

Community Pride Committee Minutes

January 6, 2009 Branson City Hall

Meeting called to order at 3:05 p.m.

Members and attendees included:

Chairperson Judy Hartley, Sandra Williams, Jerry Adams, Larry VanGilder, Chris Ely, Ron Hall, Jeni Albert, Tara Norback, Mayor Raeanne Presley, Jessica Sawyer (MoDOT), Steve Dunn (MoDOT), David Cissell (MoDOT), Stephanie Stogsdill (MoDOT), Burt Pitchford (MoDOT), Karen Murphy, Sam Clanton (KRZK).

Business:

Update on landscaping the islands at highways 65 and 76

Committee member Chris Ely gave an update on the landscaping plans for the gravel islands at Highway 76 and U.S. 65, both north and south exits. His plan includes four rows of colorful perennial plants inside the three-foot gravel buffer required by MoDOT. The colors would be blue, yellow and lavender.

In the center of the islands, Chris left room for annual flowers that are planted each year. His landscape plan was submitted to MoDOT, who approved it.

Between now and March 1, Branson Public Works will remove the gravel now in the islands and replace with topsoil. Volunteers will then be needed to plant the flowers. Chairperson Hartley is in contact with Home Depot to see if that company could donate some of the perennial plants. Tara Norback, the city forester, will be checking with the city's park and recreation department to see what plants and flowers are available in the greenhouse that we can use for the islands.

Public Works Director Larry VanGilder committed to keeping the newly planted flowers watered in the early stages to keep them alive and healthy.

Another committee member, Jeni Albert, who also operates a landscape business with her husband Jon, will look at the island at the intersection of Highway 76 and Roark Valley Rd to see how it can be enhanced with color.

Welcome to Branson sign

Jessica Sawyer from MoDOT explained how signs along highways are regulated, and she showed examples of signs. For a Welcome to Branson sign, she recommended location on property that the city owns or leases because no permit would be required, no fees and no advertising. MoDOT officials confirmed that no "Welcome to" sign would be allowed on the Cliff Drive bridge over U.S. 65. Discussion again centered on a Welcome to sign by Home Depot.

However, Stephanie Stogsdill from MoDOT informed the committee of a "Welcome to" program offered by MoDOT. It would allow cities to put signs on state right-of-way to welcome visitors to their community. The content and design of the sign face is up to community – plus the city pays for the signs. Stogsdill said these signs could be placed along north and south Highway 65 coming into Branson. She did not know the size regulations, but she will investigate and let us know. The signs can be larger than the current ones that show the city limits and population. Mayor Presley asked if these Welcome

to signs could also be placed along other highways that lead into Branson. Stogsdill not sure on that, but said the city could always apply to MoDOT for other locations. Committee members overwhelmingly liked this program, and VanGilder will create ideas for the sign faces that can be made in the city's sign shop.

Highway 65 and Branson Hills Blvd interchange enhancement

City Forester Tara Norback said she is in discussions with some local contractors about mowing those areas this spring and summer. She is working with public works to also get the irrigation system up and running to water the vegetation in the middle of the interchanges. No plans at this time to add any flowers to the center of the interchanges. Committee will need volunteers this summer to help with the mowing of those areas. MoDOT said it will mow them four times during the growing season.

Next meeting of the committee will be in early February. Notices will be sent with date and time.