

"Promoting Our Strengths" Workgroup  
Meeting Notes  
Gogebic Community College  
May 20, 2009; 6:00 PM

Kelly Traczyk was in attendance and gave an update on the initiatives that the "Retaining Our Students" Workgroup has undertaken. Although there are other things this group has undertaken, there may be collaboration opportunities between the development of the website and . Specifically, Kelly is currently trying to identify funding for a Photography Class. The class is anticipated to begin in the Fall of 2009. They are also exploring an opportunity to work with WITC as a partner or as a host for the program. There is an interest in integrating this project with the Website (using the pictures taken as the visual components of the website). There is some research to be done in terms of exactly who owns the rights to the photos.

Discussion moved to the website, and trying to narrow down the focus of the site into five or six focus topics. Lee-Ann Garske contacted *Go-In Forward* and asked for its member's input regarding how to make the point that our area has the assets that young people are looking for in a community. In other words: "What would they like to see on the website, geared towards an external audience, that effectively communicates our message?"

In the presentation of data from the Gogebic Range survey of young people and the Michigan's Cool Cities study, there were seven [out of ten] factors that appeared both in the "What Young People Want" in a community (from the Michigan Study) and the "What We Have" responses (Gogebic Range Survey). Those Seven Factors were (1) Scenic Beauty, (2) Safe Streets, (3) Close to Friends/Family, (4) Place to Raise Family, (5) Affordable, (6) Walkable Streets, and (7) Low Traffic. It was noted that, throughout our workgroup discussions, there seemed to be a desire to *not* turn our head to the issue of the economy and jobs. Using these items as the basis, we deduced the following "focus areas" (please note: these are in no particular order):

- ECONOMY/JOBS
  - o Small Business
  - o Entrepreneurial Resources
  - o Michigan Works! and Job Force partnership
- SCENIC BEAUTY
  - o Four Season Climates
- ADVENTURE SPORTS
  - o "Adventure" Clubs
- SOCIAL NETWORKING
  - o *Go-In Forward*
  - o Other Social Connections
  - o Churches
  - o "Activity Groups"
- QUALITY OF LIFE
  - o Safety
  - o Affordability
  - o Schools
  - o Great Place to Raise Family

- Walkable Streets
- Low Traffic

The next meeting will be held on **Wednesday, June 24 at 6:00 at the NORRIE PARK PAVILLION**. (if inclement weather, we will move the meeting to Gogebic Community College). At the meeting we will fine tune the “focus factors” and put together a specification for the website that can be presented to website developers.

