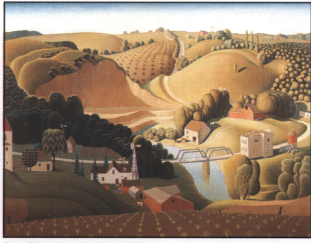


1000 Friends of Iowa



Grant Wood Stone City, Iowa 1930

Citizens United for Responsible Land Use

Annual Report 2006

Promoting responsible development that conserves and protects our agricultural and natural resources; revitalizes our neighborhoods, towns and cities; and improves the quality of life for future generations.

A Message From The Board President

1000 Friends of Iowa benefited from many people's talent and energy as we experienced a lot of change in 2006.

I want to thank our former executive director, Jonna Higgins-Freese, for her hard work and dedication during the first half of the year. Jonna's vision and skills helped us secure grants from the Environmental Protection Agency and the Ben and Jerry's Foundation, which supported the work you can read about on pages 2-3 of this report. In connection with the EPA grant, Jonna coordinated the early months of 1000 Friends of Iowa's partnership with Iowa State University Extension. She resigned in May shortly before the birth of her wonderful son, Reuben.

Thanks also go to Jade Nagel, our transportation coordinator in 2006, for her work on the "Driving for Dollars" project supported by the Ben and Jerry's grant. Jade stepped down in August to pursue a degree in social work, and still advocates for balanced transportation policies and bike-friendly roads.

Several members of the board of directors, along with our office manager, Barbara Morrill, stepped up to keep 1000 Friends of Iowa going during our executive director search. As board president, I greatly appreciated their contribution.

Particular thanks go to past president and tireless volunteer LaVon Griffieon, who spearheaded our outreach in Polk County while we undertook staff transitions. LaVon kept raising awareness and turning people out to public meetings on a range of issues. Thanks in part to her advocacy, the Polk County supervisors in October 2006 dissolved an Urban Renewal Area affecting 128,837 mostly rural acres in the county—essentially preventing what could have

been one of the largest TIF districts in Iowa's history. It will now be more difficult to condemn farmland in that area for development.

We re-hired Stephanie Weisenbach as program coordinator in November. Some of our members may remember Stephanie from her work as a program coordinator for 1000 Friends of Iowa in 2004 and 2005. In her new role, she hit the ground running, finishing our work on the "Driving for Dollars" project and creating a partnership with the Iowa Network for Local Control. Stephanie also took the lead on completing the Des Moines Metropolitan Smart Growth Audit, was instrumental in preparing our legislative agenda in late 2006 and organizing and managing our efforts in the January 2007 session.

Our new executive director, Brett Lorenzen, came on board in December and immediately got up to speed on our work in progress. In addition to his role managing on-going activities, Brett worked to identify a number of pressing needs for our organization, such as improving our computer hardware and software and other office equipment. He began revamping our online and written communications and our member database, which will be critical to the success of our future efforts.

I encourage all our members to take the opportunity to meet Brett and Stephanie, either at our annual meeting or at house parties and other events we are planning for 1000 Friends of Iowa members later this year. If you are interested in hosting or helping to coordinate one of these events, please feel free to contact me at (515) 276-6971 or laurabelin@yahoo.com.

Program Updates

Des Moines Metropolitan Area Smart Growth Audit Underway

In early 2006, 1000 Friends of Iowa was awarded a \$30,000 grant from the US Environmental Protection Agency, Region 7 to complete a study of zoning codes and to assess whether existing regulations incorporate smart growth principles and adequately train local officials, staff, developers and others about smart growth implementation.

We held a workshop with city leaders in the spring to kick-off the project, provide general smart growth education, and gather feedback about the upcoming study. We contracted with Iowa State University Extension's Gary Taylor and graduate student Lucy Wilkinson to complete the *Des Moines Metropolitan Area Smart Growth Audit*, an in-depth analysis of fifteen metro area communities' codes.

As the final report was completed in the fall of 2006, we began preparation for another workshop in January 2007 to release the results and continue the next steps of engaging decision-makers in advancing smart growth. The project will conclude in 2007 with follow-up informational and educational workshops with involved citizens, city officials, and local leaders.

We view this project as a starting point for statewide organization to provide policy tools and benchmarks for cities to pursue, and changes in development patterns that our members can support.



Gary Taylor of ISU Extension addresses the crowd at the January 2007 workshop

Driving the Dollars Project Covered New Ground on Transportation Issues

1000 Friends of Iowa, with a \$10,000 grant from Ben and Jerry's and the contributions of members, has been able to address problems with the planning process for investments in transportation and the Northeast Beltway. This project also helped build our membership base, increased visibility and credibility for our work, and it laid the foundation for long-term alliances of organizations and constituents.

Our staff member Jade Nagel covered new audiences in her outreach by:

- meeting with neighborhood organizations about transit and bike/pedestrian infrastructure needs;
- participating in roundtables with planners and advocating a shift of investments away from highway-oriented development on the urban fringe; and
- mobilizing citizens and members to comment against the Northeast Polk County Beltway.

This groundwork helped us successfully stop a proposed Urban Renewal Area, the first step in creating a Tax Increment Financing district, in thousands of acres throughout Polk County. It also resulted in widespread public opposition that influenced mayors and city council members in small cities along the beltway's path to reject the Northeast Beltway and urban sprawl.

Legal Defense Fund

1000 Friends of Iowa's Legal Defense Fund was used to assist members in Ames and Iowa City with the legal expenses associated with preventing poorly-planned sprawl. The lawsuit 1000 Friends of Iowa signed onto in 2005 against the decision for an Iowa City Walmart saw a substantial victory and the proposed Walmart was stopped. In Ames, a citizens group Advocates for Responsible Urban Design filed a legal petition in May 2006 about an unneeded commercial retail development on the fringe of

Program Updates

Ames. This case is of legal interest across the state because there is no precedent in Iowa law for not publishing a re-zoning ordinance immediately after passage by a local government, the subject matter of the legal action. Both the Ames and Iowa City issues have drawn individual contributions towards legal expenses and 1000 Friends completes the administrative oversight of handling these funds.

Legislative advocacy

Our 2006 legislative agenda focused on two primary items:

- *Monitoring the Eminent Domain legislation:* We monitored the debate and advancement of eminent domain legislation. Our experience seeing local land use issues allowed us to be a unique voice toward understanding the advantages and disadvantages of various bills offered. In particular, we supported the provisions that passed which limit the use of eminent domain for the creation of recreational lakes, which our members have found do not benefit the entire community. However, framing the eminent domain issue appropriately was a priority for us and we weighed in through radio and other media.
- *Funding for the Main Street Iowa program:* 1000 Friends of Iowa staff and volunteers completed a proposal that outlined a \$200,000 increase in administrative funding for the Main Street Iowa program based out of the Iowa Department of Economic Development. We educated lawmakers about the importance of increasing the capacity of the department to offer more technical assistance to communities and increasing the number of Main Street communities. Although the increase was not achieved in the 2006 session, it got the ball rolling for a victory in the 2007 session.
- *Preparing for the 2007 session:* We gathered more information needed to justify an increase in the Main Street Iowa program and negotiated a partnership with the Iowa Network for Local

Control. We offered coalition-organizing services from our staff for legislation addressing Confined Animal Feeding Operations in exchange for funding.



Senator Tom Harkin,
Laura Belin, Stephanie Weisenbach and Governor Chet
Culver at the 2007 Main Street Iowa grants award
ceremony.

Member services

Land Use Bulletin - The Land Use Bulletin was published once in the Spring of 2006. Publication was suspended during the staff search. Regular publication resumed at the end of the year with the addition of new staff.

Public Policy Update - Public Policy Updates were suspended during the staff search. Publication resumed in November, and the service was upgraded for the 2007 legislative term.

Website/Communications - The contracts on the previously unfinished website were cancelled in November. Control of the existing site was assumed by staff in December. The site was migrated to temporary location and work on a new site, to be controlled and maintained internally, was initiated at the end of the year.

Financial Report

January 1, 2006 - December 31, 2006

Beginning Balance	\$13,868.35
Receipts	120,655.23
Disbursements	87,062.72
Ending Balance	47,460.86

Revenue

EPA Grant	3,441.73
Program Grants	12,230.00
Member Support	
Renewals	10,474.50
New Members	3,755.00
Special Appeals	1,535.00
Major Gifts	2,500.00
Ben & Jerry's Match	4,209.76
Other Gifts	3,321.59
Non-member Support	45,236.36
Events	1,702.06
Interest	205.05
Designated Income	12,310.24
Reimbursed Expenses	300.00
Legal Defense Fund	19,184.00
Sponsorships	250.00

Expenses

Salaries	38,467.97
Benefits & Taxes	4,598.33
Association Dues	415.00
Bank Charges	194.58
Insurance	1,289.00
Interest Expense	273.50
EPA Grant Expense	6,692.00
Program Expenses	326.00
Development	477.40
Equipment/Office	617.64
Annual Meeting/Events	1,513.32
Conferences and Meetings	910.38
Miscellaneous	587.77
Occupancy	323.16
Postage	1,147.30
Printing	3,274.14
Marketing/Communications	1,250.00
Professional Fees	2,334.50
Supplies	1,470.93
Telephone/Internet	3,212.17
Travel	837.63
Legal Defense Expense	16,850.00

Staff - 2006

Executive Director

Jonna Higgins Friese (Jan - May)

Brett Lorenzen (Dec -)

Transportation Coordinator

Jade Nagel (Feb - Aug)

Program Coordinator

Stephanie Weisenbach (Nov -)

Office Manager

Barb Morrill

Acknowledgments

Office Space

1000 Friends of Iowa appreciates the generous contribution of office space from the Merle Hay Mall Corporation, arranged by 1000 Friends of Iowa board member Elizabeth Holland.

Computers

Refurbished computers were provided to 1000 Friends of Iowa in December, 2006, by The Principal Foundation.

Annual Meeting Sponsors

1000 Friends of Iowa wishes to acknowledge and thank the generous sponsors of our 2007 Annual Meeting:

Vern Jackson

Tricia Lyman

Dale McKinney

Linda McKinney

John Morrissey

Mary Ellen Warren

Laura Belin

Mount Vernon Historic Preservation Commission
Our Woodland Legacy, a Trees Forever and Holloway
Family Environmental Trust program

Additionally, we would like to thank the following individuals and organizations for their assistance in organizing the event:

RuthAnn Scheer, Cornell College Business Office

David McElhinney, Sodhexo

Lisa White, Mount Vernon-Lisbon Marketing &
Tourism Board

Mount Vernon Historic Preservation Commission

Marty Christensen, Mount Vernon City Council

Tommie Ouverson, Fuel/Nest