

MEMO

TO: Cristina Sheppard-Decius November 16, 2009
FR: Daniel Grove, The Lakota Group
RE: **Ferndale Heritage Tourism & Wayfinding Planning – Project Kick-off Summary**
CC: Nicholas Kalogeresis, Lakota
Brian Wirth, Lakota
Wendy Christie, Quill Communications
Kristine Kidorf, Kidorf Preservation Consulting

The Lakota Group Team kicked off the Heritage Tourism & Wayfinding Planning and Design process with an intense two-day series of meetings, walking-tours, stakeholder interviews, and fieldwork. The following is a summary of the meetings and general input received from these meetings:

Meetings

Attendees

Steering Committee Kick-off

Wednesday October 14th, 12:00 to 2:00 PM

Cristina Sheppard-Decius
Stacey Tobar
Jeff White
Nicole Klepadlo
Robert Bruner
Chris Hughes

Walking Tour

Wednesday October 14th, 2:00 to 4:00 PM

Cristina Sheppard-Decius
Stacey Tobar
Jeff White
Nicole Klepadlo
Robert Bruner
Chris Hughes
Heather Carmona

Open House

Wednesday October 14th, 6:00 to 8:00 PM

Veronica Lujic
Melanie Piana
Luke Forrest
Barbara Miller
Douglas Christie
Sharon Chess

DDA Board Interview

Thursday October 15th, 8:00 to 9:30 AM

Veronica Lujic
Nicole Raifaill

Ferndale Public Schools
Thursday October 15th, 10:00 to 11:00 AM

Jessica Stilger

Chamber of Commerce
Thursday October 15th, 10:30 to 11:30 AM

Jennifer Roosenberg

General Session
Thursday October 15th, 3:00 to 5:00 PM

Marsha Scheer
Steve Selvaggio
John McQuiggin
Tom Pearlman
Byron Photiades
Garry Andrews
Jean Spang
Sara Roediger

Historical Resources/Stories:

- Investigate potential historical relevance of neighborhoods
 - History of lots, particularly sizes
 - Lots along Allen have extra
- Ferndale started to grow with Detroit vacation homes/cottages
- History of Architecture
 - Sears & Roebuck Kit Homes
 - Post War Homes
 - Woodland Park (Neighborhood Association)
 - Greek Families – Harding Park area
 - African-American Families – Inman and Grayson Streets
- Multi-generational Community
 - Sullivans
 - Kitchens
 - Lennons
 - Curtains
- History/Age of Schools
 - Roosevelt the oldest
- Vincent Chin/Asian American Civil Rights/Hate Crimes Legislation
- Dream Cruise origin – Cambourne Street– “Where the Dream Began”
- Inter-urban rail line down Woodward median
 - Tracks are still buried under the median
- Preservation of significant trees:
 - Elm Trees
 - DPW treats yearly to preserve
 - Oak Trees
- Indian Trail
- Stage Coach History and Location
- All four corners had been pharmacies at one point. Made Guinness Book of World Records.
- First Church built in 1921, corner of 9 Mile Road and Bermuda Street

- First Estate was located at 9 Mile Road and Pincrest Drive
- Campbell House on Hilton
- Post Office needs identity as a WPA building
- Railroad Yard as a Historical District – Largest Switching Yard
- DDA has a strong historical assessment of the Downtown for the team’s use.
- Historical Society has a housing resource database
 - Addresses, age, names of all homes
- Historical Society sells Historical Designation Plaques for homes
- Can use volunteer hours (potentially 300 to 400) for additional research
 - Volunteer hours needed to meet grant requirements
 - Kristine Kidorf to provide guidance on research

Cultural Resources/Stories:

- Need to tell the story of the last ten years
 - The change in the Downtown
 - The change in the character of the City
 - More liberal
 - “Gay-friendly”
 - Moved from Palmer Park area due to safety
 - Home prices
 - Increased Rehab
 - Younger people more involved
 - “Fans of Ferndale”
 - Worked on harassment issues
 - Human Rights Ordinance passed in 2008
 - Locations:
 - Como’s
 - Woman’s Perogative
 - Just for Us
 - Affirmation Center (started in Pioneer Building)
- Strong Community Character
 - “Good Neighbors”
- School District most diverse in the State
 - Over 50 ethnicities represented
 - Diversity initiatives throughout the year
- School has strong art/performing art program
 - Marching Band has won 4 straight State Championships
 - CASA (Center for Advanced Study of the Arts) in Oak Park, but part of district
 - School District is committed to being a full service district
- School District has two Green Schools (Michigan Green School Standards)
 - Ferndale Middle School
 - Kennedy Elementary
- Beautification Committee recognizes homes:
 - Larger cluster of recognized homes on Cambourne Street

- Giving Community
 - 150 Non-Profits
- History of Stores
 - Previous owners/users
 - Look of building/façade
- Gallery/Public Art Walk
 - Ferndale’s Art in the City Committee
- The “Dragon” at Livernois and Brekinridge
- Green/sustainable stories/tour potential
- Sam Raimi had office space in Ferndale
- Bwana Dons – Pet Store/TV Show Host
- “Peppard House” – Actor George Peppard bought for his mother

Key City Locations:

- Blue Nile Restaurant
- Fly Trap (for breakfast)
- Sam’s Ferndale Grill
- Elliott’s Saw Mill (has a historical marker)
- Baker’s Keyboard Lounge (technically not in Ferndale) – first jazz club
- Mother Fletcher (features in “Whip-It”)
- Twisted Shamrock
- Woodward Avenue Brewery

Thoughts on Wayfinding:

- Important Routes
 - Woodward Avenue
 - 9 Mile Road
 - Livernois Avenue/Street
 - 8 Mile Road
 - Hilton Road
 - Woodward Heights Boulevard
 - Oak Park Boulevard
 - Cambourne Street
 - Pincrest Drive
 - Marshall Street
- Parking needs to be improved through wayfinding
 - Currently more cumbersome than necessary
 - Direct to other lots in case one is full
 - Some parking areas are under-used
 - On-street spaces on Withington
 - Surface lot behind Tubby’s
 - Surface lot behind Magic Bag
 - Parking behind the Courthouse at certain times

- Credit Union One parking lot could be shared during off hours
 - Meter person could Twitter when spots are available in specific lots
 - Parking rates could be modified to encourage lesser used lots
 - Parking Signs need secondary panel for timing/rate/permit information
- Need general consolidation of signs/reduce sign clutter
- Signage should reflect the urban character of the City
- Signage needs to be easily adaptable
- Bike path/way signage not clear
 - Direction could be given to bike parking locations, especially if/when covered bike parking is established.
 - Heights and locations of signs cannot be an obstruction to bicyclists
- Directional and identity signage for parks needs improvement
 - Martin Road Park – Sledding Hill
 - Tot lots – hidden within neighborhoods
 - Memorial Mall needs identification
 - Taft – a lesser know/used park
- Directional signage to key school sites
 - High School
 - Sporting Events
 - Tournaments/Regional Events
 - Special Events
 - Administrative Office
 - Enrollment
- Direction back to Downtown from High School to provide food/entertainment options for visitors at events
- Define Industrial Areas
 - Existing ground signs for two areas:
 - Wanda Commerce Center
 - Bonner Commerce Center
 - Signs funded by applicants
 - Provided through Chamber
- Direction needed to Housing Commission, especially from buses
- City Hall is poorly signed
 - Sign parallel to road
 - Sign low to ground
 - Calls out Municipal Building, not clear to many
 - Police sign larger, creates confusion
 - Hard to distinguish Library and City Hall parking lots
 - Directions on where to pay tickets/bills
 - Parking Tickets at Courthouse
 - Water Bill Drop Box
 - Parking Ticket Drop Box
- Directional/identity signage needed for Post Office
- Need signage to Fire Stations
 - Bike registration
 - Child safety

- Need signage to DPW yard
 - Pick up of recycling bins
 - Pick up available dirt
 - Animal shelter
- Exclusive Physicians Group – Do Emergency Visits – Directional Signage needed?
- Churches – too many to sign, only sign historically recognized
- Need for consolidated map of the City collecting information from many sources
 - Could be used in a web-based application with layer control.
- Reference the Woodward Non-Motorized Plan
- Signage needed for Art Bench (4-5 built and installed)
- Plaques could be created for façade improvements
- Plaques could be small/acrylic/internally lit
- Third Thursday “Open” signs
- Potential to work with Smart (Bus) to coordinate
 - Bus Routes and signage
 - Potential for bus shelters and pedestrian kiosk
- Waste containers as a means for branding
- Commuter Rail?
- Talk to MDOT about getting a Ferndale directional as part of the I-696 signage
- Look into potential trail systems along the railroad, and need for signage
- Potential signage connections to and from the Detroit Zoo
- Coordinate signage with WA3’s initiatives
- Rochester has good examples of parking directional
- Ann Arbor is a good example for well done signage design

Potential Adaptive Re-use Sources:

- State Fair Grounds
- Detroit Elevator

Follow-up Phone Calls or Meetings:

- Todd Scott at Detroit Greenways (Woodward Non-Motorized Plan)
- Bob Porter (State Fair Grounds)
- Ray White (Ferndale History)
- Mr. & Mrs. Mahan (Ferndale History)
- Shaun Slocum from DPW (history/location of trees)
- Shirley at City Hall (Ferndale History)
- Leslie Thompson (Affirmation Center)
- Larry Falardeau at Oakland County (Indian Trail)
- Hayes Jones (Smart)
- Tom Barwin (Commuter Rail History/Trails along Rail Corridor)
- Dr. Naman (Exclusive Physicians Group)
- Nancy Goedert (Raging Grammy’s/Peace Action)

Reference Materials:

- *Ferndale of Yesteryear* by Maurice F. Cole
- *Old Timers tell it like it was* by Ferndale Historical Society
- *Father, Ford, \$5 a Day* by Sherry A. Wells
- *Tough as Nails: A History of the Ferndale Fire Department* by Chief Roger Schmidt

Misc:

- Sierra Club interested in sponsoring open space areas/signs
- Need a name for the new pedestrian alley
- Need a location for the Vincent Chin memorial

Next Steps:

- Steering Committee Review of Phase 1 (Meeting #2):
 - Thursday November 12th, 1:00 to 3:00 PM
- Steering Committee Review of Preliminary Phase 2 and 3 concepts (Meetings #3 & #4):
 - Friday December 4th, 1:00 to 4:00 PM
- Community Workshop #1:
 - Thursday December 17th, 7:00 to 9:00 PM
- Community Workshop #2:
 - Thursday January 14th, 7:00 to 9:00 PM
- Signage Fabrication Pre-bid Meeting:
 - Wednesday February 10th, 1:00 to 2:00 PM