

Minutes of the Twenty Ninth Meeting of the
ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE TASK FORCE

DATE: November 5, 2013
TIME: 4:30 p.m.
PLACE: Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District (MMSD)
General Commission Room
260 W. Seeboth Street
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Members Present

Adelene Greene..... Director of Workforce Development, Kenosha County
Chair
Yolanda Adams.....President and CEO, Urban League of Racine and Kenosha
Tyrone Dumas..... Administrative Assistant and Educational Consultant, Growing Power
Ella Dunbar..... Program Services Manager, Social Development Commission, Milwaukee
Nancy Holmlund..... Past President, Racine Interfaith Coalition
Jedd Lapid..... Regional Chief Development Officer,
American Red Cross of Eastern Wisconsin
Lynnette McNeelyLegal Redress Chair, Waukesha County NAACP
Jackie Schellinger Indian Community School
Theresa Schuerman..... Walworth County Bilingual Migrant Worker Outreach
Wallace White..... Principal/CEO, W2EXCEL

Guests and Staff Present

Stephen P. Adams Public Involvement and Outreach Manager, SEWRPC
Ann Dee AllenSenior Public Involvement and Outreach Specialist, SEWRPC
Nancy M. Anderson..... Chief Community Assistance Planner, SEWRPC
Christopher T. HiebertChief Transportation Engineer, SEWRPC
Benjamin R. McKayPrincipal Planner, SEWRPC
Kevin J. Muhs Senior Transportation Planner, SEWRPC
Kenneth R. Yunker Executive Director, SEWRPC

CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Greene called the meeting of the Environmental Justice Task Force to order at 4:30 p.m., welcoming those in attendance. Ms. Greene noted that two new members were added to the Task Force and asked members and Commission staff to introduce themselves.

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES OF APRIL 16, 2013, AND JULY 30, 2013

Ms. Greene asked for a motion to approve past minutes. Mr. Lapid moved and Mr. White seconded approval of the Environmental Justice Task Force meeting minutes of April 16, 2013, and July 30, 2013. There was no discussion. The motion was approved unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

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

UPDATE ON THE REGIONAL HOUSING PLAN

Ms. Greene asked Mr. Yunker to provide the Task Force with an update on the regional housing plan. Mr. Yunker noted that a handout with a map of the governmental units that have endorsed the plan and a list of governmental units that have received a presentation and/or endorsed the plan was provided to the members at the meeting (see Attachment 1). He noted that most of the local governments that have considered and denied endorsement of the plan are towns where the plan recommendations are not applicable.

Mr. Yunker also noted that job/housing balance and transit service have been incorporated as factors into the Commission staff procedure for rating candidate projects for Federal Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ) funding as recommended in the housing plan. He stated Commission staff prepares an independent preliminary evaluation ranking of the candidate projects, as do the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) and the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR). These independent evaluations are compared at an interagency staff meeting, followed by a second meeting with the chairs of the Region's Advisory Committees on Transportation System Planning and Programming. Project selection and funding recommendations are made and forwarded to the WisDOT Secretary and the Advisory Committees for consideration and approval. He stated that the job/housing balance and transit service evaluation criteria have been implemented by the Advisory Committees. The handout titled "Commission Staff Procedure for Rating Candidate Projects for Federal Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program Funding" (Attachment 2), which was distributed to members at the meeting, sets forth the evaluation criteria used by Commission staff, including application of job/housing balance and transit service criteria. The following discussion points and comments were made:

1. Ms. Adams asked about transit service cuts to the Village of Pleasant Prairie. Mr. Yunker responded that service was cut because the Village did not want to pay the full amount requested by Kenosha Transit to continue the service.
2. Ms. McNeely asked if CMAQ funding is provided to the Region in one lump sum to distribute within the Region based on the rating criteria. Mr. Yunker responded that the full procedure is described in the handout distributed to members at the meeting titled "Procedure for Selection of Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program Projects" (see Attachment 3) and stated that funding goes to all counties in air quality non-attainment areas. Ms. McNeely asked if the cost of a project impacts the percentage of the project that gets funded. Mr. Yunker stated that cost is used as a guide to set priorities. Ms. McNeely asked who developed the criteria. Mr. Yunker stated that the job/housing balance and transit service criteria were recommendations from the regional housing plan that were implemented when the project evaluation process was last updated. The SEWRPC Advisory Committee on Transportation Planning and Programming for the Milwaukee Urbanized Area developed the criteria. Mr. Yunker noted that membership on the Committee is structured to be population proportional.

3. Ms. McNeely requested an explanation of the job/housing balance criterion. Mr. Yunker referred to the handout titled “Commission Staff Procedure for Rating Candidate Projects for Federal Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program Funding.” Projects that do not provide an alternative to daily automobile travel, such as traffic flow improvements or recreational bicycle/pedestrian facilities, would be factored (a reduction in the project score) by 0.95 if the community where the project is located is identified as having a projected imbalance between job wages and housing costs. He stated that communities with a projected job/housing imbalance are shown on Map E-1.
4. Mr. White asked if Commission reports are advisory. Mr. Yunker responded that they are advisory. Mr. White stated that Commission reports are factual and thorough and asked if governmental units typically implement plan recommendations. Mr. Yunker responded that there is often discussion regarding recommendations, and implementation varies by community and often occurs over time.
5. Ms. McNeely expressed concern about funding for sidewalks in areas with concentrations of low-income populations. Mr. Yunker stated providing sidewalks could potentially be considered during the next round of CMAQ project evaluations. Ms. Schellinger asked why sidewalks are an issue specific to low-income populations. Ms. Schuerman responded that many low-income households do not have access to automobiles. Ms. Schellinger noted that people on a fixed income may find it difficult to maintain sidewalks. Mr. Yunker noted that sidewalks provide access to transit stops. Mr. Dumas noted that sidewalks provide a hard surface, while soft surfaces often become rutted from runoff. Mr. Lapid stated that sidewalks should be analyzed for their intended use.

RESULTS OF APPLICATION OF THE PROCEDURES FOR THE EVALUATION, PRIORITIZATION, AND RECOMMENDATION OF PROJECTS FOR FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION SURFACE TRANSPORTATION PROGRAM – MILWAUKEE URBANIZED AREA FUNDING AS DEVELOPED BY THE MILWAUKEE TIP COMMITTEE

Ms. Greene asked Mr. Yunker to provide the Task Force with a review of the results of the application of procedures for the evaluation, prioritization, and recommendation of projects for Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Surface Transportation Program – Milwaukee Urbanized Area funding (STP-M) as developed by the Advisory Committee on Transportation Planning and Programming for the Milwaukee Urbanized Area. Mr. Yunker noted that the Task Force discussed potential evaluation criteria for use in selecting projects for STP-M funding at its April 16, 2013, meeting. He stated that the Advisory Committee considered job/housing balance and transit service among the criteria used to evaluate candidate projects for STP-M funds. He stated that the results of the project evaluation are set forth in the packet distributed to members at the meeting (see Attachment 4) and reviewed the various projects that were recommended for funding and not recommended for funding. Mr. Yunker also noted that a handout noting the members of the Advisory Committee was distributed (see Attachment 5). The following discussion points and comments were made during the review:

1. Ms. Holmlund asked about the relationship between the Commission and the Advisory Committee. Mr. Yunker responded that the Committee is advisory and the Commission has always accepted the Committee’s recommendations. He stated that the Advisory Committee is population proportional and comprised of local elected and appointed officials and agency representatives responsible for transportation improvement, operation, and maintenance. Ms.

Schellinger noted that there is a lack of women representatives. Mr. Yunker noted that the membership consists largely of public works administrators and there was a lack of women in the engineering field in the past. He noted that a much higher percentage of women are now pursuing an education in engineering and entering the field.

2. Mr. Yunker reviewed Tables 4 and 5 of the packet, which set forth projects recommended by the Advisory Committee for STP-M funding for the years 2015-2018. The review included the project sponsor, description, and requested amount of Federal funding. Ms. Schellinger asked which entity has the authority to distribute the requested funds. Mr. Yunker responded that the Commission provides the Advisory Committee recommendations to WisDOT and WisDOT approves projects for STP-M funds. Ms. Schellinger asked if WisDOT typically approves the Advisory Committee's recommendations. Mr. Yunker stated that WisDOT has always approved the Committee's recommendations regarding STP-M funding. He noted that there is typically more negotiation between WisDOT and local governments regarding CMAQ project recommendations. Ms. Schellinger asked if WisDOT has faith in the process. Mr. Yunker responded that WisDOT does, and they have nonvoting technical membership on the Advisory Committee.
3. Ms. Dunbar referred to Table 5 (in Attachment 4) and asked why only a few of the communities in Milwaukee and Waukesha Counties are included. Mr. Yunker responded that the table only includes communities where projects recommended for funding are located.
4. Mr. Yunker reviewed Maps 1 through 4, which show candidate projects for 2015-2018 STP-M funding and their relation to areas with concentrations of minority and low-income populations. He stated that many of the candidate projects recommended for funding are in areas with concentrations of minority and low-income populations and many candidate projects outside of these areas are not recommended for funding. The analysis shows that environmental justice populations received a proportional or more than proportional share of benefits. Ms. Schellinger noted that areas with concentrations of minority and low-income populations often coincide with areas of the Region that have older building stock and infrastructure. She noted that environmental justice populations may receive a proportional or more than proportional share of benefits because they are concentrated in areas where the oldest streets are located, which are most in need of repair. Mr. Yunker noted that pavement condition and use by both private and public transit vehicles are project selection criteria. Ms. Schellinger stated that selection criteria should consider both environmental justice populations and pavement conditions. Mr. Yunker clarified that concentrations of environmental justice populations is not a criterion, but the analysis was conducted to ensure that environmental justice populations receive a proportional share of benefits. Ms. Holmlund stated that the analysis is excellent and similar analyses should be applied to other studies, such as studies on high speed rail.
5. Mr. Dumas noted that a policy decision was made to implement a longer repair cycle for roads in the City of Milwaukee during the 1990s. Now the City is trying to catch up on deferred maintenance of roads and overpasses as a result. Ms. McNeely stated that deferred maintenance of infrastructure in the City of Milwaukee should be considered during project evaluation. Mr. Yunker noted that City of Milwaukee engineers on the Advisory Committee discussed consideration of the age of roadways and improvements and repairs that have been made to roadways over time. The Committee decided to discuss this further during the next project cycle when better data may be available. Mr. Dumas stated that quality of construction and materials

differs between communities with different socio-economic characteristics. He stated there should be a comparison of the specifications for roads in central city areas and other communities. Mr. Yunker stated these concerns will be communicated to City staff on the Advisory Committee, and he will report back on any responses at a future meeting.

6. Ms. Schellinger asked if there is action needed on the agenda item. Mr. Yunker stated that no action is needed. Ms. Schellinger stated the overall procedure for the evaluation and prioritization of projects for STP-M funding seems to be fair and equitable since recommended projects are approved by WisDOT without change. She noted the quality of roads in areas with high population densities may need to be improved, but the overall process seems fair. Mr. Yunker noted that the Task Force could endorse the process and its environmental justice analyses. Ms. Schellinger responded that the Task Force should endorse the process. Mr. White stated that the Task Force should have a role in the development of evaluation criteria and the environmental justice analyses during the next project cycle. Ms. Schellinger stated that analyses should include specifications for roads by area based on population density. Mr. Yunker stated that the Milwaukee public works representative on the Advisory Committee could attend a future Task Force meeting to answer questions from the Task Force. Mr. Dumas stated that manhole covers have dropped three to four inches in some parts of the City of Milwaukee. Ms. McNeely stated that this seems to be a local government design issue.
7. Ms. Schellinger stated that the Task Force should make a determination as to whether the STP-M planning process is equitable for environmental justice communities. Ms. Schellinger made a motion for the Environmental Justice Task Force to endorse SEWRPC's process for recommending projects to be selected for STP funding in the Milwaukee Urbanized Area. Ms. McNeely seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously.

[Secretary's Note: Mr. Lapid excused himself from the meeting prior to the vote.]

UPDATE ON THE MAJOR REEVALUATION OF REGIONAL LAND USE AND TRANSPORTATION PLANS, AND EXTENSION OF DESIGN YEAR FROM 2035 TO 2050

Ms. Greene asked Mr. Yunker to provide the Task Force with an overview of the VISION 2050 visioning and scenario planning approach. Mr. Yunker stated that the purpose of the visioning and scenario planning approach is to engage the public and elected officials early in, and throughout, the planning process to increase awareness, understanding, and support of the regional land use and transportation plan. It is also intended to expand public knowledge on the implications of existing and future land use and transportation development in the Region. The process will result in an initial vision document that will include guiding statements intended to direct development of the plan and a final vision document and plan report at the end of the process.

Mr. Yunker stated that an important part of the visioning and scenario planning process are five series of visioning workshops. Each series will include seven public workshops and eight workshops hosted by contracted nonprofit organizations. He stated that visioning activities undertaken in October included the first series of public workshops and a telephone preference survey. Workshop activities included a visual preference survey; strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) analysis; and discussion of specific land use and transportation goals. He stated that the results from the public workshops and telephone preference survey will be posted on the Vision 2050 website (<http://vision2050sewis.org/Vision2050/TheResults>). The Task Force then viewed a sample of images

from the visual preference survey at the request of Ms. Holmlund. The following discussion points and comments were made during the review:

1. Mr. Dumas noted the importance of producing food where people live, and it does not necessarily require large farms in rural areas. He asked if urban farming is a component of farmland preservation. Mr. Yunker responded that it is not, but this concern could be considered in the regional plan.
2. Ms. Adams asked if all the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats that were discussed during the SWOT exercises were recorded by SEWRPC staff. Mr. Yunker responded that all were recorded.
3. Mr. White asked if people were invited to the workshops. Mr. Yunker stated that all workshops were open to the public. He stated that the Commission used advertisements in newspapers, notices on its VISION 2050 website and the main SEWRPC website, and e-mail and postal mailing lists to publicize the workshops. In addition, Commission staff provided a news release to area print and broadcast media. Several smaller newspapers ran articles on the workshops. Attendance was good with over 100 attendees at the workshop in Milwaukee County and 20 to 40 at the other workshops. Mr. White asked if attendees understood the concept of scenario planning. Mr. Yunker responded that an introductory presentation was given that explained the planning process. Ms. Holmlund noted that she attended the workshop in Racine County and stated that scenario planning was explained clearly.
4. Mr. Yunker noted that the Commission has contracted with eight nonprofit organizations in the Region to hold additional workshops with the intent of increasing opportunities for environmental justice populations to participate in the planning process. He noted that one of the organizations is the Urban League of Racine and Kenosha, which is represented on the Task Force by Ms. Adams. He stated that the other seven organizations include: IndependenceFirst, Milwaukee Urban League, Common Ground, Southside Organizing Committee, Ethnically Diverse Business Coalition, Urban Economic Development Association, and Hmong American Friendship Association.
5. Ms. Adams stated that attendees at the eight workshops hosted by nonprofit organizations will likely be more diverse than the attendees at the seven public workshops. Mr. Yunker noted that the eight nonprofit organizations are from the Task Force's list of primary organizational contacts. Ms. Schuerman noted that she was in attendance at the public workshop held in Walworth County and almost all the attendees were older people. She asked if the workshops could be marketed to younger people. Mr. Yunker responded that the demographic makeup has varied between locations. He noted that the number of younger attendees was higher at the Milwaukee County public workshop and he expected younger attendees at the eight meetings hosted by the nonprofit organizations.
6. Ms. McNeely asked how the initial visioning input will be used. Mr. Yunker responded that the initial visioning input will be used to develop guiding statements. The guiding statements will be translated into "sketch" land use and transportation scenarios, which will be the basis for developing alternative land use and transportation plans. The alternative plans will be evaluated and will be the basis for developing the preliminary recommended regional land use and transportation plan for 2050.

FURTHER PUBLIC COMMENTS

Ms. Greene asked if anyone in attendance had additional comments. There were none.

NEXT MEETING DATE

Ms. Greene recalled the quarterly meeting schedule and noted that meetings in January have not worked well for Task Force members in the past. Mr. Yunker suggested holding the next meeting on Tuesday, February 4, 2014, from 4:30 to 6:00 p.m. Ms. Schellinger and Ms. McNeely noted that they will be out of town during the month of February. Ms. McNeely stated that she may be able to attend via telephone conference call. The tentative meeting location is the Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District offices.

ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Greene thanked everyone for attending and declared the meeting adjourned at 6:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Benjamin R. McKay
Recording Secretary

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