

Growth and Planning Team
July 12, 2018 3:30-5pm
The Elevator

Karri Steckler, Willie, Cindy Cook, Bob Siefer, Carmen Parker, Eric Leugers, Eric Vermillion, Kevin McGinnis, David Hittle, Brady Strasser (Delphi), Debra Luzier, Toby Wininger, SaraBeth Drybread, Jody Veldkamp, Sam Marcello, Steve Powell, Jennifer Hollingshead, Dana Monson & new visitor

Welcome & introductions- Karri

Stellar Communities- Randy Strasser- dealing with change and how it impacts the generations. State road 25 was severely congested for a 2 lane road. In an effort to be safer from Logansport to Lafayette, they started moving forward with plans on Hoosier Heartland to bypass Delphi. New corridor concerned about downtown businesses and bypass. Started comprehensive plan at that time. Took a few years to get through. 20,000 population in entire county- still have a lot of depression era attitudes. Expenditures are difficult to work through.

Working on placemaking and vitality for downtown. Working on civil war era opera house with local historic organization. Also added a conference center in downtown. Discussed how do they latch on to the canal and the 60,000-70,000 they bring in yearly? Brought in non-profits, social groups, school corp. and had a big dinner at YMCA to do a brain-storming session. SWOT analysis with local groups to identify things to do in town, collaborate. Lost most of industry (1,000 jobs) in the previous 5 years. Indiana Kitchen (bacon) now home to the bacon festival August 25th (feel free to visit web page). What direction do they want to go? What can the city do to leverage funds? 2nd, 3rd, and 4th floors in their downtown only had 20% of those floors were being used, some never had electricity or water. Looking at Indiana Main Street and façade grants. Preservation society looked a 1 million grant to renovate opera house. Trying to fit all the pieces together.

Stellar communities really had a pulse on small communities and leverage money to use the way it needed to be used. 2011 did the application themselves- no continuity; not short-listed. Second try, brought on a consultant to do application. Spend a lot of time working with OCRA representatives. Stellar is more regional now. Looked at how they brought capacity to the community. Got estimates from canal, opera house, to see how many people would come in. Found out that they will come from 1 1/2 to 2 hours away. Pieces of the project didn't change much, but were able to tell a story about how it would benefit, create long-term stability and bring value to the region (Lafayette, West Lafayette, etc.) and also because of the new 4-lane highway that was going to bypass the town. In year 2 (2012), discovered funding is there, but red tape didn't go away. \$17.5 million worth of work- facades, trail, all downtown revitalization- over 5 years. 6-7 months with slow down on INDOT due to governor leadership change. Found ways to find funding that was within INDOT goals. What was INDOT involved in? Spent a lot of time with Richmond, Huntington, etc. Hinge pin was \$3.5 million that was going into to opera house building. \$1.5 million from IHEDA (operations loan) gap payment for construction. Half a million is what the town is still paying on for the projects.

Facades for the entire downtown – city paid 5% of cost, 90% stellar, property owners 5% of facades and windows. Local bank offered credit card accounts for building owners -preapproval. No one needed it though- 47-48 façades completed. \$3 million for façade work. Now they can spend their own money on the insides of the buildings.

Worked with Keller Development to do a tax credit project (1/4 block) gut the building for loft apartments as well as a second project of apartments. Low- moderate income with sliding scale. No problems in the 15 years the apartments have be there. \$8 million project for lofts.

Parking, more housing on 2,3, 4th floors, facades, housing in community- IHCD/ OCRA// low-moderate housing. Saved 3 houses from going into foreclosure.

2 projects that didn't make the cut- Purdue had built solar homes and wanted to use them as infill in historic neighborhoods. Couldn't get the buy-in from Purdue. Did work with locals to do infill of nicer homes. Lastly, lots of railroad crossings and were looking at installing silent crossings, but didn't happen (would have been a 10 year process).

Lost factory which led to rentals. Then the owners are upside down on the mortgages. Tried to leverage IHCD for rental properties to build stability.

Eric- Are we too close to Indy to do this? No, I don't think so. They had projects ready to go, but just needed the funding. DuBoise county is a wealthy community and is a Stellar community. Changed to the point to be more regional; mirrors regional cities program. Elkhart county- bringing communities together and not competing.

When you worked on collaboration and getting things done- who was in the room? Started out 15-25 working group, initial meeting with non-profits for brainstorming (75 people). Was it mainly counselors/ city people? 2 counselors were on-board when they started the process. You might have people that are set in their ways and it can be tough, so you need to be patient.

2.1 million tax budget, utilities 3-3.5 million. \$5 million annual budget. \$3 million in cash when he took office in Delphi. When he left, \$13-15 million cash budget after stellar improvements. Replaced water lines and sewer all the way to the buildings. Put larger lines in to give them capacity to expand. Consulting firm was hired- HWC worked with both Stellar communities the previous year. What was cost to hire HWC? HWC managed program over 4-5 years. \$700,000 set aside to pay from Stellar funds, but actual costs \$300,000-400,000 to manage project, mayor helped. Have to do through RFP to select firm. Opera house was separate from all other projects. Brought in project manager to help with costs KJG design firm. No charge to do application from HWC.

Steps for Stellar process:

Application/ letter of intent

Reviewed and short-listed

Funding for strategic plan (with Ball State?)

Community visit

They did community visit (with timed presentation); told their story and how Stellar would benefit Delphi. Put a video together -Delphi Stellar on YouTube. High school students gave presentation, then rode canal boat to trolley and drove through housing, saw new bypass, Hoosier packers, walked a few blocks to facades, and loft project and toured opera house. Had displays/ planning documents in there and did another presentation.

Randy can share his presentation and would be glad to come back. Helped Wabash, Huntingburg in their process of Stellar Communities.

Epics program- Bob- tie in opportunities with Purdue college. Brief overview for today. Review projects that are technical challenge. Students do work for free for credit hours. Won't do master plans, social programs. 80% of reviews that Bob did of the projects, were very professional and very skilled. Great resource- starts in September. 6-9 months in queue. No fees! Students will meet with us to learn about challenges. Engineering approach to projects. Multi-year projects for students. Won't provide resources to complete projects. Commitment to partner with students.

Who do they usually work with? Counties, girl scout camp, anyone.

I-69- Draft will be shown August 1 at White River Library. Need to give more education to public on transportation issues that will come up, so they are prepared.

Trails- Opus grant was received for \$40,000. Has not yet been announced to the public. Use as leverages for JCCF grant match. Next steps will be to meet with Erin at JCCF and with a firm to create scope of work. Fundraising will continue for trails. One idea is a 5k in partnership with humane society. Will create talking points about trails for consistency for marketing. Will also create video series about trails and why they are important.

Next meetings:

Aspire large group July 25th 8-9:30am at Endress+Hauser in Greenwood. Presentation from Bridges Alliance.

Growth and Planning Team- August 9th 3:30-5pm location TBD.