

Meeting Held For Public Input On Proposed Community Center

By: Shannon Walden

Approximately 34 people gathered at Clay City High School Auditoria last Thursday evening, to discuss a proposed Multi-purpose Community Center in Goshorn Park. Members of the R.E.I.N. Coalition were on hand for the meeting as well as citizens and some special guest speakers involved with the project.

R.E.I.N. Advisory Board member Pat Wilkinson, gave a brief overview of the project to those citizens attending and introduced the special guest speakers. Dr. Nathan Schummel, Ph.D. CRRP, Assistant Professor in the Department of Recreation and Sport Management at ISU, spoke about the Master Plan his students are working on for the project. Schummel said there are two phases to the plan.

Phase one consists of five chapters and makes up 75% of the Master plan. It includes the history of the community, population analysis and projection, supply and demand analysis and standards analysis. Phase II consists of an expenditure analysis, prioritizing of things to do and a criteria ranking system. Phase II will include a random survey mailed within the Harrison Township community to gain input into what community members would like to see within the center.

The master plan is being done by students in his R.C.S.M. 345 class, Mike Hagenow, Aron Hall and Mary Bradley, at no cost to the Clay City community and will help plan the facility and programs to better fit the needs of the community. All data from the study will be presented to the R.E.I.N. Committee after completion.

"We are here to help you and to provide options," commented Schummel. "They have to come from within. Just take the bull by the horns." Dr. William Minnis, Associate Professor of Management, School of Business at Eastern Illinois University and his wife, Jennifer, also attended. Minnis wrote the CAFE grant for the Clay Community School Corporation that was responsible for the LEAAP Center, South Branch Library, Pre-School and other educational tools for the community a few years back. He has agreed to write the grant for the R.E.I.N.

The beginnings of the project left over from the Lewis Schaff estate that had gone toward the operations of the Clay County Hospital. This funding also provided for the new Clay County Extension office at the Clay County Fairgrounds and debtors for various agencies. The Commissioners are holding \$95,000.00 towards the project and it is collecting interest in the bank. The Coalition plans to apply

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Dr. Nathan Schummel, front left, with the Indiana State University Department of Recreation and Sport Management and his students, Aron Hall, Mary Bradley and Mike Hagenow, are constructing a Master Plan for the proposed R.E.I.N. Community Center as a prelude for their R.C.S.M. 345 class. (News Staff Photo)

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for grant funding for the center, with plans to use the \$95,000.00 as a match.

Brian Deakins with the Wabash Valley Community Foundation spoke on grant funding and endowments that are available through the Clay County Community Foundation. "We get money, we grow it and we give it away," he said.

Current ideas for the center include an FDA approved kitchen, large community room, as big or larger than the Orange building, a community library, food pantry, and a community swimming pool or splash park. All ideas including the swimming pool are not set in stone and members of R.E.I.N. are seeking input from community members as to what they would utilize. "We are trying to fit the needs of the entire community and that includes all ages," said Wilkinson.

Upon completion of the new center, the Orange building would no longer be utilized. The new kitchen and eating area, community room would replace the current Nutrition site for the Senior Citizens, as well as serve for private functions. The Food Pantry would replace the one on 14th Street. The library will be a community library and will operate by Memberships. Memberships would also be available for the swimming pool and it would be available for swim lessons, private parties, family nights, open swimming and physical therapy.

Other suggestions for the center have included a splash park, walking track and basketball floor in the community room.

Wilkinson said that upkeep and other expenses will be paid through fundraisers, membership, donations, and possible rentals and logo sponsorship through area businesses.

Although the proposed center will be located in Goshorn Park, an exact location has not yet been determined. "We will keep it out of the areas where we have water problems," said Harrison Township Trustee Kay Hart. Hart is also a member of the Board of Directors on the R.E.I.N. Coalition.

Hart was pleased with the turnout at the public meeting and said, "It is slow-going, but we'll get there."

R.E.I.N. stands for Recreation, Education, Information and Nutrition. Board of Directors include Kay Hart, John Mercer, Carole Mayrose, Doug Inman and Jeremy Boge. Pat Wilkinson is a member of the Advisory Board. Board member officers are Dave Kirkling, President; Tom Rea, Vice-President; Cathy Long, Secretary and Belinda Long, Treasurer. Anyone interested in joining the Coalition may do so by contacting a member, and the meetings are open to the public. The next meeting will be held at the First State Bank Community

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