



COMMISSION FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND NEIGHBORHOOD RENEWAL

MEETING SUMMARY

Wednesday, April 6, 2016

Persons in Attendance:

Executive Committee:

Mayor Andrew Przybylo – Ex-Officio
Denise M. McCreery - Trustee
Charles Ostman – Executive Director
Ross Klicker – Associate Executive Director
Steven Vinezeano – Village Manager
Mike Shields
Alan Zielinski
Joe Bialko

Stakeholders:

Jacob Ehrensaft	Rich Mangold
Carol Harczak	Iwona Filipiak
Judy McNulty	Barbara Nakanishi
Linda Stoops	Janet Lee
Rich Wlodarski	Louella Preston

I. Call to Order

Meeting was called to order at approximately 5:35pm.

II. Presentation and Discussion of the Comprehensive Entrance and Roadway Signage Plan

Daniel Grove of The Lakota Group made the presentation and led the discussion. Daniel first had everyone introduce themselves and then proceeded to go through the handout (attached) and the three families of possible signage that were selected following review by the ad hoc Signage Committee and after review of nearly one hundred citizen feedback responses submitted via the Village website. Daniel did not make any judgment as to which of the three families Niles should select and simply went through the makeup, dimensions, and other relevant facts for each family.

After about 45 minutes or so of the presentation and review of the three sign families, a straw poll was taken with significant majority of the attendees saying they liked Sign Family #1 (received 12 votes).

Following that, Daniel made the point that IDOT may require a darker background with white lettering on some of the signs (i.e., residential street signs) of each family. He showed a sign example with green background and white lettering. Mike Shields asked if he could develop a sample sign using a darker blue background as it aligned itself more with the Niles branding and imagery while the dark green aligned itself more with the IDOT brand. In general though, Shields said that the signage presented by Lakota was classic, universal, and timeless and well done.

Carol Harczak noted that she liked the ‘Diamond N’ shown in Sign Family Two.

Alan Zielinski asked whether any of the proposed signage would have ‘electronic messaging’? Daniel and Ross responded that it’s still being looked at but in the end, electronic messaging signs might be stand alone and not incorporated on the Entranceway signs. It needs more review.

Louella Preston, asked if the signage was the same for the right or left side of the road. Daniel answered right side. Daniel also reiterated in answer to another question from Louella Preston that the signage would have the highest reflective material available and would meet all State standards.

Denise McCrery stated she liked Sign Family Three mainly because it was a bit asymmetrical and did not look like a cemetery monument in her view (as the entranceway sign in Sign Family One looked in her view). Mike Shields acknowledged that her point was well taken but that he personally did not see a cemetery monument as the sign was curvilinear at the top, had blue and green color on it in several places, and had the new Niles icon imagery to lighten it up.

Steve Vinezeano brought up the subject of cleaning graffiti off Sign Families One and Three and thought Family Two with more metal on it (vs. brick) would be easier to maintain.

III. New Village Website Redesign Discussion

Ross handed out copies of two views of the proposed redesigned Home Page.

Ross also noted that the general feedback received from internal reviews on the new ‘website look’ was positive. He proceeded to walk the group through the various aspects of the Home Page and emphasized that it reflected analysis of current analytics as to what current users were looking for. Mike Shields noted, however, that they may not know what they are not getting – such as some of the things seen on a website like St. Charles’.

The initial feedback on the new website from the EDNR group was a bit muted (somewhat positive but not wildly positive). Mike Shields tried to open the discussion up more by saying that he had looked at a lot of Village websites and they generally fell into two categories: 1) narrow Village-

centric or 2) broad community-oriented with a good deal more news on the community and not just Village Hall activities. He noted that St. Charles' website was a good example of the second type and one that Niles, which currently has a more Village Hall-centric website, should really consider as we develop this new website.

Alan Zielinski, said he had just launched a new award-winning website for his company (Better Kitchens Inc.) and reiterated that it was important for a website, his or Niles, to project a very positive image of the entity and that it should be dynamic and business friendly. Alan also said that he thought that he felt there was a disconnect between the Village Hall and local businesses, particularly small ones, and that presumably a better website could help bridge that gap through more communications and news. Finally, he suggested that a webcam be put on the top of the Leaning Tower and those images be broadcast via the website as a way to increase interest in and awareness of Niles.

Mike Shields reiterated Alan's points, particularly the one about really working to help small businesses make it, and further suggested that the new Niles website should have a lot more success stories about people in Niles and in the Village work force as stories are what help people to be motivated and energized about their community.

Denise McCreery seconded Mike's sentiments saying that although Niles' website needed to convey the government news etc., more success stories are needed.

It was also asked if more photos could be included in the new website and Ross affirmed that there will be a lot more photos and a lot more ease changing them and updating them.

Mayor Przybylo suggested that Niles sell Niles-branded 'chotski's' (i.e., hats, coffee mugs, etc.) like Geneva does to increase interest and pride in Niles throughout the community.

At the conclusion of the discussion of the new website Ross distributed a survey requesting more feedback from the Commission Members. Reply's should be sent to him.

IV. Other Business

The Mayor did ask Ross to send all members a copy via e-mail of Trustee McCreery and Strzelecki's recent report on possible economic development actions that Niles might want to look closer at.

As time was running late, there was no discussion of future agenda topics (now to be finalized prior to all future EDNR Commission meetings by the Executive Committee). Again, Ross asked attendees to send in any of their suggestions for future topics to him.

The meeting adjourned about 7:50.