

Howard County FFI meeting Minutes
August 16, 2007
6:30- 8:30 PM
Cresco Fitness Center

Members Present: Larry McGee, Colleen Peckham, Robert Hughes, John Lloyd, Elaine Govern, Brian Ney, Brenda Ranum, Joye Meyer, Matt Kabliska, and Charlie Baier. We also had 10 local community people attend. Dave Puffer, Dwayne Omar, Ron Downing, Rick McCarville, Tim Walton, Amy Kustaponch, Pat Gaul, Linda Long, Brian Ney, and Hazel Boyle.

Welcome by Matt and Charlie. The group reviewed the NE Iowa FFI vision and goal; the NE Iowa Top Priorities, and explained the Suggestion Box. Howard County Planning Team members were asked to identify people who aren't at the meeting that should be and if policies have been implemented related to F&F that they are aware.

Matt reviewed the Webcasts for July and for August. They may be viewed at:
<http://www.extension.iastate.edu/allamakee/info/kellogg.htm> .

In July we viewed the following two webcasts:

July '07 Webcast #1 - "Active Living Principles"

July '07 Webcast #2- "Active Living By Design – Parks, Trails & Greenways"

A summary of the Regional Food & Fitness Leadership Team Meeting was given by Rob Hughes & Elaine Govern. Elaine explained what the Regional Team is and reviewed key points from their July meeting.

The group viewed Webcast #3: *"Why Safe Routes To School Matter."*

Discuss Questions

- What benefits could you expect for our children by creating a Safe Routes to School program(s) in our county?
 - Healthier children
 - establish good habits,
 - alertness,
 - safer with walking bus,
 - sense of community,
 - communication between different age groups,
 - less congestion,
 - less pollution intake,
 - will continue to walk/bike as they age,
 - become more observant of their surroundings.

- What obstacles could keep our county from implementing this program?
 - Distance to school,
 - weather,
 - pampered children,
 - uncontrolled intersections,
 - lack of sidewalks/bike trails,
 - cost, lack of supervision,
 - lack of people to organize,
 - time,
 - parents concerns of safety/fear,
 - personal awareness security,
 - busy streets/highways,
 - law enforcement needed,
 - insurance issue with liability

- What services, information or facilities would help implement the SRTS program?
 - Grants,
 - transportation controls,
 - volunteers,
 - sidewalk improvement (wider),
 - safe house for walkers (check points),
 - education for parents/children,
 - make a drop off point couple blocks from school and have kids walk the rest of the way,
 - not safe to ride bikes on gravel or busy highways,
 - cost for hauling bikes to town,
 - start an individualized school incentive/reward for walking/biking,
 - have routes/streets be closed for kids to just walk/bike near school

Webcast #4: *“Assessment and Mapping Toolkit for Building a Healthier Community: Safe Routes To School”*

Discuss Questions:

- Are there schools in our county ready to submit a Safe Routes To School grant application?
 - The group talked about the need to form a group of people to work on getting the information together.
 - Matt agreed to write a letter and submit it to the newspapers and to Rob Hughes to get it into the schools information packets to parents. The purpose of this letter is to inform parents about the program and ask them to serve on a committee. The feeling of the group is that they would like to see it go forward and hope they can get support from the parents and community to do so. Colleen Peckman offered to assist on the committee, representing Notre Dame Schools.

Open County Discussion

Talk by Dave Puffer on indoor skate park idea. Dave talked about the project he is working on in Cresco to find support to build an indoor skateboard park. They have a location and the plans; he is working on finding money and volunteers to help with the project.

Wrap-Up Thanked everyone for sharing their time and ideas. A tour was provided of the Cresco Fitness Center and we reviewed the plan for future enhancements by Ron Downing.

The September meeting will be in Riceville, time and location TBD. The October meeting will be in Elma time and location TBD.