

Marquette Township - *Saturday February 2, 2013* - I, Todd Noordyk, present the following SNAP-SHOT list of the 5 hour Strategic Planning session I attended as a Business Association member and Events Committee member for Marquette Township.

30 township officials and community members attended as a follow up to a brain storming session from a few years ago when 70 township citizens gathered to capture the vision on what Marquette Township should look like in 5 years and beyond.

The meeting began by *Celebrating Recent Success* in the township which included:

- ★ Improved township roads
- ★ More snow plowing.
- ★ Continued Fire & Police services
- ★ Affordable water
- ★ Develop a replacement plan on the township hall and fire hall and accomplished by not asking for any more money.
- ★ Build more boxes in the community garden.
- ★ Continue improving Lion's field
- ★ Expand the trails in Heartwood
- ★ Have active committees accomplishing real goals

The vision group has identified *Living in the Township* as a pleasant and easy to relocate to work area. Living in Marquette Township works in the new economy where people can live here in the north woods but still work world wide.

The Planning Commission has updated the communities master plan with numerous goals and objectives:

- The Sign Ordinance has been revamped based upon a distance from the hi-way or a road, and a ratio, with the speed limit sign size put against national studies. In essence, township signs will be smaller and better looking as a result of this study.
- Accessory structure regulations such as garage size will be loosened especially in the Trowbridge and platted areas. Requirements have been loosened to not include the principle structure in the size calculation. So in most cases a larger garage can be built.
- The Complete Street concept & ordinance will provide for pedestrian areas, versus just having roads built for vehicles only. So all users can be accommodated in the new township plan. For example the raised path ways on township streets *Warner* and *Brookton* roads. The committee has identified key areas to connect with pathways so residents can get to other places in the township without using a vehicle all the time.
- Future goals of smaller off street parking requirements means the township can go after more useable taxable space in the township. For example the mall was built years ago with lots of Westwood Mall parking in 50's style engineering. The township will reduce the parking requirements which offers more buffer space, more taxable developments, and less asphalt expense for developers. Rather than one parking spaces for every 4 seats, the plan is one for every 3 seats. Part time businesses could also share parking requirement spaces.
- A forest preserve district is being considered. Essentially desiring to protect the aesthetic and natural properties Marquette Township has like Sugarloaf will have more restrictive zoning applied on these assets reducing or eliminating extraction of those areas.
- Lower parcel minimums will happen on a northern scenic residential district. The townships new land use map for along the coast line and North in the township shows a smaller parcel requirement. Building there requires 40 acer parcels at higher prices, would be reduced to 5 acre parcels which would better suit this area. The township suggested taking some middle

island campers and eagles nest area and provide a better zoning requirement to allow for better development of these areas to increasing new taxable assets to the county and township.

- New rules for improving Marquette Township local food production capabilities are being invited to the table. This must be in alignment with the Right to Farm agricultural use act. The township likes to see people provide food to the coop for example. The review will discover how we can help our resident use property for residential uses and AG uses. This might be mirrored like Seattle where up to 6 birds are allowed. The review will look at having food grown in backyards in our 54mile square township allowing for AG activities where the larger your lot size the more you can do with it.
- The Planning Ordinance has added an alternative energy policy for fall distances and sound levels for wind mills for example.
- A look at the master plan is amazing and is one of the nicest ones we have ever seen. For the record, *Jason McCarthy, Township Planner and Zoning Administrator* has done a superb job in putting this study together which has become the envy of many other townships.

Planning commission is **seeking your input** on what the committee should be working on. Share your perspective.

REC COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES include:

- 5 members represent national interest for the township.
- They are to craft a plan every 5 years so they can apply for DNR grants
- Grants will be used for the Schwemwood Park property and trail head developments.
- Revising and making new regulations
- advise the board on budget before each July
- assist in finding funding sources in writing grants to acquire property.
- Better planned parking in the park area and formalize the tail head parking. Would like to propose putting forward a development grant which would add restrooms, changing room, drinking fountain, signage, showing a hub for the 48mile corridor, perhaps getting over to the business districts
- Hardwood forest property has been tough to acquire more of the property but the upside is trail activities such as the ntn have been developed more trails.
- A sign for a formal trail area was added which is part of the grant requirements
- Easements south of Walmart to the existing Schwemwood Park and additional property was acquired and additional easements to get out to the hi-way are being sought
- An architect will produce an image for developing the for the board to act on.
- There is an expansive rec area with north township trails all the way to the ski hill. This is an impressive trail map to attract people to come to this area attracting folks t come and live here.
- Lion's Field is well developed. Marquette Little League, and girls teams have been using it including the JV team for Marquette high school. Residents in the immediate area are please at how this turned out. Seek to close a small portion of Eric street to secure the area better. March 188 will be a public hearing on that wit the road commission. Circuit court will review following the hearing. The committee would like to develop a map for review on how the future would look at Lyons Field.
- The committee is seeking board support to do a conceptual drawing on this drawing for feedback on direction. There is a grant out there that Jason has recommended a passport grant to help complete up the field and get more use out of the entire area including an ice rink roller skating rink, redoing the kiddie park to include kids below 6 year olds, and adding a walkway with picnic tables and BBQ's for more use out of the park other than just the ball field. A score board was installed last fall for the ball field. In addition to passport grant

seeking donations for a backstop score board. Reviewing funds for budget planning for finish in 20014. A batting cage will be added once the master plan is in place so it's not a patch work plan with planning for the whole park. Since people park any where they want too, and since kids are running all over during games and events, we'd like to see the best ideas here and it will go to public hearing and share their thoughts of re-routing traffic and protecting the kids safety and still provide easy access for emergency and fire trucks to get through. The committee is seeking the best answer for the greater good of the area with expansion and creating a useful, beautiful asset.

- Committee's for the Schwemwood Park and Iron Ridge heritage Trail are working together and trying to determine with conceptual drawing where trail will go with improved parking so both have access to business districts, motels and hotels, restaurants, along with safety strip along 492. Drawing are being put together to determine where the trail head will go. Confident it will be located in the park this year and a sign will go up. Ernie wants to know a time-line when the 5 acres will be marketed which is not a part of Schwemwood Park. Schwemwood Park, soon to be an incredible trail head, and Lyons Field are the top 3 of the committee. Signage, and guidelines for use will be developed including hiking and groomed guidelines and policies. Dog owners, walkers and bikers need to co-exist. This also allows the township to market these trails once they are finished.

COMMUNITY EVENTS COMMITTEE

4 events are planned, an active committee that makes this a Great Place to live. Fun in the Forrest is a theme the group will be looking at. Click the 4 events and dates planned at this site

POLICE SERVICES;

- 60 additional hours through the sheriff's department. how much time is caught up in retail theft which takes people off the road patrol to captain David Lamiere, 21 year veteran, been with township since 1999.
- The board pays the sheriff's department an hourly fee which covers wage and benefits. Invoice township for vehicle repairs or office supplies. Tilden and Richmond Townships both have part time deputies. Marquette Township has 60 hours, Michigamme has a 40hour a week deputy with funding thru their township. The department has two deputies funded by the state for secondary road patrol. Township funded deputies primarily watch over intersections often resolving complaints from these areas.
- Walmart concerns; Responding to the big box stores, the retail monster so to speak, is causing the township much additional police work. 60hours a week is eaten up mostly because of the new Zero-Tolerance Walmart larceny policy. The department will respond if they are the closest car. So if the deputy is up 550 he will still respond. Police calls included 305 complaints from Walmart alone from Feb 1, 2012 through January 31, 2013 . Typical retail fraud at Walmart since in the year 2,000 when Walmart took on a zero tolerance policy, keeps township allocated deputies very busy. In the past year, Walmart took on three full time loss prevention personnel who have even chased people through the parking lot. Typically these incidents happen from 8a-5p and the deputy is asked to respond to shop lifting for theft as little as a 79cent piece of candy. *Marquette County* Prosecuting Attorney Staff. *Matthew J. Wiese* has been consulted. The township has met with Walmart and the store has changed their policy for first time shop lifters under \$25 where they don't call unless the person won't identify themselves, if it's less than \$25 in value, a juvenile, or the first time. Walmart issues a trespass letter right on the spot. The deputy said each call takes 3 hours to process; respond to, take into custody, finger print, set bond schedule, and many times once at the jail they are bonded , write a report, complete a warrant request, and finish a video review. Of that 305

Walmart police calls, 227 were done by the Marquette Township deputy. So he's spending a lot of time at Walmart. Target and Best Buy also call on retail fraud, but calls by Walmart is by far the biggest call. Township official Ellen Sargent noted that the drug problem in our area fuels this activity.

- It was said the sheriff's department does not have to provide law enforcement but is mandated to provide jail service and monitoring. Road patrol is an optional service in the township.
- The original intent was the township law enforcement officer would spend his time for calls, but not so much on retail larceny response. Now the deputies are spending most of their time responding too Walmart type cases. The township needs to look at in the future to start charging for some of these services. Because of larceny, residential response and serious enforcement issues are receiving lower response times. However, retail fraud and check fraud are serious crimes and people have to be able to call the police. Inventory theft is a real issue in all stores estimated that a 1% shrinkage happens in Marquette Township. Residents also complain if the police don't respond for two hours. Sometime it does take a while. It is a large line item for the township about \$135,000 of the budget. There is a fine line here because the business community does pay taxes and the result is that maybe 60 hours a week is not enough to cover this community. Sometimes when it takes 2 hours to respond for a non-emergency because the office is doing another call. Since this is a rural township it creates the environment that a lot of road needs to be covered.
- The board noted about 47% of the taxes come from businesses in the township. So it is quite even between residential and businesses so both have access. Historically the long response time happens all over and only so much resources can be provided. It was mentioned to map the crime areas so it becomes clear where additional services might be needed.
- It was noted that Speed Limits in the Trowbridge Park residential area should be 25mph but it's a bit higher. It would seem in a residential neighborhood it could be posted as less. If it's not posted the speed limit is 55.
- The planning question remains that some 4.9 miles come from the township which they can not increase, yet the township is required to perform certain services. Residents should consider what services could be traded off. 41% of people in vision meetings said they'd favor their own police force. But this wouldn't reduce costs probably because the township is so large.

SWOT analysis ended the meeting. These are the items to consider on the next plan!

STRENGTHS

- ★ lower tax base
- ★ great business environment
- ★ track record back to 1850
- ★ current momentum and synergy with board & economy
- ★ stability in business & residential – funding half and half
- ★ a level of commitment
- ★ level of cooperation working with other communities sharing service and lands
- ★ assets of physical and property
- ★ natural environment
- ★ growth is stable
- ★ a different plan than other state townships
- ★ voter support re-electing the current board members to continue
- ★ sense of community seems to be expanding
- ★ a cooperative attitude
- ★ a proactive approach to a proactive vision having a lot of input among many

- ★ natural resources beautiful land
- ★ considered an area of interest
- ★ an excellent volunteer base
- ★ a super place to live, work, play and visit

WEAKNESSES

- ◆ Detriments to get things done is our SIZE very big land area to get things done
- ◆ Limited Funds and don't have a way to increase our tax base because we can't just increase mileage which means we don't as much for operating base as a city would
- ◆ Commerce Drive curb appeal, because our downtown consists of a 50mph shoot thru the busiest area of the up
- ◆ Tough Traffic Patterns where we'd have more feeder roads, Commerce Drive helps, the escape route behind Starbucks helps, but try and go left out of Gordon Food Service.
- ◆ Volunteers provide a lot of our man power which means sometimes they aren't available, but it's also a strength. So we always need to encourage them helping
- ◆ Public private Partnerships help get things done and we need more of them to improve aesthetic of a corridor, put in a center street lift station, etc.
- ◆ Control; speed limits, roads, we can't make rules or control. Despite this we get roads done.
- ◆ Corridor frontage and business locations. Only 12% of the township land is developed. But businesses don't want to develop o Gold Mine Road. Eventually the corridor might run out. Growth is contingent upon having space available.
- ◆ Time and Process is slow and people don't read the master plan to stay in touch
- ◆ 32,000 cars a day down the corridor can be considered a weakness if local land owners don't work with us

OPPORTUNITIES

- Growth and Size of Township- new residential developed and business as well, behind Lowe's or along 41 corridor. It's nice to be 5minutes away from all the conveniences. Either way it creates employment growth. This generate activities for the economy
- Road Systems and Transportation- Whether it's car travel, bike paths, walking, the Township has more opportunities for access roads. We are a safer environment if there's a bike path or complete roads. This encourages business growth if we improve our transportation and roads
- Work with Kennicott with a North South Road. The road facilities master plan has provision to add the old road on the west side by the hi-lines. Our opportunity is now to communicate with the road commission and mining community for a North South Route to connect to Forrest ville thru a new road from near Lowes.
- Recreation and trails is a big draw for bike race, cross country ski races etc.
- Tap the snowmobile and ATV market which are not real welcome in the city of Marquette. So the township should embrace this more. Since they spend \$300 a day we should change a few things and provide for them.
- Amphi-theater would be an awe-sum add on to the community. Think of the events we could have Pine Nob style or 4th of July events having the business community participate as vendors having farmers market there.
- Sense of Community means people generally want to be involved and the more you get involved the stronger the community would be including less crime
- Ancillary markets wheelers and snowmobiles, consider an RV Parks with full service wireless like in Ashland that generated 50k a year to general fund..
- Another Transitional living facility would be attractive to our area
- Consider becoming our own city as Marquette Township City with our own zip code. Harvey

is now Chocolay Township and less Marquette

THREATS

- State funding and revenue sharing as it divided up
- Big Box evaluation to the township is being challenged
- Perception of the provision off adequate police services
- Transportation on a grand scale where the corridor becomes congested
- Rio Tinto truck traffic
- Why don't Rio Tinto build the road behind Lowes.
- Future responsibilities of roads summer and winter
- Heartwood Forrest threat losing out on potential preservation of long range rec opportunities which could affect the economy
- Losing un-captured markets like snowmobiling, 4 wheelers, rv's, looking for a place to go other than Tourist Park.
- Some of our land are in commercial forest and when they come on the market they could be gone. Private ownership can change protection keeping public access.
- Annexation is a threat based upon the City of Marquette board decisions
- Our governor wants governmental consolidation to reduce costs. 1,240 townships and at the state level they'd like them to be consolidated. But Marquette Township is in line with what people are paying. Losing the control of our land would not be productive.
- Re-composition pf the country board and we no longer have representation on thee board and don't have a voice. Because of annexation or a new city commission we need to say who are we?

Please contact township offices with your comments and concerns.