

MINUTES

SOUTHEASTERN WISCONSIN REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

PLANNING AND RESEARCH COMMITTEE

Tuesday, August 17, 2010

1:31 p.m.

SEWRPC Office Building
Commissioners' Conference Room
W239 N1812 Rockwood Drive
Waukesha, Wisconsin

Present:

Excused:

Committee Members:

Daniel S. Schmidt, Chairman
Susan S. Greenfield
Gregory L. Holden, Vice-Chairman
William E. Johnson
Robert W. Pitts
Nancy Russell
Daniel W. Stoffel
Paul G. Vrakas
John F. Weishan, Jr.

Anita M. Faraone
Mary A. Kacmarcik
John Rogers
David L. Stroik

Staff:

Kenneth R. Yunker
Elizabeth A. Larsen
Michael G. Hahn
Debra A. D'Amico

Executive Director
Business Manager
Chief Environmental Engineer
Executive Secretary

ROLL CALL

Chairman Schmidt called the meeting to order at 1:31 p.m. Roll call was taken and a quorum was declared present. Mr. Yunker noted for the record that Commissioners Faraone, Kacmarcik, Rogers, and Stroik had asked to be excused.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF MEETING OF JUNE 1, 2010

Chairman Schmidt asked if there were any changes or additions to the June 1, 2010, meeting minutes.

On a motion by Mr. Vrakas, seconded by Mr. Pitts, and carried unanimously, the minutes of the meeting of June 1, 2010, were approved as published.

PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION ON URBAN DEVELOPMENT RECOMMENDATIONS IN THE YEAR 2035 REGIONAL LAND USE PLAN AND URBAN STORMWATER MANAGEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS IN THE REGIONAL WATER QUALITY MANAGEMENT PLAN

Chairman Schmidt asked Mr. Yunker to present to the Committee the Commission staff's *Urban Development Recommendations in the Year 2035 Regional Land Use Plan* (copy attached to Official Minutes).

Mr. Yunker explained that at a prior Planning and Research Committee meeting during a sanitary sewer amendment discussion, there were questions about urban development and stormwater management. He stated that he will review the Commission's urban development recommendations in the year 2035 Regional Land Use Plan, and Chief Environmental Engineer, Mike Hahn, will review the urban stormwater management recommendations in the Regional Water Quality Management plan. He encouraged the Commissioners to ask questions and comment throughout these presentations.

Mr. Yunker began his presentation by distributing a pamphlet entitled, "*Natural Connections – An Illustrated Guide to Green Infrastructure Mapping*" prepared by Openlands and the Center for Neighborhood Technology, both from the Chicago area. It cites, as a good example of regional and integrated land use planning, the Commission's 2035 Regional Land Use Plan which recommends restrictions on growth outside urban areas while recommending the preservation of prime farmland and environmental corridors.

Mr. Yunker stated that all of the Commission's regional planning efforts begin with the regional land use plan. That is, all regional planning is designed to serve the development and redevelopment, and land use pattern, recommended in the regional land use plan. He noted that the regional land use plan is prepared under the direction of an advisory committee which includes representatives from each of the seven counties, and local, State, and Federal government. He stated that the Year 2035 plan is the fifth generation regional land use plan, and that the land use plan is updated and reevaluated approximately every ten years. Mr. Yunker also pointed out that the land use plan is strictly advisory, as are all SEWRPC plans.

During Mr. Yunker's presentation, the following questions and comments were made and addressed:

1. In response to an inquiry by Mr. Pitts, Mr. Yunker responded that some Counties and communities have contracted with the Commission to prepare their comprehensive plans.
2. In response to an inquiry by Mr. Weishan, Mr. Yunker responded that each regional plan update includes an assessment of the extent to which the recommendations of the previous plan have been implemented.
3. Mr. Vrakas noted the projected shift from a manufacturing to a more service-based economy. Mr. Yunker stated that the Region has maintained a larger proportion of its employment in manufacturing compared to the remainder of the State and other metropolitan areas in the United States.
4. During Mr. Yunker's presentation regarding the Region's population forecast for the year 2035, Mr. Pitts asked whether the Commission staff uses Census data to monitor its forecasts annually. Mr. Yunker responded that the population forecasts are monitored annually based upon estimates provide

by the State of Wisconsin. Mr. Yunker added that the regional transportation plan included a comparison of forecasts with actual data for each of the Commission's land use and transportation planning efforts.

5. Mr. Johnson commented on how technology has changed business and specifically construction, reducing the amount of labor required to produce the same amount of product. Mr. Yunker agreed and noted how technology has allowed the Commission to reduce staff, including secretarial and research aide and analyst staff.
6. In response to an inquiry by Mr. Vrakas, Mr. Yunker said that the specific size information for environmental corridors and isolated natural resource areas will be included in these minutes.

[Secretary's Note:

The minimum sizes for environmental corridors and isolated natural resource areas are:

- Primary Environmental Corridors – 200 feet wide, 2 miles long, and 400 acres
- Secondary Environmental Corridors – 1 mile long and 100 acres (no minimum width)
- Isolated Natural Resource Area – 200 feet wide and 5 acres]

7. A discussion ensued regarding rural cluster residential development. Mr. Stoffel stated that five acre rural residential lots result in land too large to mow, and too small to farm. He gave an example of a cluster subdivision, with the same overall density. The example was for a 40 acre parcel, clustering eight residences each on 1½ acre lots, resulting in 28 acres of land potentially preserved for farming.

Mr. Vrakas commented on how well the concept of cluster rural residential development has worked in Waukesha County.

Ms. Greenfield noted the pressures for rural residential development. She also noted that five acre overall density and cluster development does increase the cost of housing, which results in some opposition. She observed that lower density and cluster developments do have environmental benefits.

Ms. Russell noted that most farmland in Walworth County has A-1 zoning requiring a minimum 35 acre parcel size. She added that Walworth County has been able to preserve agricultural lands and natural resources, even though there has been pressure for development. She noted the involvement of the County's towns in the recently completed Walworth County comprehensive plan. She added that the plan did not recommend making conservation (cluster) subdivisions mandatory.

In response to an inquiry from Mr. Weishan, Mr. Yunker said that the purpose of five acre overall density rural residential development is to maintain an area as rural with respect to infrastructure needs, such as transportation, sewer, and water. The alternative of rural development with overall densities of 1 housing unit per acre or 1½ acres would result in an area with potential urban needs for transportation, sewer, and water. However, it would be inefficient to provide urban infrastructure and

services to areas with those overall densities.

There being no further questions or comments, Chairman Schmidt asked Mr. Hahn to present to the Committee the Commission staff's *Urban Stormwater Management Recommendations in the Regional Water Quality Management Plan*. (copy attached to Official Minutes)

Mr. Hahn stated that the purpose of his presentation was to provide an overview on the Commission's recommendations for urban stormwater management in the regional water quality management plan, and to describe the findings of a U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) study entitled "Protecting Water Resources with High Density Development," noting USEPA's conclusion that urban development (four to eight housing units per acre) may better protect water quality, as compared to rural, or sub-urban development (one housing unit per acre).

During Mr. Hahn's presentation, the following questions and comments were made and addressed:

1. In response to an inquiry by Mr. Yunker relative to ways of achieving urban nonpoint source pollution abatement in urban areas that are fully developed, Mr. Hahn responded that measures could include intensive street cleaning, directing street runoff to street medians with rain gardens, green roofs, and addressing parking lot runoff.

Ms. Greenfield noted the need to educate residents on the value of having rain gardens. She also noted that public locations such as schools and libraries may be good opportunities for rain gardens.

2. In response to an inquiry by Mr. Stoffel, Mr. Hahn confirmed that the proposed change by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) to NR 151 is that construction sites must limit the maximum discharge of total suspended solids to no more than five tons per acre per year.
3. In response to an inquiry by Mr. Vrakas relative to the implementation of NR 151, Mr. Hahn stated that WDNR and communities are educating construction contractors and other affected parties on the revised regulations.
4. During Mr. Hahn's presentation on USEPA's study of the effect of development density on water quantity and quality, he explained the study conclusion that higher density residential development may better protect water quality and may result in less runoff is based upon the finding that significantly less of an urban area will be developed--and significantly more of an urban area will remain undeveloped--if an urban area develops at densities of four to eight housing units per acre, as compared to one housing unit per acre.

In response to Mr. Pitts' inquiry, Mr. Hahn responded that the USEPA study was completed about five years ago.

[Secretary's Note:

The USEPA report entitled "Protecting Water Resources with Higher-Density Development" can be found online at epa.gov/smartgrowth/pdf/protect_water_higher_density.pdf.]

5. Ms. Greenfield commented that there will always be people who want to live on large lots, and there is a need to better manage stormwater quantity and quality in those areas. Ms. Russell expressed concern about the chloride discharges attendant to water softeners, noting the increase in chloride levels in

streams and lakes.

6. In response to an inquiry by Mr. Stoffel relative to potential improvements in storm sewers which could reduce nonpoint pollution, Mr. Hahn responded that catch basins and sedimentation/flotation devices can reduce pollution, but they require more maintenance. He noted that the City of Milwaukee has installed some sedimentation/flotation devices, but has found that they are not cost effective.

CORRESPONDENCE/ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chairman Schmidt asked Mr. Yunker if there was any correspondence or announcements. Mr. Yunker reported there was no correspondence and then stated that the next Planning and Research Committee meeting will be held on Tuesday, November 9, 2010. He then said that the Quarterly Full Commission meeting will be in Kenosha County on Wednesday, September 15, 2010.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Committee, on a motion by Mr. Johnson, seconded by Mr. Pitts, and carried unanimously, the meeting was adjourned at 3:43 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kenneth R. Yunker
Deputy Secretary

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