

Avon Hills Initiative Executive Committee Meeting
April 30, 2008
Room 150, New Science Center, Saint John's University

Present: Bill Fahrney, Jackie Leedahl, Lowell Rushmeyer, Karen Bobeldyk, Milt Blomberg, Peter Dwyer, Allan Davisson, Mike Leedahl, Will Huston, Tom Kroll, Rachel Peterson

Birding Events

Milt Blomberg, hobbyist birder, joined us to suggest our co-sponsorship of birding events in Avon. He is hosting a birding day on May 17th with the MN Ornithological Union. The AHI will advertise it through the website, the AHI newsletter (as applicable), and the CSB/SJU bulletin board. Milt will also attend Saint John's Arboretum's birding day on May 10th. It may be possible to combine this event with the Arboretum birding event in future years.

Milt also suggests "wildlife viewing areas" would be a nice addition to the area. Tom suggests speaking to Chuck Wocken to see if this can be part of the renovation of Hwy 51. (Tom passed the info on to Jodi Teich of Stearns Co Highway Dept. on May 1.)

Avon Area Arts

Jackie Leedahl presented an update on events from Avon Area Arts. The AHI will add a link to Avon Area Arts on its website. Jackie also suggests combining an art event with the conference/annual meeting.

Annual Meeting

An annual meeting should be scheduled in January 2009. A subcommittee of Tom Kroll, Jackie Leedahl, Bill Fahrney (Chair), Mike Leedahl and Peter Dwyer has been formed to plan this. The first meeting of this will be at 3 p.m. on June 4.

Capitol Report

Property tax – The legislature has passed and the Governor has signed the 35% reduction in property taxes for undeveloped tracts of forest land. This was a bill promoted by the Avon Hills Initiative. Rep Larry Hosch and Rep. Larry Haws have been very supportive.

LCCMR will be official as of July 1st.

CapX2020

Tom spoke with the head of this project and was told not to assume the power line will follow I-94, as the Avon bottleneck creates severe problems for that possibility. Alternative routes will go far north or south of the Avon Hills. Members of the AHI Executive committee will attend a meeting on May 22nd in Alexandria and another on June 2 (open house) in Melrose.

Comp Plan and Ordinances

Allan said the re-writing of the whole county ordinance will begin in the fall. Allan Davisson and Steve Plantenberg were appointed to be Avon Hills Initiative delegates to the county ordinance review committee.

Other business

We will not have a May meeting.

Peter provided information on the Initiative Awards, which should coincide with the annual meeting.

Suggestions should be sent to Peter, who will discuss it with the annual meeting subcommittee.