

Land Use Committee Meeting
July 11, 2012 ~ Minutes
NIRPC Auditorium

Members & Visitors

Kevin Breitzke, Sergio Mendoza, George Malis, David Wright, Pat Pullara, Nathan Pavlovic

NIRPC Staff

Eman Ibrahim, Tom Vander Woude, Kevin Garcia, Gabrielle Biciunas, Meredith Stilwell

Chairman Breitzke called the meeting to order at 10:13 a.m.

Chairman Breitzke spoke about the Land Use Climate Impact on Community Planning Webinar held at NIRPC on June 21st. The webinar was through the Purdue University Land Use Team and included topics such as what can be expected weather wise and climate change impacts on long-range planning. Sergio Mendoza commented positively about the webinar, but wished it had been better attended.

◆ **Adjustments to the Urbanized Area Boundaries (UZA)**—*Kevin Garcia, NIRPC*

Every 10 years the Census Bureau designates geographic areas based on census results. Using the 2010 results, the Bureau worked with ESRI to develop the model for area designations, two of which are urbanized and urban clusters. Urbanized areas are defined as those areas with population greater than 50,000 and urban clusters have a population between 2,500 and 49,999. A map of the urbanized areas and urban clusters in Northwest Indiana based on the 2010 census and a FAQ topics handout were provided. The modeling used results in jagged boundaries for the urbanized areas and sometimes allows for rural designated areas to fall in between the urbanized areas. Since FHWA uses the urban and rural distinctions for their highway classification system, highway performance monitoring system report, and for distribution of STP funds the jagged boundaries sometimes makes it difficult when planning and funding for projects. Although not required, NIRPC's goal is to smooth out the boundaries to come up with adjusted urbanized area boundaries to make both planning and funding projects easier. This is for designation purposes only and does not affect zoning. The best approach for adjusting the boundaries was discussed and it was determined that holding a workshop to develop an agreeable methodology involving planners, engineers, and town council members for the communities affected would be good. It was also noted that in addition to the current map, a map reflecting the adjusted boundaries for the 2000 census results should be provided for comparison and focus on the areas which have changed.

On motion by Sergio Mendoza and second by George Malis, the minutes of the May 9, 2012 Land Use Committee meeting were approved.

◆ **Regional Land Use Planning** – *Eman Ibrahim, NIRPC Planning Manager*

a. 2040 Plan Implementation Matrix

The final draft of the 2040 Implementation Matrix has been completed and compiles all goals, objectives, strategies, and action items from the 2040 Comprehensive Regional Plan. The Matrix also includes length of term (short, medium, long-term) and guidance for funding. A priority list of plans, projects and action items for the next five to ten years is being developed through the Pathway to 2040 CRP Implementation Committee and will be shared with the Land Use Committee and others upon completion. NIRPC staff met with the four urban core communities of Hammond, Gary, East Chicago, and Michigan City to develop a list of priorities and areas of implementation they would like to see as soon as possible. Those priorities were presented by Tom Vander Woude at the Urban Core Sub-Committee Group Meeting on July 10. The priorities will be presented to the Implementation Committee at their meeting on July 12.

b. Kick off of the Livable Centers Initiatives (LCI) Project

The LCI Project came from the 2040 CRP and is a fundamental approach when looking at strategies for land use, transportation, and environmental balance in Northwest Indiana. Creating livable centers encourages local jurisdiction to plan and implement strategies that link transportation improvement with land use investments. NIRPC will be meeting and working with the planners and officials of the 41 municipalities to decide on their livable centers locations and also define the boundaries of those centers. There can be one or more centers established. The boundaries must be established for the Creating Livable Communities (CLC) funding program. High gas prices, environmental impacts of air quality and stormwater, carbon emissions, and the shortfalls of funding make establishing livable centers and encouraging development within those centers important. Basic elements looked for in a livable center include compact; mixed use development; all buildings facing streets; unique design characteristics; many access options for all modes of transportation; easy, safe, and convenient street crossings; well maintained public streets; aesthetically appealing landscaping; public gathering spaces; and ways to service activities in the day as well as at night. Beginning July 11, NIRPC will begin to look at eligibility, type of projects needed, how funding will be obtained, and how to deal with FHWA and DOT for funding allocations. Several types of centers are being looked for and within a community more than one type of center might be identified. The types of centers, their basic elements, and the communities in the region that could fall into those types of centers were presented. The center types include Metro, Large Community, Town, and Neighborhood. The design principles and scale recommendations can be changed after discussion with the communities. A handout was provided that detailed center types and sizes established within the 2040 Plan for communities in the region.

c. Kick off of the Creating Livable Communities (CLC) Funding Program

The funding for this program is a compilation of portions of STP, TE, and CMAQ funding programs and will be 80% federal funding with 20% local funds. The program focuses on supporting projects within livable centers or around transit stations. The background of the program is from federal agencies and revolves around mainstreaming transit-oriented development in the metropolitan transportation planning process and to use smart growth criteria when prioritizing projects within the TIP. When changes are made to the selection criteria for transportation improvement funding, it is related to what is recommended by the federal agencies. Other recommendations from the federal agencies were detailed. These projects are typically eligible under STP, but are difficult to fund when competing with highway projects and improvements. This separate funding will allow more opportunities for communities lacking funding to do work to encourage people to move to urban centers or around downtown areas. MPOs around the country have had this type of program for many years. Examples from San Diego, the San Francisco Bay area, Atlanta Regional Commission and the Houston-Galveston Area Council were presented. A list of recommended projects will be compiled by the next meeting and work will be done in the next month or so with the Federal Highway Department in regard to getting funding from the FTA to support the CLC Program. Categories will also need to be established for construction and plans so that projects are not submitted that cannot be funded by the Program.

◆ Local Communities Update

a. Current or Proposed Studies, Plans, and Projects

Sergio Mendoza reported the DNR Coastal Program is gearing up for their 2012/2013 funding cycle. Project ideas within the funding criteria priorities established by the Coastal Advisory Board at their June Meeting may be sent to Coastal staff or Maggie Byrne to move forward. Dates have yet to be released for workshops. Coastal is also going to reach out to a couple communities regarding projects ideas to see if they are interested in moving forward with them.

It was commented to be visionary in looking to connectivity of the urban core areas. Bus transportation is slipping away and in order to get people out of their cars there has to be connectivity to college and university campuses, recreation areas, and shopping. Rather than building more roads and paving more ground there needs to be more efficient and sustainable means looked at.

Nathan Pavlovic reported Save the Dunes is working on a project currently that involves putting out a survey to get a handle on land conservation that is happening in the region. They will be working with both land trusts

and hopefully municipal and regional planners to compile a comprehensive report detailing who is working on land conservation and green space in the area.

David Wright commented on GPTC's entry in the Unified Planning Work Program for a planned study on alternatives to expand how transit is provided on the Broadway Corridor in Gary and Merrillville. He noted that in a typical month there are around 110-120 transit trips in Northwest Indiana involving GPTC, RBA, and V-Line, and one in five of those trips are on routes that serve the Broadway Corridor in Gary and Merrillville. GPTC submitted a mass-transit project to the 2040 CRP and Sierra Club also submitted another Broadway project. GPTC has now submitted a proposal for an alternative analysis for transit on Broadway and received federal funds. They are looking for the match for those funds and at least three potential funding sources have been identified. It is hoped to kick off the project sometime in fiscal year 2013, as early as this fall. The potential for expanding the transit system on the Corridor and using it as an impetus to redevelop both metro and town centers on the Broadway Corridor has the potential to create a very good cycle of land use and transportation.

Announcements

a. CRP Outreach

As part of the Plan outreach meetings are being held with each of the community's town or city council or planning commission about the strategies and recommendations of the 2040 CRP. Gabrielle Biciunas announced meetings were held with Chesterton and Dune Acres. A meeting with the Gary City Council is scheduled for early August.

b. Pathway to 2040 Implementation Committee for the Comprehensive Regional Plan – 9:00 a.m., Thursday, July 12, 2012.

c. The next Land Use Committee will be held Wednesday, September 12, 2012 at 10:00 a.m. at NIRPC.

The meeting adjourned at 11:38 a.m.