

# Mississippi Mills Residents' Association

Board of Directors, Minutes of Meeting, November 22, 2006, 7:30 pm; Market2World Boardroom

## **Presentation:**

**Brian Ritchie** (OMAFRA) provided a short video presentation on the First Impressions Program and fielded questions from the Board. FI Program is 2 years old.

- communities matched with similar character, development issues, tourism, etc
  - OMAFRA can search out communities and help to pair up, or we can suggest a possible match
  - Communities sign a Terms of Reference/ MOA agreeing to mutual level of effort
- FI team uses all senses to evaluate the visited community
  - Provides valuable input to town planning, BIA, etc
- Support tools (samples left) include at no cost:
  - "FI Community Exchange" Team Members Guide Booklet (FICETMGD)
  - FICETMGD – for Downtowns
  - FICETMGD – for Tourism
  - FICE-Coordinator's Guide
  - FICE Process flow slide.
  - Also provide support and advice, MS-Word or MS-Powerpoint templates for reporting, etc
  - Website: [http://www.reddi.mah.gov.on.ca/userfiles/HTML/nts\\_6\\_21811\\_1.html](http://www.reddi.mah.gov.on.ca/userfiles/HTML/nts_6_21811_1.html)
- Key benefits:
  - external evaluation– “new eyes” ; e.g. how does town respond to “investment inquiries”?
  - building relationships with other communities
  - engages broad spectrum of community in improving community's image.
- Costs:
  - Effort to organize core group and incorporate broad base on input
  - Monetary costs include meals, accommodation and travel of team members (6-11): usually funded by Town ~ \$500-\$1000
  - Time/effort of team: training 2hrs, visit, debrief, report, presentation
- Potential pitfalls – scope: team thinks it can get more accomplished than it can; e.g. better to have two separate FI's for Pakenham and Almonte, than try to do one for both.
  - also, rural perspective seen as a challenge
- Some communities that have participated include:
  - Alliston
  - Brussels
  - Carleton Place
  - Elora
  - Ingersoll
  - Lancaster
  - Rockland
  - Vankleek Hill
  - Westport
- Next steps: Generate a core group interested in participating, drawn from a wide cross-section of community; e.g. Chamber, BIA, business, residents, town staff, newspaper, councillor, etc.

***Action: MMRA Board would begin to test for interest through MAAP, emails to members and contact with other groups. (Board)***

**In attendance:** George Yaremchuk, Jill McCubbin, Shaun McLaughlin, Arnie Francis  
**Regrets:** Mike Boire, Stewart Yeaman

1. Minutes of Previous Meeting, Sept 26/06 (Approved)
2. Treasurer's Report - no formal report, but little change in finances.
3. Membership:
  - a. Arnie noted that the Board regretfully accepted the resignations of Marnie Bruce and Al Seaman this fall, as both were unable to complete their terms due to personal reasons. Their contributions were greatly appreciated and missed.
  - b. The Board needs to find replacements – **Jill** would follow up with certain contacts, **Arnie** would include as part of next membership e-mail
  - c. **Arnie** would continue to look after the membership database until further notice.
4. Community Communications
  - a. First Impressions- Board would continue to engage broad base of involvement until momentum gained (**all**)
  - b. Arnie debriefed Board on his and Stephen Brathwaite's interview with Consultant doing Planning & Buildings Review. **Jill** to pursue issues around dissatisfaction with report.
  - c. **Arnie** would put out a Communiqué on a regular, (4-6 week) basis to fill information vacuum for members – Board would be asked to contribute; include Yahoo Group summary to encourage interest, announce participation on Town Committees, and try to get people monitoring issues from Committee/Council meetings.
  - d. Website – **George** would be happy to post any submissions; a Blog was not considered tenable at present, but George would pursue software options. Elected Councillor's write-ups from AG (**Arnie**) and from posters would be scanned and put on website (**George**) for future reference.
  - e. Position Paper was suggested to encompass (**George** to draft?):
    - pursuing recorded voting – Note: Majority of candidates supported except Minille and Levi at ACM. – **Jill** to follow-up with Mayor
    - immediate publication of draft minutes
    - instituting a recording secretary to ensure independent and objective note taking
    - mandatory electronic submissions (e.g. requested by Town from contractors) be made available in electronic format to encourage easier public access to material.
  - f. Re-direction of community concerns through Discussion Group e.g. Snow Dumping across from Old Kirk (**Jill**)
5. Next Meetings proposed (3<sup>rd</sup> Wed, except Dec) – **all Board members** are asked to confirm with Arnie if this schedule ensures their regular participation or not. Alternate dates are requested.
  - a. Dec 13/06.- at Arnie's place - informal
  - b. Jan 17/07
  - c. Feb 21/07
  - d. Mar 21/07
  - e. April 18/07
  - f. May 16/06 (AGM)