

Placemaking in Rice Lake

Last summer we asked our community to go through the process of scrutinizing several areas in town. They were asked to make comments both good and bad along with giving suggestions of what they would like to see in that location.

A Steering Committee was formed last fall to make sure that progress is happening in each of the nodes. Each node has a Chairperson responsible for it. These “Chairs” have been meeting once a month and reporting on what is happening.

Node 1. Main Street bridge area. Is working on getting a mural painted on a metal building along the lake. A discussion with an artist will be happening soon and a design developed. Also happening in that node, is work being done in the Knapp-Stout Park. The planters are being weeded and will be planted with some perennials and petunias. The Golden K will help keep them watered. Parks & Recreation has helped with lots of pruning and weed pulling and pulling out trees that have grown among the flowers around the gazebo. The park is starting to look good. Kathy Wellsandt is the Chairman.

Nodes 2 & 3. Downtown Main Street area. We were told that the lighting downtown was dim, so with Rice Lake Utilities help, we are testing out LED lights in one of the decorative poles to see how much difference it will make before looking at the rest. Also looked into is the possibility of doing a streetscape design. Of course, these will take funds to do, \$3,000-\$15,000. Cory Schnacky is the Chairman.

Node 4. Veterans Memorial City Park. Both the Lions Club and Golden K Club have given funds toward doing a new play area for kids ages 12 and under. It will be relocated to a level area near the tennis courts. Craig Antonson is the Chairman.

Node 5. Located down by the colleges. This spring, a large group of 72 people worked to remove the buckthorn along the trail. We cannot see the river along the trail! The next project has not been formulated yet, but a meeting is pending to discuss it. Heinz Eller is the Chairman.

Node 6. The intersection of Hwy. 0 & SS. There is discussion on putting in a pocket park on the northeast corner near the Farmers Market. Dave Armstrong is the Chairman.

Node 7. Moon Lake Park. They have been checking the park out, talking to the Soccer Association and will be coming up with some projects soon. Ryan Urban is the Chairman.

Node 8. City entrance signs. The committee has had several designs submitted and are working now to fine tune the first one. Cost of each will run around \$32,000. We have 4 entrance signs to Rice Lake, and these will be replaced one at a time. Cory Schnacky is Chairman.

With all the ideas and wishes in various planning stages, the committee will be doing some fundraising so that these projects can move forward. We are looking at doing an event and asking for donations that can be earmarked for a specific project by the donor.

The committee meets every first Tuesday of the month at 11:30 a.m. We move the meeting around to various restaurants for lunch. If you are interested in joining us, give the Chamber a call to find out where they are that month.