

FOND DU LAC VISION & STRATEGIC PLAN

Workshop #3: Friendship Learning Elementary School Workshop

Friday, March 20, 2015

On the afternoon of Friday, March 20th, an *Envision Fond du Lac* workshop was held with the 5th grade class at the Friendship Learning Elementary School in North Fond du Lac. The workshop began with a brief overview of the planning process and concluded with a student discussion of issues. The workshop included a questionnaire exercise, from which participants shared their written comments with the overall group. The following is an issue-based summary of the input received during the workshop.

Note on Summary Context

The following is a summary of the thoughts, comments, and opinions received in response to workshop questions. Some comments were shared with the entire group, while others were recorded privately on worksheets. It is important to note that the items identified in this summary are not recommendations or observations of the consultant, but rather feedback and comments received from those who participated in the workshop.

Issues & Concerns

Students were first asked to identify important challenges and things they dislike about greater Fond du Lac. Participants voiced their concerns regarding a range of issues; however, many comments centered on key themes, which are summarized by issue categories below.

Trains and Trucks

Students highlighted the nuisance created by trains and heavy trucks as a top concern. Students felt that trains and semitrailer trucks travelling through the area create noise and cause too much traffic. Students also noted being frequently stopped by long trains and that there are few options not to have to cross at-grade. Pollution was also mentioned as a factor resulting from proximity to heavy train and automobile uses.

Parks and Recreation

Students described parks and recreation facilities as needing improvement and new investment. These included parks, athletic facilities, pools, playgrounds, skate parks, and other facilities, largely focusing on the need for more family and youth based activities in the area. Similarly, the need for more trees, plants, and other natural elements was raised. Students noted the need to travel to Oshkosh and Appleton to visit some of these park and recreation amenities.

Garbage and Vandalism

Participants also discussed the high amount of garbage and debris in greater Fond du Lac, and minor issues related to vandalism. Students felt that members of the community do not care enough for the area, which leads to excessive littering. As such, respondents not only called for efforts to clean up trash, but also a need to change local attitudes in the community to ones of stewardship.

Priority Actions & Projects

Students were asked to list ideas they had that could make greater Fond du Lac a better place. Given the school's location in North Fond du Lac, many of the student's comments are specific to that area, as noted. Their responses

provide a wide range of ideas, which have been categorized under economic development, parks and recreation, governmental services, transportation, and identity. All responses are listed below:

Economic Development

- Build a mall in North Fond du Lac
- Attract more businesses and entertainment activities to Forest Mall
- Build more video game arcades
- Attract higher paying jobs
- Attract more restaurants to North Fond du Lac
- Attract a larger grocery store (such as a Walmart) to North Fond du Lac
- Build bigger houses in North Fond du Lac

Parks and Recreation

- Add more local parks
- Build more skate parks
- Build a trampoline park
- Build more and improve existing athletic fields
- Add more trees
- Add more trails
- Build more water parks
- Add more fish to Lake Winnebago

Governmental Services

- Hire a K-9 unit officer
- Fine those who litter
- Limit or reduce the number of smokers
- Clean garbage and debris
- Develop more activities, particularly for youth
- Create better places for kids to hang out or play

Education

- Construct more schools
- Improve local schools
- Push back the school day to start at 9:30 and end at 3:30
- Increase school clubs and extracurricular activities

Transportation

- Make necessary improvements to local roadways
- Decrease the number of trains going through the community
- Build bridges for train tracks to separate grades
- Remove semitrailer trucks from the highways
- Require that semitrailer trucks be quieter
- Foster improved or safer driving
- Allow pedestrians to ride skate boards and scooters on Main Street Fond du Lac

Community Strengths & Assets

The workshop concluded with a discussion of the assets that greater Fond du Lac has to build upon and should be preserved moving forward. Workshop participants identified local parks, recreational opportunities, and particular food options within the area as important assets to greater Fond du Lac. All assets and strengths identified in the workshop are listed below:

- Regional location
- Quick access to Wisconsin Dells
- Rural setting
- Cows
- Local parks
- Open space
- Athletic fields
- Skate Park
- Hunting & fishing
- Local schools
- Food options including fresh produce
- Culvers
- Panda Express
- Marcos Pizza
- Menchies (previously called Cherry Berry)
- Gilles Frozen Custard
- Local businesses
- Forest Mall
- Game Stop
- The people
- Fond du Lac is safe
- Roundabouts
- Everything is close together
- Small neighborhoods