

**Pathway to 2040 Comprehensive Regional Plan
Implementation Committee Meeting
NIRPC Auditorium
January 18, 2012
Minutes**

Attendees

Nancy Adams, Keith Kirkpatrick, Sylvia Planer, Jim Ton, Richard Morrisroe, Sharron Liggins, Sergio Mendoza, Ian Nicolini, Jim Jessup, Sandra Rodriguez, Rich Herr, Bruce Bendull, Joan Crist, Joe Wszolek, Jennifer Kharchaf, Mike McPhillips, Amy Delahunty, John Artis, Nicole Messacar, Cecile Petro, Kris Parker, Tyler Kent, Don Parker, Brian Poland, Bob Thompson, David Wright, A.J. Bytnar, Sandy O'Brian, Christopher Meyers, Alice Dahl, George Malis

Guests

Tim Cole, Craig Grabow,

Staff

Mitch Barloga, Gabrielle Biciunas, Bill Brown, Joe Exl, Kevin Garcia, La'Kisha Girder, Eman Ibrahim, Hubert Morgan, Steve Strains, Tom Vander Woude

Welcome and Introductions

Chairman Michael Griffin called the meeting to order at 9:20 a.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance and self-introductions. The Committee membership list was available.

Approval of Minutes

On a motion by Jim Ton and a second by Don Parker, the minutes of the November 16, 2011 meeting were approved as submitted.

Role of Committee

Chairman Griffin referred the committee to the November 16 minutes, page 2 for the purpose, roles and responsibilities, and committee expectations and contributions. The 2040 CRP covers the elements of environmental justice, protection of natural resources, and integration of transportation and land use. This committee will now help implement the adopted plan. Sub-groups will be formed to handle certain aspects of the plan.

Presentation – Local Food Planning

Kevin Garcia discussed the importance of local food planning. He described the Northwest Indiana Local Food Study funded by a grant from the Donnelley Foundation. The first part of the study is in the CRP, pages I-62 to I-67. The study team consisted of Kevin, Beth Shrader, Chairman Kevin Breitzke, the food study advisory committee (FoodSac) consisting of regional stakeholders. The food system encompasses production, processing, distribution, consumption and reuse. It is tied to the CRP through economy, land use, the environment, health, and initiatives to access fresh produce by all residents especially those in environmental justice areas in the core communities. Kevin would like to work with the core communities sub-group to address access and other issues. Most of the locally grown food is for export. 40% of all the farms grow corn and soybeans. Local restaurants deal mostly with the larger distributors. Consumers lack education on local foods and why it is good to spend money locally. A more coordinated effort is needed on the composting system to help the environment. Kevin presented some of the issues involved, like spending. An estimated \$2.95 billion is spent on

food grown outside the region for food vs. \$88 million spent on food grown within the region. Kevin also discussed achieving better health for the region's residents to counter the 30+% obesity rates. While the number of farms in the region has declined over the last century, farms have increased in size, become more industrialized and are using more chemicals. Agriculture is the greatest non-point source polluter in the country through run-off from herbicides and pesticides which gets in our water system.

The second version of the food study being drafted by Kevin and Beth Shrader will be available shortly. Goals and objectives have been developed and indicator selection is currently being developed with ensuing recommendations. Comment period followed. The availability of and access to local foods helps lower the carbon footprint and aids in local economy. In addition, as an implementation strategy, local governments can encourage local grocers and restaurants to indicate if they serve locally grown food, or at practice due diligence by least visiting the local growers. Encouraging businesses to provide local produce is another solution. We can also strengthen and support local farmers' markets as well as create co-ops. Marketing the importance of consuming locally grown food is another strategy.

Implementation Matrix

Eman presented the implementation matrix to the committee which will monitor progress, develop strategies and action steps for goals and objectives, prioritize recommendations, develop a timeframe of short, medium and long term to prioritize actions, identify funding sources, identify NIRPC's role as well as that of federal/state, and local entities and showcase achievements through best practices, successes and resources. All NIRPC staff contributing to the plan has been working on formulizing the matrix, adding goals and objectives for every chapter of the CRP plan as well as the action items. Land use and transportation linked projects are eligible for federal transportation funding. The Regional Development Authority has supported many projects in the urban core and will support livable centers. For the next two-year Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP), we are proposing two new programs: to create the Livable Centers in the region to link the livable centers project to a funding program, which is the second program. This funding would cover livable centers, mixed use, transit-oriented development types of projects. Staff will be working with the various committees at NIRPC to help fill in the blanks. In about a month, this committee will have the draft matrix to review for about two weeks to provide feedback. The matrix, categorized by short, medium or long term, should be completed by the next meeting and ready for adoption and project prioritization.

Urban Core Subcommittee

This committee will include Gary, Hammond, East Chicago and Michigan City representatives at a minimum. It will focus on advancing CRP recommendations intended to revitalize the region's historic central cities, provide technical support and assist in securing resources from federal and other external sources. John Artis of East Chicago, Beth Jacobsen of Hammond, a representative to be named from the City of Gary, a representative from Michigan City and the Regional Development Authority, Sergio Mendoza, and Joan Crist. Contact Eman or Gabrielle if you are interested in serving on this committee. Hubert Morgan expressed that these meetings should be held in the core communities themselves. The APA conference will be held in Chicago next year. We want to show, through mobile workshops, how we are advancing the CRP as relates to the core communities. On a motion by Richard Morrisroe and a second by James Ton the Urban Core Subcommittee was affirmed pending the naming of the to be determined representatives.

Current Initiatives

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CRP Launch Event: Hubert Morgan reported on the 2040 launch. A date has not yet been set, however, the launch will be held in one of the urban core communities. One location is the Marquette Park Pavilion, however, it is under renovation but we would hope to have the launch in May. We'll be meeting with the RDA to see if we can set a date for the launch. As part of our efforts to reach out to the community, we're now using Facebook both for NIRPC and for our public involvement page "INvolve Northwest Indiana" and you can see all the efforts of our community, such as Sandy Rodriguez's Stewart House work in urban agriculture. We have over 700,000 people in northwest Indiana and our goal is to reach as many as we can. We had a regional bus tour; we visited a year-round urban market in Detroit. An upcoming rural summit will be held in LaPorte. When we launch the 2040 plan, we want people to know they can interact with us and stay involved in our work through the next 30 years. Mitch Barloga administers the NIRPC Facebook page as well as the Northwest Indiana Greenways & Blueways page. We will continue to use the NIRPC website, snail mail, email and the media for public outreach as well. We have passed out a couple hundred copies of the reports out already. We have a couple of thousand summary plans, about 400 abridged and about 100 full copies of the CRP Plan. Copies are available at all meetings and they will be going out to all the region libraries in the next month. The public is being provided with the summary and/or a CD. A suggestion to provide a one-page synopsis of the plan and where it is available was made. Another suggestion was for a two-minute video to be posted on YouTube, Facebook and NIRPC's web page.

Transportation Project Selection Criteria: Bill Brown reported that implementation of the plan actually began last year. The Project Selection Scorecard was available in the packet. Bill described the criteria for selecting transportation capacity expansion projects. A project had to be consistent with the Complete Streets policy (non-motorized, transit, pedestrians) and be a product of the congestion management process which is looking at alternatives beyond expanded capacity. Projects passing the two criteria then had to go through the scoring system. Bill described the categories of mobility, transportation and land use, safety, environmental, quality of life and growth and revitalization. Mapping of the projects helped identify their location as to livable centers as defined in the CRP and multipliers were used to encourage project development in preferred growth areas of urban core communities and livable centers. Eman Ibrahim added that this was the first implementation piece of the plan and focused on the goals and objectives of the CRP. The matrix would be the second implementation piece.

Schedule of Meetings – 2012

This committee will meet quarterly as follows:

- January 18
- April 18
- July 18
- October 17

More of the work will be done within the policy committees. It is possible that once funding begins and more implementation takes place, meetings may be scheduled every other month.

Other Business

Michael Griffin announced that the Town of Highland has selected a new commissioner to the NIRPC board and thus he will no longer be the chair of this committee. However, he would like to continue on as a member of the committee.

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The next Pathway to 2040 Implementation Committee meeting will be on April 18 at 9:00 a.m. at NIRPC.

Chairman Griffin adjourned the meeting at 11:20 a.m.

Handouts and materials provided:

- Agenda
- *Pathway to 2040* CRP Implementation Committee Membership List
- Implementation Matrix
- Food study handout

A Digital MP3 of this meeting is filed. Contact Mary Thorne at NIRPC should you wish to receive a copy of it.

Requests for alternate formats, please contact Mary Thorne at NIRPC at (219) 763-6060 extension 131 or at mthorne@nirpc.org. Individuals with hearing impairments may contact us through the Indiana Relay 711 service by calling 711 or (800) 743-3333.

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