

Avon Hills Initiative Executive Committee and Staff Meeting
September 28 4:00 PM
Room 150 “New Science Natural History Museum” Saint John’s University

Avon Hills Executive Committee Members Present: Steve Plantenberg, Cliff Borgerding, Sherry Kutter

Avon Hills Staff Members Present: Tom Kroll, Melissa Holm, Emily Franklin

Old Business:

1.3 Conference Community Feedback: Members concurred feed back was positive with suggestions for next year conference to include a longer welcome, longer sessions, more political representation at the round table, hold the conference earlier in February (Note: February Landowner Conference potential scheduling conflicts), Tighten up the morning schedule and hold a social hour/entertainment after the round table.

2.1.3 A financial update was provided for review by the committee

3.1.3 There was much discussion regarding the AHI Conference for next year including goals and focus. Possible topics include conservation overlay districts and the fostering of dialogue between stakeholders. Tom Kroll will check the schedule for tentative dates in March. The discussion focused on the need to either hold a conference, or a specific workout session on the development of a conservation overlay district. Executive committee members will take the next month to brainstorm ideas. The focus of conference or workshop event will be determined at next month’s meeting.

4.1.3 It was agreed upon to concentrate on a smaller workshop with a focus on environmental/conservation overlay districts in place of a larger conference in March. This provides us with an opportunity to involve local government leaders and community members prior to workshop sessions at the individual township level.

5.1.3 Education Committee meeting scheduled for Thursday, September 9th at 4:00p.m. Education committee members will be invited to discuss the fall social and the larger workshop planned for spring 2006.

6.1.3 Education Committee meeting occurred on September 9th. See attached meeting notes. An additional meeting on September 22nd was cancelled. Work on the conference will continue over the next few weeks.

1.5 Members discussed the importance in becoming active in exploring creative ways to secure sponsors/in kind/donations/grants and 501 (c) 3 possibilities for AHI.

2.1.5 Steve Plantenberg to explore Avon Townships 501 (c) Account Status and if this currently inactive program is transferable.

3.1.5 Steve noted that the account in Avon Township is active. However he has not approached the Township to date regarding future plans for its use. It was suggested that legal counsel be consulted regarding the development of 501(c) 3 status, either through a voluntary transfer by Avon Township, or by starting a new 501(c) 3 account.

4.1.5 Original 501(c) 3 account was for the town hall and exploring this option is held off for the time being. AHI is still searching for legal expertise for guidance in attaining non-profit status. Tom to explore individuals who might be interested in providing help.

5.1.5 Discussion of the pursuit of tax exempt status will be tabled until early 2006. Focus of the group now is on the fall social and organizing the spring workshop. Cliff volunteered to do some research on the pro's and con's of attaining 501(c)3 status.

1.6 The Committee concurred within the next 30-45 Days we will need to identify co chairs for next year's conference and establish task force assignments for its planning.

2.1.6 No progress to report

3.1.6 Co-chairs will be designated at next months meeting. Ernie Diedrich volunteered to be one of the co-chairs, or at least help with planning? Melissa Holm (new AHI intern), Sarah Gainey, and Emily Franklin can also be relied on to help organize and plan the event.

4.1.6 Sarah Gainey is volunteered to co-chair for workshop planning by Tom.

5.1.6 Further discussion of the workshop will continue at the education committee meeting on September 9th.

6.1.6 Refer to attached notes from the Education Committee meeting held on September 9th.

1.9 Committee Report Education/PR (Mark Conway chair): Plans are to formulate a conference wrap-up press release and work with the Government Committee to draft a position paper on Cluster Developments.

2.1.9 No progress to report

3.1.9 Mark Conway has resigned from his position as Education/PR chair. A new chair is needed.

4.1.9 Sherry Kutter and Mary Eisenschenk could possibly co-chair the Education/PR Committee as they work to educate the local community on air pollutants and emissions in the area, which has become a concern. This will be decided at a future meeting and the chair position is still considered open.

5.1.9 Sherry Kutter has agreed to chair the Education/PR committee and will be helping to organize for the spring conference. Mark Conway and other executive committee members have agreed to help Sherry with this task.

1.10 Committee Report Government (Alan Davisson chair): Plans are to draft of position paper on the merits of Cluster Developments.

2.1.10 No progress to report

3.1.10 It was suggested that Alan may wish to postpone work on the position paper and focus on the merits of an environmental overlay districts.

4.1.10 No progress to report

5.1.10 No progress to report

6.1.10 No progress to report

1.11 Committee Report Administration (Cliff Borgerding chair-replaces Mike Brown): Cliff will draft a preliminary planning outline for the organization and formulate a structure so we may focus our future efforts.

2.1.11 No progress to report

3.1.11 No progress to report at this time.

4.1.11 No progress to report at this time.

5.1.11 No progress to report

6.1.11 No progress to report

1.12 Committee Report Cultural/Sense of Place (Chris Schellinger chair): Fall social event planning is a priority. Chris will determine scope of Bouja and possible coordination with Collegeville Colors on Sunday, October 2, 2005. Mark Conway mentioned Scott Russell Sanders-writer will be here 1st week in October also North Dakota singer/song writer Chuck Suchy may be available.

2.1.12 It was discussed to give greater identity to the AHI event may be to hold the Bouja off Campus. Suggestions include the Pelican Lake Ballroom, the Leroy Ritter farm inclusive of kitchen and indoor meeting facilities and possibly the county park on Upper Spunk Lake.

3.1.12 Discussion relative to location of the Bouja continued. Chris Schellinger will be making contacts to firm up possible sites.

4.1.12 After more discussion of possible locations for the Fall Social, the Ritter farm seems like the best option. A motion was made and seconded to hold the Bouja/Fall Social at the Ritter Farm. Date and other details are still unspecified.

5.1.12 Steve has volunteered to contact Chris about progress for the fall social. It was suggested to change the focus of the social from a large BOUJA to a pot luck where neighbors can gather together for food, fun and good discussion. Saturday, October 8th was agreed upon for the date of the fall social, possibly to be held at the John Merten farm. A tentative time of 1:00-4:00 has been set.

6.1.12 The fall social has been cancelled. The focus of the group will move to putting out a newsletter before the spring conference and working on the spring conference. The possibility of a spring social to follow has been suggested.

1.13 Committee Report Fundraising (Ernie Diedrich chair): No tasks identified.

2.1.3 No progress to report

3.1.13 Ernie will be meeting with Catherine Stoch in Institutional Advancement to discuss funding possibilities for AHI. Grant applications will most likely be pursued through Saint John's Arboretum or the University until AHI achieves 501(c) 3 status.

4.1.13. Ernie unable to meet with Catherine last month. He is scheduled to meet with her on Monday, August 1 at the Meeting Ground to discuss funding options. Tom mentioned mailings to the AHI observers, which are valuable. However, funding needs to be secured for these mass mailings, which may be obtained through a grant for operating needs.

5.1.13 Emily indicated that Ernie met with Catherine and will provide an update at the next meeting.

6.1.13 Ernie was not present at the meeting but will present an update on his findings at the next meeting.

1.14 Committee Report Non Governmental (We need a Chair!) No Tasks identified

2.1.14 Phyllis Plantenberg has volunteered to fill the position

3.1.14 No activity to report at this time

4.1.14 No activity to report at this time

5.1.14 No activity to report

6.1.14 No activity to report

3.0 DNR Land Acquisition-Avon Township: DNR has entered into an agreement with property owners to acquire 250 acres of oak/maple/basswood forest in Avon Township. The parcel is adjacent to property owned by St. Cloud State University. The land would be kept by the State in its natural state as a nature reserve.

4.3.0 Township supervisors wrote letters to Stearns County and copied MN DNR. MN DNR would like to make a joint announcement of the acquisition in cooperation with AHI to present the parcel.

3.1 Avon Township and City of Avon Orderly Growth Agreement update. It is understood the two governing bodies have come to an agreement regarding growth in areas adjacent to the City of Avon. A final copy of the agreement is expected to be signed shortly.

4.3.1 The City of Avon Orderly Growth Agreement has been agreed to by both parties (City of Avon, and Avon Township). The agreement is tentatively scheduled to be signed next week on Wednesday, August 3rd.

The growth agreement has been signed and a joint meeting is to be held on September 16th. The project is moving forward.

6.3.1 The orderly growth agreement has been signed.

New Business August 31st, 2005

4.0 AHI needs to consider developing a logo, establishing a mailing location, and creating stationary/letterhead for letters to be sent to public officials. For letters to be sent in the near future a basic letterhead will be created with the address:

Avon Hills Initiative
Collegeville, MN 56321-3000

Cliff and the Administrative Committee may take the lead on this project.

5.0 Permission to contact the SJU student to create the AHI logo has been granted. He will be compensated from AHI's budget upon creation of an appropriate logo for the organization. Melissa has agreed to contact the student about creating the logo.

New Business September 28th, 2005

6.0 The spring conference will become the focus of the monthly AHI meetings from now until the date of the conference, which is yet to be determined.

Thoughts **and discussion** about the spring conference included:

1.0 The goal of the spring conference is to be informational and educational, not to produce a specific product

2.0 The committee should meet with the townships prior to the spring conference to cover the basic information to be presented. It was also suggested to having meetings at the township level after the spring conference to continue to foster dialogue relative to the topics discussed at the conference.

3.0 Notes from the speakers should be collected to bind into a newsletter type format for the city commissioner. These packets could also be distributed to local township planning boards and made available to others interested in the content.

4.0 Allan Davisson suggested a speaker who presented at two workshops over the summer in Nisswa, MN. Randall Arendt is a speaker knowledgeable about environmental overlay's and open space zoning. Emily will look into him further and Tom will potentially contact him.

Next Meeting 4:00 PM October 28th in Room 150 "New Science and Natural History Museum SJU"