

Steering Committee Meeting Notes

Friday, December 6th, 2013 10:00 am – 12:00

The Community Foundation of Mendocino County

204 S. Oak Street, Ukiah, CA 95482 (707) 468-9882

New Dial In Number

Dial In # (760) 569-7225, Participant Access Code: 108 1131#

1. Call to Order: 10:00 am

- a. Attendees: **Dan Hamburg** (Mendocino County 5th District Supervisor), **Doug McCorkle** (North Coast Railroad Authority), **Jim Moorehead** (Alliance Chairman), **John Kuhry** (Economic Development and Financing Corporation), **Howard Egan** (Realtor), **Mitch Drake** (CEO, Golden Bear Broadband), **Susanne Norgard** (ED Community Foundation), **Ray Gifford, Jr** (Ukiah Wireless), **Trish Steel** (Alliance Administrative Coordinator)
- b. Call-in: **Brian Churm** (Alliance Technology Chair), **Cathy Emerson** (UCCC Manager, Center Economic Development), **Myron Curtis** (DSN ICT/DM, for California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office), **Greg Jirak** (Broadband Associates)
- c. Guests: **Claude Lewenz** (Managing Director, The VillageTown Stewards & Co)
- d. Changes to Agenda: Claude Lewenz was added to give a 15-minute presentation on Village-Towns after item #6.

2. Broadband Coalition of Northern California Counties

- a. Trish gave a brief update on the BCNCC: We currently have 28 letters of endorsements for the statement that substandard broadband damages the regional economy. Ten different counties are represented, and included are endorsement letters from Boards of Supervisors, County Superintendents, businesses, and non-profits.
- b. There has not been any outreach efforts lately because we have been focused in other areas.
- c. Myron thought that there was some statewide initiative which included State Superintendent of School Tom Torlakson to tie together the different alliances, and wondered if there was some way to reach out and ask if they are interested in working with us. The group he was thinking of is the California Broadband Council (CBC) and Tom is on their board.
- d. The Alliance is familiar with the CBC and has not found it to fulfill this function (tying the various Alliances together). CE added that the CBC was legislated to help identify broadband issues, and chartered to meeting quarterly. They currently meet about every nine months, and to date the council has been in no position to do anything other than to listen. A few working groups have started, but the frustration is that they are not doing much.
- e. There are nine members of the group, and their website is <http://broadbandcouncil.ca.gov/home.aspx>
- f. Myron said that he would try reach out to them individually. Jim sat in on a CBC meeting earlier in the year, and he suggested that Myron target Carlos Ramos and Tom

Torlakson. Carlos is the Director of the California Department of Technology, and during the CBC meeting he was very attentive to the speakers. Tom is the State Superintendent of Public Instruction.

- g. Myron felt that if we can't get the support of the CBC, then we should reach out to the other Consortia.
- h. He also had another other point and two question: 1) this is all politics and we need to find a way to get the large carriers to cooperate with us, and 2) would it be possible and helpful financially to piggyback fiber optic cables on PG&E poles and other high transmission towers and 3) can we leverage the special federal mandate that requires that cell phone service is "end-to-end" on the national highways to get the larger ISPs to provide service along the highways?
- i. Regarding question 2, Mitch said that the entire length of the Route One Corridor Project (part of GBB which is along the Mendocino Coast) uses PG&E poles, and that PG&E has been great to work with.
- j. Mitch also had a comment to Myron's first point about finding ways to cooperate with the existing carriers that spoke to the difficulty of this task: the large carriers were all invited to be part of the NCRMMI plan and become partners in GBB, which would have been the most cost-effective way to build the network; they chose not to participate.
- k. And in regards to question 3, GBB plans to place towers that could provide a path for existing wireless carriers to have a contiguous signal along Highway 1; currently there are four locations without towers.
- l. No one really seemed to know much about this federal highway mandate, so there were no other comments about it.

3. Golden Bear Broadband (GBB)

- a. Mitch Drake was in attendance and provided us with an update on the GBB application.
- b. He received the CPUC letter on Wednesday, November 27th with a cover letter by Robert Wullenjohn, Program Manager Communications Division. This letter told Mitch what route segments may be approved and what route segments could not be approved.
- c. The CPUC letter is disappointing, but Mitch is not giving up and will propose to sit down with commission staff following a thorough review of the letter and a path forward is derived. Mitch has been consistent from the beginning that breaking the application apart doesn't work for GBB.
- d. Trish asked if the Draft Alternate Resolution process was being considered, but Mitch responded that they need a Draft Resolution first, and from the tone of the CPUC letter they are a long ways off from receiving it.
- e. For GBB, the effort is far from over. This project is too important for the people of northern California, and without it northern California is summarily excluding from the rest of the world.

4. **Access Sonoma Broadband (ASB)**

- a. Mike Nichols was not in attendance to give a report; the next ASB meeting is on Wednesday, December 18th at the new Economic Development Board office in Santa Rosa. The address is 141 Stony Circle, Suite 110.

5. **Facilitating Broadband Deployment- CalFire and Dept of Finance**

- a. It has been a little over one month since our special topic meeting, and Trish reported that all parties involved were sent out an email asking if they have anything to report back, and she is still waiting to get their responses. We will hopefully be able to report out more completely after Christmas.

6. **CPUC mapping survey/Validation of Broadband Availability**

- a. The Alliance is actively working on a distribution plan for Mendocino County to get this survey out far and wide; more on this survey and distribution plan can be found in the notes from 11/08/13 (<http://www.mendocinobroadband.org/topics/steering-committee/>)
- b. Hard copies of the surveys can be found at all public libraries in Mendocino County, and the Alliance has a link to the survey on our website at <http://www.MendocinoBroadband.org>. We encourage everyone to take this survey and share the information with friends.
- c. Today as part of this distribution plan, Jim, John Kuhry and Trish are meeting with MPIC Program Director Debbie Purcell to discuss collaboration (<http://www.mpic.org/>).
- d. We are still waiting for an iOS version of the application of the cellular testing application, and were disappointed to hear that it sounds like there is not a lot of energy being put into developing this by the CPUC. We were told that a college student is working on it part time.

7. **Village-Town presentation by Claude Lewenz, Managing Director**

- a. Dan introduced Claude, who flew in Wed from New Zealand for this second trip to Ukiah. Last night Claude introduced this Village-Town concept to business leaders, county officials, and public safety personnel and others here in Ukiah.
- b. This is a concept that Claude has been working on for decades, and is basically a highly concentrated economic movement that can be moved anywhere there is access to high-speed broadband.
- c. As Mendocino County tries to figure out how to sustain itself economically, this could be seen as an extremely interesting and exciting opportunity for us, as Claude is looking at Mendocino County as a possible location to build a Village-Town.
- d. Claude provided handouts, and left three different large, hard-cover books about Village-Towns to share around the county. This is a huge concept and topic with more information than I could possibly provide in these notes; the best way to understand the concept is to listen to Claude's TedTalk (<http://villagetowns.net/en/index.php/video/video/tedx-talk>) and to go visit their website (<http://villagetowns.net/en/>). There is also a five-minute video on You-Tube

that gives an overview of the Village-Town
(<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bRdW0V6DgOg>)

- e. Here are the first few paragraphs from the Executive Summary of the website:
- i. The current urban development models are not working. When we stopped regarding people as citizens, and began to call them consumers, the concept of community life began to break down, spawning new problems and challenges unknown by previous generations. What we call a VillageTown came from a multi-decade analysis of what went wrong and how to get back on track.
 - ii. Physically, a VillageTown is a mixed-use real estate development based on a *walking home-range* which means that all destinations to which one goes on a day-to-day basis (from home to work, school, church, recreation, shopping and socializing) are within walking distance; no cars within and no outbound commuters. Economic and social critical mass determines population and land use:
 - iii. **10,000-population** town made of villages and a town center
500 acres (200 hectares) of land is optimal that includes:
 - *150 acre* (60 ha.) urban core made of 20 side-by-side villages & a commercial town center
 - *50 acre* (20 ha.) walk-to industrial park
 - *300 acre* (120 ha.) greenbelt (65% of the total land) that surrounds the urban core
- f. In looking at the Village Town and Mendocino County, Claude talked about how we need to create a reason for businesses to move here, and the Village-Town could be that reason. We could attract a large number of high-tech companies and green technologies, and also focus on our social and cultural well-being and invest money into those as well.
- g. This type of village is called "Open Source Real Estate Development." There is no developer, and this is a significant difference from normal developments. When you use a developer, much gets extracted and taken away as profits for the developer. From the website, *"it's sort of like the open source movement - you buy the hardware, but the operating system is free... both free to use, and free to change."* The hardware includes the land, homes, plazas, public buildings and commercial work places. People pay for that just as they would buying a computer or Android cell phone. The operating system is the governance document, what the Stewards call the Social Contract. The template is found in the three books that Claude provided, most notably in [VillageTowns - the Next Step](#).
- h. Within the urban core everything is "walkable" and there are no cars. This creates a safe place for kids as one advantage. There is a lot of self-insurance in the Village-Town, and you can even run your own banks.
- i. Claude was asked why he is considering Mendocino County as a location for a Village-Town, and his response is that they came to have a look, and found that our values aligned with theirs and that we are sufficiently open-minded here for it to work. There are also not the restrictions on growth here that you find in other areas, such as Sonoma

County. They need to be able to find affordable land within reasonable distance of an airport, and other resources such as water. For the broadband issue, they plan to go to Google and ask them to do for us what they did for Kansas City.

- j. Jim asked how this project would help the Alliance solve the broadband problem for the county, and Claude said that you define this as an economic engine, and it becomes the core of a county-wide project that ties everyone and other small businesses into it. Think of it like an octopus...it is bringing something extremely attractive to Google.
- k. This was an exciting idea and there were quite a few questions asked. The Village-Towns could potentially solve many problems and issues that counties and communities continually face (pollution, urban sprawl, water shortages, energy issues, lack of affordable housing, unemployment, social isolation, health care, public safety, etc)
- l. Once they get permission and the go-ahead, the entire Village-Town could be built in 12 months.
- m. Again, visit the website if you are interested (<http://villagetowns.net/en/>) because there is so much more to this topic.

8. Meeting adjourned at 11:50