

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm by Kapaun.

The meeting was properly noticed by both the Town of Warren and the Village of Roberts.

Present: Steve Melby, Patty Johnson, Stephanie Lamia, Katy Kapaun, Michelle Aho, Geno Hanson, Jerry Mueller, Tim Johnson, Warren Tracy (phone).

Approval of the minutes

Motion to accept the minutes from February 7, 2024, by Hanson, seconded by T. Johnson. Motion carried.

Recap and address any outstanding items from February 7, 2024, Meeting

Do you want to allow the County to help preserve some farms, etc. Have had some of the barns redone in the Township for storage. They would only have to get a building permit. Some barns/buildings are being converted into dance/party facilities. Hanson thinks they are all about saving the barns but wouldn't know what zoning would need to be changed. Town is open for ag barns or outbuildings being used for none-farm purposes. Town is open to tourism. For the Village was the renter/owner mix for housing – 20/20 mix for this. Do we have a target mix of rental to owner? The village wants to maintain its small-town feel. How do you do this with a larger rental percentage. Kapaun said that we are slightly higher than the national average. She is comfortable with the current mix. Looking at more multifamily housing. Melby asked if this is driven by the market but how do you do that if it is driven by the market? P. Johnson thinks that we could put in that we have a goal that way we can look at current numbers and work with the developer to encourage them to work with us on what they are building. Lamia would be concerned about the shift in more rentals. If we do start to waiver away from this number, how do you balance this out again? Comfortable with 70/30 concept.

Desire small town feel and residential style but didn't want to dictate styles. Kapaun asked how we do this? Tracy thinks that this could mean houses in different elevations, colors, etc. so they do not look all the same.

This seems reasonable for knowing the neighborhood when you come in to develop.

For the Village, should the plan allow a second dwelling unit or to allow accessory units? This is not preferred in town. Do we want a policy to include this is the plan. Accessory unit is like a space above a garage, or a totally separate unit. The second dwelling is a small unit like a mother-in-law suite. Kapaun thinks overall she is not in favor of this because of the current property line issues that we have and the lot sizes. Hanson said that the county does not allow this. This will not be changed.

55 plus is for people who are considering downsizing in the next five years. Increasing demand for senior housing services. If they don't have the services or housing, they will move somewhere that has this. They would have to move and not be able to age in their community. The problem in the township is that they have had to look to move into the village but there is no hospital, etc. for them. The closest is 10 miles away.

Review and discuss Cultural and Historical Resources

There is nothing for the Village or Township on the State and National registry. There are eight properties in each municipality that are listed on the AHI or Wisconsin Architecture & History Inventory (which is a digital source for info)

For Cultural Resources we have an active list but are there any others that are not listed? We have the 4-H Club, Chamber of Commerce, Boy and Girls Scouts, Etta Johnson Memorial Committee, Power of 100 women, Yellowstone Trail thru Roberts, Nike Base that decommissioned missile base, Warren Cemetery, at the Town Hall in the picnic shelter room built for Red Clapps stagecoach, Peter Close and Rand Waughtal as historical, and the old feed mill.

Review and discuss Economic Development Element

Diverse Employment base with around 140 employers with 1,000 employees in the 54023-zip code. Farmers are often excluded or self-employed business that do not file with the State. Very low unemployment. 96% of the residents living in Roberts leave the community to work and over 80% commute alone. Do we want to market to these employees to get them to live here and shop here? Asked about how to help with carpooling to the cities. 6.3% of Village workers work at home while 8.6% of Town workers work at home (home-based business, remote work).

Survey results for Economic Development Town:

Not a strong consensus. 38% Town respondents agree or strongly agree that more new business and light industry are needed in the Town. 29% agree or strongly agree that the Town should use incentives to recruit or promote new business and industry and 17% of the Town respondents do not believe industrial or commercial development should be in the Town except for home-based business, Ag-related business & Ag-tourism and recreation and tourism.

Village survey results:

Most respondents agree that more new businesses and light industry are needed in the Village. Most or all business types are appropriate in the Village (home-based businesses and split on manufacturing and warehousing. The Village was more divided on using incentives to recruit or promote new business and the Village provides adequate growth opportunities and supports businesses.

Lamia thinks we are keeping Roberts a secret. Not making it easy for them to find a job here to help support them. How much should the village/town be involved. Where should the new business be located? Near the existing commercial and industrial buildings, along highways or no more. In town – near existing commercial and industrial buildings along the highways.

Types of businesses desired by the community are grocery store/pharmacy, specialty stores, services for seniors. Undesirable businesses would be super scale or biggest box stores and large traffic generators.

The tools and incentives that we currently use to attract businesses to locate in the community are TIF, relationships to County EDC or other economic partners. We currently don't have room in the business park to build in that was Village owned. In the township you have to work with the Town and County and have to have private septic/well systems.

What is the Chambers role in helping to expand our communities and growth? They have monthly meetings, help with marketing existing businesses or attracting new business. They mainly support the existing businesses and attract small privately owned businesses.

Commercial Development: The 2002 plan was heavy Village and three districts – downtown, interchange, highway commercial but now we have Millers Corner, Roberts Town Center. Do we look out on the south side to do something or the Lamson property and maybe more out by dollar general?

Local economies and downtowns are changing: Role has changed as economy changes (fewer farmers, commuter trends) bigger box commercial and large industry along highways and not downtown. Transportation changes with the interstate. Vacant storefronts and deteriorating structures. More commercial property that the market can support? Do we redefine and re-focus the downtown? What about housing? Discussed what is really downtown Roberts. What does this include for Main Street? How far does this go? How do you keep your downtown noticeable? Some core downtown traits are Mix of land uses, diverse and inclusive, compact development forms, central and strategic location and historic. 80% of residents disagree or strongly disagree that downtown Roberts is inviting and vibrant. Part of the discussion is what is working well in downtown area? What is unique about our downtown? What are other opportunities for downtown?

Homework and next steps:

Next meeting will be on April 17th at 7:00 PM. Homework will be any follow-up or outstanding items from this meeting. Reviewing Utilities & Community facilities, reviewing Ag & Natural Resources and Reviewing Land use.

Motion to adjourn at 9:15 PM by Hanson, seconded by Melby. Motion carried.

Megan Dull
Village Clerk