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City residents, leaders select areas for comprehensive plan

When it comes to areas that residents and leaders should work on for the future of Hoopeston, many options are possible.

A group of community citizens and leaders met Thursday to narrow the list to the areas they felt were most important.

More than 40 people met at St. Anthony Parish Hall for the first of two visioning meetings to develop areas that need to be addressed and included in a comprehensive plan for Hoopeston.

The group met with Mary Jane Clark and Tara Sewell of the Illinois Institute for Rural Affairs' Health Resources division, part of the institute's Mapping the Future of Your Community program.

Areas of discussion included downtown revitalization, tourism, housing needs, infrastructure, business retention and expansion, youth programs, programs for the underserved and elderly, improving educational opportunities, building bridges among community groups and job creation in areas other than industry and manufacturing.

The session was similar to one held in 2002 although the results were slightly different.

In 2002, approximately 20 participants set the city's goals as building bridges across issues to increase community involvement and targeting job creation in areas other than industry and manufacturing. A third area, retaining and expanding existing businesses, was also included.

In Thursday's session, participants identified the need to improve the city's infrastructure as the top priority. Infrastructure includes things from water and sewer lines to sidewalks, streets, telecommunications and drainage.

Group members believe that in order to grow the community, Hoopeston must first have these services in place in a quality fashion.

Coming in second was business retention and expansion, including the need to create more jobs, develop the Route 1 corridor and the need for a "buy local" campaign.



Librarian Lou Graham, forefront, ponders Hoopeston's strengths and weaknesses and Grant Township Supervisor Bill Boose reviews information with Mary Jane Clark of the Illinois Institute for Rural Affairs. The three were among those attending a visioning meeting Thursday.

Third was the need for housing, including moderately

See PLAN on other side

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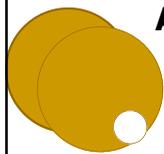
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Police News



Stolen mower leads to arrest of three men

A mower reported stolen at 4:28 a.m. Friday led to the arrest of three Potomac men.

Police said a large zero-turn radius lawnmower was taken from Birkey's Farm Store, 1037 S. Dixie Hwy. Arrested in connection with the incident were Brian R. Lock, 47, of 27101 N 1055 E Rd., Lyle S. Lund, 35, of 415 E. State St., and Cory S. Young, 26, of 8201 E 2900 N Rd., were each charged with theft over \$300.

Additionally, Lund and Young were charged with criminal damage to property and criminal trespass.

Young was also charged with possession of burglary tools.

All were taken to the Public Safety Building in Danville to await arraignment.

Lock was taken into custody with the assistance of the Vermilion County Sheriff's Department, east of Ross-ville, near East Attica Rd. and 1650 East Rd.

About four hours later, Lund and Young were apprehended near 4000 N Rd and South Second Ave.

Plan continued from other side

priced homes for new families, senior housing and housing for executives.

The group opted to add a fourth item to its list of top concerns, building bridges among community groups, in an effort to improve attitudes, increase cooperation and tear down walls.

Envisioning what the community needs is an important part of development, said Mary Jane Clark, Mapping Health Resources manager, adding she was impressed with the number of people who attended Thursday's session. "This is amazing," she said.

Both Clark and Sewell said they saw changes in the community since the 2002 session, especially in Hoopeston's appearance and how it draws people in. Sewell cited one business in particular, Flowers and Gifts by Molly Culbert. "Actually, it drew us today," she said.

While hoping for growth, Clark said the community must also plan for the results of growth, including increased stress on the infrastructure and resources. "You have to make sure you're ready for growth," she said. "Even if you're on the right track, you'll get run over if

The mower equipment was recovered in a field just west of South Sixth Ave., just south of Hoopeston.

In other police news:

Delia G. Tapia, 31, of #11 Parkview Court, was arrested at 10:16 a.m. Thursday at home. Tapia, wanted on an Iroquois County warrant for failure to appear on a deceptive practice charge, was transported to Iroquois County.

Briefly

Smoking cessation program offered

Hoopeston Regional Health Center is offering a seven-week smoking cessation program starting Tuesday, May 1. Classes meet every Tuesday from 7-8 p.m. The program is free. The weekly classes meet in the Community Room of Hoopeston Regional Health Center. Call Mary Ann Piercy at (217) 283-5531 for more information.

Meetings

Hoopeston City Council, 7 p.m. Tuesday, city hall

you just sit there."

Participants also heard from Ruth Thompson, housing outreach specialist, who is working with a grant targeting housing needs in 13 communities, including Hoopeston. Thompson said she will work with city leaders to determine what is available, what will be needed and a plan to get there.

A second visioning session is set for 3:30-6:30 p.m. Monday, May 7, also at St. Anthony parish hall.

In this session, participants will come up with ways to meet the goals selected at Thursday's meeting.

The meeting is open to all Hoopeston residents, who are asked to come and provide input.

Weather



Mostly sunny today. High 83. Tonight, mostly clear. Low 59. Tomorrow, chance of thunderstorms. High 77, low 51.

For current weather conditions, call Hoopeston Weather Service, (217) 283-6221.

A cell phone was found at 10:30 a.m. Friday in the 600 block of East McCracken. The owner may identify and claim it at the police station.

A 27-year-old Hoopeston woman reported at 10 a.m. Friday that someone took her purse from her vehicle, which was parked in the 300 block of North Eighth Ave.

Myrna J. Moore, 27, of 709 S. First Ave., was arrested at 10:10 a.m. Saturday at Pamida, 1020 W. Chestnut.

Moore was charged with retail theft after she was allegedly caught shoplifting at the store. She was released on \$100 bond.

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Classifieds

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Heartfelt words of thanks from the family of Bill Crozier to all of those who stood by the family in their deepest hours of grief. Whether you visited the family, brought prayers, love, food, monetary gifts or sent flowers/plants, in our hearts we will be forever grateful. You know who you are.

The Crozier Family

LOST & FOUND

Lost: man's wedding band. Lost Tuesday, April 17. If found, call 283-5310. Reward

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3 pc. tan recliner sectional sofa, \$250. (217) 283-5736

RUMMAGE SALES

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