

**MINUTES**

**SOUTHEASTERN WISCONSIN REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION**

**PLANNING AND RESEARCH COMMITTEE**

January 20, 2005

1:30 p.m.

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

Present:

Excused:

Committee Members:

Daniel S. Schmidt, Chairman  
Robert A. Brooks  
Gregory L. Holden  
Leonard R. Johnson  
Michael J. Miklasevich  
Kenneth F. Miller  
James E. Moyer  
David L. Stroik  
Anselmo Villarreal

Anthony F. Balestrieri  
Thomas H. Buestrin  
Paul G. Vrakas

Absent:

Leon T. Dreger  
Kenneth C. Herro  
Lee Holloway

Staff:

Philip C. Evenson	Executive Director
Kenneth R. Yunker	Deputy Director
Loretta Watson	Executive Secretary

**ROLL CALL**

Chairman Schmidt called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m. Roll call was taken and a quorum declared present. He noted that there were two new Commissioners present at the meeting who were not in attendance at the Commission Quarterly Meeting last December, those being Commissioner Anselmo Villarreal from Waukesha County, and Commissioner Leonard R. Johnson from Kenosha County. He welcomed the new Commissioners and asked the other Commissioners to introduce themselves.

## **APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF MEETING OF NOVEMBER 23, 2004**

On a motion by Mr. Holden, seconded by Mr. Moyer, and carried unanimously, the minutes of the meeting of November 23, 2004, were approved as published.

## **CONSIDERATION OF MATERIALS ATTENDANT TO THE FORTHCOMING NEW REGIONAL LAND USE AND REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLANS**

Mr. Evenson noted that a great deal of regional plan updating work is now underway, this being the mid-point of the ten year cycle observed with respect to regional plan making. In particular, he continued, significant activity has been underway for several months attendant to the preparation of updated and extended regional land use and regional transportation system plans. To meet Federal requirements, the updated and extended plans will have a design year of 2035.

For the benefit of the new Commissioners, Mr. Evenson indicated that it has been longstanding Commission practice to bring all Commission documents intended for ultimate Commission adoption as elements of the comprehensive regional plan to the Planning and Research Committee, thereby giving individual Commissioners an opportunity to explore in some depth the technical aspects of the Commission's substantive regional planning work program. Before doing so, however, such materials, in the form of drafts of chapters of Commission planning reports, are thoroughly reviewed by the appropriate Commission advisory committee. He noted that the Commission Advisory Committees on Regional Land Use Planning and Regional Transportation Planning had been active for some time now, with work progressing to the point where those Committees have approved a number of chapters and such chapters are now ready for review and consideration by the Planning and Research Committee.

Mr. Evenson then suggested that perhaps the best way to approach the Planning and Research Committee's consideration of these chapters is to provide an overview briefing through a Power Point presentation by the Commission staff. After a brief discussion, it was the consensus of the Committee that such an approach would be desirable. Mr. Evenson then called upon Kenneth R. Yunker, the Commission's Deputy Director, to provide an overview of the substantive materials included in those chapters of SEWRPC planning reports under consideration at this meeting.

Mr. Yunker then delivered a lengthy presentation attendant to the materials set forth in chapters, as identified below, of SEWRPC Planning Report No. 48, *A Regional Land Use Plan for Southeastern Wisconsin: 2035*, and SEWRPC Planning Report No. 49, *A Regional Transportation System Plan for Southeastern Wisconsin: 2035*. A copy of Mr. Yunker's presentation slides is attached to the minutes as Exhibit A.

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

1. In response to an inquiry by Mr. Moyer relative to rural development pressures, Mr. Yunker indicated that, while not all local units of governments agree, Commission plan recommendations to limit rural residential development to a density of no more than one unit per five acres is becoming relatively well accepted across the Region. Such a development density, especially when coupled with cluster or conservation subdivision development designs, can help significantly to limit development on the rural landscape while responding to development pressures and being cognizant of property rights.

2. In response to an inquiry by Mr. Miller, Mr. Evenson indicated that the Commission's regional planning is broad and systems level in nature. The Commission's planning concepts acknowledge that county and local units of government need to refine and detail Commission plans. With respect to the urban areas of the Region, which are largely governed by incorporated municipalities, there are rarely conflicts between local plans and regional plans. In the more rural areas of the Region, there are times when a local governmental unit cannot come to terms with the basic Commission regional plan recommendation and ends up going its own way in a local plan. This was the case, for example, in the Town of Wheatland in Kenosha County where the Town Plan Commission and Town Board – after two years of intensive effort by the Commission staff – ended up unable to come to terms with Commission land use development recommendations. By contrast, however, the Commission has worked directly with nine of the sixteen towns in Walworth County and in all cases the resultant town lands use plans appropriately refined and detailed the regional land use plan.
3. Mr. Miklasevich noted that a frequent concern over rural land use development involved large three-to-five acre parcels that ended up using far too much land to accommodate a given population. Mr. Yunker concurred with Mr. Miklasevich's observation, noting that for this reason the Commission staff has long promoted clustering and conservation subdivision design techniques where the overall density is the key criterion and where lot sizes are relatively small – no more than one acre – and open space is permanently maintained. Mr. Evenson commented that significant strides in adopting local regulations toward this end are being made, pointing in particular to new regulations in the Town of Caledonia and throughout Walworth County. Mr. Moyer commented that clustering of rural development goes a long way to eliminating the kinds of problems cited by Mr. Miklasevich.
4. In response to an inquiry by Mr. Stroik relative to changes over time in the amount of environmentally sensitive lands in the Region, Mr. Evenson indicated that the Commission measures such lands through aerial photography interpretations every ten years. There are both losses and gains in such lands, with losses typically attributable to urban development and with gains typically attributable to restoration of wetlands that were formerly farmed and reforestation efforts.
5. In response to an inquiry by Mr. Johnson, Mr. Yunker indicated that there had been, over the past years, a very substantial increase in the number of automobiles or light trucks available per household in the Region. Such increases, he noted, correspond to increases in person and vehicle trip making and to declines in carpooling and use of transit.
6. In response to an inquiry by Mr. Villarreal, Mr. Yunker indicated that there is data available by ethnic group attendant to vehicle availability per household and mode of travel to work and that such data would be attached to the minutes of this meeting. Mr. Yunker further indicated that there is a reasonably strong correlation between household income, household vehicle availability, and mode of travel to work.

[Secretary's Note: Three tables setting forth the data requested by Mr. Villarreal are attached as Exhibit B.]

7. Mr. Brooks observed that the trends in traffic congestion and use of public transportation seem to correlate more to personal income than anything else. Given that correlation, he asked, and given rising incomes, is there a need to expand public transportation? Mr. Yunker commented that, indeed, the use of public transportation has little impact on traffic congestion, but that public transportation serves other important needs. These needs include serving that segment of the population that simply doesn't have enough income to afford private automobiles; providing a transportation choice to some segments of the population that can afford automobiles but would prefer to make, in particular, the work trip by another mode; and serving certain high density areas of the Region, such as downtown Milwaukee, the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee campus, and the Milwaukee County Regional Medical Center where it is difficult to meet parking demands.
8. In connection with a discussion about development objectives for the transportation system serving the Region, Mr. Stroik suggested that the text set forth on page 3 of chapter VII of the SEWRPC Planning Report No. 49, be reviewed and possibly revised to indicate that some modifications were indeed made since the last time that the objectives were reviewed. Mr. Yunker agreed with Mr. Stroik's observation and indicated that the revised text would be included in the minutes of the meeting.

[Secretary's Note: A copy of the revised text included on page 3 of chapter VII of SEWRPC Planning Report No. 49 is attached as Exhibit C of the minutes.]

**SEWRPC Planning Report No. 48, A Regional Land Use Plan for Southeastern Wisconsin: 2035; Chapters 1, 2, and 3**

Chairman Schmidt thanked Mr. Yunker for his very informative briefing concerning a substantial amount of material. He then indicated that unless there were further questions or comments, it would be in order for the Committee to take formal action relative to the chapters that had been presented and reviewed attendant to SEWRPC Planning Report No. 48.

After brief further discussion, on a motion by Mr. Miller, seconded by Mr. Moyer, and carried unanimously, Chapter 1, "Introduction"; Chapter 2, "Existing Conditions and Trends"; and Chapter 3, "Review of the Currently Adopted 2020 Regional Land Use Plan," of SEWRPC Planning Report No. 48 were approved for publication.

**SEWRPC Planning Report No. 49, A Regional Transportation System Plan for Southeastern Wisconsin: 2035; Chapters 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 7**

Chairman Schmidt then indicated it would be in order for the Committee to take formal action relative to the chapters that had been presented and reviewed attendant to SEWRPC Planning Report No. 49.

After brief further discussion, on a motion by Mr. Stroik, seconded by Mr. Brooks, and carried unanimously, Chapter 1, "Introduction"; Chapter 2, "Review of the Current Adopted Regional Transportation Plan"; Chapter 3, "Inventory of Transportation Facilities and Services"; Chapter 4, "Travel Habits and Patterns"; Chapter 5, "Anticipated Regional Growth and Change"; and Chapter 7, "Objectives, Principles, and Standards", of SEWRPC Planning Report No. 49 were approved for publication.

**Record of Public Comments: Review and Update of Regional Land Use and Transportation System Plans: Volume 1 – August 4 – September 20, 2004**

Chairman Schmidt then indicated that it would be in order for the Committee to take formal action to accept and place on file the Record of Public Comments concerning the regional land use and transportation system plans as presented to the Committee.

There being no further discussion, on a motion by Mr. Miklasevich, seconded by Mr. Holden, and carried unanimously, the subject Record of Public Comments, August 4 through September 20, 2004, was accepted and placed on file.

**CORRESPONDENCE**

There was no correspondence to be referred to the Committee.

**CONFIRMATION OF NEXT MEETING DATE**

The next meeting of the Planning and Research Committee will be February 17, 2005, at 1:30 p.m. in the Commission offices.

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to come before the Committee, on a motion by Mr. Moyer, seconded by Mr. Miklasevich, and carried unanimously, the meeting was adjourned at 3:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Philip C. Evenson  
Deputy Secretary

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