

Minutes of the Thirteenth Meeting of the
ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE TASK FORCE

DATE: February 4, 2010
TIME: 4:00 p.m.
PLACE: Independence *First*
540 South 1st Street
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Members Present

Adelene Greene..... Director, Division of Workforce Development,
Chair Kenosha County
Nancy Holmlund..... President, WISDOM Interfaith Coalition
Vice Chair
Ella Dunbar Program Services Manager, Social Development Commission, Milwaukee
Jedd Lapid..... Development Officer, Greater Milwaukee Foundation
Lynnette McNeely Attorney, Law Offices of Thomas J. Awen; NAACP
Brian Peters..... Housing Policy Advocate, Independence *First*
Wally Rendon Member Education/Outreach Representative, Racine Educator's
Credit Union; former Racine Police Officer
Theresa Schuerman..... Walworth County Bilingual Migrant Worker Outreach
Willie Wade Alderman, City of Milwaukee

Guests and Staff Present

Stephen P. Adams Public Involvement and Outreach Manager, SEWRPC
Robert P. Biebel..... Special Projects Engineer, SEWRPC
Jim Bowman Citizen
Ryan Holifield..... UWM Geography Department
Gary K. Korb Regional Planning Educator, UW-Extension/SEWRPC
Catherine Madison..... Policy Analyst, UWM Center for Economic Development
Benjamin R. McKay Principal Planner, SEWRPC
Joel Rast..... Director, UWM Center for Economic Development
Karyn Rotker..... Attorney, ACLU of Wisconsin
Sean Ryan The Daily Reporter
Jodi Habush Sinykin Midwest Environmental Advocates
Bruce Wiggins Citizen
Kenneth R. Yunker Executive Director, SEWRPC

ROLL CALL

Ms. Greene called the meeting of the Environmental Justice Task Force to order at 4:05 p.m., welcoming those in attendance. Ms. Greene introduced two new task force members, Ella Dunbar, Program Services Manager, Social Development Commission, Milwaukee and Jedd Lapid, Development Officer, Greater Milwaukee Foundation, and thanked them for joining the Task Force. She then asked the other Task Force members, staff, and guests present to briefly introduce themselves.

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES OF JUNE 2, 2009, JULY 28, 2009, AND SEPTEMBER 24, 2009

Ms. Greene stated that the minutes of the June 2, 2009, and July 28, 2009, meetings have been approved through the Task Force list serve. Ms. Greene then asked if there were any questions or comments on the minutes of the Task Force's twelfth meeting, held on September 24, 2009. Hearing no comments, Mr. Rendon made a motion to approve the minutes from the September 24, 2009, meeting. Ms. Holmlund seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Ms. Greene asked if there are any public comments on the agenda or other Task Force business. The following comments were made:

1. Mr. Wiggins stated the current State legislation (SB 511) regarding Regional Transit Authorities is important to the Region because it could help to provide access to jobs for low-income populations in the Region. He urged Task Force members and others in attendance to contact their State legislator to support the bill. Ms. Holmlund stated that dedicated funding for local transit is necessary before Federal funding will be made available for commuter rail, which is a message she heard reinforced while speaking with legislative staff in Washington D.C.

UPDATE ON THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC IMPACT ANALYSIS OF THE PRELIMINARY RECOMMENDED REGIONAL WATER SUPPLY PLAN

Ms. Greene introduced Catherine Madison of the UWM Center for Economic Development (CED). Ms. Madison directed the Task Force's attention to the PowerPoint presentation entitled "*Progress Report on the Socio-Economic Impact Analysis of the Preliminary Water Supply Plan by the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission*" (see Attachment 1). The presentation included a review of preliminary regional water supply plan recommendations, public outreach efforts and the results of efforts conducted to date, the preliminary draft of Chapter 2, "*Population Distribution Forecasting*," and the preliminary draft of Chapter 3, "*Job Distribution Trends and Forecasts*." The following discussion points and comments were made regarding the review of preliminary regional water supply plan recommendations and the public outreach efforts:

1. Mr. Peters asked how many water utilities recommended for conversion to Lake Michigan water from groundwater or new utilities using Lake Michigan water are outside of the Great Lakes Basin. Ms. Madison stated that the only utility located entirely outside of the Basin is Waukesha. She stated that Brookfield straddles the boundary of the Basin; however, only the eastern portion of Brookfield that is within the Basin is proposed to be converted to Lake Michigan supply. Mr. Biebel stated that New Berlin, which already has a service agreement to receive Lake Michigan water from the City of Milwaukee, and Muskego, which has indicated that the utility will continue to use a groundwater supply, also straddle the boundary.
2. Mr. Wade asked if there are other organizations in the Region that make recommendations regarding water supply. Ms. Madison stated that the Wisconsin DNR and Public Service Commission are involved in the regulatory framework. Mr. Yunker stated that SEWRPC is currently the only organization that makes advisory recommendations. Mr. Wade asked if communities and regulatory agencies implement SEWRPC recommendations. Mr. Yunker stated that, as with other SEWRPC studies, some communities may choose to implement the

recommendations and some communities may choose not to implement the recommendations. For example, the Village of Germantown has already advised the Commission that they intend to meet their water supply needs with groundwater, rather than Lake Michigan water.

3. Mr. Wade suggested that SEWRPC makes its recommendations based on environmental data and long range considerations and local governments are likely to make decisions from an economic standpoint. He then asked if SEWRPC revisits recommendations that may not have been implemented by local governments. Mr. Yunker stated that the implementation status of a regional plan is reviewed and considered when a plan is updated.
4. Mr. Peters asked if a community can use Federal stimulus money for projects to improve water quality based on SEWRPC recommendations. Mr. Biebel stated that implementation of the regional water supply plan has not been linked to Federal stimulus funding.
5. Mr. Wade asked if there are other studies that communities, such as the City of Milwaukee, should consider in reviewing issues regarding water supply. Mr. Biebel stated that the regional water supply plan will be the only study available that is regional in scope; however, the City will be advised by its internal staff and consultants. Mr. Wade stated that it would be helpful to review and compare facts and recommendations from multiple sources.
6. Ms. Holmlund asked if records are kept regarding local government implementation of SEWRPC recommendations. Mr. Yunker stated that this information is inventoried during regional plan updates, and documented in those regional plan reports.
7. Ms. McNeely observed from the presentation that developers who participated in the first public outreach session stated that proximity to water supply infrastructure is a more important factor to project development than water supply source. She asked if there is new technology that makes water supply sources located a long distance from a development more accessible and whether this technology had been factored into the public outreach sessions. Mr. Biebel stated that the technology to move water from a distant source has been used for several decades.
8. Ms. McNeely asked if the participating developers have experience with developments in utility service areas and developments in rural areas and whether a developer's experience influences their perspective regarding the public outreach questions. Ms. Madison stated that most of the developers that were interviewed prefer to develop in areas with sewer and water infrastructure. Ms. McNeely asked if the availability of Lake Michigan water will influence the importance of water supply source and if there would be a paradigm shift regarding development if Waukesha were served with Lake water. Ms. Madison stated that developers are generally more concerned with the availability of water supply infrastructure, regardless of water supply source.
9. Mr. Peters stated that there still seems to be a lot of development in rural areas despite the developer responses regarding the importance of water supply infrastructure. Ms. Madison noted the cheaper land in rural areas. Mr. Biebel stated that some developers specialize in rural development, but most would choose to develop in water supply service areas if given the choice.
10. Mr. Wade asked if the utility managers who participated in the public outreach session discussed the cost of infrastructure maintenance. Ms. Madison stated that water supply source should not impact the cost of water supply infrastructure maintenance; however, if additional infrastructure is added there will be maintenance of that additional infrastructure. Mr. Wade stated that the cost

of infrastructure maintenance seems to be overlooked and asked who pays for the maintenance costs. Ms. Madison stated that the costs are reflected in the water sales rates and the Public Service Commission oversees this process.

11. Mr. Wiggins asked from the audience if water quality had been considered during the public outreach sessions with developers and utility managers. Ms. Madison stated that the public outreach findings did not reveal a difference in quality between Lake Michigan water and compliant groundwater. Mr. Wiggins asked if the regional water supply study included research on groundwater contamination. Mr. Biebel stated that groundwater contamination data is included in the study. Ms. Rotker stated from the audience that a comparison of Lake Michigan water quality and the quality of noncompliant groundwater could have impacted the responses received during the public outreach sessions. Mr. Rast stated that this comparison was also included in the public outreach session and the quality of noncompliant groundwater was found to impact development decisions.
12. Ms. Schuerman stated via teleconference connection that the Hispanic population in the Region is growing rapidly and has a high incidence of poverty. She asked how the public outreach focus groups are being marketed to Spanish speaking residents of the Region. Ms. Madison stated the public outreach consultant is not present at the meeting. Ms. Holmlund stated that the methods of public outreach are of interest to the Task Force. Ms. Schuerman asked if the outreach methods and materials could be shared with the Task Force. Mr. Yunker suggested that the UWM CED staff share its public outreach materials and methods with the Task Force. Mr. Rendon asked which organizations have been contacted. Mr. Yunker asked the UWM CED staff to provide its list of contact organizations for Task Force review. Mr. Wade asked if Task Force members could suggest additions to the contacts list. Mr. Yunker stated that additional suggestions would be appreciated. Mr. Wade stated that paid community organizers, funded by the Federal Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP), are working in 18 areas of the City of Milwaukee. This would be a good opportunity to utilize the connections they have made with members of the community.
13. Mr. Peters asked if the public outreach materials were user friendly. Ms. Madison stated that the materials focus on education regarding the preliminary regional water supply plan recommendations so participants are prepared to discuss the issues when they attend the public outreach sessions. She added that attendance at the meetings was perhaps of greater concern.
14. Ms. Sinykin noted the Great Lakes water diversion application now being prepared by the City of Waukesha. She stated that the City is proceeding with the environmental impact statement (EIS) and information from the socio-economic impact analysis (SEI) of the preliminary regional water supply plan will be relevant to the process. She asked if CED staff had been in contact with the DNR or the City of Waukesha regarding the SEI. Ms. Madison stated that the City of Waukesha was represented in the first public outreach sessions but the SEI data and findings are not ready to be presented. Mr. Rast stated that the CED is under contract to prepare the SEI and provide it to SEWRPC. Mr. Yunker stated that SEI data and findings will be made available through inclusion in the regional water supply plan.
15. Ms. Sinykin stated that the data and findings from the SEI are relevant to the City of Waukesha EIS and should be shared with the City as they complete the EIS. She also suggested that Task Force members should be present at the EIS public hearing to voice environmental justice concerns.

The following discussion points and comments were made regarding the preliminary draft of Chapter 2, “*Population Distribution Forecasting*” and preliminary draft of Chapter 3, “*Job Distribution Trends and Forecasts*:”

1. Ms. Rotker stated from the audience that the minority population projection data on the table on page 19 in Chapter 2 is aggregated. She stated that most of the projected growth in minority populations in the selected communities outside of Milwaukee will be from the Hispanic community and the African American community will remain concentrated in Milwaukee, Racine, and Kenosha. She stated that the aggregated population projection data does not portray the continued concentration of the African American population in the Region. Ms. Madison responded that the tables on page 18 include race alone data separate from Hispanic ethnicity and that the table on page 19 can probably be removed from the report; however, in some instances the populations are too small to develop reliable projections unless the data is aggregated, particularly for long timeframes.
2. Mr. Peters stated that the term “persons with disabilities” rather than “disabled population” should be used in the report.
3. Mr. Peters asked if the City of Waukesha still has a problem with its water quality and if that is the reason the City is pursuing a Lake Michigan water supply source. Mr. Biebel stated that the City’s water is now primarily compliant with regulations; however, the deep aquifer is dropping and water from that source may create compliancy problems in the future. Mr. Peters asked if alternative water sources to Lake Michigan have been studied. Mr. Biebel stated that other viable options including use of shallow aquifer groundwater supply are outlined in the preliminary regional water supply plan.
4. Ms. McNeely asked if a limited water supply in the suburban areas of the Region would limit further suburban growth and concentration of minority populations. Mr. Rast stated that preliminary findings are not pointing in that direction. Mr. Biebel stated that there are groundwater water supply alternatives to Lake Michigan that are adequate to provide the amount of water needed for Waukesha’s projected population. He stated that growth in the Waukesha water utility service area is projected to be modest because most of the planned service area is already built out. He also stated that all areas of the Region have an adequate water supply to support projected population growth without converting to a Lake Michigan water source.
5. Mr. Yunker added it should be recognized that development is not dependent on a municipal water source, as development can be implemented with private wells and POWTS, or “septic systems.” Specifically, the Region could develop entirely on one-to-two acre lots with private well and septic systems and have a sustainable groundwater supply. He added that such a pattern of development, however, would clearly not be desirable for other reasons. Ms. Rotker stated from the audience that the SEI should include a scenario that limits water supply to suburban areas to stop additional growth.
6. Ms. McNeely stated that the cost of new water supply infrastructure is disproportionately high for low-income households. Ms. Madison stated that water sales rates and land use will be addressed in Chapter 4, which should be available soon.

7. Mr. Rast asked the Task Force to bear in mind that the CED was providing preliminary findings at today's meeting. The focus group meetings have not been completed and their findings have not been shared with the Task Force today.
8. Ms. Holmlund stated that Task Force members should help in the effort to recruit for the second round of public outreach sessions.
9. Mr. Wade noted that in Europe, the East Cost, and other areas, higher income people are coming back to central cities, and if continued are pushing lower income populations to outlying communities.

UPDATE ON OTHER SEWRPC PLANNING EFFORTS, INCLUDING THE REGIONAL HOUSING PLAN

Ms. Greene noted the time and stated the agenda item will be discussed at the next Task Force meeting.

FURTHER PUBLIC COMMENTS

Ms. Greene thanked the Task Force and audience members for their active participation. She then asked whether those in attendance had any additional comments. There were none.

ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Greene stated that the next meeting of the Task Force is scheduled for Thursday, March 4, 2010, from 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. at Independence*First*, 540 South 1st Street, Milwaukee. Ms. Madison stated that a public outreach session is tentatively scheduled for the Independence*First* location on March 2nd (the public outreach session is rescheduled for March 18th). Ms. Greene declared the meeting adjourned at 6:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Benjamin R. McKay
Recording Secretary

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