

Minutes of the Eighth Meeting of the

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE TASK FORCE

DATE: January 27, 2009

TIME: 4:00 p.m.

PLACE: Urban League of Racine and Kenosha, Inc.
718 North Memorial Drive
Racine, Wisconsin

Members Present

Adelene Greene.....	Director, Division of Workforce Development, Chair	Kenosha County
Joette Heckenbach	Cope Services, Ozaukee County	
Nancy Holmlund.....	President, WISDOM Interfaith Coalition	
Lynnette McNeely	Attorney, Law Offices of Thomas J. Awen; NAACP	
Brian Peters.....	Housing Policy Advocate, Independence First	
Yolanda Santos Adams	Director, League of United Latin American Citizens	
Theresa Schuerman.....	Walworth County Bilingual Migrant Worker Outreach	

Guests and Staff Present

Gary K. Korb	Regional Planning Educator, UW-Extension/SEWRPC
Benjamin R. McKay	Senior Planner, SEWRPC
Karyn Rotker.....	Attorney, ACLU of Wisconsin
Kori A. Schneider - Peragine	Program Manager, Community and Economic Development, Metropolitan Milwaukee Fair Housing Council
Kenneth R. Yunker	Executive Director, SEWRPC

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Chairperson Greene called the meeting of the Environmental Justice Task Force to order at 4:10 p.m., welcoming those in attendance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE OCTOBER 14, 2008, MEETING AND NOVEMBER 25, 2008, MEETING

Ms. Greene noted that not enough Task Force members were present to constitute a quorum. Therefore, the minutes of the October 14, 2008, and November 25, 2008, meetings could not be approved or changed; however, she asked if there were any questions or comments. There were none.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Ms. Greene asked whether those in attendance wished to comment on the agenda or other Task Force business. There were none.

SCHEDULE OF 2009 MEETINGS AND MEETING TIME

Mr. Yunker directed the Task Force's attention to the handout entitled Environmental Justice Task Force Tentative 2009 Meeting Schedule (see Attachment 1) and briefly reviewed the schedule. Mr. Yunker

explained that the dates, times, and locations followed the previously established Task Force schedule of meeting on the fourth Tuesday of every other month between 4:00 and 6:00 with locations rotating between different areas of the Region.

Task Force members raised the following discussion points and comments regarding the schedule:

1. Ms. Holmlund asked if the typical meeting locations in the various communities would remain the same, such as HeartLove Place Inc. in Milwaukee. Ms. Heckenbach noted the long distance she traveled to the meeting, and suggested that the meetings could be held in a centralized location to reduce the distance for Task Force members. She suggested that the HeartLove Place Inc. location seemed to be convenient. Mr. Yunker stated that SEWRPC staff could map the address of all Task Force members to determine a location that is most central to all of the members. Ms. Schuerman stated that most members seemed to like the HeartLove location.

Ms. Santos Adams stated that at least once every three meetings the location should be in the Racine or Kenosha area because it often takes an entire afternoon for members located in this area to commute to and attend meetings in other locations around the Region. Mr. Yunker noted that SEWRPC has used a conference room at General Mitchell Airport for meetings in the past, which may serve as a location that is convenient for members from the Racine and Kenosha areas as well as members from other areas of the Region. Mr. Yunker then stated that the next meeting is scheduled for Milwaukee and perhaps it could be held at the airport location if it is available. Ms. Holmlund asked about the availability and cost of parking at the airport location. Mr. Yunker stated that those Task Force members can park in the airport garage and the Commission would have their parking validated.

2. Ms. Schuerman suggested that the November 24, 2009, meeting date should be re-scheduled because it is too close to Thanksgiving. Mr. Peters suggested that the date for that meeting be rescheduled to the first week in December with other Task Force members in agreement. Ms. Greene stated that she has a conflict with the March 24, 2009, date; however, the problem could be resolved by appointing a Vice-Chair who could then chair the meeting on that date. Other members of the Task Force agreed a Vice-Chair should be appointed. Ms. Holmlund volunteered to be appointed Vice-Chair with agreement from the rest of the Task Force members present.
3. Mr. Yunker asked if the 4:00 start time was still convenient for Task Force members. Ms. Holmlund suggested the end time be moved back to 6:15 because the meetings typically run past 6:00. Mr. Yunker stated that a number of start and end times will be sent to Task Force members via the List Serve and meetings can be scheduled for the time frame that is convenient for the greatest number of members. Ms. Greene stated that she would prefer to start later, perhaps at 4:30, and the meeting length should not exceed two hours.
4. Ms. Heckenbach asked how many meetings have not had a quorum and wondered if the reason there seem to be so few meetings with a quorum was because of the membership itself or an inconvenient start time. Mr. Yunker responded that two members have requested to be replaced and that SEWRPC staff will review meeting attendance records and contact those members with inconsistent attendance to ask if they would like to be replaced. Ms. Heckenbach asked if the Task Force will have a voice in appointing replacements. Mr. Yunker stated that the Task Force can make recommendations to the Commission. Mr. Peters stated that replacing members with inconsistent attendance is a good idea.

REVIEW OF BEST ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE PRACTICES

Mr. Yunker stated that SEWRPC staff has contacted the Federal Highway Administration and Federal Transit Administration for information regarding other metropolitan planning organizations that conduct extensive public involvement and outreach programs and plan evaluation activities. The following organizations were explored by SEWRPC based on these referrals: Miami-Dade Metropolitan Planning Organization, Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission, East Central Florida Regional Planning Council, Knox County Metropolitan Planning Commission, and Central Alabama Regional Planning and Development Commission. A report documenting discussions between SEWRPC staff and staff from other organizations regarding public involvement and outreach and plan evaluation efforts, focusing on efforts not currently undertaken by SEWRPC, will be prepared. Ms. Heckenbach asked that links to the organization websites be sent to Task Force members via the list serve.

UPDATE ON THE REGIONAL WATER SUPPLY STUDY

Mr. Yunker stated that a newsletter announcing a series of public informational meetings intended to brief the public on the preliminary recommended regional water supply plan was recently distributed. The public informational meetings were scheduled for sites throughout the Region in January and February and the comment period for the preliminary water supply plan will extend through February 9, 2009. Responses will be developed to the comments received.

The following discussion points and comments were made regarding the regional water supply study:

1. Ms. Santos Adams asked how the public was informed about the public informational meetings and the opportunity to comment on the preliminary regional water supply plan. Mr. Yunker responded that the meetings were advertised in various newspapers throughout the Region, in addition to the newsletter distribution by first class mail. Ms. Santos Adams asked if there were any advertisements in Racine and Kenosha area newspapers. Mr. Korb responded that advertisements were placed in the Insider News, Racine Journal Times, Kenosha News, and Fronteras de la Noticia.
2. Mr. Peters asked about the nature of the feedback received so far. Mr. Yunker stated that the feedback has not been analyzed yet because the comment period is still ongoing. Ms. Greene asked if there will be a report on the comments. Mr. Yunker responded that all comments received will be documented and grouped into common themes with a written response to each group of comments.
3. Ms. Schuerman suggested that the language in advertisements be simplified. Mr. Yunker stated that staff will review the language and try to simplify the language as well as develop longer and shorter advertisement options that could contain varying levels of detail to be run on different days of the week, depending on cost.
4. Ms. Heckenbach stated that the advertisement print is very small and suggested that the Task Force review and provide input on future advertisements. She also asked if the newspapers could do articles regarding the water supply plan and future regional planning efforts. Mr. Yunker stated that press releases are typically developed to encourage newspapers to carry stories. Ms. Santos Adams requested that future advertisements and news releases be distributed to Task Force members via the list serve so members can forward the materials to their contacts in other organizations throughout the Region.

5. Ms. Schuerman asked if the advertisements are printed in other languages. Mr. Yunker stated that SEWRPC brochures are usually printed in Spanish as well as English.
6. Ms. Rotker stated from the audience that the advertisement language should be very basic to appeal to low literacy populations. Ms. Rotker also stated that the Federal Highway Administration has information regarding best practices for developing written materials for low literacy populations.
7. Mr. Peters asked if SEWRPC distributes materials to other organizations that represent low income or minority populations. Mr. Yunker responded that SEWRPC maintains a contact list of organizations that represent low income and minority populations. Ms. Heckenbach requested that the Task Force be allowed to review and comment on the contact list. Ms. Heckenbach then asked if the comment period regarding the regional water supply plan could be extended past February 9, 2009. Mr. Yunker stated that the comment period would probably be extended. Ms. Heckenbach asked if the comments received and the responses to those comments could be distributed to Task Force members. Mr. Yunker replied that they would be distributed.
8. Ms. Greene asked about the locations of the water supply public informational meetings. Mr. Yunker responded that at least one meeting is held in each county and three meetings were held in Milwaukee County. Ms. Holmlund stated that the Ives Grove location, a common Racine location for past SEWRPC public informational meetings, is not very accessible and a new location with public transportation access should be identified for Racine. Mr. Yunker stated that Gateway Technical College is often alternatively used for public informational meetings held in Racine, and Ms. Holmlund stated that either that location or City Hall are preferable. Ms. Schuerman asked if people can submit comments without attending a meeting. Mr. Yunker stated that comments can be submitted by a variety of means, including the SEWRPC website, without attendance.

UPDATE ON THE REGIONAL HOUSING PLAN

Mr. Yunker stated that a preliminary draft of the regional housing plan scope of work was recently mailed to members of the Regional Housing Plan Advisory Committee. Mr. Yunker also stated that the scope of work was e-mailed to Task Force members and distributed to attendees at today's meeting. The first Advisory Committee meeting will be scheduled soon. The date will likely be before the next Task Force meeting. A series of public informational meetings regarding the housing plan scope of work is also expected to be scheduled.

The following discussion points and comments were made regarding the regional housing plan:

1. Ms. Holmlund stated that the Task Force nominated a number of potential candidates for Advisory Committee membership and many nominees were not appointed. She suggested that a thank you letter be sent to those individuals who were nominated by the Task Force but not appointed to the committee. Mr. Yunker stated that a thank you letter and a copy of the scope of work would be sent to those individuals. Mr. Peters asked if appointed Advisory Committee members had been approached to ensure willingness and ability to serve. Mr. Yunker stated that each member had been contacted.
2. Ms. Greene asked how many Task Force nominations were selected for Advisory Committee membership. Mr. Yunker stated that staff will go through the Committee roster and tally the

number of Task Force nominations. Ms. Santos Adams stated that it looks like Milwaukee County is heavily represented. Ms. Holmlund asked if the membership was balanced between the various categories of representation listed in the conceptual framework for membership structure. Mr. Yunker stated that staff will reconstruct the method for membership appointment (see Attachment 2 for the conceptual framework and membership appointment by category of representation). Mr. Yunker then stated that each county in the Region is represented in the membership as well as Federal and State agencies. Mr. Peters suggested that those nominated but not selected be used as Committee alternates.

3. Ms. Rotker stated from the audience that the Advisory Committee membership is comprised of too many government agency officials and too few housing advocacy organization representatives. Mr. Yunker noted that Task Force member Brian Peters will serve on the Advisory Committee, as well as Kori Schneider-Peragine, a regular audience attendee at Task Force meetings. Ms. Rotker also stated the original SEWRPC regional housing plan from 1975 includes a very wide range of housing issues that should be included in the current housing plan. Ms. Rotker then provided SEWRPC staff with a copy of the basic principles of the housing planning process from the 1975 regional housing plan and the table of contents from the Fair Housing Planning Guide developed by HUD, which is available on the HUD website. Mr. Yunker stated that both copies will be attached to the Task Force minutes (see Attachment 3) and distributed to Task Force members via the list serve. Ms. Rotker stated that fair housing issues in the Region may be more complex than just affordability and pointed out the low percentage of the Region's minority population living in the suburbs.
4. Ms. Heckenbach asked if the Task Force could be provided with a timeline for preparation of the housing plan and timelines for preparation of other regional plans. Mr. Yunker stated that staff is currently developing the timeline for preparation of the housing plan and it will be distributed to the Task Force via the list serve. He also stated that the Task Force may be interested in other types of plans that SEWRPC develops such as the transit development plans for Racine and Kenosha Counties. Mr. Peters asked if SEWRPC has enough staff to prepare all of these plans. Mr. Yunker stated that SEWRPC has adequate staff; however, projects must be prioritized and sometimes projects have to wait for staff to become available, given the Commission's flat or declining budget of the last several years.
5. Ms. Holmlund suggested that an expert on sprawl, such as Myron Orfield or David Rusk, could be invited to speak to the Task Force because sprawl affects all regional plans. She also stated that this may be a way for SEWRPC to get in touch with other individuals and organizations with expertise on best land use planning practices.

UPDATE ON SOCIO-ECONOMIC IMPACT ANALYSES

Mr. Yunker stated that socio-economic impact analyses were discussed by the SEWRPC Executive Committee at its last meeting on January 22, 2009. This was the first meeting of the Executive Committee since the last Task Force meeting in November because the Executive Committee meeting scheduled for December was cancelled. Staff and Ms. Greene, a member of the Executive Committee, shared the results of the discussion regarding socio-economic impact analyses from the last Task Force meeting. The Executive Committee directed staff to prepare a request for qualifications relating to a socio-economic impact analysis for the regional land use plan.

The following discussion points and comments were made regarding socio-economic impact analyses:

1. Ms. Schuerman asked if socio-economic impact analyses for SEWRPC plans will be done by SEWRPC staff or an outside consultant. Mr. Yunker stated that SEWRPC will start to address socio-economic impact analyses by preparing a request for qualifications for a consultant to complete an analysis relating to the regional land use plan.
2. Ms. Heckenbach asked if a socio-economic impact analysis will be prepared for the water supply plan. Mr. Yunker stated that the first socio-economic analysis will be prepared for the land use plan, as discussed at the November 25, 2008, meeting. He noted that the land use plan is the basis for all Commission plans. Ms. Heckenbach asked if an analysis could be done for the water supply plan before it is adopted. Mr. Yunker responded that the direction provided by the Executive Committee and from the discussion at the last Task Force meeting was to prepare a socio-economic impact analysis for the regional land use plan, and then to apply the findings to other SEWRPC plans. Virtually all Commission plans are designed to serve the regional land use plan; for example, the regional water supply plan is designed to serve the planned land use pattern recommended by the regional land use plan. Mr. Yunker also stated that work on a request for qualifications will begin shortly.
3. Ms. Holmlund stated that the socio-economic impact analysis should be completed before the water supply plan is adopted because it may be difficult to later change the plan. Mr. Yunker stated that a socio-economic impact analysis prepared with a focus on land use would permit results to be applied to other regional planning efforts. He also stated that the regional land use plan is always evolving and an update of the plan will take place after the 2010 Census. Beginning the discussion of a socio-economic impact analysis now will fit well with this timeline.
4. Ms. Heckenbach referred to page six of the November 25, 2008, meeting minutes and noted that she had re-stated at that meeting that a motion was passed by the Task Force recommending a socio-economic impact analysis be developed for all SEWRPC plans by a consultant. Ms. Heckenbach stated that she recalled a good discussion on this topic and that Task Force members fully supported the motion at the October 14, 2008, meeting.
5. Mr. Peters asked how the decision to do the socio-economic impact analysis in conjunction with the regional land use plan was made at the Executive Committee meeting. Mr. Yunker stated that a summary of previous Task Force discussion was provided to the Committee by himself and Ms. Greene and the Committee then provided the direction that staff should prepare a request for qualifications.
6. Ms. Rotker stated from the audience that the regional water supply plan should not be adopted without a socio-economic impact analysis because of the extensive infrastructure investments that could result from the plan. She stated that there is an adequate supply of water to support the anticipated land use development in the City of Waukesha without the use of Lake Michigan water according to SEWRPC studies; however, in her opinion, the use of Lake Michigan water may support a much greater amount of industrial and commercial development than would otherwise be possible. Mr. Yunker stated that both the number of jobs and population in the City of Waukesha are projected to grow during the regional land use plan design period, regardless of the source of water. Ms. Rotker stated that a socio-economic impact analysis prepared in conjunction with the regional water supply plan will determine if there will be a greater shift in

employment and population based on the water source and if it will cause a disproportionate burden on other portions of the Region.

DISCUSSION OF THE PURPOSE AND FUNCTIONS OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE TASK FORCE AND EVALUATION

Task Force members raised the following discussion points and comments regarding the purpose and evaluation of the Environmental Justice Task Force:

1. Mr. Yunker stated that the work of the Task Force is just getting started. He also stated that the regional housing plan presents the Task Force with its first opportunity to be involved with the preparation of a regional plan from the beginning.
2. Ms. Schuerman stated that it does not seem like very many members use the list serve and asked if anything could be done about this. Ms. Heckenbach suggested that list serve use might increase if more materials are e-mailed between meetings. Mr. Peters stated that he has not used the list serve much in the past, but will try to use it more in the future.
3. Ms. Holmlund stated that there should be regular attendance of Task Force meetings by all members. Mr. Yunker stated that the two members who asked to be removed from the Task Force will be replaced and other members with inconsistent attendance will be contacted. Ms. Holmlund stated that the two members who are stepping down should be replaced by persons who represent the same categories so no groups are under-represented on the Task Force. She also stated that attendance may increase if meetings are more centrally located.
4. Ms. McNeely asked for a review of Task Force recommendations and the extent to which they have been implemented to date. Mr. Yunker responded that such a review will be provided to the Task Force prior to the next meeting.

Mr. Yunker noted the potential for the Task Force to help shape the regional housing plan, because it will be involved from the beginning of the study. Ms. McNeely noted that Mr. Peters is on the Regional Housing Plan Advisory Committee and will be able to express the recommendations of the Task Force. She suggested that each advisory committee could have a member from the Task Force for the same purpose. Ms. Santos Adams stated that a Task Force member on each advisory committee would provide the Task Force with a greater opportunity to make comments on various SEWRPC plans. Mr. Yunker stated that the Racine and Kenosha transit development plans have recently been initiated and there should be opportunities for Task Force member involvement on those committees.

5. Ms. Heckenbach stated that she welcomes the opportunity for Task Force evaluation and suggested that an individual who was involved in the formation of the Task Force, such as Joel Rast, be invited to speak regarding its purpose. She also stated that the discussion at this meeting had been good. Ms. Holmlund suggested that members review the Task Force purpose statement prior to the next meeting.
6. Ms. Greene suggested that attendance might improve if meetings stay on schedule more consistently. She suggested that in the future the agenda should be limited to two or three discussion items. Ms. Schuerman suggested presented materials be provided to the Task Force, but not necessarily at the Task Force meetings.

7. Mr. Peters asked whether the SEWRPC public involvement and outreach manager would be invited to future Task Force meetings. Mr. Yunker responded that the public involvement and outreach manager would help implement Task Force suggestions and be expected to attend future meetings.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND FURTHER PUBLIC COMMENTS

Ms. Greene thanked the Task Force for their active participation, and audience members for their patience. She then asked whether those in attendance wished to comment. The following comments were made:

1. Ms. Rotker stated that she appreciated the opportunity to comment on agenda items during the discussion rather than waiting until the end of the agenda.

ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Greene thanked the Task Force and guests for their time and participation. Mr. Yunker stated that staff will check the availability of the General Mitchell International Airport conference room for the March 24, 2009, meeting scheduled to take place in Milwaukee. Mr. Yunker also suggested that the Task Force vote on the October 14, 2008, and November 25, 2008, meeting minutes electronically, using the list serve. The Task Force members in attendance agreed. With several Task Force members departing, Ms. Greene declared the meeting adjourned at 5:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Benjamin R. McKay
Recording Secretary

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KRY/NMA/GKK/BRM
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