want to meet without him. The schedule would not prevent that from happening, and it would be up to the Committee if they wanted to.

Item #4: Present Draft Public Participation Plan

Mark Roffers then reviewed the material included in the handouts. The City is required to adopt a Resolution establishing public participation procedures for the comprehensive plan. A draft Resolution is enclosed. The Public Participation Plan and meeting schedule should be included as attachments to the Resolution. John Wilmet said these will be sent to the Council for them to act on.

Item #5: Identify Key Planning Issues and Data Needs

Mark Roffers said this is the part of the meeting where the Committee members can give him some of their opinions and comments. He asked these three questions of the members:

1. As you look forward at the next 20 years, what do you think are the biggest opportunities for the City of Fort Atkinson?
2. As you look forward at the next 20 years, what do you see as the biggest challenges?

3. If there was one issue that this comprehensive plan could resolve, what would that single issue be?

Chairman Zastrow said that one opportunity is the quality of life along with sustained growth that maintains our quality of life. We have avoided the challenges that come with growing quicker than what can be handled by staffing or infrastructure. Fort Atkinson is not a small town, but it does have a lot of progressive people, businesses and activities that we want to maintain.

James Fitzpatrick said what he has learned while living here and from people that are living here is a tremendous feeling of pride in the community. People really care about how this City will grow and they understand all of the elements that are considered vital to a strong community, business, industry, health care and education. They all have to grow together to work.

Sheldon Mielke said there needs to be balance between development and preserving the rural nature of the County and surrounding areas. Jefferson County will be under increasing pressure from surrounding communities to develop. The City needs to grow in a planned manner that will continue to increase the tax base so we can afford the services we expect in the City. We also need to watch what is developing around us to preserve our rural character and quality of life.

Jill Kessenich said there also needs to be a balance between preserving the core of the City, businesses and residential, and the development of businesses and residences on the fringes.

Sandy Mayer said the biggest opportunities and challenges are one in the same – growth. How do you manage it? Growth is needed, but the challenge is how to manage that growth to satisfy everyone's concerns. We need to keep some rural flavor, but it is hard to do that and still have growth. We need to figure out how to do that to maintain the quality of life.

John Wilmet said one of the biggest opportunities for the City is our location; near several high level universities, with the Madison, Milwaukee and Chicago influence starting to take affect here. It might also be our biggest challenge, as they start to grow and expand toward us.

Jeff Woods said the biggest opportunity is our quality of life, it is what has brought people here and what keeps them here. The biggest challenge is to balance keeping the quality of life with a slow sustained growth, so that your services can keep pace with your growth.

Mark Roffers asked if there were any under-utilized sites or areas in the City. John Wilmet said the City is land-locked as far as areas of development are concerned. There are limited areas that we can grow in, and one of the biggest challenges will be to insure the plan has these as City growth areas, and not rural growth areas. Sandy Mayer added there is room for growth in the City's south side Business Park. Mark Zastrow felt there is opportunity for commercial/retail growth along the Janesville Avenue and Madison Avenue corridors. John Wilmet said the City has an extensive park and recreation program and the School District also has a lot of events, but there is an age group that seems to be left out with not a lot to do. An older group (18-21), and a younger group (10-14), that do not have programs and do not have a lot of activities.

Mark Roffers then re-asked the “one-issue” question you would like to see resolved. John Wilmet said it is preserving the areas the City needs for its growth. Jim Fitzpatrick said that we also need to be aware of the changing diversity in the community.

Item #6: Plans for Community Vision Workshop

Mark Roffers said the next order of business is to set a date and location for the workshop. The meeting agenda handout was reviewed first. The purpose of the workshop is to gather information and opinions from the largest possible cross-section of the City as possible. The process is very interactive – to get the most information.

In discussing the location, Mark Roffers said the best facility is one with a large room and round tables. James Fitzpatrick said that depending on the date, the High School could be used. The dates discussed were May 30 and 31 and June 5, 6 and 7. John Wilmet said he will work out the date with the School District and notify the Committee of the selected date.

Item #7: Set Next Meeting Date

At the consensus of the Committee members, the third Monday of the month worked best. The next meeting was set for June 18, 2007 at 6:00 p.m. in the Municipal Building.

Item #8: Adjournment

A motion to adjourn was made by Sheldon Mielke, seconded by John Wilmet, and passed by a 7-0 voice vote. The meeting adjourned at 7:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeffrey L. Woods, P.E.
Secretary