

**SUMMARY OF
REGIONAL HOUSING PLAN PUBLIC INFORMATIONAL MEETINGS
(May 18 to June 22, 2009)**

May 18, 2009
HeartLove Place
Bethel/Empowerment Rooms
3229 N. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Drive
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Attendance: 11

Written Comments Received:

1. Plans for where people live and work must include consideration of how families manage child care access and school placements for their children. Access to these services is extremely important – let's not forget the stabilization of families.
2. Gentrification of neighborhoods often displaces low income and elderly who cannot afford the taxes.

Vision Statements Received: None

May 19, 2009
United Community Center
Café el Sol Conference Room 2
1028 South 9th Street
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Attendance: 7

Written Comments Received:

1. Bravo to SEWRPC for undertaking this study. I look forward to the results and hope they can be:
 - a. Integrated with transit planning to encourage good public transit options between affordable housing and family supporting jobs;
 - b. Used to discourage or eliminate zoning standards that virtually eliminate any options for smaller more affordable housing in some outlying suburbs;
 - c. Used to encourage more subsidized housing throughout the Region, dissipating the concentration in Milwaukee's central city.
2. I think it is about time SEWRPC looks at housing and work and living patterns. The current economic conditions should help this message and implement some real change in this area (region of Milwaukee and surrounding counties). Implementing a diverse population and economic strata over the Region instead of concentrating it in one county can only improve the Region's social and economic viability.

3. Don't penalize people for accessible building. Don't penalize people for building sustainably. If you build thicker walls with more insulation and use brick, which is more sustainable and has an energy savings function, you will pay taxes based on the square footage as measured by outside dimension. You could pay for 4 percent to 6 percent (more than 60 to 70 square feet) that you don't use. Same with airlock entry, which is energy saving. Then you pay more taxes because the house is worth more. For Solar PV or H₂O heating they are not allowed to assess more for the additional value, this should be the same for other energy saving practices. Wider doors and halls will also raise the taxes you pay. Good, sustainable, energy efficient design should not be penalized.
4. Zoning does not allow "row housing," which the U.S. Census defines as "single family," in many communities where it is not called "single family."

Vision Statements Received:

1. Reflect all economic strata in all the surrounding counties as near to equal as possible.
2. Have smaller manageable and affordable housing in all suburban areas in Southeastern Wisconsin.
3. Communities should:
 - a. Be pedestrian and bike friendly;
 - b. Have public transportation available;
 - c. Be transit oriented;
 - d. Allow for planting of native vegetation adapted to local conditions;
 - e. Allow you to grow your own veggies;
 - f. Allow you to share housing with friends – intentional communities;
 - g. Have community wireless internet access.

May 20, 2009
Wauwatosa Public Library
Firefly Room
7635 W. North Avenue
Wauwatosa, Wisconsin

Attendance: 6

Written Comments Received:

1. I attended the first half hour of your meeting at the Wauwatosa Public Library on May, 20, 2009, and was distressed by the poor attendance, which I believe is at least partially the result of poor publicity. Who knew these meetings were taking place? I picked up all of your handouts and read them at home. I will make my comments in relation to these handouts:

- a. Brochure 1 describes the membership of the Regional Housing Plan Advisory Committee. The list is notably lacking existing homeowners and full of vested interests. How can such a committee be totally lacking members who are homeowners or renters? This is unacceptable and clearly biases the advice given.
 - b. Newsletter 1, page 4, Planning Process Step 1: The bias I mentioned is clearly evident in the definition of the housing problem, which immediately looks toward subsidized housing. Nowhere is there any mention of the problems encountered by regular, taxpaying people in acquiring and maintaining their homes.
 - c. Newsletter 1, page 4, Planning Process Step 2: What does the second sentence mean? Quantify targets??? I have a BA, MA, and PhD and I have no idea what you are saying. This is meaningless confusion.
 - d. Newsletter 1, page 5, Planning Process Step 3: I would submit that what constitutes “affordable housing” is as much a function of wages paid to workers as it is a function of the cost of housing.
 - e. Newsletter 1, page 5, Planning Process Step 4: Here you talk about affordable housing near job centers and transit to job centers. How do you know where these will be in 2035? The rapid rate of change in the job market and the loss of traditional manufacturing enterprises makes such “job centers” rare except for medical centers. It seems to me to be presumptuous to think we can know in 2009 where these will be in 2035.
 - f. Newsletter 1, page 5, Planning Process Step 5, point #2, third sentence: What if the “common perception that higher density multi-family housing carries a substantially higher community cost burden” is in fact correct?
 - g. Newsletter 1, page 5, Planning Process Step 5, point #3, second sentence: Why are you doing this when the results are already known? There is plenty of data on the impact of foreclosures in the aftermath of our recent housing collapse. I would not expect us to be significantly different.
 - h. In summary I think that our ability to project information like where job centers will be located or even if there will be “job centers” in 2035 is much more limited than it was 20 or 30 years ago because of the pace of change and the impact of the global economy. We can guess, but this is not the basis for sound planning.
2. I am grateful that SEWRPC is undertaking this extensive an effort in regional housing planning, and commend you on the proposed plan for the study. I just have a few (probably not original) thoughts on various aspects of the planning process:
 - a. Step 4: Seems especially important in identifying patterns and clusters of existing and anticipated housing and development among municipalities. One wish I have is to find a way to discourage people from moving away from established areas to a more rural area, but who then call for establishment of services they left behind, thus stretching municipalities ability to provide service and transforming the rural area into sprawling suburbia. In conjunction with Step 5, I’d like to encourage the development of more dense areas, with smaller lot sizes and community green/recreation spaces; formation of neighborhoods that incorporate some shopping and services within walking/biking distance; and encouragement of more pedestrian-friendly retail and commercial areas.

- b. Step 6: We truly need to match housing to either job location or accessible and affordable transportation to jobs, which mandates coordination of planning with other public works planning processes – a daunting task, but essential nonetheless.
- c. Step 8: Congratulations on addressing the supply or need for accessible housing of all types!
- d. Step 10: It will be interesting to hear about best housing practices, especially those seeming most suitable for this area. One concern is willingness (or not) to include energy-saving or other green technologies in approval valuations. Some seem reluctant to cover those for new, single-home construction – why are they not helping to bring more of these in to help individuals and communities be more responsible in energy usage?
- e. In addition to the socio-economic impact analysis of your preliminary recommendations, I hope you will also incorporate a sense of the stewardship we all should be committed to in planning for future development that will not only serve the needs of individuals and communities in the region, but also minimize the “footprint” we occupy in relation to the land as an organic whole. We need to be good neighbors to the other life forms who share our spaces, rather than an occupying army that spoils all it passes through.
- f. Thank you for your detailed and thoughtful work so far. I’ll follow your progress with interest!

Vision Statements Received: None

June 3, 2009
Waukesha Rotary Building
Frame Park
1150 Baxter Street
Waukesha, Wisconsin

Attendance: 11

Written Comments Received:

- 1. The regional housing plan should address:
 - a. Define sub-regions and the current housing, job, and transportation accessibility of each area.
 - b. Affordability of housing, availability by income, type of housing (rental, ownership, single family, condo), and special needs populations such as the elderly.
 - c. Projected job growth to housing need by income and type – identify various housing needs.
 - d. Expand analysis of impediments to fair/affordable housing. How can current/past policies be changed to de-concentrate minorities? Include local policies, Federal housing policies and funding, and State/WHEDA policies and funding. Overcome NIMBY.
 - e. Green building and affordability = energy savings.
 - f. Issue leadership and business involvement. Housing is an economic development issue.

- g. Build relationship between jobs, housing, and transportation.
- h. Consistent mix of housing based on employment/income for sub-regions (i.e. a 65/35 mix may be acceptable except if all housing is high cost). Mix must be universal for income/affordability and type.
- i. Identify attitudes toward fair housing from various racial groups through a survey.
- j. Subsidized housing must include families, not just elderly.
- k. Best practices: look at other regions for policies, types of affordable housing, and implementation.
- l. Review the 1975 plan for successes and deficiencies. How did the current imbalance occur? Why?
- m. Fee impact on affordability.

Vision Statements Received: None

June 9, 2009
Walworth County Government Center
Old County Board Room
100 W. Walworth Street
Elkhorn, Wisconsin

Attendance: 6

Written Comments Received:

- 1. I think that a volunteer group should be formed to help the homes that are in foreclosure, to help with maintenance and help areas seem less poverty stricken.

Vision Statements Received: None

June 10, 2009
Ozaukee County Administration Center
Auditorium
121 W. Main Street
Port Washington, Wisconsin

Attendance: 5

Written Comments Received: None

Vision Statements Received:

- 1. Include rental units with a mix of monthly rents to match the needs of entry level job holders in the community.

2. There should be an appropriate mix of homes to match the range of incomes earned by potential homeowners.

June 15, 2009
Kenosha County Job Center
GTC Class Room
8600 Sheridan Road
Kenosha, Wisconsin

Attendance: 5

Written Comments Received:

1. I am currently paying 80 percent of my income towards my rent. There is a freeze on Section 8 Vouchers and not enough low income projects available to support the amount of need. Crime is very high in area projects and discourages families from residing there. I am facing possible homelessness with four children at home. I don't know where to go for help. I have a job and I work as much as I can. Currently, there isn't any help out there! It is very frightening for families facing this situation. The low income people have been left out of planning for many years – now we have this current crisis.

Vision Statements Received:

1. Landlords and building owners should not be so profit based with the attitude that they discourage families from decent housing. The crime rate needs to be addressed in housing projects, there needs to be much more available housing.

June 16, 2009
Gateway Burlington Center
Room 100
496 McCanna Parkway
Burlington, Wisconsin

Attendance: 3

Written Comments Received:

1. Housing development elements should in my opinion include low-, middle-, and high-income homes. My opinion is this will help to stabilize and develop what the social climate should be.
2. In developing the model for 2035 housing, do you weight the last ten years pattern of job growth and population?
3. I would like information on clustered development and environmental corridors.

Vision Statements Received: None

June 17, 2009
Racine Gateway Technical College
Michigan Room
1001 Main Street
Racine, Wisconsin

Attendance: 3

Written Comments Received: None

Vision Statements Received: None

June 22, 2009
Washington County Public Agency Center
Rooms 1113 A-B
333 E. Washington Street
West Bend, Wisconsin

Attendance: 3

Written Comments Received:

1. The study should reference optional types of housing development such as co-housing, new urbanism, planned unit developments (PUD), and shared green space.

Vision Statements Received: None