Prosperity Index Committee
Monday, August 14th, 2017
Hagerty Center, Traverse City, MI

DRAFT- Minutes - DRAFT

Committee members present: Ken Osborne, Alan Cooper, Doug Luciani, Eric Bachman, Ed Boettcher, Doug Mansfield, Richard Schmidt, Marsha Smith, Mike Groleau

Committee members absent: Joe Moch, Clint Steele, Tim Nelson, John Stephenson, Jamie Al-Shamma, Michael Cain

Staff present: Anne Helbig, Sarah Lucas

Call to order: The meeting was called to order by Committee Chair, Ken Osborne at 4:05 p.m.

Approval of Minutes:
Motion to approve the minutes of the June 12, 2016 meeting was made by Ed Boettcher, seconded by Richard Schmidt. Motion approved.

Meeting Minutes:
A presentation was made by Sarah Lucas to address questions raised at the previous committee meeting. The lack of affordable housing is affecting the demographics of our region. Constructions costs are high as are transportation and energy. The demand is not being met for both single family-owned homes as well as rentals. There is often resistance in the public to high-density residential developments but public support is critical. Policy, both local and statewide, is a barrier to addressing housing. Even when policy is changed, there can still be public opposition. Financing is another barrier. Subsidies are needed to develop low-to-moderate income housing developments. Public-private partnerships can be effective to make projects work. Networks Northwest has been actively engaged in discussions to create regional initiatives and solutions.

Discussion among the committee: Local zoning and control has been creating more barriers. Most new development is being opposed. Long commutes are an issue for getting workers. We need to make it easier for public entities to take more risks. Statewide policy issues are acting as red tape. The housing partnership can help to advocate for policy changes. It only takes a few negative comments from constituents to change the mind of an elected official. Developments that occur on commercial land in city centers that have “use by right” is one solution. Adaptive use of historic structures is expensive but has had some success in the region. Also, allowing 2-3 units on a single family lot has worked in some neighborhoods without public opposition.

Suggestions for the next board meeting: Structure the conversation around who are the right partners and people that can help move the needle. Highlight success stories and potential solutions. How we can engage the elected officials in a meaningful way. Get into more specifics on the regional housing partnership.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned by consensus at 5:04 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Anne Helbig
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