



HANNUM, WAGLE & CLINE
e n g i n e e r i n g

Meeting Minutes

Blackford County ED Plan

Industrial Site Visit

Prepared by: Cory J. Whitesell, P.E.

Meeting Date: May 18, 2010

Issue Date: May 20, 2010

Attendees:

Cory Whitesell

Rob Cleveland

Hannum, Wagle, & Cline Engineering

Blackford County Economic Development

The purpose of the meeting was to visit and assess existing and future economic development sites.

1. Montpelier Shovel Ready Site
 - a. \$1.6 Million invested.
 - b. 18 years remaining on bond.
 - c. There is a creek through the site. What is the feasibility of re-aligning or modifying the stream? Is there a floodplain?
 - d. Rob does not have any design drawings for the site – only a preliminary lot plan in his office.
 - e. The sign for this site faces the county road, and is not visible from the highway.
 - f. There is a house at the northeast corner of the site. It has been suggested by others that the house should be acquired and added to the acreage.
 - g. Rob noted that the key question for this site is what to do with this site given the investment they have in it. Specifically, they want to know if they should invest more in the site to address the stream, acquire the house, improve signage, etc. – or if they should cut their losses and settle for a “lesser use” (such as the previously proposed truck stop).
 - h. A truck stop was proposed for this site but was turned down.
 - i. Site is near Central States – a large grain elevator.
 - j. Site has all utilities including broadband. Gas is not on site, but is a short distance away and could be extended very quickly.
 - k. They are somewhat open to discussions about alternate ideas for use of the sites. They have heard proposals for uses from truck stops, nursing homes/assisted living, to CAFO’s.
2. Additional Montpelier sites
 - a. There is a large, level site at the northwest corner of SR 18 and CR 400 E. There is a farm along SR 18, but otherwise the site is adjacent to existing industrial uses along CR 400 E. There is discussion on whether this site should have been developed instead.
 - b. This is a large, level site east of CR 400 E, south of Central States (south of SR 18). This site has access to rail.
3. Hartford City Industrial Park
 - a. They currently have one 40 acre site available.
 - b. The site is certified shovel ready.
 - c. There are several existing buildings available for purchase at the industrial park.
 - d. A shell building was built several years ago. After a series of events and disputes, the building was put up for tax sale and was purchased by Blackford County Economic Development. They will regain possession of the property late in 2010 if taxes are not paid by others.

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- e. They are in the process of replacing signs into the park. The intention is to match proposed community wayfinding signage.
 - f. They have recently built a new road to improve access to Petosky Plastic.
 4. Long Term Hartford City Sites
 - a. After the 40 acre site is developed, Hartford City has no other Greenfield sites available for economic development.
 - b. There is significant agricultural property located north and northwest of the existing industrial park. This would be suitable for expansion of the industrial park, except that current owners are unwilling to sell. The properties are owned by the owners of a nearby bed and breakfast, and they are keeping the land as a buffer from the industrial park.
 - c. The industrial park abuts residential uses to the east. There is no opportunity for expansion here.
 - d. There are over 300 acres of property available north of SR 26, between Industrial Park Road and CR 200 W. There is currently one farm on the site at the intersection of CR 26 and CR 200 W.
 - e. There is significant property available on the north side of Hartford City between the commercial district and the High School. There is a willing seller for land on the east side of SR 3. The City has made a commitment to extend water to this area to allow a bowling alley to be re-built after a recent fire (near CR 200 N). However, there is no sewer in the area. The school might be interested in sewer, but the city is currently reluctant to pay for sewer to this area because they are already paying on two other sewer bonds at this time. Sewer only extends north to Huggins Drive.
 5. Agriculture
 - a. The community is interested in agricultural preservation.
 - b. CAFO's currently require a special exception.
 - c. There have been lawsuits over CAFO's locally that have went to the state supreme court. Courts ruled that if a CAFO is permitted by IDEM, that they could be built regardless of special exception approval.
 - d. The community is debating whether or not to keep this special exception.
 - e. We discussed that having CAFO's as a permitted use in an agriculture district can be problematic if there are a mix of residential and agricultural uses in an agriculture district. We discussed that communities can overcome this by having a subset of the agriculture district (the most intensive agricultural uses) that discourage housing and allow CAFO's as a permitted use. Rob noted that some have proposed locally to make a residential use a special exception in an agriculture district to help accomplish this.
 6. Other
 - a. The city is interested in widening SR 26 from SR 5 to the Hartford City industrial park.
 7. Scope of work desired by Rob
 - a. Provide an "honest assessment" of the viability of existing sites.
 - b. Provide recommendations for the improvement of existing sites to make them more attractive.
 - c. Identify opportunities for mid-to-long term sites in Hartford City and/or Montpelier. Provide direction related to these future opportunities, and make recommendations for future improvements.