

Minutes of the Twenty Sixth Meeting of the  
**ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE TASK FORCE**

DATE: January 17, 2013  
TIME: 4:00 p.m.  
PLACE: Independence*First*  
540 South 1<sup>st</sup> Street  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Members Present

Ella Dunbar ..... Program Services Manager, Social Development Commission, Milwaukee  
Jedd Lapid ..... Regional Chief Development Officer,  
American Red Cross of Eastern Wisconsin  
Brian Peters ..... Housing Policy Advocate, Independence*First*  
Wally Rendon ..... Member Education/Outreach Representative,  
Racine Educator's Credit Union; former Racine Police Officer

Guests and Staff Present

Stephen P. Adams ..... Public Involvement and Outreach Manager, SEWRPC  
Nancy M. Anderson ..... Chief Community Assistance Planner, SEWRPC  
Catherine Madison ..... UW-Milwaukee Center for Economic Development  
Benjamin R. McKay ..... Principal Planner, SEWRPC  
Karyn Rotker ..... ACLU of Wisconsin  
Kenneth R. Yunker ..... Executive Director, SEWRPC

**CALL TO ORDER**

Mr. Yunker called the meeting of the Environmental Justice Task Force to order at 4:10 p.m., welcoming those in attendance. Mr. Yunker noted that both Task Force Chair Adelene Green and Vice-Chair Nancy Holmlund cannot attend and Ms. Greene asked him to chair the meeting.

**APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES OF OCTOBER 9, 2012**

Mr. Yunker noted that not enough Task Force members were present to constitute a quorum. He noted that the minutes cannot be approved without a quorum; however, members present can still provide comments on the minutes. Mr. Peters stated that staff did a good job on the minutes. There were no other comments.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Mr. Yunker asked if there were any public comments on the agenda or other Task Force business. There were none.

## **REVIEW OF THE OUTCOME OF PUBLIC MEETINGS HELD IN NOVEMBER-DECEMBER 2012**

Mr. Yunker asked Ms. Anderson of the Commission staff to review the outcome of public meetings held in November-December 2012 regarding the preliminary recommendations of the regional housing plan and socio-economic impact analysis (SEI). Ms. Anderson stated that the preliminary housing plan recommendations were approved by the Regional Housing Plan Advisory Committee in July 2012 and by the Commission's Planning and Research Committee in September 2012. She stated that nine public meetings were then held between November 13, 2012, and December 6, 2012, with a public comment period extending through December 14. Three of the meetings were held in Milwaukee County and one meeting was held in each of the other Counties in the Region. Meetings were publicized through paid advertisements in newspapers. News releases were also sent to newspapers, radio stations, and television stations throughout the Region and a meeting notice was run on the Milwaukee City Channel. In addition, a letter regarding the preliminary plan and meeting schedule was sent by Steve Adams of the Commission staff to about 90 organizations across the Region that represent environmental justice populations. There were 71 attendees at the public meetings.

Ms. Anderson stated that a meeting with County and local planners was held on December 18, 2012. The focus of the meeting was on the preliminary recommendations and job/housing balance analysis. The public comment period was extended through December 21 for those in attendance at the planners' meeting. She noted the importance of obtaining input from the planners because they will implement many of the plan recommendations. She also noted that a record of public comments was prepared, which was distributed to Task Force members. The record of public comments includes a summary of public comments received from the public meetings and planners' meeting, and a response to the comments. It also includes a copy of written comments received, copies of the presentations given by Commission staff on the preliminary plan and by UW-Milwaukee staff on the draft SEI at the public meetings, copies of newspaper ads and articles, copies of newsletters and brochures summarizing the plan, and related materials. A summary of the planners' meeting and the letter to environmental justice organizations are also included in the record of public comments. Ms. Anderson stated that 14 comments were received, which were generally favorable with a few suggestions for revisions or additions to the preliminary recommendations.

Ms. Anderson then asked the Task Force members to turn their attention to the revised draft of Chapter XII, *Recommended Housing Plan for the Region*, which was distributed to Task Force members. She stated that major updates to the chapter begin on page XII-42 and include a brief summary of suggested revisions to the preliminary recommendations from the SEI, a summary of public comments and SEWRPC's responses, and proposed final recommendations. She also noted a new section that sets forth plan conclusions beginning on page XII-65. The following discussion points and comments were made on Chapter XII:

1. Ms. Anderson stated the SEI concluded that none of the preliminary recommendations would be expected to have a negative impact on environmental justice populations. Of the 47 preliminary recommendations, the analysis determined that 33 would be expected to have a significantly positive impact and 11 would be expected to have a positive impact. The impacts of three preliminary recommendations were determined to be neutral. Ms. Dunbar asked if "significantly positive impact" and "positive impact" are defined in the plan. Ms. Anderson responded that they are defined in Appendix K, which provides a more detailed summary of the SEI, and the definitions will be added to Chapter XII on page XII-42.

2. Mr. Peters referred to proposed final recommendation No. 5a under Affordable Housing and asked if local governments have control over restrictive covenants placed on a development. Ms. Anderson responded that local governments do not have total authority over covenants. Ms. Dunbar asked if covenants are public record. Ms. Anderson responded that covenants are recorded in the county office of the register of deeds.
3. Mr. Peters referred to proposed final recommendation No. 11 under Affordable Housing and stated that a property maintenance ordinance may have a negative impact on low-income households. Ms. Anderson responded that the recommendation includes the use of Community Development Block Grant or other funds to assist low- and moderate-income households in making needed home repairs.
4. Ms. Anderson referred to proposed final recommendation No. 4 under Job/Housing Balance and noted that five comments opposing the recommendation had been received. She noted that there is a concern that any restriction in the formation of new Tax Increment Financing (TIF) districts will hinder economic development efforts in cities and villages across the State. SEWRPC staff's response is that a community with a job/housing imbalance would be able to create a new TIF district if State TIF legislation is amended as proposed under the recommendation. The recommendation calls for a community with an imbalance to identify steps in the TIF proposal that would be taken to reduce the imbalance. She stated that staff does not suggest any changes to the recommendation. Mr. Peters stated that County and local government representatives on the Regional Housing Plan Advisory Committee have expressed concern regarding this recommendation; however, other representatives, including himself, support the recommendation.
5. Mr. Peters referred to proposed final recommendation No. 3 under Accessible Housing and suggested changing "Department of Health Services" to "State agency." Ms. Anderson noted that the existing language in the recommendation refers to the Department of Health Services or a State agency.
6. Mr. Yunker referred to the addition of Part 4, Conclusions, and noted that it was added in response to Ms. Dunbar's previous request to prepare a statement of why implementing the plan recommendations would be good for the Region. He also noted that the Conclusions section has been prepared as a separate handout, which was distributed to Task Force members.

#### **CONTINUED DISCUSSION OF THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC IMPACT ANALYSIS (SEI) OF THE REGIONAL HOUSING PLAN**

Mr. Yunker stated that Ms. Madison of the UW-Milwaukee Center for Economic Development staff previously reviewed the preliminary findings of the SEI at the October 9, 2012, Task Force meeting. Mr. Yunker then noted that the final chapters of the SEI report have been distributed to the Task Force members, including Chapter 8, *Environmental Justice and Public Participation*, and Chapter 9, *Summary and Conclusions*. He asked Ms. Madison to review Chapters 8 and 9 of the SEI report. The following comments and discussion points were made during the review:

1. Ms. Dunbar suggested working with other organizations in areas of the Region where turnout to public meetings has been low, perhaps by inclusion on the agenda of another meeting. She noted that members of the public may not know why regional planning issues are relevant, so inclusion on a familiar agenda may help. Mr. Adams of the Commission staff noted that there are frequently public meetings on issues such as housing developments using Low Income Housing

Tax Credits that Commission staff could attend. Mr. Rendon stated that it is important to use venues that are familiar to local residents, such as churches, to reach the target audience. Mr. Yunker noted that Mr. Adams has attended over 300 meetings with 250 organizations and will continue to discuss regional planning issues with organizations throughout the Region.

2. Ms. Dunbar stated that social media could be used to reach young adults. Mr. Rendon noted that many people have access to social media through smart phones, including people previously without internet access.
3. Mr. Peters noted that he conducted extensive outreach to groups Independence*First* works with, but there was still low attendance at the regional housing plan public meeting held at Independence*First*.
4. Ms. Dunbar suggested presenting aspects of regional planning issues that impact daily lives to create greater interest. Ms. Madison noted that the turnout for the regional water supply plan SEI public meetings was low despite a controversial component. Mr. Peters suggested using Facebook to obtain public input on regional plans. He suggested posting smaller pieces for comment that would not be overwhelming.

After the discussion of Chapters 8 and 9 of the SEI report, Mr. Yunker asked each Task Force member to indicate whether they were in agreement with the SEI and its findings with respect to the housing plan recommendations.

1. Mr. Peters stated that he appreciates the suggested revisions to the preliminary housing plan recommendations resulting from the SEI findings and he thought UWM staff did a good job.
2. Ms. Dunbar noted that the regional housing plan includes extensive data and stated that she appreciates the work involved in producing the plan.
3. Mr. Lapid stated that he agrees with Ms. Dunbar that the housing plan turned out well.
4. Mr. Rendon stated that he agrees with Ms. Dunbar and Mr. Lapid that the outcomes of the housing plan and SEI are good; however, he did miss some of the discussion during the preparation of the plan and the SEI.
5. Mr. Peters noted that the Task Force had previously requested a section in the SEI devoted to more specific impacts of failing to implement housing plan recommendations. Mr. Yunker noted that UWM staff is still working on the final draft of Chapter 9, which will include this discussion (see Attachment 1 for this section of Chapter 9). Ms. Madison noted that the discussion will focus on key issues, such as zoning. Ms. Dunbar noted that the lawsuit against the City of New Berlin is a good example of the cost to a community if regulations are not followed.
6. Mr. Yunker noted that Commission staff recently made presentations on the housing plan to the Waukesha County Business Alliance and the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel Editorial Board, which were both well received. Mr. Yunker stated that the Journal Sentinel staff noted that SEWRPC had previously prepared a statement of why public transit is good for the Region and asked if a similar piece had been prepared for the housing plan. Mr. Yunker noted that a statement has been prepared for the regional housing plan and is reflected in the Conclusions section of Chapter XII.

7. Mr. Yunker stated that staff will contact Task Force members not in attendance for their reaction to the SEI findings and the proposed final recommendations of the housing plan.

#### **UPDATE REGARDING TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM PLANNING**

Mr. Yunker asked the Task Force members to turn their attention to the handout titled "Schedule for Reevaluation of Regional Land Use and Transportation Plans," which was distributed to Task Force members (see Attachment 2). He stated that work was initiated in 2012 with the collection of inventory data and the initiation of work on population and employment forecasts. Work on the forecasts will be finalized in early 2013 and work will be initiated on designing three land use and transportation scenarios, which will be tested as part of the planning process. Scenario testing will be completed and the preliminary regional land use and transportation plans will be prepared in 2014. A socio-economic impact analysis of the preliminary plans will also be conducted in 2014. The final plan documents are expected to be completed in 2015.

Mr. Yunker stated that the Task Force will be involved in the planning process. Mr. Peters asked if the Task Force will have an opportunity to comment on the proposed extension of the Lake Parkway. He stated that the extension is unnecessary given the improvements to IH-94. Mr. Yunker responded that Task Force members may comment at any time. He stated that the Wisconsin Department of Transportation has indicated it does not intend to move the project into preliminary engineering at this time. He noted that the Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors voted 17 to 1 to adopt a resolution requesting that the Commission amend the adopted year 2035 regional transportation system plan to include an extension of the Lake Parkway. Mr. Peters asked if there will be an analysis of the impact of the proposed extension on environmental justice populations. Mr. Yunker responded that it would occur during the reevaluation of the regional land use and transportation plans.

#### **NEXT MEETING DATE**

Mr. Yunker stated that the next meeting date will be in mid-April in keeping with the quarterly meeting schedule. He stated that staff will distribute a list of possible dates to Task Force members.

#### **FURTHER PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Mr. Yunker asked whether anyone in attendance had additional comments. The following comments were made:

1. Ms. Rotker stated that she will not be able to attend the January 23, 2013, Regional Housing Plan Advisory Committee meeting and would like the comments she makes here to be conveyed to the Advisory Committee.
2. Ms. Rotker complimented UWM staff on the SEI report and noted the discussion of issues that contribute to segregation in the Region in Chapter 9. She stated that requirements for recipients of certain forms of Federal funding to engage in affirmative marketing may be helpful in reducing segregation. She noted examples of affirmative marketing such as distributing notices of housing availability to neighborhood groups in areas with a high concentration of minority populations.
3. Ms. Rotker referred to proposed final recommendation No. 8 under Job/Housing Balance and suggested eliminating the "Milwaukee Urbanized Area" language from the recommendation. Mr. Yunker responded that the Milwaukee Urbanized Area (MUA) is the only urbanized area in the

Region with a direct allocation from the Federal Highway Administration of Surface Transportation Program (STP) funding and SEWRPC works with local governments through the MUA Advisory Committee to establish criteria for projects to receive STP funds. Mr. Yunker stated that a meeting was held with the MUA Advisory Committee and there was resistance to changing the project selection guidelines, including from City of Milwaukee representatives. Mr. Yunker stated that SEWRPC would continue to meet with the MUA Advisory Committee and report the results to the other urbanized area Advisory Committees and encourage them to consider similar revised guidelines. He stated that the recommendation would be revised to reflect this suggestion (see Attachment 3).

4. Ms. Rotker referred to the maps included in the PowerPoint presentation prepared by Commission staff and noted that the rapid bus routes that offer reverse commute service are shown the same as those that offer only traditional commute service. She suggested revising any applicable maps in the housing plan to show the two differently (see Attachment 4 for the revised maps).
5. Ms. Rotker suggested that SEWRPC public outreach could be improved by conducting outreach activities in public areas with high foot traffic. She also suggested simplifying outreach materials. She noted the Federal Highway Administration has developed a handbook that outlines how to conduct public outreach and prepare materials. The handbook is available at [www.fhwa.dot.gov/hep/lowlim/webbook.pdf](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/hep/lowlim/webbook.pdf). She noted that there were 100 attendees at the transportation forums held in Milwaukee in early December 2012. She stated that volunteers distributed flyers for the forums on Milwaukee County Transit System buses. She noted that she received feedback during the forums that SEWRPC's on-bus travel surveys were difficult to understand.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

Mr. Yunker thanked everyone for attending and declared the meeting adjourned at 5:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Benjamin R. McKay  
Recording Secretary

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