

Minutes of the Fourth Meeting of the

**REGIONAL HOUSING PLAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

DATE: January 20, 2010

TIME: 1:30 p.m.

PLACE: Tommy G. Thompson Youth Center, Banquet Room 2  
State Fair Park  
640 S. 84<sup>th</sup> Street  
West Allis, Wisconsin

Members Present

Julie Anderson ..... Director of Planning and Development, Racine County  
David Cappon ..... Executive Director, Waukesha Housing Authority  
Michael Cotter ..... Director, Land Use and Resource Management, Walworth County  
Damon Dorsey ..... Owner, The Dorsey Group, Milwaukee  
Rob Henken ..... President, Public Policy Forum  
Jeff Labahn..... Director of City Development, City of Kenosha  
J. Scott Mathie ..... Vice President of Government Affairs, Metropolitan Builders Association  
George E. Melcher ..... Director, Kenosha County Planning and Development  
Michael Murphy..... Alderman, City of Milwaukee  
Falamak Nourzad ..... Principal, Continuum Architects & Planners, Milwaukee  
Linda Olson..... Director of the Aging and Disability Resource Center, Washington County  
Antonio M. Pérez..... Executive Director, Housing Authority of the City of Milwaukee  
Brian Peters..... Housing Policy Advocate, IndependenceFirst; EJTF Member  
Kim Plache..... Senior Community Relations Officer, Milwaukee Office of WHEDA  
Maria Prioletta ..... Housing Development Director, Milwaukee Department of City Development  
Welford Sanders..... Executive Director, M. L. King Economic Development Corporation  
Mary Kay Schleiter ..... Associate Professor,  
Department of Sociology, University of Wisconsin-Parkside  
Kori Schneider-Peragine ..... Senior Administrator, Inclusive Communities Program,  
Metropolitan Milwaukee Fair Housing Council  
Dale R. Shaver ..... Director, Waukesha County Department of Parks and Land Use  
Andrew T. Struck..... Director of Planning and Parks,  
Ozaukee County Planning and Parks Department  
Scott Thistle ..... President, Brookstone Home Builders, Waukesha  
John F. Weishan, Jr. .... Supervisor, Milwaukee County Board

Guests and Staff Present

Stephen P. Adams ..... Public Involvement and Outreach Manager, SEWRPC  
Nancy M. Anderson ..... Chief Community Assistance Planner, SEWRPC  
Benjamin R. McKay ..... Principal Planner, SEWRPC  
Laura Million ..... Researcher, Public Policy Forum  
Leo J. Ries..... Program Director, LISC Milwaukee  
Delbert F. Reynolds ..... Field Office Director, Milwaukee Office of HUD  
John Siepman ..... Vice President of Operations, Siepman Realty Corporation  
Becky Steffes ..... Waukesha Housing Trust Fund  
Marne J. Stück ..... Government Affairs Director, Greater Milwaukee Association of Realtors

Kenneth R. Yunker ..... Executive Director, SEWRPC

## **CALL TO ORDER**

SEWRPC Executive Director Ken Yunker called the meeting of the Regional Housing Plan Advisory Committee to order at 1:35 p.m., welcoming those in attendance.

## **APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 23, 2009**

Mr. Yunker asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the September 23, 2009, meeting. Mr. Labahn made a motion to approve the minutes from the September 23, 2009, meeting. Mr. Pérez seconded the motion. Mr. Yunker asked for any discussion on the minutes. Mr. Murphy stated that he was disappointed with a recent newspaper article stating that the City of New Berlin Plan Commission believes affordable housing is not appropriate in its City Center development. He stated that it is disappointing that the City of Milwaukee has an agreement to provide water to the City of New Berlin and New Berlin is still unwilling to provide affordable housing. He also stated that providing affordable housing is a serious issue and not all of the Region's affordable housing should be located in Milwaukee. The regional housing plan should be taken seriously and should not be a plan that sits on the shelf. There being no further discussion, the minutes were approved unanimously by the Committee.

## **PRESENTATION REGARDING THE PUBLIC POLICY FORUM REPORT ENTITLED “GIVE ME SHELTER: RESPONDING TO MILWAUKEE COUNTY'S AFFORDABLE HOUSING CHALLENGES”**

Mr. Yunker introduced Advisory Committee Rob Henken, President of the Public Policy Forum. Mr. Henken directed the Committee's attention to the PowerPoint entitled “*Give Me Shelter: Responding to Milwaukee County's Affordable Housing Challenges*” (see Attachment 1). Mr. Henken stated that there are a few caveats to the study. First, the study's focus is on rental housing in Milwaukee County. Second, much of the data is based on the 2000 Census and does not take into account the recent housing and economic downturn. He then stated that the general finding of the study is that there is an adequate supply of affordable rental housing in Milwaukee County; however, the lowest income households in the County have an insufficient income for the existing low-cost rental housing. Mr. Henken then reviewed several policy options to address the issue. The following discussion points and comments were made regarding the presentation:

1. Ms. Schneider-Peragine asked if Section 42 Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) units are included in the inventory of publicly assisted rental housing units in Milwaukee County. Mr. Henken stated that they are included.
2. Mr. Peters asked if consolidating the County and City Section 8 voucher programs is considered under the study. Mr. Henken stated that one of the study policy options is to consider consolidating the two programs.
3. Mr. Yunker asked Mr. Henken if there are any local examples of Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFI) involved in affordable housing. Mr. Henken stated few of Milwaukee's CDFIs fund affordable housing, although Legacy Bank has been involved in developing affordable housing. Mr. Yunker asked why fewer CDFIs fund affordable housing in Milwaukee compared to other areas. Mr. Henken stated that the need for affordable housing is considerably less in Milwaukee compared to an area such as Chicago, where there is more CDFI

funding of affordable housing, and there have been past failures that may be discouraging to local CDFIs. Mr. Pérez stated that the mission of most local CDFIs is small business development.

4. Mr. Murphy asked if Milwaukee County awards Section 8 Vouchers in areas of the County outside the City of Milwaukee. Mr. Henken stated that the County does award vouchers to areas outside the City. Ms. Schneider-Peragine stated that it is about an 80/20 split, with 80 percent of the vouchers awarded inside the City of Milwaukee. Mr. Cappon suggested that the ratio may be influenced by consumer choice. Mr. Pérez stated that the ratio is also influenced by landlord participation in the program. Mr. Murphy stated that the concentration of publicly assisted housing in areas without job opportunities has gotten worse since the economic downturn and affordable housing needs to be provided in areas of the Region with greater job opportunities.
5. Mr. Cappon stated the lack of landlord participation, rental units, and expense of rental units in comparison to the subsidy offered through the voucher program contribute to the lack of households receiving subsidies in outlying areas of the Region. He stated that when a voucher is awarded it can be used in other jurisdictions and households often move to areas where it is easier to use the voucher. Mr. Cappon also stated that Waukesha is an example of consolidating programs (the programs in the Cities of Waukesha and New Berlin and Waukesha County have been consolidated); however, HUD captures any savings on administration and the money is not available for additional vouchers. In addition, program costs have gone up since the economic downturn because of job losses and the resulting loss of income for program participants. The program is stressed further because no additional vouchers have been made available for eight years.
6. Mr. Murphy stated that the City of Milwaukee housing trust fund has been able to leverage \$22,000,000 in development with a small amount of funding. He also stated that in the future there may be national housing trust fund legislation. Mr. Weishan stated that Milwaukee County has created a special needs housing trust fund.
7. Mr. Yunker asked if the Section 8 voucher program will continue to remain flat. Mr. Cappon stated that the program works well but it is costly. He stated that the number of households served by the voucher program in Waukesha County has fallen from 1,600 to 1,100 over the last eight years. Mr. Pérez stated that the only new vouchers recently have been for housing for persons with special needs.
8. Mr. Yunker stated that the issues analyzed in this study will carry over to the Regional Housing Plan and will be analyzed in the broader context of the entire Southeastern Wisconsin Region.

#### **PRESENTATION REGARDING THE BUILD GREEN WISCONSIN PROGRAM**

Mr. Yunker introduced Advisory Committee member J. Scott Mathie, Vice President of Government Affairs, Metropolitan Builders Association. Mr. Mathie stated that the Build Green Wisconsin Program will provide guidelines and a certification for green development. He introduced John Siepman, Vice President of Operations, Siepman Realty Corporation, and Scott Thistle, President, Brookstone Homebuilders and Advisory Committee member to speak about green residential projects in the Region and how they can be developed at a low cost.

Mr. Siepman directed the Committee's attention to the PowerPoint entitled "*Siepman Realty Corporation*" (see Attachment 2). The focus of Mr. Siepman's presentation included typical features

found in conservation subdivisions, advantages of conservations subdivisions, and how to encourage the development of conservations subdivisions. The following discussion points and comments were made regarding the presentation:

1. Mr. Peters asked who is responsible for the maintenance of open space within a conservation subdivision. Mr. Siepmann stated that a homeowners association is typically responsible for the maintenance of the common open space. Mr. Peters asked if the common open space in a conservation subdivision is open to the public. Mr. Siepmann stated that public access varies. The common open spaces are usually privately held by the homeowners association with either public access or with private access for the residents of the subdivision. In some cases the homeowners association may lease portions of the open space to soccer leagues or other organizations.
2. Ms. Plache asked if multi-family and two-family components can be incorporated into conservation subdivisions. Mr. Siepmann stated that typically they are located on the edge of the development and act as buffers, if they are incorporated into a conservation subdivision.
3. Mr. Murphy asked where an example project is located. Mr. Siepmann stated that most of the Siepmann Realty Corporation projects are located in Waukesha County and there is a list of the projects on the company's website at [www.siepmannrealty.com](http://www.siepmannrealty.com).
4. Mr. Cappon asked why it is more difficult to provide green space in a subdivision when the lot size is smaller than 10,000 square feet. Mr. Siepmann stated that the high cost of land in areas with higher densities makes providing green space prohibitive. He also stated that local land use plans and ordinances may not allow conservation style subdivisions. Mr. Yunker stated that a review of local government zoning ordinances will be one of the agenda items for the next Advisory Committee meeting. Mr. Yunker then asked if residential projects that preserve environmental features can be developed in urban settings. Mr. Siepmann stated that it is possible; however, vertical development would probably be necessary. Mr. Murphy asked if Middleton Hills is a good example. Mr. Siepmann stated that Middleton Hills is more of a traditional neighborhood development.

Mr. Thistle directed the Committee's attention to the PowerPoint entitled "*Responsible Options for an Affordable Green Future*" (see Attachment 3). The focus of Mr. Thistle's presentation included an introduction to the options for building and developing affordable green subdivisions, including green home construction options, the costs associated with green subdivision construction, local case studies, and examples of advanced energy features. Mr. Thistle also emphasized the need to provide housing that is affordable to families with middle income earnings. The following discussion points and comments were made regarding the presentation:

1. Mr. Melcher asked if advanced green features for homes typically need to be replaced before their cost is made up in yearly energy savings. Mr. Thistle stated that the lower cost features, such as low flow faucets, typically do not need to be replaced before the cost is made up; however, high cost features, such as solar panels, will typically need replacement before the cost is made up in energy savings.
2. Ms. Schneider-Peragine asked what typically prevents the construction of higher-density residential developments. Mr. Thistle stated that some local governments do not support higher density development and do not provide for higher densities in their zoning ordinances. Ms.

Prioletta asked if it is true that higher-density residential development does not hurt a community's tax base. Mr. Thistle stated that higher-density development does not hurt a community's tax base if the community has existing urban density. Mr. Yunker stated that a common argument against allowing smaller lots and smaller house sizes is that more financial burden will be placed on the local school system. He noted that the 1975 regional housing plan included a recommendation to fund schools through a means other than property tax.

3. Mr. Cappon stated that the perception regarding rental housing is that it does not contribute enough to schools through property tax. Communities often restrict rental units from having three or more bedrooms because of concerns regarding the possible increase in school age children. Ms. Prioletta noted that the National Home Builders Association prepared a report regarding the costs and benefits of higher-density housing. Mr. Yunker stated that the report will be attached to the minutes (see Attachment 4). Mr. Thistle stated that communities with only residential development typically have the most concerns regarding their tax base and that mixed use, commercial, and industrial development can help offset the residential property tax burden.
4. Mr. Melcher stated density must be appropriate to the community, for example, high density residential development is not appropriate for areas without urban services such as public sewer and water service. Mr. Yunker agreed that it is important to provide the necessary services required for urban density development. Mr. Peters stated that from the standpoint of persons with disabilities, high density residential development is preferable because public transportation and pedestrian facilities are not typically provided at lower densities.

### **REVIEW AND DISCUSSION ON PRELIMINARY DRAFT CHAPTER III, "PLANS AND PROGRAMS RELATED TO HOUSING IN THE REGION," OF THE REGIONAL HOUSING PLAN**

Mr. Yunker stated the two-hour time reserved for the meeting was over and requested that Committee members provide comments regarding the draft Chapter III via the list serve prior to the next meeting. Committee review of the chapter will be placed on the agenda for the next meeting. Mr. Peters requested that the number of presentations during a meeting be limited in the future to allow more time for discussion regarding draft chapters of the regional housing plan.

### **DISCUSSION OF 2010 MEETING DATES**

Mr. Yunker briefly reviewed the 2010 meeting timeline (see Attachment 5) and stated that comments regarding Chapter III will be reviewed at the March 24, 2010, meeting as well as Part I of Chapter IV, "*Market-Based Housing*," of the regional housing plan. Part I will include an inventory of existing housing stock in the Region and a review of local government zoning ordinances and other policies that impact residential density.

### **CORRESPONDENCE AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Mr. Yunker stated that no written public comments were received. Ms. Schneider-Peragine asked if a 10 minute public comment period could be added to future Advisory Committee agendas. There were no objections from the Committee. Mr. Yunker stated that a public comment item will be added to the beginning of the Committee agenda starting at the March 24, 2010, meeting.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Mr. Yunker thanked the Committee members and guests for their time and participation and declared the meeting adjourned at 3:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Benjamin R. McKay  
Recording Secretary

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