Taking Steps toward Responsible Land Use

For four days in June, several communities in Iowa took big steps toward becoming more walkable.

Ankeny, Cedar Rapids, Iowa City, and Waterloo hosted visits from Dan Burden of Walkable Communities, Inc. In each community, Burden walked a neighborhood or street that had been selected by the community, took pictures, and made recommendations about how to make it more walkable.

The visits were sponsored and coordinated by 1000 Friends of Iowa as part of our initiative to promote a balanced transportation system that gives people choices about how to get where they need to go. 1000 Friends has chosen to focus on transportation because “development follows the pipe” — whether that’s sewer, water mains, or a road. The kinds of roads we build determine how the land is used — divided freeways use acres of farm ground and create car-dependent, low-density strip development. On the other hand, communities that have focused on human-scale neighborhood streets with a mix of residential and commercial streets and higher densities experience less sprawl and greater vitality.

During his visit, Dan pointed out that “Healthy neighborhood streets give people a chance to walk, bike, drive, and interact. Such streets pump life into neighborhoods, making them more pleasant places to live. Slowing traffic on neighbor-hood streets can often raise property values 10–15%. Many solutions are quite simple and highly affordable. For instance, using paint to narrow lanes, adding bike lanes, and planting trees are simple strategies that can often create big benefits.”

Bob Miklo, Senior Planner with the City of Iowa City, said, “The walk itself was beneficial as a way to get the property owners involved in thinking about continued on page 3

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

- Walkable Communities  Pages 1 & 3
- Growin’ Times  Page 2
- Meet More Friends...  Page 4
- Annual Meeting Re-Cap  Page 5
- News from Friends Across Iowa  Pages 6–7
- Countdown  Page 7
- Silent Auction  Page 7
- Books and Brochures  Page 7
- Hello and Goodbye  Page 8
- Annual Report 2004  Special Insert

(Left to right) Dan admires David Deeds’ neo-traditional residential development in downtown Waterloo as Ed Ottosen, an architect from Structure Architects and the Main Street Waterloo Design Council Chair, and Terry Poe Buschkamp, executive director of Main Street Waterloo, look on.
am excited to be part of the changes at 1000 Friends of Iowa, and I want to tell you about what brought me to this organization and what keeps me committed to its work.

Growing up in the Des Moines suburbs, I thought little about land use or planning policies. My awareness grew during the 15 years that I lived, studied and worked outside Iowa. Each time I returned to visit family and friends, I was dismayed to see more and more farmland outside Des Moines disappearing, even as residential and commercial properties in once-thriving neighborhoods were vacant. Many times I looked forward to visiting a favorite locally-owned restaurant or shop, only to find that since my last trip home it had been displaced by large chains.

I first heard about 1000 Friends of Iowa in connection with its Buy Local campaign almost five years ago. When my husband and I moved back to Iowa to start a family in 2002, I jumped at the chance to become more involved. The three years I have spent on our Board have deepened my commitment to our mission.

At a time when urban and rural interests are often pitted against each other, I hope that a central message of 1000 Friends will reach more Iowans: policies that promote vibrant cities and towns go hand-in-hand with policies that preserve working farms. Both help create the kind of communities that Iowans of all ages will want to stay in, or come home to.

Finally, I want to say a few words of thanks to our legendary outgoing president, LaVon Griffieon, who will be one tough act to follow. As I like to say, LaVon has forgotten more about land-use issues than I will ever know! Fortunately, 1000 Friends will still be able to tap her wisdom and expertise. Her energy and creative thinking will inspire me to learn more and to do more.

Meanwhile, I look forward to hearing from our members across the state, not only about land-use concerns in your communities, but also about your hopes for 1000 Friends during this time of growth.
possibilities for development and pedestrian improvements along Riverside Drive.”

Several members appreciated Dan’s perspectives and are already using them to improve their communities. Ames Smart Growth reports that Jim Murdock has been trying to explain some of Dan’s walkable community concepts to the City Council.

Vern Jackson wrote, “Congratulations on selecting the right person to present the right information to the right audience at a very good time. I feel that the information and communications that
took place in Cedar Rapids during the week of June 5th will have a greater impact on improved community transportation planning than anything that has taken place before.”

A group of concerned residents in Cedar Rapids, led by Richard and Diane Luther, George and Janelle McClain, and others, has submitted a proposal to the Iowa Great Places initiative to make First Avenue the centerpiece of Cedar Rapids as a Great Place. Their proposal incorporates some of Dan’s ideas and requests funds to bring him back for a design charrette.

We hope the learning will continue!

Above left: In a very rainy beginning to his Iowa journey, Burden recommends that Ankeny require on-street parking in subdivisions to slow traffic and alleviate the need for 3 car garages. A four-lane divided highway with an interstate-style intersection separates this residential neighborhood from the rest of town and is not appropriate for children to cross, so IDOT’s cooperation would be required to change the design specifications and speed limit. Burden also recommended adding crosswalks throughout town.

Below left: John Peterson, Director of Community Development, demonstrates back-in angle parking in Ankeny. On-street parking improves traffic flow and requires 30% less space per car than parking lots. Back-in angle parking is safer for drivers and pedestrians (the trunk and car doors open towards the sidewalk, providing easier and safer access for passengers.

Center: Dan Burden explains a recommendation to Cedar Rapids Streets Commissioner Don Thomas and a KCRG reporter. Dave Elgin, City Engineer, is in the background.

Above right (left to right): Bob Miklo, 1000 Friends board member Jim Throgmorton, and Jeff Davidson, transportation planner, listen as Dan explains how Riverside Drive could be made more walkable through mixed-use development that capitalizes on the area’s proximity to the river and recreational trails.

Below right: Dan Burden presents his suggestions for Cedar Rapids’ First Avenue to a packed audience, including Founding Friends Richard and Diane Luther (2nd row, 2nd and 3rd from right) at St. Matthew’s Catholic Church. Dan recommended a median, turning pockets, and intersection improvements to make First Avenue safer and more functional. It should not be widened for a long time — if ever. The Regional Planning Commission recently approved a concept for widening First Avenue to 7 lanes.
Our members make our work possible!

You make 1000 Friends of Iowa what it is, so in this issue we’ve started highlighting member names in our reports—if we miss yours, please let us know so we can correct it!

Leightly Challenge Met

Thanks to these new Founding Friends, we met a challenge from the Leightly Foundation, which matched the first ten new contributors at the $100 level with an additional $200.

Thanks to the Leightly Foundation and our new Founding Friends!

Flavia G. Bachel Living Trust/Susan G. Roupe
Diane Goodson
Elizabeth Jacobi
Lois E. James
Dewayne & Amy Johnson
James Larew
Kami & Eric Olsen
Jacqueline and Roy Peters
Grant Purdy
D.J. Rinner
Chuck Tripplett
Nancylee Ziese

Contributors to 1000 Friends of Iowa,
March 15–July 1, 2005
Thanks to these supporters who make our work possible.

Revitalizing Friend ($5,000+)
Iowa Foundation for Education Environment and the Arts

Sustaining Friend ($1,000–$4,999)
Dave and Barb Hurd
The Leightly Foundation

Supporting Friend ($250–$499)
John Morrissey
Moyer & Bergmann, PLC

Founding Friend ($100–$249)
Marian Arens
Larry Arnold
Flavia Bachel Living Trust
Lee & Meredith Berryhill
Terry Benser
Rod & Joyce Brink
Katherine & James Clifton
Stan Crocker
Don & Marian Easter
Bruce & Marlene Ehresman
Diane Goodson
Tommy Haas
Robert Haug
Tom & Carolyn Hildreth
Elizabeth Jacobi
Lois E. James
Dewayne & Amy Johnson
Linda Johnson
Erwin & Janet Klaas
James Larew
Lee & Cindy Lundstrom
Richard & Diane Luther
Jo & Paul Lydon
George & Janelle McClain
Bill & Betty McKibben
Gay Mikelson
Leslie & Pauline Miller
Milford & Caroline Moen
Mary Moore & John Schulte
Aletia Morgan
Judi & Hamid Nayeri
Rob Owen
Jacqueline & Roy Peters
Allan Powers & Ann Mowery
Laurea Norian
Kami & Eric Olsen
Grant Purdy
Paul & Marsha Readhead
Vernon Retting
D. J. Rinner
Deb Ryan
James & Susan Schultz
John & Jean Sebern
Michael Smith
Art & Jayne Stanforth
Carole Teator
Chuck & Kay Tripplett
Wayne Wasta
Nancy Lee Ziese

Family ($50–$99)
Danelda Allen
John Beltz
Larry & Maria Brummel
Virginia Crowe
Terry & Jill Friend
Nea Lansing
William & Gracie Larsen
Robert Miklo & W. Luge
Berneil & Ted Mueller
Shannon Ramsay
Jenny Schulz

Student/Senior ($20–$49)
August & Pearl Asmus
Donna Baizer
William & Dianne Blankenship
Kenneth Bruene
David Campbell
Daniel Campon
Doug & Lorna Faulk
Eloise Cranke
Elizabeth Forell
Helen Gunderson
Charis Hovden
Walt & Mariel Jackson
Harriet Jensen
Leonard Konopka
Ray & Mary Ann Martin
Barb & Walter Mendenhall
Patricia Negroes-Castillo
Donna & Vern Nelson
Lois Nelson
Brian & Skywalker Payne
Michael Petersen
Sue Roberts
Jerry & Lynnette Spicer
Sarah Sutton
Katherine Tachau & John Scott
Judy Stammeyer
Bill & Beth Terrell
Kay Tripplett
Jack Troeger
Jon & Margaret Vernon
Mary Sand & Von Kaster
Wanda Wendt

Other
Florence & William Boos

Our thanks to Koeh Brothers and Susan Koeh Bridgford for generously donating the design of the Land Use Bulletin

** Additional contributors are listed under "Annual Meeting Sponsors"
1000 Friends of Iowa
ANNUAL MEETING A GREAT SUCCESS

Nearly 60 people attended 1000 Friends of Iowa's annual meeting — so many that we began to worry whether we would have enough Iowa-grown lunches for everyone. No one went hungry, however, and everyone seemed to enjoy the speakers, the awards, the music of the Barn Owl Band, and the walking tour of Somerset Village.

Many thanks to Erv Klaas for the many hours he spent to make the annual meeting such a success!

Sponsors of Dan Burden's visit and the annual meeting include:

**Individuals**
- Laura Belin
- Dale R. Edwards
- Fritz & Susan Franzen
- Richard & Diane Luther
- Tricia Lyman
- George & Janelle McClain
- John Morrissey
- Jim & Julie Popken
- Sue & Al Ravenscroft
- Jim Throgmorton
- David & Dian Urush
- Mary Ellen Warren

**Organizations**
- Aqualand/Pets Plus
- Cedar Rapids
- Downtown District
- City of Ankeny
- City of Cedar Rapids
- City of Iowa City
- City of Waterloo
- Griffeeon Family Farm
- Linn County
- Trails Association
- Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation
- Marian Arens & Associates
- Moyer & Bergman, PLC

(Far left) Board member Jim Throgmorton presents a Best Development Award to incoming board member Dale McKinney in the Renovated Residential category for converting a historic department store into the Van Allen Place apartments in Clinton.

(Left) Members of the Barn Owl Band (as heard on Prairie Home Companion) provided toe-tappin' entertainment at the after-meeting reception at the Somerset Village Clubhouse.

(Below left) LaVon joins in the discussion of "Land Use 101.

(Below) Dan Burden talks with Joe Van Ginkel at the reception.
SE Polk: RURAL WATER

Rural landowners in eastern Polk County are being asked by county officials to agree to become an Urban Renewal Area. Once that happens, county officials can leverage bonding capacity to use property tax funds to join with Des Moines Water Works in buying SE Polk Rural Water. Rural residents are being promised a 50% reduction in water rates and no increase in taxes while residents countywide are being asked to pay for the bond extension for 20 more years. Skeptical residents have noticed the designated area is also home to the proposed NE Polk County Beltway.

An Urban Renewal Area is defined in Chapter 403.2 of the Iowa Code as necessary to assist and retain local industries and commercial enterprises to strengthen and revitalize the economy. This doesn’t sound like a plan for preserving the rural heritage the residents sought when moving there. Once the property has been designated part of an Urban Renewal Area, it is one step closer to becoming a TIF district and the Board of Supervisors can amend its urban renewal plan at any time to reflect a new vision.

This proposal appears to be laying the groundwork for public subsidies to promote growth along an unneeded road that is in the study stage—it appears to have very little to do with cheaper water rates for rural customers.

Newton: SPEEDWAY QUESTIONS

Submitted by Marvin Woods

Despite the fact that building plans have not been submitted and building permits have not been issued, the US Motorsport Corporation began breaking ground to build a 7/8ths mile long speedway adjacent to the Newton airport on what was once 225 acres of agricultural land.

The speedway’s questionable financing was brought to light during the legislative debate, but seemed to carry no weight with either state or city decision makers and a bill was still passed to give the speedway a $12.5 state sales tax rebate.

However, the Newton City Council recently requested that proof of the speedway’s loan closure must be forthcoming before July 11th in order for the city to continue to finance the traffic study and road engineering work. In late breaking news, NASCAR officials have clarified that they have no affiliation with the track other than the fact that one of their drivers is designing it.

Iowa City: SMART ZONING

The Planning and Zoning Commission held another hearing to receive public comments about the proposed new zoning ordinance on June 27. The new code would promote infill and higher density development. Several members of 1000 Friends of Iowa spoke in support of the new code, while many members of the development community opposed it. Iowa City members are encouraged to watch for details about the next hearing, which should take place in mid-August, and speak up for good development.

Ames: WHY JOHNNY CAN’T WALK TO SCHOOL

Ames Smart Growth reports that the city is currently waiting on a response from the developer regarding comments the city made on a proposed contract. However, that response has been delayed for a number of months. Ames Smart Growth members unsuccessfully opposed the closing of two neighborhood elementary schools — Northwood and Roosevelt. Another school may be closed next year. There is a direct development connection to the closings, as Ames built a new middle school on the south edge of town and moved all of the city’s sixth graders to the new location.

To see the report, Why Johnny Can’t Walk to School, for more information on the impact of poor community planning on school children, go to www.nationaltrust.org/issues/schoolsrpt.pdf.

Boone County: TEST OF ZONING ORDINANCE

Boone County citizens concerned about a proposed gravel pit outside the residential community of Moingona presented at a Board of Adjustment meeting on July 14. Terry and Jill Friend worked with residents who believe that the project does not meet the criteria for a conditional use permit due to concerns about traffic, safety, and the integrity of archaeological sites. This is the first test of Boone County’s 1999 zoning ordinance, and residents want to protect its integrity.

In other Boone County news, Kim Houlding has been selected to participate in the committee that will revise the comprehensive plan. Earlier this year, Kim organized her neighbors to prevent a rural subdivision from being built miles from town.

McGregor: POOR PLANNING

Submitted by Tim Mason

Residents of Clayton County have been active for four years to halt a poorly planned development by River Bluff Resort, LLC. The developers have publicly stated that construction will begin in July of this year on River Bluff Resort, which is planned to include a hotel, water park, restaurant, golf course and a private gated housing community. Located three miles west of McGregor and Marquette, utility service will need to be run from these towns.

The entire project will be funded leveraging the borrowing power of a $20 million TIF bond, issued (without legal opinion) to the California developer last November by Clayton County. After an infusion of new money from California investors, four Iowa farmers have been paid for their real estate as development begins.

Two legal actions are pending: the developer filed a SLAPP lawsuit against members of Concerned Citizens of Clayton County, which in turn counter-sued.
Cedar Rapids: 
WIDENING 
FIRST AVENUE

Galvanized by the Regional Planning Commission's approval of a 
concept to widen First Avenue from five to seven lanes, residents and 
business owners along the street have stepped forward to push for better 
transportation and design options.

Richard and Diane Luther, Brian Fagan of Moyer and Bergman, 
George and Janelle McClain of Cornerhouse Gallery and frame, Joy 
Oehs, Marian Ahrens, 1000 Friends of Iowa, and others have participated 
in public meetings or submitted comments on the Long Range 
Transportation Plan.

In addition, residents have submitted a proposal that First Avenue 
be designated an Iowa Great Place.

Des Moines: 
TEMPLE SITE 
RAISES ISSUES

Some residents of the Lower Beaver neighborhood are concerned 
about a proposal to annex green space located on a bend in the river behind 
their homes. Tai Dam immigrants purchased the property a number of 
years ago to build a temple, sacred water and forest, and housing. Now 
fundraising concerns are causing the Tai Dam to consider selling part of 
the property for residential development in order to finance their own 
construction project. Neighbors have concerns about additional traffic, 
the destruction of green space, and making sure the development is 
appropriate to an infill project.

713 DOWN...  287 TO GO!

Time is running out to become a Founding Friend!

The Board of Directors of 1000 Friends of Iowa 
has made a commitment to reach 
1000 Founding Friends by the end of 2005.

Founding Friends are those who support the organization's work with $100 each year, and have done so at least once. So far this 
year, we have 30 new Founding Friends. If you're a past or present 
member who is not yet a Founding Friend, you should be receiving a letter and a phone call from a board member asking you to renew or 
become a Founding Friend. We hope you'll be able to help!

All new Founding Friends through the end of 2005 will receive a free CD compilation of resources related to Smart Growth! 
Recruit a new supporter as a Founding Friend and we'll send you a 1000 Friends of Iowa t-shirt!

Westminster Presbyterian 
Hosts Silent Auction to Benefit 
1000 Friends of Iowa

After hosting a talk by LaVon Griffieon & Ed Fallon last year, Westminster Presbyterian in Des Moines wanted to do something 
to live out their commitment to care for creation by supporting 
1000 Friends of Iowa. Judy Seberna-Beachy donated a painting 
for the silent auction, as well as note cards, which quickly sold out. 
The art show, sale, and silent auction attracted quite a crowd and 
raised nearly $200 to support 1000 Friends' work.

Thank you, Westminster Presbyterian!

Land use and Faith brochures available

If you'd like to help your faith community understand 
some of the moral and ethical issues related to caring for 
God's creation in regard to land use decisions, 
we have some material that may be of help — the brochure, 
'God's People in an Age of Urban Sprawl,' 
summarizes some of the moral and ethical issues 
related to land use. Call or write to us to request copies.

New Book on Rural Life Available

Sustaining Heart in the Heartland: Exploring Rural Spirituality

Editor Miriam Brown, OP, works with The Churches' 
Center for Land and People, an ecumenical group with members in Iowa, Illinois, Minnesota and Wisconsin.

The book honors rural life and illustrates what is at stake 
for rural people and our country in this corporate-induced farm crisis. It describes 
the contributions and deep 
spirit of the people, the odds against which they work, and 
gives pastoral suggestions and resources for church and 
community leaders. Concerned 
urban readers will also find it useful. The book costs $18.95 
from the publisher, Paulist Press.

Go to www.paulistpress.com 
(new releases) or call 
1-800-218-1903
1000 Friends of Iowa says
HELLO & GOOD-BYE
to board members

The annual meeting gave members a chance to thank departing board members for their commitment and welcome the wonderful new additions to our board.

Pat Cancilla, Rachel Engwall, Keith Forman, Loren Lown, Jo Lydon, Jane Reissen, and Carter Woodruff ended their terms of service on the board. We appreciate their many contributions of time, talent, and treasure to the organization, and we look forward to continuing to work with them.

We are excited to welcome some new board members as well. Shearon Elderkin was president of the Linn County Conservation Board when a proposal was made to extend Highway 100 through the Rock Island State Preserve. She has continued to fight against that location, and gained much expertise in transportation and land use issues in the process.

Elizabeth Holland, J.D., is the Chief Executive Officer of Abbell Credit Corporation, whose properties include Merle Hay Mall in Des Moines. She is involved in smart growth efforts nationally, including serving as the International Council of Shopping Centers' representative to Chicago's Sensible Growth Steering Committee.

Dale McKinney is a principal of InVision Architecture and has been the lead architect on several projects that have won Best Development Awards from 1000 Friends, including this year's Renovated Residential category (see photos from annual meeting).

Mary Ellen Warren has long been a supporter, and her husband George Warren is an Advisory Council member. Mary Ellen has been active in downtown redevelopment efforts in Waterloo for many years.

Officers for 2005 include: Laura Belin, President; Pete McNally, Vice-President, Mary Ellen Miller, Treasurer; Trish Lyman, Secretary, and Jim Throgmorton, at-large executive committee member.

If you're interested, see details at www.kfoi.org