

FARMINGTON BICENTENNIAL TASK FORCE

July 25, 2023

Farmington City Hall – Conference Room

- Committee members present: Maria Showich-Gallup, Pam Green, Chris Halas, Sean Murphy, Courtney Showalter, Maria Taylor, Micki Skrzycki
- Others in attendance: Brian Golden

Chairperson Sean Murphy called the meeting to order at 7:03pm

A/ UPDATES FROM MEMBERS

- Micki suggested doing events in Flanders, Mooney – non-downtown.
- Pam shared the following suggestions from former Farmington educator David Hales, now with Michigan Historical Commission: Decide what are key themes about Farmington that everyone should know. We are about family, health/welfare/safety, etc. His dream was a craft center set up someplace related to bicentennial.
- Brian shared an original copy of the program for the Sesquicentennial (150th) and an old article by P.D. Warner about the founding of Farmington Township. Brian suggested starting the celebration in Farmington Hills on Power Road, adjacent to Alameda, where Farmington Township was first “founded.” He sees opportunities for participation from many Farmington and Farmington Hills organizations including schools, library, churches, service organizations, military organizations. He information about history to be the bicentennial’s foundation. Brian recommends we come up with a one-page trifold document to display the bicentennial logo and tell the story of Farmington’s founding.
- Chris said he is confident this one-pager will find its way into the DDA assets.
- Maria T reminded the group that our suggestions are going to Farmington City Council, who controls potential funding. She doesn’t think they’ll move forward with an official kickoff event that is outside the city boundaries.

B/ PRIORITIZING SESSION

Committee members discussed the merits of items from the previous meeting’s brainstorming session, rating them on effort and community impact.

Ideas were assigned to:

- 1 of 4 key players: Kate Knight (DDA), Walt Gajewski (Farmers Market), Melissa Andrade (City Manager’s office), Julie Law (Founders Festival)
- Community groups

Committee members volunteered to contact these potential stakeholders prior to the next meeting. A summary of assignments is below. If the groups contacted do not show interest, the idea will likely be scrapped; top-tier ideas may be reassigned.

C/ NEXT MEETING: Tentative: August 8, 7pm, City Hall. Julie, Walt, Kate, and Melissa will be invited, so we need to confirm the date works for them.

D/ ADJOURNMENT: Sean Murphy adjourned the meeting at 9:25pm.

ASSIGNMENTS

MICKI: MELISSA/ICE RINK COMMITTEE

-Theme the NYE 2023 celebration: ball drop to bicentennial (School of Rock Farmington song)

MICKI: WALT

- Pie contest or chili cookoff
- Favorite family/grandma recipe. Collect it into recipe book and sell it.
- Historic cooking demos, throwback day
- Have a night or a couple nights with food trucks and craft beverages, relaxing music, and bonfires with marshmallows available to toast; have one day be antique market that goes through the evening

CHRIS: KATE

- Ladies night out: sell swag, put on Throwback Thursday
- Sidewalk vinyl, like we do for Grand Raven
- Large space with timeline experience... tie in with stimulating walkability. Do this potentially at cut thru behind Fresh Thyme – light it up with cheap overhead lights.
- Have Syndicate Bicentennial drink sold at the Pavilion in a pop-up during Riley Park concerts. Make sure pop-up has history exhibit and Bicentennial swag for purchase.
- Harvest Moon VIP ticket where you get a pint glass with the logo. Could do for FF too

GRAND RAVEN:

- Ravencrow contest: do an Arthur Power ravencrow
- 200th button on all the Raven Crows
- New Orleans style band parade is returning – have a centennial something to hold up
- Pumpkin contest: have pumpkin artist do bicentennial pumpkins (they have one)
- Taste-off competition (must be all new drinks) to create a special drink that will be awarded the official bicentennial drink of the Syndicate and marketed all summer. Each must submit boozy and virgin version of it in order to be considered. Tasting could be at the March event (part of the restaurant tour)

HOLD OFF UNTIL WE HEAR FROM KATE RE: MASONS PARK FUNDING/TIMELINE

MASONS PARK/SKATE NIGHT: have Run Club and PLUS do it; City/DDA

- Unveil it as part of celebration, spin it like we're doing it for the 200th (Kate idea)
- aka Commission piece of commemorative art displayed in public space, but not a mural
- Time capsule: bury in Masons Park when we do the unveiling
- Announce the bicentennial drink winners
- Roller skating (it was in 100th) – maybe we could have a community skate that leaves from the Masons park/Masonic lawn (Massive bonus: Would get people to attend)

MARIA T: JULIE LAW

- Make it a carnival/like the Wyandotte Street Fair
- Theme "Bicentennial Bash"
- Keep vendors to historical themed or Michigan-made, don't bring in commercially-made things

- Everyone wants a bigger band (“not a cover band”)
- Drone show: ask her opinion

MICKI: ELKS

- Throwback Ox Roast

COURTNEY: Oakland Street carolers

PAM: FH SPECIAL SERVICES

- Postcard project - feature at Art on the Grand
- Flower art or giant floral arrangement to do a massive 200 (battle of the flower shops?)
- Chalk artist – “coloring book” like An Arbor did

MARIA S-G: PTA

- Bring back bingo at FF. Historical or bicentennial swag as prizes

ED FOUNDATION

MARIA T: CHRIS GREIG

MICKI: DIANE BAUMAN

- Gala at Warner; high-dollar ticket with sponsors. Might be cool even if under construction (make it a feature, let people go in). Do short-term art installation? Or collection of historic photos. \$200. Gov. at Governor’s Mansion!—opportunity to talk about million dollar check Invite Kim, Warnerettes to assist.

BRIAN: Cemetery walk in conjunction with Grand Raven (already confirmed)

PAM: ROGER AVIE/FF PARADE

- Sign up for historical era to have then to now represented in parade. “Decades parade”
- Grand marshal at FF, get the longest-living person in Farmington to be marshal
- Get some old fire trucks to drive in the parade
- Bicentennial float contest?

BRIAN: CHAMBER

- Holiday window displays contest
- Restaurant week/taste of Farmington March 8

PAM: BEAUTIFICATION COMMITTEE

- Wants to host a light the night event, sidewalks lined w votive bags
- Put flags in Farmington veterans’ yards (get list from Legion) – add legion, boy/girl scouts
- Spring cleanup with 200 prizes

MICKI: FARMINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

- Contact them about third-grade study of local history
- Wax museum from schools – 5th grade? Stationed throughout the city at Grand Raven

PAM: FARMINGTON COMMUNITY BAND: Have them do a bicentennial performance

MARIA T: SCHOOL OF ROCK

Create song, do music video, open Harvest Moon, Rhythms, FF

Note: Make sure City has veto power

COURTNEY: LINDA DESKINS (ALSO HISTORICAL COMMISSION): Historic home tour, interior or exterior.

MARIA S-G: LIBRARY

-Old-fashioned stories or crafts, decade history talks

MICKEY

-Create commemorative float – Mickey will chair!! Design contest among high school art program. Workers to assemble it: Arts groups, beautification committee

MARIA: SCOTT FREEMAN, SCHOOL OF ROCK

-Farmington Idol. **Second tier idea, scrap if no interest**

-Oculus glasses where you can see old Farmington – at FF. Julie could sponsor but someone else will have to execute it.

PAM: OPTIMISTS, PTA

-Kids day at Founders Fest. Hold in Shiawassee Park. Kiddie rides (Julie Law), old-fashioned games, food trucks, fire trucks, cookout (hot dogs/Busch's, ice cream/Guernsey),

MARIA T: ARTS COMMISSION

-Decorate windows of empty storefronts

MARIA T: CHECK TIMING WITH DPW

-Tree on the compass rose at Riley Park. **Second tier idea, scrap if not possible**

MARIA T: KITCHEN CREATIONS, BAKERIES

-Gingerbread house contest of old Farmington buildings, open to public and bakeries

SEAN: KATE

-Bar crawl with each participating restaurant bringing out their special themed drinks again. "Bicentennial Bar Bounce"

BRIAN

-Scavenger hunt; include the 16 historical markers or historical sites. Will only require PR

MARIA T: FRESH THYME

-Postcards to Farmington

SEAN: KATE

-“Passport to Farmington” – stamp for each business you spend \$5 at, 25 stamps you get a prize (maybe a 200th t-shirt or hat)

MARIA S-G: ASK BARS

-Trivia nights: each decade do a night, or 4 nights with each 50 years. Rotate through area bars

HOLD OFF UNTIL WE HEAR FROM CHAMBER

-Kickoff event on March 8

-Make this restaurant week – Chamber

-Taste of Farmington strolling dinner organized by Chamber

-Awards for oldest and newest business or some sort of award

(-New City Hall sign behind Council)

-Formal proclamation from Council

-Speech from Mayor – we need reason to make people come, or do it for video

-Corner Barber window – Maria/library will do

MICKI: ASK DIANE

-Project old photos onto City Hall north wall outside at night during events

BRANDING/CONTENT CREATION

CHRIS AND CARL

-New City Hall sign behind Mayor

-Lamp post banners: key/random years with interesting information, few sentences with historical photos. Creating awareness for everyone who drives through town

-Banner over the street – a different one every month

-DDA assets: A-frames, kiosks, water bill, banners on light posts

-Metromode series can cover bicentennial

-Put history stuff plus QR code in water bills

-Logo/branded package, put on City letterhead, website, social, DDA, share with participants

-SWAG: Calendar, postcards, T-shirts, mugs, pint glasses (Kate will know prices from Syndicate), collector’s coin or item exclusive to 2024

-200 days of... social campaign, or once a week. Put on DDA social calendar

-Throwback Thursday series all year on City social media (plus web and Observer)

-Break down the historic marker tour into a bunch of social media posts. Serial content. Could also have people talking at each

-Video hits with cameos from celebrities (like Kenny G play a little thing) wishing Farmington a happy birthday – funny social content

CHRIS: TALK TO KATE ABOUT THIS

-Commemorative art. Check with Kate on Masons park funding status; could be that

WE WILL ASK THE CITY TO PROVIDE/BUDGET FOR

- Dedicated web page on City website for TBT, scavenger hunt, schedule, etc.
- Traveling pop-up museum that goes to all events. Would be nice if it were changed up throughout year. Repurpose content also used on FB, etc.

OTHER STUFF

MARIA T/JOE

- Get dignitaries to our events: reps, senators
- Opportunity to donate at all events. Find a 501c3: DDA, Friends of GWM
 - Matching funds (GLP)
 - Different matches, drawing, etc. or burst events every month
 - State fundraising goal upfront: park amenities, public art, etc.
 - Talk to Kate re: Masons, is it going to be call for artists, when will be unveiled
- See if we can insert ourselves into other stuff in state of Michigan. Like rest stop when coming into Michigan – get some of our promotional material there