

MINUTES

SOUTHEASTERN WISCONSIN REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

PLANNING AND RESEARCH COMMITTEE

Tuesday, June 1, 2010

1:32 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
Robert W. Pitts
John Rogers
Nancy Russell
David L. Stroik
Paul G. Vrakas
John F. Weishan, Jr.

Brian Dranzik
William E. Johnson
Mary A. Kacmarcik

Staff:

Kenneth R. Yunker
Elizabeth A. Larsen
Donald M. Reed
Debra A. D'Amico

Executive Director
Business Manager
Chief Biologist
Executive Secretary

ROLL CALL

Chairman Schmidt called the meeting to order at 1:32 p.m. Roll call was taken and a quorum was declared present. Mr. Yunker noted for the record that Commissioners Dranzik, Johnson, and Kacmarcik had asked to be excused.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF MEETING OF FEBRUARY 23, 2010

Chairman Schmidt asked if there were any changes or additions to the February 23, 2010, meeting minutes. On a motion by Mr. Stroik, seconded by Mr. Vrakas, and carried unanimously, the minutes of the meeting of February 23, 2010, were approved as published.

CONSIDERATION OF SOUTHEASTERN WISCONSIN REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION MEMORANDUM, REVIEW, UPDATE AND REAFFIRMATION OF THE YEAR 2035 REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN

Chairman Schmidt asked Mr. Yunker to review with the Committee the SEWRPC Memorandum, “*Review, Update and Reaffirmation of the Year 2035 Regional Transportation Plan*” (copy attached to Official Minutes).

Mr. Yunker gave an overview of the regional transportation plan update noting that a major review and reevaluation of the regional transportation plan with new census, land use, and travel survey data was initiated in 2002 and was completed in 2006 and resulted in Commission adoption of the year 2035 regional transportation plan. He stated that Federal laws and regulations require that every four years the regional transportation plan be reviewed, reaffirmed, and amended as needed. He added that this review of the year 2035 regional transportation plan included a review of the continued validity of the year 2035 plan forecasts, a review of the trends in performance of the regional transportation system, a review of the implementation of the regional transportation plan over the past four years, and the recommendation of a number of proposed amendments to the regional transportation plan resulting from State, county and local planning and engineering conducted over the past four years. Mr. Yunker noted that the report, and all proposed amendments to the regional transportation plan, had been reviewed and approved by the Commission’s Advisory Committee on Regional Transportation Planning. Mr. Yunker added that an additional amendment reviewed and approved by the Advisory Committee was to add to the transit element of the plan the proposed downtown streetcar line in the City of Milwaukee. He noted that this line had been shown in the 2035 plan as a potential fixed guideway transit line undergoing detailed corridor study. The corridor study had now been completed, and the Wisconsin Center District and City of Milwaukee had determined to implement the streetcar line, beginning with preliminary engineering.

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

1. Mr. Weishan suggested that text should be added to more clearly state that in the absence of dedicated local transit funding, the planned improvement and expansion of public transit will not occur, and transit service will continue to be reduced. Mr. Yunker responded that this text will be added to the portions of the report which describe the transit element of the plan.
2. In response to an inquiry by Mr. Rogers, Mr. Yunker stated that the City of Milwaukee would have the responsibility for implementing the streetcar line.
3. In response to an inquiry by Ms. Russell, Mr. Yunker stated that the streetcars would be powered by electricity from overhead wires and will run on rails. A discussion ensued on the transit corridor study in downtown Milwaukee conducted by the Wisconsin Center District. Mr. Weishan suggested that the text describing the corridor study should include the identification of the other alternatives considered including guided electric powered buses. Mr. Yunker stated that the discussion of the corridor study in the report will be expanded to include an identification of the range of alternatives considered.
4. Ms. Russell stated that during the preparation of the Walworth County comprehensive plan in 2009, a number of towns in Walworth County were opposed to some of the planned off-street bicycle paths in their towns. Mr. Yunker stated that the plan maps and text will be revised to specifically identify the bicycle paths which are opposed by the towns, and to indicate that the review and update of the Walworth County Park and Open Space plan in 2011 is expected to reexamine and amend the proposed off-street bicycle paths in Walworth County, and the updated County Park and Open Space Plan will

then amend the off-street bicycle path element of the regional transportation plan.

5. Mr. Rogers indicated that the City of Milwaukee and Milwaukee County have significant traffic congestion problems, and there does not appear to be agreement with what the Commission is proposing to address that congestion. Mr. Yunker noted that the analyses under the regional transportation planning effort concluded that traffic congestion may be expected to about double over the next 25 years if no action is taken, and if action is limited to the public transit expansion and transportation systems and demand management actions in the regional plan, only slightly less than a doubling of traffic congestion is projected. If the entire regional plan is implemented, including proposed freeway and surface arterial capacity expansion, it is projected that the doubling in future traffic congestion may be avoided, and future congestion levels would remain at current levels. Mr. Rogers stated that it is important to state these conclusions when presenting the recommendations of the regional transportation plan.

There being no further discussion, a motion to recommend the SEWRPC Staff Memorandum, *Review, Update and Reaffirmation of the Year 2035 Regional Transportation Plan* for its adoption by the full Commission with the changes to the report identified by the Committee was made by Mr. Pitts, seconded by Ms. Greenfield, and carried unanimously.

CONSIDERATION OF RECOMMENDED PLAN (SECTION 10) OF THE AMENDMENT TO SOUTHEASTERN WISCONSIN REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION REPORT NO. 42, NATURAL AREAS AND CRITICAL SPECIES HABITAT PROTECTION AND MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR THE SOUTHEASTERN WISCONSIN REGION

Chairman Schmidt asked Dr. Reed to review with the Committee the Recommended Plan (Section 10) of the *Amendment to Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission Report No. 42, Natural Areas and Critical Species Habitat Protection and Management Plan for the Southeastern Wisconsin Region* (copy attached to Official Minutes).

Dr. Reed gave a brief overview of the effort to update the regional natural areas and critical species habitat protection plan. He provided an overview of the recommendation of the preliminary recommended plan, a summary of the public input received on the preliminary plan, and a summary of the final recommended plan. He highlighted the changes made in the preliminary plan as a result of the comment received.

In response to an inquiry by Ms. Greenfield, relative to the extent that local land trusts were involved in the preparation of the plan, and the funding sources available for the protection of natural areas, Dr. Reed responded that land trusts were involved in the preparation of the plan, including being members of the plan advisory committee. Dr. Reed then noted some of the ways projects are funded, including Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources stewardship funding, and county funding. He noted that, in some cases, landowners donate their land, and in others, seek guidance on the proper management of their land.

There being no further questions or comments, it was moved by Mr. Rogers, seconded by Mr. Vrakas and carried unanimously, to approve for publication this recommended plan (Section 10) of the *Amendment to Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission Report No. 42, Natural Areas and Critical Species Habitat Protection and Management Plan for the Southeastern Wisconsin Region* 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

After a number of Committee members noted that they would need to leave the meeting shortly, it was moved by Mr. Pitts, and seconded by Ms. Greenfield and carried unanimously to postpone the 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 to the next Planning and Research Committee meeting.

CORRESPONDENCE/ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chairman Schmidt asked Mr. Yunker if there was any correspondence or announcements. Mr. Yunker reported there was no correspondence or announcements.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Committee, on a motion by Mr. Rogers, seconded by Mr. Holden, and carried unanimously, the meeting was adjourned at 2:56 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kenneth R. Yunker
Deputy Secretary

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