



**First
Impressions
of
NEW HOLSTEIN, WI**

By Oconto Falls, WI

Visit conducted 09/25/01

A program for community improvement



Profile of Team

- Norman Kratz, Mayor
- Pete Mann, City Administrator
- Eugene Forncrook, Common Council President
- Mark Dickinson, Falls Family Restaurant
- Andy Mercier, Mercier's Hotel & Sports Bar
- Ann Senn, Senn Hometown Insurance Agency
- Ron Barlament, Community Development Authority

Contact Person: Rob Burke, UW Extension, Oconto County

As you approach the community....

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

-Small Wisconsin community with agricultural base. Difficult to get to – no interstate highways. Public power community.

-Small town. Typical Main Street community. Small town businesses, small family restaurants, insurance companies, gas stations, etc. Not much Main Street activity. Typical older neighborhoods of housing. Mixed use of areas (irregular zoning). A few small areas of newer development. Some new business; not much industry. Outlying rural farm area.

-The city would be about the same as the City of Oconto Falls

-Small farm community with basic accommodations

-A small rural farm related community with mom/pop shops on Main Street. On main highway, a pass-through community.

-Older, industrial based. German theme. Not too green or park-like.

II. The "five minute" impression:

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 others in your group for this part.

-Nice clean wide streets. Long drawn out central business district. Pleasant streetscapes. 10:00 a.m. not much activity downtown; no traffic back-ups. Well maintained properties; neat lawns. Directional signage adequate. Major intersection on north side could be improved for safety. Several vacant big boxes. Well kept community.

-Saw sign for golf course. Nice welcome sign. See area of new development when first entering town, new business. Cooley needs cleaning up. A lot of trees. Nice floral shop. Cute drug store (Nice area of new development behind Ameriquip.) Many open buildings. Some areas of nice older homes (period homes). Some buildings kept up nicely (historically). Didn't see much of leisure stuff to do or signs of things to do other than golf course before town. Where is the high school? No sign. Where are the parks, recreation? What's this town known for? Anything? Lot more bigger business than I expected. Bigger city than I expected. Noticed some rather large buildings vacant.

-Lot of closed up buildings. Nice city sign, club sign. Liked the light post, the old houses and banners. Nice touch.

-Main Street seems to be very long and have a fair amount of open buildings. Too many homes. Highway 57 traffic quite heavy, mostly semis.

-Basic small town farm community. Having some problems as most small communities. Empty business fronts areas that look nice; others need improvement. Some very nice homes people take pride in. Town stretched out. Not very many signs.

-Clean, neat, well kept with uncluttered downtown; however, obvious lack of activity. Two large buildings vacant on either end of town indicating loss of business. Being on a major highway should present opportunity for growth.

-Liked the architecture on some of the buildings. Large size of open, available buildings. Nice new development at the beginning of the city. Downtown did not seem to "pop-out" mixed with a lot of housing. But there was enough of a Bavarian, German feel for me to get a sense of identity and spirit. Clean, nice park and neat.
-Old buildings. Main Street not very busy. Clean. Some buildings need paint.

III. Evaluate EACH entrance to the community

Driving:

Go about ½ to 1 mile out each road and return. List positive and negatives for each.

57 N.

-Good welcome sign. Not good organization. Sign transition between agriculture, industry and commercial area. Need to remove or screen yard of concrete company and Lakeside Fab. Other than that, very pleasing, well kept entrance.
-What's up with a new grocery - looks like same size being built next to what looks like a perfectly good building (grocery) next to it? Township has a nice hall/garage for a township. Noticed a sign for new industry park (TIF District) Where is city hall? Post office? What's the info center? A building or the kiosks? Nice light posts on Main Street; must look nice at night. I like the idea of the real estate board by info center.
-Go from industry to commercial and residence through Main St.
-New TIF district started on North end and small strip mall
-Nice landscaping in area of welcome to city sign. Sign could be more colorful. Industries and commercial combined. Some business and industries need cleaner appearance (paint and landscaping) Signs are not uniform or have a theme (professional signs and homemade signs). Excavating going on. Large empty business complex.
-Neat, clean, obvious development away from downtown. Nice city garage facility. Auto dealership and auto service/gas stations predominant.
-TIF being busily worked on. Why the old, empty store next to the new PigglyWiggly? Well kept-up city. Nice roads. So neat and clean.
-Neat, clean, closed store, lots of small business, no junk.

57 S.

-Industrial area. Tracks on east, rec trail on west very well kept. Limited clutter from signage. Very pleasing - cut grass. Could use more trees to line street. Overall impressed by pride property owners have in their establishments.
-What's the narrow pathway (road) being built? Walk/bike trail? Very neat. Metko nice. Starlight could use a new sign. Main Street scene looks typical. Tim's house beautiful. Old house next to Ameriquip, what a shame. Funeral home nice. Not much for signs directing you to stuff. Nice high school grounds. Neat that there's an airport. Rural surroundings as expected.
-Seems dead.
-Signs could stand out more. More landscaping at businesses and roadways. Having industries and business and motel (restaurant). Some excavating going on.

57 S. Cont.

-Recreation trail? If so, could be a huge boost. **Neat and clean.** Lacking occupancy in obvious commercial zones.

-The rec trail on the left is impressive—big—it gives me the idea the place is going to be fun and active. New, nice roadway. Excellent road. Pride in community evident due to neatness and upkeep of businesses.

-Nice rec trail. Railroad coming into town. High school very impressive.

H coming in from airport

-Pastoral setting. Good road. Rubble pile at airport could be removed. City limits sign not too attractive. Somewhat intimidating. Airport sign could be more visible 50m highway. Industrial buildings at airport not particularly attractive, but it's an airport. No entrance sign.

-Tell you are coming into town from water tower. Not much of a sidewalk district. Doesn't appear to be a community where you can stop, walk around from shop to shop. Ameriquip must be the big business in town. Have seen three locations already. Nice looking residential areas.

-Nicely cut grass and roads at airport. Like the football field and well house. Again, nice old houses fixed up.

-Grounds were well kept and neat. Athletic field also looks good.

-Nice looking stadium and school. No sign for town.

-Attractive facility should stimulate recreational and business flying. Nice high school campus.

-Extent of city limits comes way out, it seems. City airport impressive thing to have.. Again, very neat. Are all those buildings airplane hangers? There are lots of them. Nice and dramatic view of a modern, neat high school stadium.

-Lots of room. Well kept-up.
size

IV. Evaluate the downtown business area: (Signs, appearance, etc.) Walk around...comments on people: Were they friendly, did they know answers to questions: did they try to help, appearance, etc.

-Good streetscape. Decorative and functional lights. Wide, well maintained street. Clean street. Nice banners. Some directional signage. Well kept buildings. Mix of residential/commercial along Main Street. No apparent focal point in center. Uneven walk between paving blocks and concrete. Railroad Street one way. Better signage for visitors. Minimal directional signage on Main Street. Directional signs to city hall, library not very visible and not noticeable. Flower planters on Main Street.

-Wow – a museum – nothing directing you there. A lot of stuff for sale or rent. The Beacon looks like somewhere I'd be willing to stop and eat/drink. They should try to get a hospital. A lot of outdated, rusted signs. South Town Restaurant – okay food, nice people.

-The people were friendly...Flower Shop, True Value, liquor store. Main Street long and side road had commercial, Appearance clean. Stores too far apart.

- Downtown was well signed and fairly neat. People were friendly and answered all our questions they could.
- Businesses are spread out for walking business to business. Signs are not very uniform except franchise businesses. Lot of empty buildings for sale or rent.
- Business district spread out over a long area on Highway 57. No district area of commercial enterprise. People met were friendly and cooperative.
- Strung out quite a bit. No main shopping area evident. Museum (Timm House) seemed very nice
- Jerry from LaTec Credit Union very helpful.

V. Evaluate other business area(s) (Signs, appearance, maintenance) Walk around, comments on people?

- Most business areas are attractive, particularly on south side of community. Get rid of concrete company on north side - need to get it off the main drag.
- Corner of Mason and Wisconsin, poor. Railroad Street shops look nice from street view. Zion Lutheran, nice. Finally found City Hall/Library after driving around. Looks like a lot of employers and employment opportunities. Library is nice. Nice kids playhouse - nice area of chairs and tables. Large tape area compared to ours. More computers than we have. Nice idea for the "Book Page" for book review. Large kids area. ARPS room cold and damp.
- Sparse - spread out.
- Lack of activity. Mix of good/bad condition of buildings.
- Several nice, newer establishments impressed ~~ae~~: Piggly Wiggly, Kwik-Stop and the "old German" theme of several businesses on the main drag were very pleasant.
- Signs poor. The signs that are there, maintenance good.

VI. Comments on residential: Tour town looking for residential areas, structures...(look for variety! neighborhood feel...) Drive and walk some.

- \$12,000 fully improved lots. Sidewalks by all new streets. Older areas of town, tree lined streets. New areas need urban forest. New areas appear to be sterile.
- Love all the trees. Look kept up well. Hilly town! New residential developments look nice. Really nice homes. Love all the older homes kept well.
- Nice old houses. Roads need some help and weeds on sidewalks.
- Very nice older homes.

VII. Observe and make comments on:

(a) street signs

- Fresh/maintained - green/white
- okay
- I don't see signs to get to city hall, etc.

(b) traffic patterns/street conditions

- Main Street - trim grass between curb and sidewalks. Cracked sidewalks, broken curb.
- Fair
- Streets are in poor condition. Lots of weeds growing in curb and gutter.

(c) welcome signs (at entrances)

- North side okay. Wes: side none.
- Okay
- Yes

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

- Signs minimal
- Fair to poor
- Didn't see much. City hall off the main street, didn't like this.
- Good
- Need signs with arrows for directions
- Hospitals - none. Good, found what we wanted
- I would like to see more
- Okay

VIII. Comments on industrial/park area: (Sign? well defined? ..busy...growing... new, etc.)

- TIF District - new - streets/utilities in. Some surrounding businesses detract from development.
- Saw TIF sign. Doesn't look like much yet aside from car dealer. -Ready for growth.
- I think it is a new Industrial Park - Industry all around town.
- Definite look of Industrial Park
- Where industrial starts and ends and who is in the industrial parks?
- Not well defined nor very busy. Not much development apparent.
- No park but lots of industrial in pockets.
- Sign okay. Not growing. A lot of room left for business.

IX. Comments on schools (appearance...location...spirit...feaf) Report from group that visits school.

- Looks well maintained. Elementary seems over-crowded, portable classrooms. Directional signage to schools would be of assistance.
- High School looks nice. School on Park looks nice. Sew a few signs about a tailgate party.
- Appearance looks good (didn't visit)

- Nice High School campus! Elementary schools well kept and attractive.
- Dramatic impression on entering from "H"
- Appearance very good

X. Comments on parks, playgrounds, athletic facilities, etc.:

- Kiwanis - Big park, nice, lots of varieties of facilities. Civic Park - Good shade, band shell, open pavilion, well cared for. Sled Hill - construction underway.
- A lot of signs to Kiwanis - looks nice. Very nice - like the pond and walking trail. Impressive! 'Wow, how big - runs all the way to the pool! I'm jealous! Nice looking park across from city hall. Wow - great parks!
- Clean, nice. Like the Community Center.
- They get an A+.
- Nice parks and a lot more than expected. Newer playground equipment, the pond, the pavilions - impressive. Needsigns to promote and give direction.
- Excellent parks, well kept. Obvious community spirit in their up-keep.
- Kiwanis Park area .4-. Community Center nice! Big spacious park area. Impressive parks and love the trail.
- Super - Lots of room in them. Well planned.

XI. Comments on other:

(a) hospitals/clinics

- None
- Can't find any - not even on a map - Saw a clinic
- No hospital as advertised 6 miles away
- Saw doctor's office tin Main St.
- None we saw
- Hard to find - found out it is in Clifton

(b) billboards/advertising

- Fortunately limited
- Very few
- Didn't notice
- Usual

(c) Other

- Directional signs not really noticeable

XII. Community information: comments on

(a) community brochure (tourist type)

- Better than ours
- This is something we need
- Saw little one at Bonita's - Could be larger, easier to find
- Very good
- Found it useful
- Very good

(b) business/attractions brochures or directory

- Nice, except it lists hospital and there is none.
- Received a folder from mayor
- Very good
- Okay
- Good

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

- Amazingly large public utility area
- Good diversity of industry
- Main Street not defined - Commercial businesses spread out
- Very good
- Yes

(d) map

- Nice
- Very good
- Would like a better one

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

- Good ideas
- Liked the 61c we received. Good information on City. Facts on City and Profile
- Too small - hard to find.

XIII. City Hall...describe your visit:

(a) appearance of facility, including signing

- Well kept but dated. Police Department inadequate

- Couldn't find it. Buried by shrubbery. 70's decor. Great stories on history of city by city hall employee. Very clean though.
- Older city hall but very clean. City workers look like they work together
- Good
- City Hall was very busy. Again, no signs
- Old structure, old furnishings but very functional
- Beautiful
- Very neat

(b) helpfulness of staff

- Helpful and informative, but they knew who we were
- Nice. Mayor was great! Lots of info
- Very helpful. Very, very nice mayor
- Very good
- City Hall mayor very informative
- Excellent
- A+
- Good

(c) other

- Inside - people's office looks nice and uncluttered
- City to get to someone's office have to go through other's working area. Office staff 6 or 7.
- Mayor very helpful
- Mayor very informative and I enjoyed her historical perspective and emphasis
- Very good. Mayor very helpful! neat person

XIV. Other stuff...

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

- N/A
- N/A
- N/C

(b) pay phones (working, phone book intact, etc.)

- Didn't check
- N/A
- N/C

(c) parking

- Didn't have a problem
- Seems okay
- Very adequate

(d) water fountains, benches, etc.

- Didn't notice
- Planters nice -- kept up well
- Adequate

(e) other

- Lots of weeds growing in streets and curb/gutter. Interesting that there is no cable.

XV. Chamber of Commerce...describe your visit

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

- Not a really definitive location for Chamber
- Didn't see
- Visited with Chamber president at Credit Union and he is up-beat and positive
- Yes, Kwik Stop
- None

(b) comment on information available

- Like the community profile and the sheet on facts on New Holstein
- Very good
- Okay

(c) comment on staff

- Did not meet
- Bonita and employee helpful and very friendly

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

- Unknown
- Good location for kiosk

WRAP IT UP --

A. Using your "senses" ...

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

- No distinctive taste
- Did not notice very many eating establishments
- Excellent Piggly Wiggly with "everything"
- Restaurant -- good

2. What does the community SMELL like?

- The Flower Shop (country?) Smelled good (coffee) Piggly Wiggly smelled good - bakery
- No smell
- Very usual -- nothing outstanding
- Fine
- Clean

3. What SOUNDS did you hear?

- Activity
- Traffic on the main drag -- no other distinctive
- Quiet
- Usual -- nothing outstanding
- Pretty quiet
- None

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.)

- Inviting, attractive, pride
- Rough streets. Impressed by some things, disappointed by others (similar problems to Oconto Falls - vacant buildings, no foot traffic areas, business areas too spread out. A lot of walk-in type shops were closed. A bedroom community.
- Main Street nice, paved. Side road rough patches. Main Street too long in between stores. House, industry on same street.
- Rough streets
- Warm, quiet, working at improvements in area
- Very nice people. Business activity very slow. Nice community, quiet!
- The feel was neat, clean, orderly. Also, German theme is pleasant and charming.
- Warm -- Rough street

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

1. Clean
2. Well kept
3. Pride in housing
4. Progressive
5. Attractive Main Street

1. Parks
2. Grocery store
3. Nice friendly people
4. Lots of Industry
5. Beautiful neighborhoods with well kept old houses

1. Parks
2. Airport
3. Grocery store
4. People easy to take too
- 5.

1. Mayor
2. Parks
3. School
4. Airport
5. Industries

1. Clean
2. Orderly
3. Good spirit
4. Great parks
5. Airport

1. Pride in heritage
2. Neat
3. Good main roadway
4. Friendly and informative business people
5. The park and the trail - The trail as a facility and as a symbol of cooperation and growth

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:

- Expansive park and recreation facilities
- Attempt to encourage those who have period homes/businesses to keep and maintain their historical integrity.

-Parks and recreation facilities were excellent, clean and inviting. Located in a few areas, good accessibility. We are expanding parks and should continue to provide safe, family friendly facilities.

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

-Attractive

-That they have some things that are so much nicer than Oconto Falls for a community about the same size - parks, grocery

-Their airport is an excellent advantage if used properly and marketed for business growth. A nice community with quiet bedroom appeal and easy access to large shopping areas in three directions.

-Large parks

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

-Entire group did not notice directional signs to parks, city hall, etc. Signs directed toward visitors don't appear to be very noticeable. Great nail to E e l -- Congratulations on the effort!