Village of Big Rock Comprehensive Plan

Initial Public "Kick-off" Meeting

The general public in Big Rock was invited to a community meeting to initiate the comprehensive planning process for the village at large. This meeting was held in the evening at the Big Rock Fire Department on March 11, 2013. The meeting was well-attended by community leaders and residents, with over 30 participants. Attendees were led through a workshop that was designed for them to share their main issues and strengths of the village with each other.

This initial meeting allowed CMAP staff, County and Village officials to briefly describe the comprehensive planning process to the general public and convey its importance as an instrument of decision-making for future growth and development in the community. Next, each participant had the chance to share his/her main issue in the village today with the entire group. At the end of the activity, participants voted on their top issues and or concerns for the Village.

Issues

The general public's most common issues revolved around the need for a greater focus on economic development. The issue that was raised most frequently was the lack of commercial and industrial tax base in Big Rock. People shared their concerns that the rural small town character of Big Rock should be preserved by balancing commercial growth with farming. Other people mentioned concerns about traffic control and poor image around Route 30 and the need for improvements.

There were also several issues raised regarding the village's infrastructure, from flooding and drainage problems, to roadway maintenance, to improving and adding sidewalks throughout town, specifically along Route 30 to Prince Road. Some participants mentioned the need for more intergovernmental collaboration for access to police services, as well as added youth and senior recreational activities beyond what currently exists. Lastly the issue of need for utility infrastructure improvement to allow access to high speed internet, cable, and electric power distribution was raised by many participants.

Top Community Workshop Attendee Issues:

- Roadways and sidewalks
- Maintaining the character of Big Rock
- Poor field drainage
- Need for commercial growth
- Need for utility infrastructure improvements
- Poor image around RT 30
- Agricultural Preservation
- Future camp ground
- Traffic disruption from rail train
- Communications

Future Projects

Residents were asked to list what projects they would recommend to address the issues and concerns discussed in the previous question. The following is a list of the potential projects provided:

- Improve and pave worst roads.
- Improve and add sidewalks throughout town, specifically along RT 30 to Price Road –promote pedestrian safety.
- Connect outer subdivisions to town.
- Dauberman Road extension.
- BNSF overpass and additional safety rail crossings.
- RT 30 improvements and traffic control.

- Address flooding and stormwater drainage, specifically along RT 30 to Creek.
- Direct water access to storm drain.
- Utility distribution system improvements –high speed internet and cable.
- Pursue economic growth, while maintaining a community character balance –increase tax revenue.
- Keep Rural setting agricultural and enhance it –focus on trees and landscaping in and around parkway.
- Bike path trails, specifically along Granart Road and Jericho Road to connect other subdivisions to old center.
- Expand Park District or create a community center to include more recreational activities for children and seniors.
- Improve communications with community –social media, marketing to and from citizens.
- Intergovernmental collaboration –Park District/Police services.

Strengths of Big Rock

Overall, public meeting attendees felt that Big Rock is a safe, friendly place to live with good services. Other assets and strengths noted by residents included:

- Quality rural setting with lots of beautiful open space.
- Quiet small town community.
- Friendly community –people support and help one another.
- Public amenities and village services, including community centered events.
- Privacy
- Diversity –small and large properties
- Community Pride
- Easy access to places and major roadways.

Vision of Big Rock in the year 2030

Residents were also asked to write a headline for the local newspaper that would describe Big Rock in 2030. The following are some of the headlines that were provided:

- Big Rock voted #1 town to raise a family
- Big Rock maintains small rural community
- Big Rock voted best places to live
- Big Rock's new Town Center Complete!
- Sustainable Green Town of Big Rock
- Big Rock! Best kept secret in Kane County
- Google to build new headquarters in Big Rock