

Decorah Sustainability Commission
City Council Chambers / City Hall

Wednesday, August 18, 2021, 5:00 - 6:15 pm

Members present (at Council Chambers): Michelle Barness, Ben Grimstad, Jeremy Leitz, Jim Martin-Schramm, Molly McNicoll, Brent Parker, Ann Mansfield

Others: Mayor Lorraine Borowski, Emily Neal

AGENDA

- Call to order
 - a. Jim Martin-Schramm called the meeting to order at 5:01 pm.
- Approval of Minutes from July meeting.
 - a. July 21, 2021 meeting minutes approved (Motion by B. Grimstad, second by J. Leitz).
- Updates:
 - City Council funding request for Sunflower Child Development and Discovery Center project. (Mayor Borowski)
 - a. Council expressed excitement for project; recent update re acquisition for land from Winn Med. Center very helpful. Council commitment: \$350K from American Recovery Funds and \$150K from various places in city budget over the next 5 years. Total of \$500K for the project. (At this time, there will not be sustainability-related funds in excess of the \$10K already committed from DSC for this fiscal year.)
 - GHG study approval by Council (Mayor Borowski)
 - a. \$2,500 approved by Council in support of the Green House Gas Study to be completed by CEEE at UNI
 - EV charging agreement (Jim Martin-Schramm)
 - a. Alliant Energy – working through questions re cost, software, terms and agreement, potential repair costs; updating language of agreement for a total of 2 pedestal stations for 4 cars. Alliant offered assistance for applying for the VW settlement funds, city was not interested at this time. Luther was also eligible; has applied for and will receive assistance for a station near the Regent’s Center.
 - Per capita renewable energy based on 2020 census (Jim Martin-Schramm)
 - a. Wanda received 2020 census data this week.
 - b. Action E.5.
 - c. Installed capacity – 0.7398KW/capita. 3300/5600 is 5.6 megawatts for installed capacity. This is a baseline. We will be able to track our progress based on this. See attached memo date August 17, 2021.
 - Downtown recycling infrastructure (Jeremy Lietz & Brent Parker)
 - a. Brent met with IRP to design 5 bins (marked cans, aluminum, plastics). SMID has committed \$1,000 in support. Brent has a draft letter to city council for when the design is ready. Plan is to put 2 bins out now; store the other 3 until we get a process determined. Issue of pickup; city manager will work with city staff to determine.

- b. Birgitta Mead is the new Recycling Education Coordinator for Winneshiek County Conservation. (Previously at Winn. Co. Recycling). Jeremy and Brent will follow up with Birgitta about educational efforts related to this initiative.
- Discussion: Next steps regarding Communications Plan RFP and/or survey (Ann Mansfield)
 - a. Have previously discussed that the Communications plan is an important element for the DSC and city to develop.
 - b. At the upcoming council work session, Emily will talk to the council re the onboarding process of the new city manager to include orientation to the Sustainability Plan.
 - c. DSC has a unique role to bring all aspects of sustainability to the communication plan discussions. Everyone in agreement to wait until new city manager on board to move ahead.
- Discussion: Iowa Code 384.3A Use of Franchise Fee Revenues (Jim Martin-Schramm)
 - a. In conversation this summer, Jim has learned that the city needs an ordinance for Franchise Fee Revenues; Mayor Borowski read Resolution 3085 passed by the city in June 2, 2020.
 - b. Franchise Fee – intended half for streets, half for sustainability. Can also include economic development, etc. B. Grimstad noted that funding for the City Forester/Arborist fits with improvements to public property.
- Discussion: Focus of next quarterly meeting with city leaders
 - a. Mayor Borowski suggests that we can now schedule a fall meeting with the new city manager coming on board mid-September 2021.
 - b. The commission decided the focus of this meeting should be for people/organizations to share significant updates and areas where they could use some help from others ... this is what we are doing, post-pandemic; where are we sitting... patterns of pandemic issues; broadband, childcare, workforce development, etc.
 - c. Ann Mansfield will share the discussion framework as well as the notes from the first quarterly leaders meeting held on February 26, 2020.
- Other Business
 - a. Air pollution monitors; data is available online at <https://www.purpleair.com/map?opt=1/mAQI/a10/cC0#15.35/43.302533/-91.78373>. Laura Peterson and summer students are analyzing the data. Molly will send the link (Purple Air) for air monitoring in an email to Chopper to place on city website.
 - b. Emily encouraged DSC to issue new releases of activities. Example; Recycling, Air monitoring, etc. Commission members can send brief statements to Jim for submission. Wanda will send out.
- Meeting adjourned @ 6:18; Motion made by B. Grimstad, second by B. Parker.
- Next meeting is September 15th
- Minutes submitted by Ann Mansfield

“Decorah 2030”

Meeting Design final draft 02.25.20

Planning group:

Co-leaders:

Chad Bird – City Administrator
Steph Fromm – Winn. Co. Econ. Development

Others:

Jodi Enos Berlage – Luther College, Rochester Hub project
Ross Hadley – City Council, Sustainability plan
Emily Neal – City Council, Sustainability plan
Ann Mansfield – Facilitator

Purpose of convening a “Decorah 2030” meeting in February 2020:

This convening is in follow-up to a meeting held at in October 2019; initiated by Jodi Enos Berlage and Robert Christman from Luther to provide an update to key city entities re the Luther Rochester Hub project and the potential community connections/impact. Since that meeting, there has been interest in convening this “group” again to share organization priorities and explore potential for collaboration and/or partnership to advance the individual and collective strategic plans of these key entities.

Meeting Date: Wednesday February 26th 1:30-3:30 pm at Viking State Bank Conference Room

Organization RSVPs (as of 2.25.20):

- **City of Decorah:** Chad Bird, Lorraine Borrowski (not able to attend), Council members: Ross Hadley, Emily Neal
- **Winneshiek County Economic Development & Project Childcare:** Steph Fromm, Lora Friest
- **Luther College:** Jenifer Ward, Eric Runestad, Brad Chamberlain, Jodi Enos Berlage, Robert Christman
- **Winneshiek Medical Center:** Jenna Haynes (for Lisa Radtke, Dave Rooney), Rick Burras, WMC Board Chair
- **Decorah Schools:** Mark Lane
- **Vesterheim:** Marsha McKelvey
- **Decorah Jobs:** Harlan Satrom, Keith Bruening, Mike Huinker (for Ben Grimstad)
- **Decorah Chamber:** Kristina Wiltgen
- **Winneshiek County:** Conservation – Barb Schroeder, Other “big projects” - Fairgrounds

Meeting design summary

- 1:30 pm
 - Welcome and Context – Steph and Chad
 - Introductions – “Why were you willing to come to this meeting?”
 - Will keep intros to <1 min/each.
- 1:45 pm
 - Meeting/conversation guidelines:
 - Overall purpose: establish relationships, share key priorities and explore potential for future collaboration
 - What is shared today is not for public dissemination
 - Facilitator will guide the discussion to “keep moving” and end on time
 - Other?

- 1:47 pm
 - “Round 1”
 - Invite each organization/entity to share priority elements of their strategic plan for the coming 5-10 years. Encourage each organization/entity to share what aspects they are most excited about (opportunities/vision) (4-5 minutes each)
 - City of Decorah
 - Winneshiek Co. Economic Development and Project Childcare
 - Luther College
 - Decorah Schools
 - Winneshiek Medical Center
 - Vesterheim
 - Decorah Chamber
 - Decorah Jobs
 - Winneshiek County
- 2:32 pm
 - “Round 2”
 - Invite each organization to share their biggest challenges/barriers and where they could use help from other stakeholders to achieve their strategic priorities (2-3 minutes each)
- 2:55 pm -- Brief Break
- 3:00 pm
 - “Round 3”
 - High level: Explore opportunities to collaborate, partner...
 - Consider human/financial/facility/land resources, etc
- 3:20 pm Conclusion/Next steps:
 - Assess the interest/readiness of the group to develop a 10-20 year collaborative community vision for Decorah that includes a planning process.
 - Who else needs to be “at the table”?
 - Possibly consider design thinking approach as part of this process

DECORAH 2030
Convening 02.26.2020
Notes by Emily Neal

INTRODUCTIONS:

Ann introduction, Rick: Welcome to Viking State Bank
Chad and Stephanie, Context for the Meeting:

Guidelines of the meeting:

Overall purpose is to establish relationships, share key priorities and explore potential for future collaboration.

Introductions:

Kristina Witgen, Mark Lane, Jenna Haynes, Rick Burras (WMC), Stephanie Fromm, Lora Friest, Harlan Satrom, Barb Schroeder, Jodi Enos-Berlage, Jennifer Ward, Stephen Spore (??), Eric Runestad, Brad Chamberlain, Robert Christman, Mike Huinker, Marsha McKlvey, Ross Hadley, Chad Bird, Emily Neal

Ground Rules:

- What is shared today is not for public dissemination,
- Facilitation keep conversation balanced and moving.
- This is your meeting
- People will support what they help create
- Other..

Chad Bird:

Sharing aspects for the City Plan:

- Hiring building inspector
- Implementation of a community wide Sustainability Plan
- Stronger street improvement and maintenance plan
- New Fire Station and space needs
- Strengthening community partnerships
- Succession planning

Stephanie Fromm: Economic Development (WCDI)

- What do entrepreneurs need to survive
- How do we attract visitors
- How do make businesses sustainable
- How do we grow our schools and workforce
- Families need: Houses, Jobs, Schools, Entertainment, Transportation infrastructure:
- 3 project priorities 2020: Childcare, North Winn School (Business Enterprise), Conservation and Trail Development,

Decorah Jobs

- Focusing on business park and industrial park, new and current businesses
- Create and Economic Development Plan for Decorah and Winneshiek

- A lot of what we do is reactionary, hoping to be more proactive
- Added Piece: A Wellness/Recreation Center (bubbles up and needs a home)

Winneshiek County Conservation Board:

- Trails (connecting to our neighbors)
- Environmental Education
- Neste: Campground and recreation center, long term Nature Center/Visitor Center
- Linking Trails and Park in the county and beyond.

Winneshiek Hospital

- Just finished strategic plan
- Main priority: Growth and Space
- Capturing marketing trends where are the markets taking us what specialities can we provide
- Become a regional healthcare
- Capturing pricing: administrative overhead high and higher, margins smaller and smaller
- Facilities plan: we are short on space for providers
- What is medicine going to look like 10 years from now? Telecare, robotics
- MSA and PSA with Mayo, but we are a County owned hospital to do that we need to be profitable
- Balancing needs and costs

Mark Lane: Decorah Community School

- Redefining our mission, vision and values
- What does service excellence look like
- Team learning: administrative and TLC
- How do we become systems leaders together
- Facilities: we need an elementary school
- Transportation Facility
- Transform Education: How do we meet the needs of Iowa Students

Chamber:

- Programming and connections with a lot of people, but seemingly like separate entities
- Need efficiencies in resources
- Maintaining relationship between Chamber and Economic Development: fostering and growing this partnership
- Staffing is always a challenge: 2 staff, 35 hours a week. Kristina only salaried.
- Some improvements needed in building
- Improve business and investment model: All chambers operate differently.
- Redeveloping and relaunching website: Visit Decorah, doing more things with manufacturing, including tours, etc.
- Merchandise (patches and sticker)

Vesterheim:

- Master planning: Snohetta: Large Capital Project
- Received a capital grant from Margaret A. Cargill

- Received a programming grant from Margaret A Cargill (MAC P)
- Part of project is funded and moving ahead with
- Kerry Building remodel in a feasibility study campaign.
- Fundraising, Programming and Capital Projects: Our YEAR

Decorah Bank:

- Leadership development from the bank: Young development of talent
- Small local banks helping to build our rural communities
- Reading a book Crucial conversations

Luther College

- Strategic Plan:
- Creating a new experiential learning hub
- A community liaison partner from the college
- Establish a day of service
- Luther College as a resource as inclusive excellence
- Enhance a welcoming community (goes both ways)
- Enhance and welcome our new audiences of students
- How do replicate the Rochester Hub here in terms of deep internships in Decorah
- 14 students in Rochester, 20 plus hour internships (in Mayo and other institutions)
- This is the type of learning parents and students want.

Update on Sustainability Plan:

City Needs:

- More youth engagement in commission and boards
- Farmers Market: Invigoration:
- Community Solar
- Car Charging Station
- Infrastructure
- Communications

Economic Development

- Education about what is economic development
- Strategically leveraging the funds we do have
- Bringing back in tax dollars to our community

Decorah Jobs

- Alignment and trust in the community: Getting people on the same page
- \$\$\$
- Investment pool

County Conservation

- Being included
- Looking at the big picture
- Flood Mitigation

- Funding

Winneshiek Medical Center:

- Communication
- Space facilities
- Recruitment: Good School Systems, County, Housing

School District

- Facilities
- Childcare

Chamber:

- Need to be more proactive instead of reactive
- Perceptions become reality
- We can't continue to do what we have always done

Vesterheim:

- Facilities
- Sustainability
- Fundraising
- We need to engage the local audience more

Other:

- Affordable housing
- Employment for trailing spouse and daycare

Luther:

- Having ready partners for internships, service opportunities
- Private college business model: fewer students, paying a little less with greater need.
- Disconnect with the community
- As an institution we will change and this will affect the community
- Partnerships and collaborations
- Immersion learning experiences

Human/Financial/Land Use Partners in Collaboration:

-Embed Experiential Learning

-How do we partner on housing: people coming to Decorah without a lot of equity

-Population aging

-Rural 360 partnerships to redevelop

-What does it look like to have US develop housing not an outsider developer?

-Newton Housing: Prison:

Lora Friest: Financing is also a system: How do you maximize bringing in dollars? We have capital resources in our community and human resources in our community.

Estate planning: Investing in our community

Rural Summit Wisconsin.

Discussion about Visioning: what does it mean for our work.

What could we do if we.....??

What do we want to create together?

August 17, 2021

To: Decorah Sustainability Commission
Fm: Jim Martin-Schramm, Chair
Re: 2020 Decorah Renewable Energy Capacity Per Capita

The Decorah Sustainability Plan includes the following action item (E5):

Commission a professional study to establish a 2020 baseline of installed renewable energy generating capacity per capita (kW/per capita) within the City of Decorah limits; update every three years.

Rather than commission a professional study, the Decorah Sustainability Commission asked Alliant Energy to furnish the city with the amount of renewable energy generating capacity in Decorah through 2020.

On May 7, 2021, Alliant's account representative provided the following information about all renewable energy generating capacity in Decorah's zip code (52101) through December 2020:

City	Technology Type	Number of Projects	Total DG System Size kW (AC)
Decorah	Solar PV	234	4,013.01
	Wind	1	1,600.00
Grand Total		235	5,613.01

The 2020 U.S. Census information was released in August 2021. Decorah's April 1, 2020 population was 7,587. (See <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/decorahcityiowa>)

Thus, the 2020 baseline of installed renewable energy generating capacity per capita is 0.7398 kW/per capita. ($5,610.01 / 7,587 = 0.739827$)