

Chamber of Commerce in Culver

Board of Directors' Meeting July 27, 2010

The board of directors for the Chamber of Commerce in Culver met at the Culver Coffee Co. with members, Greg Fassett, president, Dawn Minas Brockey, vice-president, Ben Schaller, treasurer, Ralph Winters, Dick Brantingham, Mike Stallings, and Rick Tompos, present. Also in attendance, Dick Swenumson and Jack Cunningham for Second Century project, Michael Doss, Culver town manager, and Bobbie Ruhnow, executive secretary. Absent were Scott Huberty, Tony Sellers and Ron May. Fassett called the meeting to order at 7:30 AM.

SECOND CENTURY COMMITTEE REPORT ON PROPOSED BIKE PATH

Cunningham and Swenumson updated the board on a proposed project defined by Culver's Second Century Committee and reviewed a meeting held with MACOG. A project entitled SRTS (Safe Route to School) is being underwritten by possible grants. The local committee is composed of Swenumson, Cunningham, Doss, Brad Schuldt and John Mulford. This grant deals with sidewalks only.

SCC is proposing to renovate and improve a projected bike path in Culver and lake area. Presently, there are seven existing signs designating the bike route, but Cunningham proposed additional information signs be purchased. Cunningham suggested six additional signs be added and provided the type and placement information to the board. He also provided a map designating a bike route for most scenic value.

Cunningham said if approved by the Chamber board as an SCC project, they would make a presentation to the Culver town council, state and county officials for approval. If approved, they will speak with Vanadco to determine the sign costs. Winters updated the board on the W. Shore culvert renovation and asked if it would be possible to incorporate a 10' easement into the bike path at that location. He noted that the county commissioners had agreed to donate up to \$35,000 for the needed renovation of the deteriorating culvert. He also hoped to get township participation in the cost. Cunningham said he was unsure if any grants would cover the \$10,000 cost of adding the easement. Stallings then made the motion to approve the project seconded by Winters which was approved. The committee will check with Marshall County Visitors' Bureau to determine who owns the existing bike path signs.

INDIANA MAIN STREET PROGRAM

Doss reported on opportunities provided by the Indiana Main Street program which is designed to improve the commercial districts by enhancing existing buildings, improving lighting, signs, sidewalks, and curbs in an effort to support tourist activity in these areas. Grants are available (Downtown Enhancement Grants-DEG) for promotional campaigns, façade renovations, and a revolving loan fund related to economic revitalization of downtown areas.

Schaller asked if the Chamber's Second Century Committee could be the lead group in this effort to obtain DEG funding. Brantingham, chairman of the SCC, agreed that as the long range planning committee of the Chamber, they could adopt this project. Discussion about the tax status of SCC and by-laws was held to determine if the group qualified to lead this project for the community.

Stallings made note that the Culver community is composed of three "downtown" areas and if possible, all should be considered in any enhancement program undertaken by the SCC. Fassett noted that it would be helpful if the SCC committee discussed opportunities with Rochester and Logansport who are participating in this program. Stallings, Brantingham, and Tompos will serve on the committee and Fassett will contact the counterparts in Logansport and Rochester. Andrea Cook, a member of Culver's EDC, will also serve on the committee. Brantingham suggested involvement of some original members of the Charente team, and Judy Campbell's name was suggested. Winters and Ruhnow declined and noted that new "faces and ideas" would be a benefit to the group.

NEW BUSINESS

Recognition of Chamber's participation in the community was a discussion point. Stallings noted that there were comments that the Chamber didn't do enough for Culver business. Board members agreed that projects like the Farmers' Market, new banners, signage, Taste of Culver, Marshall County Visitors' Guide participation, formation and support of SCC should receive more publicity.

An effort to increase participation of local restaurants will be made in 2011 by contacting all area restaurants with a letter of invitation and assuring that at least one dinner (or more) will be held at that location. With an assurance of at least 20-25 members attending, the restaurant would easily recoup their dues.

It was noted that there was a recent meeting to discuss formation of a county-wide Chamber of Commerce. Each town would have a representative on the county wide board. Members agreed that the local Chamber is a healthy entity and could see no advantage in going county wide.

The September meeting is tentatively scheduled for September 7, at City Diner. Terri Grabil, MCCVB visitors' guide rep, will be present. Mike Woolfington, Francis Ellert, and Barb Linhart, will be issued an invitation to recognize their efforts in supporting and managing the local Farmers' Market. MCCVB has given \$500 to replace the old tent. This season of Farmers' Market has been successful and there are more vendors than usual participating.

Fassett reported that he has had discussions with a group called Base Camp Business which would support a web site listing all local events. There is a yearly cost of \$500 but would be a strong base for scheduling events for the area. This might be an instrument to avoid scheduling conflicts. Fassett will review the proposal for further discussion.

Stallings noted that in a recent issue of the Chicago Tribune, the only event listed for the Marshall County area was Amish Acres. Fassett will contact Mike Woolfington and ask that he contact the Tribune with local Culver events, such as Lake Fest, Taste of Culver, Lions Club Corn Roast, etc.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:20 AM
Bobbie Ruhnow, Executive Secretary

CofC
minutes
July,
20103