

Northeast Iowa Food & Fitness Initiative  
Winneshiek County Planning Team  
Sept. 19, 2007  
Meeting Minutes

**PRESENT:** Don Arendt, Brenda Balk, Lorraine Borowski, Ron Bullerman, Donella Darrington, Rick Edwards, Lindsay Erdman, Karen Foster, Rita Friest, Clark Goltz, Ann Grimstad, Joe Grimstad, Stephanie Hughes, Jennifer Johnson, Janet Lambert, Lyle Luzum, Sue Luzum, Ellen Macdonald, Ann Mansfield, Kate Mansfield, Steve Matter, Barb Schroeder, Craig Mosher, Eric Nordschow, Jan Nordschow, Marissa Nordschow, Lyle Otte, Janelle Pavlovec, Brenda Ranum, Hannah Ranum, Betty Ransom, Randy Uhl, Rachel Vagts, Krista Vanden Brink, and Luther students: Lydia Beattie, Julia Hankins, Becky Stiger, Hannah Huinker, Christa Person, Melissa Berg, Bryan Topf.

**POLICY CHANGES:** Decorah Mayor Don Arendt said the city is working on a sidewalks assessment project, and the city is trying to fill in the missing pieces of sidewalk.

**NOT HERE BUT SHOULD BE:** Participants mentioned that members of the County Board of Supervisors should be attending, as well as members of county school boards.

Brenda reminded Team members concerned about getting into the food aspect of the initiative that that will happen eventually and that the Northeast Iowa Food & Farm Coalition has been working on food issues.

**REGIONAL TEAM:** Winneshiek's Team consists of Karen Foster, Rick Edwards and Eric Nordschow, and youth reps Kate Mansfield and Hannah Ranum. Lindsay Erdman is the alternate. Foster said the team had conducted a regional meeting at Monona, discussing Safe Routes to School. She recruited former principal Clark Goltz to represent the interests of the South Winneshiek School District. Rick Edwards reported that Lora Friest of the RC&D office is writing a Safe Routes to School Grant from the Iowa DOT.

**KELLOGG TAP TEAM:** Brenda reported that the Kellogg TAP Team was favorably impressed with their recent Northeast Iowa visit. Highlights included the Riceville Welcome Center, Seed Savers, Decorah bike trails, Oneota Coop, the NICC Dairy Center, the Waukon wellness center, the Mississippi River, the Northeast Iowa Food & Farm Coalition meeting and the RC&D annual meeting.

**WALKABLE COMMUNITIES:** A webcast with Mark Fenton talking about "Walkable Communities" was shown and discussion followed. Fenton said 4 elements help communities be more walkable. They are: 1. mixed land use 2. good connectivity 3. an inviting destination 4. a safe area.

The webcast also talked about the 3 "P's" that help create environments where people are more like to walk or ride: They are: 1. Programmatic (walking school bus) 2. Project intervention (changes to infrastructure) 3. Policy change (building the right way in the first place.)

During discussion Barb Schroeder said the webcast and such discussions help create a higher community awareness. Racheel Vagts said the city of Decorah is working on connectivity. Ron Bullerman said Calmar is cutting curbs and working with NICC to provide greater connectivity.

Benefits of walking/biking more were then discussed: Mentioned were getting kids outside more; developing a better and stronger sense of community; reducing the carbon footprint; improving school performance; improving student behavior; reducing the “busyness” in our lives; economic benefits.

### **ASSESSMENT AND MAPPING TOOLKIT FOR BUILDING A HEALTH**

**COMMUNITY: COMMUNITY MAPPING TOOLS**”: This webcast asked – What benefit would there be for the communities in our county if we collected data using one or more of the following 3 assessments?

- Walkable/Bikeable Community Maps
- Environmental Barrier Mapping
- Trail Use Counter Program

Walkable/Bikable maps would promote trails and walking routes. These could be obtained for \$3,000 for the entire county. Would utilize ISU design students.

Barrier Mapping would identify obstacles such as narrowness; dead-ending; speeding traffic; no curb cuts; stray dogs; overgrown with vegetation; lack of signage. Would cost \$1,000 per county.

Trail Use Counter Program – would monitor trail use and store information until downloaded. \$250, plus \$50 administration fee for each. Can be installed for up to two weeks. Downside – provides the numbers but says nothing about who makes up those numbers.

During discussion, it was mentioned that walking maps are really important for visitors. It was also mentioned that more benches for resting are needed on trails.

Rick Edwards said it would be beneficial to have the Decorah/Winneshiek County mapping. Brenda reminded this is a 5-county project and assessments can’t be done for all communities.

**CONSERVATION PROJECT**: At the end of the meeting, a number of participants stayed to here Winneshiek County Conservation Director Barb Schroeder discuss a pilot project being planned that involves programs designed to alleviate the “nature deficit disorder” affecting many youths. The program would incorporate outdoor recreation activities with environmental education. Barb said no other county conservation organization in Iowa is proposing to do what the pilot project involves. She said other states such as California and Connecticut have done similar projects. Barb said she would provide a detailed summary of the project at a future meeting.

**SUGGESTIONS**: 1. When people speak they should stand and speak slowly and distinctly, women’s voices are especially hard to hear 2. Wisconsin has adapted a statewide initiative/policy relating their local foods and trail system. USA Today article. Knowing how they apply this may be a big help. 3. I liked Brenda’s suggestion of adding 15-30 minutes to the end of the meeting for discussion 4. More free discussion and less structured. 5. Black marker on whiteboard hard to read 6. I suggest one minute of walking in place every half hour 7. Room was too warm.