

Community Meeting Attendees

Name	Address	E-Mail
Dean Miller	722 4th St.	deanauto@kctc.net
Dave and Anne Skaden	806 5th St.	skaden@kctc.net
Barb Christensen		
Larry Christensen		
Larry Kern	903 8th St	Lkern@kctc.net
John T. Mehaffy	808 13th St.	
Robert Miller	1223 12th Place	
Sheryl Miller	1223 12th Place	
Darlene Arndt	309 A Ave. # C-8	
Suzanne Tinnian	305 C Ave	
Doug Morgan	808 11th St.	
Sylvan Schlabuch	200 F Place	
Mark Robse	813 6th St.	
Steve Reif	831 14th St.	
Marilyn Woodin	829-14th St.	woodin@kctc.net

Community Meeting Notes

What is the most positive aspect of Kalona that we need to make sure we hold onto?

Cost of Living

Rates here are much cheaper than in Iowa City if I chose to buy or rent there.

Education

When I had 3 children going through the school system, I thought it had great educational opportunities.

Location

We looked for a house outside of Iowa City when we started our family and decided Kalona is nice to be in a place that is slower paced, but not way out.

Great location between Iowa City and Washington is valuable.

The location along the Iowa City corridor.

Access to the city.

May think we are isolated, but 3-5 hours from Chicago, KS, St. Louis, Minneapolis, and Omaha; traveled to those towns extensively for business—we really have the best of both worlds here and really aren't too isolated.

I enjoy that I can live in Kalona and go shopping in Washington or Iowa City.

Public Perception

It's a great place to raise a family.

I moved here from Milwaukee and have been really impressed with friendliness, convenience of getting around, and the ease of raising a family.

We like the farm community and raising our daughter here.

The best of both worlds; we need to keep that flavor here.

Quality of Life

Last 10 years, Kalona was voted one of the 10 best small towns in Iowa.

Great place to raise three children.

I had a business here for 30 years and my children grew up here.

Residents

Nice community that has always been clean and progressive.

Kalona continues to try to stay in touch and keep moving forward.

A lot of pride and people that want to progress are here.

Friendly and homey.

Friendliness

I worked in Iowa City when husband became ill and we moved to Kalona. When he passed away I felt safe, liked my apartment, and thought the friendliness of the people here was great, which is why I decided to stay.

When I moved to North Liberty it had 1200 people, when I left there it had 7800 people.

Smalltown Atmosphere

I work in Iowa City and it's really nice to come out of the city into the quiet and peacefulness here.

Came here to retire from Riverside community; thing I like best about Kalona is not being associated with a Casino, which would have been right in our backyard.

Husband and wife both started out here, moved away and it's like coming back home.

Fairly quiet compared to most other towns.

Tourism

Unique culture is distinct with the Amish community.

Impressive, but people forget, we look so hard for industry, but we have one of the best industries in tourism.

My daughter owned a house in Kalona, told us to come here and buy a house across from her, then she moved to California, but we love it here.

What is your favorite place in Kalona? Where do you really like to be—we are looking for places besides your home?

Civic

City park, spend a lot of time down there working concessions; I like to watch the kids play ball.

Historical buildings.

Library

Downtown

Evening walks from our place on 6th St. to and around downtown.

Just like all the shops out in the country and in town; I like to shop and I like to shop here.

General Atmosphere

From my house we go to post office, library, bank, restaurant for lunch-it's just a great area you can walk.

Our neighborhood-North on 5th St.

The mini-forest in our backyard.

Existing Facilities

Dean's backyard.

Golf course when weather permits.

Sitting in the quilt gallery with some of the best quilts in the country is very soothing and peaceful.

Spend a lot of time in Shiloh, south of town.

Local Business

Columns and Chocolate

Different businesses I do errands at or just driving around town and talking.

The Parlor Restaurant; easy place to be with good conversation and good food.

The Parlor; it's a coffee thing in the morning.

The restaurants

What do you think is the biggest issue facing Kalona in the next 5, 10, 15, 20 years of growth?

Amount of Growth

I hope it doesn't outgrow its small town atmosphere.

If you don't grow a little bit, eventually people are going to stop or slow down.

Existing Facilities

Swimming pool is losing business to surrounding communities. Some outside communities still come to our pool for now, but it's starting to lose business to other surrounding communities.

Swimming pool was voted on 7 times in 1989. Thing that is difficult is pool was great when it was built. Surrounding communities with swimming pools had bigger tax bases. Everyone wants something spectacular, but you don't have the tax base to provide those in small towns.

The swimming pool is not being kept up to date; we could update it with an aquatic center or something.

Historic Preservation

I am concerned about the perpetual care and upkeep of our historical buildings and their condition 50 years from now.

Historical buildings are one of the best small town attractions in the country; we recently found out that you can't start endowments with less than \$100,000 and need it least a million dollars to start talking about paying a permanent planning director.

Infrastructure

Continue upgrading streets.

Making the infrastructure and amenities available and interesting enough to draw people in and keep them here.

Storm drains are a problem we need to work on.

Whether we can maintain the quality of life infrastructure; for example, the recreation center is going to need some major work (could add an indoor walking path).

Local Businesses

Age of people running businesses; what will happen to them when they decide to close the door.

Business District; when a variety store business burned we lost an important piece of the downtown business district. How do we replace that?

Develop the available industrial park.

Don't want to grow too fast, but have to grow to some degree to not lose what we have downtown.

Downtown needs to grow with some more businesses to attract people to Kalona. Growth and being able to retain small town atmosphere.

I have a business in town and I think we have great businesses, but we need to be recruiting new businesses.

Keep people employed here in town.

Keeping downtown business district vital and thriving.

Residents

Need to connect north and south end of town for older and young generations; we all benefit from keeping the community knit together.

More land for residential development.

Need hard working volunteers that are employed in town to keep the volunteer fire department viable.

New generation older people are still active, still putting miles on shoes.

Tourism

Corridor that comes in on Main St. is kind of unattractive.

Gateways into town; commuters on Highway 1 never knew a Kalona existed, which is why we need to work harder to get people drawn into the downtown.

This town doesn't have a place for motor homes to park to visit just for a day (not a campground); no place for big rigs to park.

Tourism will keep this town going and keeping it attractive for tourists coming in.

What does Kalona want to be? A small town or go after tourism

What is Kalona going to be? A tourist town or not? A small town with all of the conveniences.

Town Cohesion

Hate to see Kalona grow as fast as North Liberty did. Hate to use up beautiful land because of fast speed of growth.

Traffic

We need to have a farm to market road from Richmond to the John Deere store across Highway 22, which would be a great asset to the community. In that process you'll have to cross the English River and we need a new bridge: maybe 400 feet to the west so you can drive straight on and straight off. Would facilitate farmers and enhance trade and commerce in this community.

Access north of Kalona; anything North of Highway 22, you have to come back down here to get out.

Echo the comment about traffic flow.

Increased traffic levels cause traffic problems with the two main highways and the development going north off Highway 1.

Lack of connectivity between the northern area and Highway 1.

What is your least favorite place in town?

Existing Facilities

Our ball fields are an unbelievable facility that's underutilized.

We could be running plenty of tournaments with our ball fields as parents love to watch kids play ball.

We were associated with it a few years ago with a volunteer basis—we could do a better job bringing kids and families down on a weekend that will also fill stores and restaurants.

General

The northern portion of Washington County does not get the advantages it could have out of Washington County. Maybe new supervisor will help that.

Infrastructure

In 1993 there was a whole sheet of water that came down the hill and flooded basements in every house at the bottom; we need to control those occasional happenings.

Street lighting is inadequate all over.

The cemetery is getting pretty full with no place to go.

You can smell the lagoon while driving down Highway 1 on certain days. .

Outdoor Recreation

All RR ground is privately owned; still there and looks like a RR, can we purchase that back? Time to purchase land is gone.

Bike trail system; Highway 22 and 1 are suicide roads to bike on and you can't ride on the grave roads.

Coordinated county/region wide bike trail system could identify this area as a place to bike to and get some economic development to spin off of that. Look at Lanesboro MN

County is undergoing a comp plan update in February they had a presentation from, DNR Lake Darling people, regional parks director, and Washington County conservation director. In 10 year plan for county conservation they are going to plan to create trails from: Lake Darling, Brighton, Washington and connect to Marr Park and connect to Key Wash. Then go from Washington to Riverside and extending up to Hills to try to connect with interlinking going Johnson County and up to North Linn County. This would be a good opportunity to make our presence known there. These are inter-county plans that the DNR is really promoting. Their regional parks director has these visions of connecting outer skirts of county with central parts of the county. Some trails would be extra shoulder width on highways.

How good is the walkability of this community?

How many of you like to walk for exercise?

Everyone

Regional trails system is on the plan list by the regional parks manager for the DNR for the areas. If trails are what we want, this is the inter agency planning group we need to keep the pressure on.

There's no place to bike- I have lived here 4 years and the bike is hanging in my garage.

Walking/biking trails. A group tried to save the Old River Bridge as a historic thing and a dirt road comes in east Kalona on highway 22 you could make a biking walking trail all the way through Richmond. There is access back there. I would like to see that pursued.

Recreation Center

City will have to do something about the recreation center being at a point where it needs to be renovated or remodeled. I hope they think very seriously about how they are going to do it and what they are going to include.

Residents

Mentoring programs for youth and how city can participate in encouraging young adults/preteen ages to become involved with whatever improvements we are talking about; participation in this planning process etc.

Sidewalks

A lot of new developments don't have any sidewalks.

More interconnected sidewalks.

Need to put in wide sidewalks on it least one side of the street where we have a lot of new development and houses.

Need wider sidewalks.

We have sidewalks on one side of the road, but people don't use it, they use the street.

Traffic

80% of people flip u-turns downtown; we need a four-way stop.

Highway 1 and keeping it on the radar with DOT as far as whether it's a transformation into a super 2; it's an opportunity and a draw back.

Intersection right in front of the post office; my daughter is in preschool at the library and the traffic zooms by there. Post office has one entrance and creates a bottleneck.

Should be able to cross Highway 22 from the north and south, but a ditch is there; should be gotten rid of and create a good way to get from the north side to the south side and put over the park where there is residential right across the street.

The U-turn; someone almost got hit by someone u-turning.

If we recommended a theme in Kalona, what would that image be?

Horse and Buggy

Rural in addition to horse and buggy. Seems like farmers have started things such as produce auctions and gotten into organic farming, so just a rural farming community that is still current.

Sale barns are important to our history.

Any other issues we haven't talked about that need to be considered?

Amish

The Amish heritage is an important part of this community; we want to remember that.

B Avenue

"The Place to B" –but it's not an attractive gateway, the corridor needs to be improved. First time we came to Kalona we came in on B Street and if that was my recollection, I would have never come back.

Numerical-alphabetical system was invented in the 70s to name new development from new growth.

Future Development

Gateways-developers will bluff all the time; if they want to be here they will do what they have to in order to be there.

If we ask developers to adhere to high standards, the city needs to lead that charge.

Inevitable development at the intersection of Highway 1 & 22-if we are going to allow commercial development (mini strip malls, drive throughs, etc.) we need to pay attention to aesthetics and somehow keep small town feel with new buildings.

Pella has stipulated the way things have got to be built in a specific way.

Local Businesses

I'd like to see the shops stay open later at night. I work in Iowa City and don't get home till after 5; I can only go shopping in Kalona once a week.

Quilts

A lot of people also think of quilts when they think of Kalona.

Wayfinding

We were trying to direct people into town last year and telling them where to turn and I didn't know the name of the street. Business district needs to be named Main St. (B used to be Main Street-the one that comes from Highway 1). People on Highway 1 would know what Main St. is. Main St. went to B. St in the 60s when someone decided east-west streets needed to be lettered.