

First Impressions

of

Fennimore

by Mineral Point

Visit conducted 11/12/93

A program for community improvement

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FIRST IMPRESSIONS

The FIRST IMPRESSIONS visit of Fennimore by Mineral Point was conducted on November 12, 1993.

A team representing Mineral Point consisted of 4 escorted viewers..2 women & 2 men;

1. man is a-newcomer to the area..self-employed in Farm mgt. consulting business, , his wife has business downtown w/rental property.
2. woman in medical profession..has lived here 6 yrs.
3. man is self-employed..has a seasonal recreational business near town..not a native.
4. woman , who is a REALTOR..has lived in the area all of her life..also on Area Development committee.

All of the group are Chamber of Commerce members & very involved in Mineral Point development.

We toured the community of Fennimore on Friday, November 12, 1993, from 10:00a.m.-1:30p.m. It was a dark,dreary & cool day, with rain anticipated later.

Our inspection followed the format provided by James Schneider, Grant Co. Economic Development Corporation, and was very enjoyable!

We, the visitation team, as a whole, met for an hour before mailing out the inspection reports, reviewed the comments given, and had no disagreements on any comments made. We were very impressed with the Industrial Park, the variety of businesses and services, and general well-kept appearance of the town!

The 4 individuals inspection reports are enclosed. Any questions, please advise at 608/987-2142.

It was a pleasure touring your community.We hope our inspection will be of assistance in Fennimore's further development..and we are sure the information provided by First Impressions will be invaluable to the City of Mineral Point. We eagerly look forward to receiving Fennimore's report on Mineral Point...

Thank you to all involved with FIRST IMPRESSIONS...

Carole E. Rule
Carole E. Rule, Chmn

Building at intersection of Hwys 18 & 61 downtown Fennimore needs repair or removal.



As you approach the community

I. What was my perception before visiting? What did I expect?

*I was aware that the city was **on** a flat terrain and that two major roads went through the city. The fact that the Tech School was east of town was also known.*

*Open mind - **no** expectations.*

*I expected a small town, nothing special, just a typical "**small** town"!*

*Expected an active, growing city, because **of** Technical College with stores and entertainment catering to students.*

II. The "five minute" impression:

Take one drive through the community without stopping. As you exit the community, pull over to the side of the road and write down what you felt about the town with only this quick look. Do this in silence, don't talk with the other in your group for this part.

*Entering the city **from** the east: Eight miles prior to the city limits I saw the sign for the Doll Museum - **six** miles the Hardee's sign - **four** miles the Kiwanis Club - and signs **for** the **GOLF** Course and Rayovac. All entrances to the city were well marked and it was found out later that the pictures of the train had been taken **off** the signs to be painted. All major entrances were clean and roads in good repair.*

*I was impressed with how clean Fennimore appeared to be. Nothing out of the ordinary jumped out at me. Building **on** corner of 61 & 18 (South end of town) is an eyesore. 61 South has cute mouse. SW Library System building nice.*

*Positive: Welcome to Fennimore signs at all major entrances very nice!
Have well-kept homes and businesses in all directions.*

*Negative: 2 story frame bldg at Hwy 18 & 61 intersections in need of demolition **on** major repairs. Old FFA welcome sign needs painting.*

As YOU "drive" around town:

You now divide into your teams: one team will drive the town for about an hour while the other members will hoof it and start visiting businesses, city hall, etc. After lunch the teams will switch roles **so** everyone has a chance to drive the community and to personally walk into stores and visit with people.

III. Driving...evaluate EACH entrance.

Go about 1/2 • 1 mile out each road and return. List each road (61 North, etc.) and list positives and negatives for each.

*Could find **no** detracting issues **on** any of the routes into town.*

Hwy 18 • SW Technical College looked to have a professional appearance, clean and well-kept. Rayovac also. Napp's Motel had trash in driveway. Methodist Church impressive. Atlas Roofing Co. in poor condition. All entrances into town were nice with well-kept signs.

All entrances looked pretty good • see "5 minute" impression.

IV. (a) Driving...evaluate the downtown business area:

(Signs, appearance, size, etc.)

*Pretty good • streets are wide enough to stop and **look if** you have too.*

All buildings appeared in very good condition, except Antique Center house (eyesore) and house at corner of 61 & 18.

Signage good.

Wondered if large crowds in town would parking be adequate?

IV. (b) Driving...evaluate other business area.

*The area **on** the north side of town has an abundance of light industry. This area in places **is** very **junky** and unattractive. Some of the residences mired in with the businesses were also in need of repair. The resale of residences in this area must be poor. This problem will continue to affect the tax revenue in this area of your town. It's easy to move away from this area into other areas of the city because of the availability of land around the city.*

NW side of town not kept up.

*No supermarket downtown, but nice business/services area **on** Hwy 61 North (bank, supermarket, ~~gas~~ station all look nice).*

V. Driving...comments on residential:

*The general appearance of the town **is** very good. **You** have a nice mix of homes and it appears that a lot of newer homes have been built. The apartments **on** the south side are very attractive and **mix** well with the residential properties. Congrats to the builders. **In** the future you could have a park **on** the south side.*

Lots of new construction (homes). Streets designed for additional expansion - curb and gutter, handicap design.

Most homes are well-kept. Many new homes being built.

Residential areas had mix of old and new, with neat mobile home park on east side fronting on Hwy 18. Ample room for expansion of residences in City.

Negative: mobile homes spotted here and there.

VI. Driving...comments on;

a. street signs

Good.

Good - Presidential theme.

Good with 1 or 2 slightly bent.

Nice idea using former U.S. Presidents names on street signs (Kennedy, Ekenhower, etc.) running north and south. Well marked.

b. traffic patterns/street conditions

Very good.

Streets in good condition.

Good.

Streets clean. Traffic flow seems very workable.

c. welcome signs (at entrances)

Excellent.

*Three being repainted (partial).
One beautiful sign, good color, easy to see.*

Excellent.

*Impressed by large 'Welcome to Fennimore' signs at entrance to City.
(Had RR logo removed from signs for repainting.)*

d. direction signs to parks, schools, hospitals/clinics, attractions, services (i.e. police), etc.

Could use some more but in a small town where everyone knows where everything is, the need is not as important as it is in a bigger city.

*Good signs - new blue 'DRUGFREE ZONES':
No sign for High School from 18 West.*

Park had health stations on west side of town.

Very adequate. Need direction signs to H.S. for people for out of town

Marsden Park has signage on Hwy 18 East. Clinic, C of C, businesses, services were well-marked.

Negative: High School hasn't a sign ~~off~~ Hwy 18 E • should have sign for visiting schools.

VII. Driving... comments on industrial park/area:
Sign well defined...busy...growing..new...etc.

The sign to the Industrial Park was nice and the streets were wide and in excellent shape. The general appearance was displeasing because of the tall weeds and dirt piles. It would be hard to envision my new company in your park in its present condition. If the areas of development were mowed or grassed, the appearance would be much nicer.

All the trailers in the park area are a definite distraction. How many acres are for sale in your park and what are the uses of some of the smaller areas?

- Good sign for entrance.*
- No sign for dead end.*
- Fire hydrants well marked but need paint.*

- Good locations.*
- Easy access.*
- Very visible.*
- Looked like all utilities were ready to go.*
- Appeared large with even more room for expansion.*

- Highly visible Industrial Park sign, but not much action in the park*
- No phone # on sign, nor acres indication on sign.*
- Well-laid out streets, hydrants.*

VIII. Driving...comments on schools:

The high school is attractive and well located in the residential mix. Good signage around the school and having the busses in the back is a good traffic area safety feature. The high school is close to a park and not too far from the downtown.

The secondary school is older and not well located. The fence around the school is unattractive as is the landscaping. The school is close to the downtown area and this is not a positive because of the amount of traffic in and around the school.

*Clean, neat looking.
Elementary School 196%*

*All schools looked good.
High School should have directional sign from all main roads.*

Two schools (Elementary and High School) look to be in good condition with signs in front of schools? but **none** on Hwys or streets. Grounds well maintained.

IX. Driving...comments on Parks, playgrounds, athletic facilities, etc.:

Your parks are excellent. The park on the east side is very nice and well located. The one on the west side looks new and is well situated because of the area and the Health Care facility.

- Three tennis courts.
- Volleyball and basketball courts.
- End of Adams St. - old pillars in need of repair or tear down.
- Football field beat up because season just ended.

- Many water faucets available thru out town
- Iron park bench in downtown near Lion water faucet should be repaired or replaced. Other parks seem nice.

Two neat and clean parks - Marsden and Arborvitae - Marsden especially nice with swimming pool, tennis courts, playground equipment - very nice!
Negative: Rock entrance post in much need of repair (especially on south side of park).

X. Driving...comments on other:

a. hospitals/clinics

Clinics are newer and very nice. It's also nice that your citizens have the opportunity to have the choice of using the one that fits the hospital they would like to be at.

No hospital - clinic signs small but readable.

Nice appearance.

No hospitals - two clinics - one for Lancaster and one for Boscobel Hospitals - plus mental health clinic.

b. billboards/advertising

Most everything is well marked and the advertising is in good taste.

Neat - not cluttered.

Nice appearance.

Not too distracting. Be nice to have directory of churches, as there appears to be a variety of churches.

C.

XI. Walking around...comments on businesses (physical Dart):
Appearance, displays, signs, etc.

A ~~mix~~ of the old and new • some nice older buildings. The old bank looks lost in the downtown area It's too bad the people that own it couldn't be more creative with the building.

New bank is hard to find • tucked behind old bank

- *Cannot find fault.*
- *Signs have nice appearance.*
- *The freight yard buildings did not have signs on all of them.*
- *At first glance I thought they were empty until I went in them.*
- *The Tuckwood House sign on top of antique auto on Main Street is tacky.*

- *Well-kept, good signage.*
- *Have most businesses and services.*
- *Didn't notice shoe store, men's clothing store, theater.*
- *Gorgeous Library • interesting old bank bldg • not utilized to utmost.*

XII. Walking around...comments on people:

Were they friendly, did they know answers to questions, did they try to help, appearance, etc.

The people I met were very nice and friendly.

Very friendly • gal at F&M Bank (Pauline) even made call to see if a certain restaurant was open. She mentioned numerous places to eat.

People very friendly. Answered all questions and more with enthusiasm. Went into bank and lady so accommodating she even called the Silent Woman Restaurant for us to see if open (it was!).

People on the street not overly friendly, but people in stores were very helpful. Girl in gas station across from "Jr & Cathy's" did refer me there for good home cooking! Food was very good and reasonably priced! Janice Prew in City Hall very helpful.

XIII. Community information: comments on.....

a. community brochure (tourist type)

***Your** brochures are very nice and cover the interests of the city very well.*

Very professional.

*Very attractive.
Many locations available to get them.*

Nice • distributed many places.

b. businesses/attractions brochures or directory

Like our town, the business mix is poor. But for a small city you have a very nice furniture store.

Nice brochures.

*Very attractive.
Many locations available.*

Well-done.

c. community profile (demographic, industrial type information for prospective business people, etc.)

Very nice industrial park and some room on the north side to expand into the rural area. I say this side of town because of the light industry now there.

Industrial Park attractive • major (Rayovac) industry.

Adequate.

Didn't see.

d. map

Nice one in city hall, but out of date. Should be outside of the building in an area where tourist could see it • like the depot.

Yes.

Adequate.

Adequate -yellow map very helpful.

e. other (ie. bulletin/notice tourism, kiosks, etc.)

Service club signs.

Nice idea to have notice board in front of Library.

Didn't notice many • K signs and Lions signs.

XIV. City Hall...describe your visit:

a. appearance of facility, including signing

I really liked your City Hall. It is a real Civic Center • used by all in the city.

Others in group asked questions.

Very impressive. Nice building with multiple uses.

Very impressive, well-kept brick City Hall/Civic Center in center of town. Janice Prew very helpful (in City Hall).

b. helpfulness of staff

The staff in the office were very nice, very helpful and very knowledgeable. It was a joy talking to them.

Excellent • more than helpful

Janice Prew, utility clerk was very helpful and nice, but doesn't know about all of Real Estate people in town. I did notice Wood Realty sign and know Rands are bldg, homes, etc.

c.

XV. Chamber of Commerce...describe your visit

a. did people know where it was (or who to refer you to?)

*Did not know where it was • hard to **find** • **no** one there to help you that know about the job of the chamber.*

~~Was~~ not open.

Didn't ask

People were aware of where it was • good signage but hard to "get in" correct office area.

b. comment on information available

Lots of brochures available.

Office was not open.

c. comment on staff

*Chamber staff not in her office but gal **in adjoining** office let us in to get brochures.*

Didn't talk to staff.

d. other (hours, appearance, locations, etc.)

Hard to find • not easy to get into • all doors were locked.

*Sign outside for Chamber fine, but inside door not marked adequately. The ideal situation would be for direct access **from** outside.*

Appears C of C is in good location, but when you enter the bldg where C of C is housed and note "1st place on the right" - but nothing on the door indicates Chamber is in this "shared facility!": Confusing.

XVI. Other stuff....

a. public restrooms (available, condition, etc.)

In City Hall • very nice and clean.

In major restaurants.

"Was delighted to find in City Hall • very nice, well-kept women's/men's public restrooms."

b. payphones (working, phonebook intact, etc.)

Not easy to find and looks like very few in town.

Noted two • no phonebooks.

Saw two phones but no phonebooks.

Saw two • one not marked across from 'Silent Woman' and neither pay-phone had telephone books.

c. Parking

Very ample through the city.

Good.

Adequate.

Downtown across from "Silent Woman": but for customers only. Appears ample parking in front of stores, but for large crowds in town, would parking be adequate?

d. water fountains, benches, etc.

Did not find fountain. Benches in Library nice • at City Hall poor.

Nice walking path & benches in residential area with stream running.

Lion is cute.

Iron benches in downtown need repair.

Didn't notice fountains • benches need repair.

Street sweeper out and working.

WRAP UP

A. Using your "senses"...

1. What does the community TASTE like? (Specialty bakery/restaurant, etc.)

I had pizza Good service but not very good pizza Carry out only.

Good food - reasonable prices. Jenny Craig wouldn't like Carols Custards (too good).

Train atmosphere - nice.

"Silent Woman" has good cajun food. 'Cottonwood' is known for great sirloin tips and chicken, broasted potatoes.

2. What does the community SMELL like:

Country air with a city flavor.

Pleasant (bakery was out of everything other than cookies and bread).

Normal.

Fresh clean air.

3. What SOUNDS did you hear?

Noisy in downtown - nice in residential areas.

Lots of traffic (trucks on major thoroughfare).

Normal.

Quiet!

4. What did the community feel like (emotional response, i.e. cold/warm, crowded/deserted, inviting, etc., or physical response, i.e. rough streets, etc.)

- The downtown area was busy with traffic.*
- The downtown looks nice and the people are very accommodating.*
- It was hard to **find** a phone - the one in the freight yard area was not well marked*
- The park by the Library was very nice. The area by the city hall (north side) was not.*
- Generally, I did not feel comfortable.*

- Weather was cold - not many on street - bad time of year to have this survey done.*

- People on the street were not overly friendly, but those in the stores, restaurants, City Hall, etc., were very helpful.*
- Nice farmland on the edges of town.*

B. List the 5 most positive things you observed about the community:

1. *Excellent parks in the right areas of town.*
2. *Residential streets were wide and in very good shape.*
3. *I wish-our town could have your City Hall.*
4. *You have a nice mix of light industry on the north side of town.*
5. *Your trailer park is very nice - one of the nicer ones that I have seen.*

1. *Clean.*
2. *Lots of places to eat (for its sue).*
3. *Good streets.*
4. *Lots of new homes.*
5. *Churches of your choice.*

1. *Good condition of buildings with few exceptions.*
2. *Good variety of restaurants.*
3. *Friendly people.*
4. *Clean.*
- 5.

1. *Well-kept downtown business bldgs.*
2. *Hardly any empty business bldgs - if any.*
3. *Large welcome signs at every main entrance.*
4. *Large Industrial Park*
5. *Rayovac and Southwest Tech.*
6. *Silent Woman/Fenway Hotel.*

C. Describe ONE idea that you will steal for use in your own business/community and describe how you will start to implement it within the next 72 hours:

Take the aerial map of our town (like the one in the City Hall - only more current) and place it in our downtown park. Cover it with glass and have an electric lighting system with it to show where things are in the city.

Get an authentic train for our town and restore our depot. Not to steal your thunder, but to add some authenticity to our city's history.

Better signs from all directions.

Install large Welcome signs at entrances to City - talk to C of C.

D. What will you remember most about the community six months from now:

That you do have shops to visit and one very good eating establishment that has good food and atmosphere.

Good food.

How pleasantly surprised I was. Excellent lunch at Carol's Custards (great desserts!).

Well-kept homes, business bldgs. Good eating places and (other than Silent Woman) are reasonably prices - "Jr & Cathy's", "Carol's Custards": Southwest Tech very neat. Earth shelter design at CESA.

E. Other comments (that just didn't seem to fit anywhere else!)

- The freight yard is not well marked. It looks like an after-thought located behind a parking lot.*
- I like your Library hours - consistent and into the evening.*
- Unique water towers (two).*
- B&B Gazebo unique.*
- Some mobile homes seemed out of place in residential area.*
- I am amazed that Fennimore advertised as much as it does. Other than the Doll Museum and "Dinky" and Train Museum, there isn't alot to do. Stores were fine but not a "shopping excursion". Other than "hometown friendliness"; not much more. Bakery did not have much to sell.*
- Attractive Rock F&M Bank on the side street behind the old bank bldg.*
- Not sure there is enough to do in town or area to entice visitors to stay overnight or longer.*