

MACKINAC ECONOMIC ALLIANCE

Directors Report September 9, 2013

On August 19th Mary Swiderski and Anne Ottaway attended a luncheon meeting with Aaron Payment, Chairman of the Sault Tribe to introduce the Mackinac Economic Alliance and identify ways in which the Tribe and the Alliance could work together. Anne Ottaway talked about the mission of MEA with specific reference to some of the Alliance's efforts to promote trade school and vocational education programs. Attending the meeting was Sault Tribe Transportation Planner, Wendy Hoffman. Following the meeting Anne and Mary toured the Lambert Center. Next, MEA will be researching potential companies to operate a Call Center in Mackinac County. Many thanks to Mary for making this meeting possible and for her continued involvement in this initiative

On August 24th Carmeuse Lime and Stone hosted an Informational Open House at their Cedarville Operation. MEA worked with MEDC to have a plaque prepared for Carmeuse in appreciation for their 60 years of continuous operation in Mackinac County. Lois Ellis of MEDC presented the plaque to Carmeuse Manager, Mark Snyder. The turnout for this event was tremendous and the feedback was all very positive. Thank you to all MEA Board members who attended this event.

MEA has made arrangements for the DEQ (Jeff Hukill) and MEDC (Lois Ellis and Jen Tucker) to make a joint presentation to the Brownfield Authority Board to discuss the building blocks of Brownfield development, a review of TIF and Act 381 and the available grant opportunities offered through DEQ and MEDC in the redevelopment of Brownfield properties. For MEA Board members who are interested in a concise, informative explanation of Brownfield opportunities and their relevance to specific Mackinac County properties (i.e. old hospital) please join this meeting at the Airport on October 3, 2013 at 7:00 p.m.

Following the August meeting when Board members recommended that MEA take an active role in identifying prospective real estate developers for the old hospital research was undertaken in earnest. Investigation led to the discovery of a company specializing in the adaptive reuse of vacant buildings as affordable housing for families and seniors.

Progress continues on the Safe Routes to School Grant MEA is coordinating on behalf of Clark Township. Since funding under this grant cannot be applied to infrastructure improvement on school property MEA has reached out to Donna Norkoli, the Sault Tribe Grant Coordinator assisting on Safe Routes to School grant for Les Cheneaux Schools. Donna has requested Sault Tribe Transportation Planner Wendy Hoffman to include the needed funding in her Transportation Improvement Plan being readied now for upcoming allocation of Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIR) Funds.