

Village of Pleasant Prairie
Community Development Department
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Pleasant Prairie Café

November 1, 2007

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Pleasant Prairie Café Held August 21, 2007

The Pleasant Prairie Café was held on Tuesday, August 21, 2007 at the LakeView RecPlex. Over 90 participants attended to contribute ideas and help guide future growth within the Village. Attendees worked cooperatively in café style discussions to answer three separate questions. Each question was designed to take participants from their perspective of the past and present to what they envision thirty years into the future. Questions were guided by a representative from the UW-Extension who facilitates café style meetings for groups around the state.

The outcome of each café question was recorded for use by the Village staff when updating the Comprehensive Plan for the Village. Table captains recorded a variety



Participants at the café work to discuss their vision for the Village in thirty years.

of themes that recurred throughout the many discussions that took place as an artist illustrated the common thoughts. At the end of the evening, recurring themes and suggestions were shared by the table captains.

Café Asks Participants To Use Their Personal Experience to Answer Questions

The August 21st café produced many great responses to the three questions posed to the participants. The questions included:

1. What makes Pleasant Prairie a great place to live, work, and play?
2. What benefits have you experienced or observed from the growth that has occurred in the Village over the past **18 years since the Village's** incorporation in 1989?
3. What types of activities, centers of activities, or new developments should the Village encourage/attract?

In addition, Village staff posed three additional questions to the café participants as they exited, including:

1. What is one thing you will do to make great things happen in the Village?
2. What is the one thing that we should do together as a community now to make great things happen for the Village in the future?
3. What do you think the Village will be like in 30 years?



Participants agree: the Village has grown to take on its own identity.

Question #1: What makes Pleasant Prairie a great place to live, work, and play?

Similar ideas were discussed and presented by the participants and are listed below:

- Location, location, location
- Within driving distance of work, major entertainment venues, close to mass transit, easy access to I-94
- Quiet streets with low traffic
- Great schools
- Great public services: fantastic snow/leaf removal, safe police and fire service, garbage pick-up, and easy access to medical care
- Great quality of life in a family-friendly environment
- Diversity of land uses: open space, industrial, commercial, residential and parks
- Fair, reasonable taxes
- Community Events: Prairie Family Days, fireworks, triathlons; all of the family activities scheduled throughout the year
- Low crime rate
- Great amenities: Lake Andrea and Lake Michigan, hunting, fishing, bike trail, RecPlex, IcePlex and great shopping
- Clean air
- Easy access to community leaders and Village government
- Community pride



Participants work together to explain why Pleasant Prairie is a great place to live, work and play.

Question #2: What benefits have you experienced or observed from the growth that has occurred in the Village over the past 18 years since the Village's incorporation in 1989?

Café participants collaborated to share the benefits they have seen since the Village's incorporation. Some of the benefits they discussed were:

- Improved services: fire, police, garbage pick-up, medical services, road maintenance, and sewer/water
- Ability to grow through annexations of town land without worrying about being annexed into the city of Kenosha
- Creation of the corporate parks and Prime Outlets retail stores
- Carefully planned development and defined neighborhoods
- Low crime rate even though the Village has grown
- Cleaning up of adult book stores
- Increase in property values and the values of homes
- Recreation programs have expanded: RecPlex, IcePlex, bike trail and triathlons
- **Addition of St. Catherine's Hospital**
- Preservation of trees



- Expansion of elementary schools and new technology high school
- New post office and Pleasant Prairie zip code



A representative from the UW Extension leads groups through the discussion questions.

“The paved walking path around Lake Andrea is one benefit the people of Pleasant Prairie have seen since incorporation.”

Café attendees discuss the benefits they have seen within the Village since incorporating in 1989.



Question #3A: What types of activities, centers of activity, or new developments should the Village encourage/attract?

This café question asked participants to focus on what new developments and activities the Village should attract. Ideas that participants discussed included:

- Cultural center for meetings and concerts/theatre
- Library
- Outdoor public ice skating rink
- Museum
- Fire Station (on the west side)
- Hotels
- Good quality homes on smaller lots
- Downtown district with small, quaint businesses that are culturally diverse) (examples: coffee shops, themed stores/restaurants, book store, boutique-style shops)
- Pleasant Prairie train station
- Education facilities including high schools, technology schools and community colleges
- Bike trail connecting east and west
- Connect Chiwaukee Prairie and lakefront with trail or structures/canals
- More “No Smoking” establishments
- More activities (ex: art fair, farmers market, concerts in the park, theatre, parades)
- More recreation amenities (examples: outdoor pool, more parks, beach development with a park, band shell, theatre)
- More industrial growth to include high technology manufacturing
- Sports events that could attract more people
- New shopping with more specialty shopping
- More developments that bring outsiders deeper into the Village



The artist at the August 21st café depicts the ideas participants have for new activities or developments within the Village.



Participants also would like to see more of the following:

Question #3B: Do you see any conditions or limitations that could help or hinder the Village in attracting these activities?

How do we control new growth? Participants at the café voiced their concerns over any possible factors that could prohibit the Village from adding new attractions and developments. Their responses included:

- Limited tax revenues
- Keeping a balance of hometown feel/ old world charm with new growth
- High cost of development
- Money
- Need ordinances to change with trends
- Low population density
- Road access (example: minimal east roads that can connect to the interstate)
- Traffic
- Need higher wages so people can remain in Pleasant Prairie instead of leaving to work elsewhere



Participants move to a new table to discuss a new question with a new group.

Participant Individual Responses

At the end of the café, participants were asked to respond to three additional questions individually:

“One thing that we should do together to make great things happen for the Village is... to continue to listen to homeowners, allowing them to participate in planning for the future of the Village.”

What is the one thing we should do together as a community now to make great things happen for the Village in the future?

- Create a unique Village Green Center
- Continue to promote proactive, quality planning
- Complete the plan and stay with the plan
- Allow only well-placed family-oriented development
- Plan for high-technology industry requiring advanced degrees
- Continue to meet and develop ideas as a community
- Continue to have high expectations for the Village
- Keep promoting our lifestyle and services
- Open communication at Board meetings
- Develop more parks with water features/bathrooms
- Get more citizens involved
- Create wider main roads
- Investigate having our own school system



By working together, residents create a vision for the future of Pleasant Prairie.



What is the one thing that you will do to make great things happen in the Village?

- Strive for quality housing and developments
- Speak positively about the Village and how it is a great place to work, live and play
- Become more involved in community activities
- Encourage others to get involved
- Generate interest for existing events
- Support local government in any way possible
- Help develop high quality youth
- Stay informed
- Support through tax dollars
- Spread the pride of the community with the outside world
- Encourage community volunteerism

The one thing that I will do to make great things happen in the Village is.... “to spread the pride of the community with the outside world.”

Participant Individual Responses

At the end of the café, participants were asked to respond to three additional questions individually:

In thirty years, Pleasant Prairie will be... "A strong community with culture, shops, markets—a sense of history that will still be in style for hundreds of years."

What do you think the Village will be like in 30 years?

- Booming but hopefully equally green
- A community with high technology jobs that pay well
- A bigger, well-controlled version of what we have now
- A village with an efficient transportation system
- Significant increase in residential development
- A thriving and vibrant industrial park development
- Diverse in people, economic strata and housing
- A community that is proud of itself



As participants talked about their vision for the future of Pleasant Prairie, an artist documents the themes into a mural.



Planning Continues On Village Green Center With Three Village Café Discussion Workshops

As part of fostering a sense of identity for the Village of Pleasant Prairie, planning began in 1994 for a “downtown” style center for the Village that would become a destination location. The project was given the name Village Green Center. It was noted, at that time, that additional growth in the residential community would need to occur in order to accommodate a retail-based community center.

Since that time, residential growth in the Village has flourished, and the decision was recently made to resume planning for a Village Green Center. The Center is proposed to be build on land north of Highway 165 and southwest of the intersection at Springbrook Road and 39th Avenue, near the Pleasant Prairie Post Office. Three planning workshops (Cafés) have been scheduled to discuss Village Green Center.

During the first workshop, those working on the project will interview residents, property owners, and other stakeholders in the immediate area. The Developers will work with the Village Green Technical Advisory Committee to develop a description of existing conditions in the area. They will gain feedback from neighboring property owners and other Village residents as to their vision for the Center. This step will be accomplished through a Café style meeting, similar to the village-wide Café meeting that was held this past summer.



This map shows the proposed location for the Village Green Center.

The second workshop will involve the development of concepts that will address the issues and opportunities relating to the location of the Center. During this step, those working on the project will also identify a visual preference for the architectural style of the Center. This step will be accomplished through a second Café style meeting with the Technical Advisory Committee, residents, and other interested parties.

The desired outcome and final step will be to prepare a Neighborhood Plan amendment and a detailed, architectural and site Design Guideline document regarding the character and identity that the Center will portray. The outcome generated at this stage will be reviewed during a third Café style meeting when the developers will describe the Plan with related details and will answer questions and concerns from the community. After these steps are complete, the Technical Advisory Committee, Village Plan Commission and Village Board will review and consider approval of the documents.



Community input will shape the future of the Village as residents work together at the Village Green Café to create a vision for the proposed Village Green Center.

The first Village Green Center Café is scheduled for

Thursday, November 15, 2007
at 5:45p.m. at the Village Hall

For more information about the Café, or if you plan to attend, please contact the Village Community Development Department at (262)925-6717.

“In the end the most essential need of a downtown is character. If nothing distinguishes the downtown from the strip, the mall, the nearest megastore, or the formula-design chain store, why would someone bother coming downtown?”

*-Roberta Brandes Gratz,
Cities Back From the Edge*

A special thanks to UW-Extension Agent Annie Jones who served as the café facilitator, the UW-Extension staff, Kenosha County staff, the Commissions and Boards, the Village staff and the many insightful participants who made the August 21st café a success.



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