



# **CREATING TOMORROW TODAY**

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## ***CREATING THE PLAN***

Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission 6100 Southport Road Portage, Indiana 46368 (219) 763-6060

### **2040 Comprehensive Regional Plan Steering Committee Meeting NIRPC Auditorium June 25, 2009 Minutes**

#### **Members**

Don Abraham, Roosevelt Allen, Jr., Mike Aylesworth, Geof Benson, Joan Bliss, Cassandra Cannon, Kathy Chroback, Ken Dallmeyer, Joe Eberts, Dale Engquist, Dan Gardner, Phil Gralik, Rich Herr, George T. Janiec, Jim Jessup, George Malis, Richard Morrisroe, Kay Nelson, Sandy O'Brien, Chuck Oberlie, Pat Pulara, Lauren Riga, Jill Ritchie, Daniel Suson, Debbie Thomas, Bob Thompson, Garry Traynham, Joe Wszolek,

#### **Guests**

Shane Alford, Pat Carlisle, Tim Cole, Jim Dworkin, Carlyle B. Edwards, Heather Ennis, David Ellis, Lakisha Girden, Liz Greenwald, Christopher D. Mercado, AJ Monroe, Brian Poland, Scott Sefton

#### **Staff**

Gabrielle Biciunas, Bill Brown, Matt Hay, Ryan Hicks, Jordan Isringhaus, Eman Ibrahim, Belinda Petroskey, Lauren Rhein, Steve Strains, Mary Thorne, Tom Vander Woude

#### **Welcome & Minutes**

Mayor Oberlie chaired, calling the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m. with self-introductions. Two names were misspelled in the minutes of May 28 and will be corrected. On a motion by Geoff Benson and a second by Bob Thompson, the minutes of May 28 stood approved as amended.

#### **Outreach Subcommittee**

There will be an Outreach Subcommittee meeting immediately following the Steering Committee meeting to continue the conversation on the consultant selection process for community outreach to put this in place before the end of July.

#### **Goal-Setting Workgroup Session Update**

The input in the packet is a verbatim list reflecting the input from all six of the goal-setting sessions. An average 25-30 people attended each session. Email Belinda Petroskey with any corrections or changes. The issues listed on the last page are issues received which are out of NIRPC's realm and conflicting suggestions such as the Illiana issue. Definitive goals will be part

of the next activity of development scenarios and strategies. The goals will go to the appropriate NIRPC policy advisory committees in July. A final draft set of goals will be brought to the Steering Committee at the July meeting. Resources of documents including current NIRPC plans will continue to be brought in to add to this overall process. The Northwest Indiana Forum will do a presentation in September or October.

### Subregional Cluster Workshops

The next steps in the planning process are to hold a series of subregional cluster workshops, two in Lake County, and one in each of Porter and LaPorte Counties. The purpose statement in the packet describes the need for these workshops, to look at the current regional preferences for locations of new growth, development and redevelopment to envision the physical future of Northwest Indiana. The public will be invited to look at how growth and conservation should play out. The input will help shape the draft plans, which are the future scenarios. Participants will look at the vision statement, review the draft goals and objectives and participate in hands on activities which will map out the goals and objectives and identify where development should be concentrated, protection and restoration of natural resources and identify multi-modal connectivity opportunities. HNTB will have greater presence, doing the actual technical modeling analysis, run the scenarios and bring the analysis back for review in early January. Tentative dates for the subregional cluster workshops are in September; final dates will be provided at the next meeting.

### The Marquette Plan

John Swanson presented background information of this NIRPC document, discussing the Marquette Greenway Project in the 1980's. The vision statement, guiding principles, the five frameworks and how they were set up was explained.

The first phase of the Marquette Plan went from the Illinois State Line to the City of Portage and includes five cities, four of the five have active projects. The second phase is a reinvestment vision is from Portage to the Michigan state line of what the region can be 75 years forward including smart growth principals, enhancement of public access to Lake Michigan, environmental protection and tourism. An expansive list of projects has been identified via color-coded graphic. Two projects have been completed. The Portage Lakefront and Riverwalk is a crown jewel and a poster child for the Marquette Plan. The land's initial use was as a landfill for wastewater treatment sludge. Over 12 years was spent in remediation and a number of years in negotiations between the industry, the EPA and the National Park Service. The second completed project is the Lake Michigan Water Trail. The Northwest Indiana Paddling Association was formed to help promote sea kayaking on this water trail. Also, a \$28 million funding decision was made by the RDA for the restoration and rehab of Marquette Park to the City of Gary. Additionally, the US 12/20-SR 49 Corridor is being looked at as a gateway project as well as a Dune Kankakee Trail from the Dunes State Park eventually on to the Kankakee River. Five projects identified in the Marquette Plan have been funded, 16 are in the planning stages and 50-60 more projects have been identified as future plans. An implementation coordinator will be hired as part of RDA staff to help implement the projects. The

Donnelly Foundation will provide a grant which will help with outreach about the Marquette Plan.

### Other Business

- Update on Quality of Life Impact Meeting – Lauren Rhein, Eman Ibrahim and Matt Hay met with Sandy O'Brien to review the list of questions regarding mapping and data analysis items in Sandy's letter to identify clarifications and limitations on the data. An overview will

be provided as to elements to look at regional analysis of the change in demographics in the region.

- Belinda thanked the core group of people who attended all six of the CRP goal-setting workgroup sessions. Other plans adopted, will be included in the draft document which will be coming out shortly.
- John Swanson announced NIRPC's new GIS/Website Technician who received his Masters in Geography from Western Michigan University with a specialty in GIS.
- The Greenways & Blueways Plan received an award from the Indiana Planning Association as well as a National Achievement Award from the National Association of Regional Councils at the Denver conference.
- Pat Jackson of Northwest Indiana Federation advised that there is a regional bus forum next Monday, June 29 at IUN's Savannah Center at 6:30 p.m.

The next Steering Committee meeting will be on July 23 at 9:00 a.m. to discuss the goals and issues provided in the packet as well as the staff's work on all the adopted plans in the region as well as a presentation on watershed planning.

Mayor Oberlie adjourned the meeting at 10:07 a.m.

Handouts provided:

- Agenda
- April 23<sup>rd</sup> Meeting Minutes
- April 23<sup>rd</sup> Meeting Summary
- April 23<sup>rd</sup> Outreach Subcommittee Meeting Notes
- Report on Outreach Activities
- Results of Goal Setting to Date
- Subregional Cluster Workshops Purpose Statement
- Marquette Poster Plan
- Bike Map
- Water Trail Map
- *NIRPC and Me*
- *Discover Calumet*
- *CRP Newsletter*

*Audio tapes of this meeting are filed. Contact Mary Thorne at NIRPC should you wish to schedule a time to hear them.*

Respectfully submitted June 29, 2009  
Mary Thorne, Planning Secretary  
Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission