

Minutes of the REGULAR MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Wednesday, June 16, 2021

Committee Members Present:

Atlas-Ingebretson, Barber, Chamblis, Cummings, Ferguson, Johnson, Lee, Lilligren, Lindstrom, Sterner, Vento, Wulff, Zeran, Chair Zelle

Committee Members Absent:

Fredson, Gonzalez, Muse

CALL TO ORDER

A quorum being present, Committee Chair Zelle called the regular meeting of the Council's Committee of the Whole to order at 4:02 p.m. on Wednesday, June 16, 2021 on the following roll call vote:

Aye: 12 Atlas-Ingebretson, Barber, Chamblis, Cummings, Ferguson, Johnson, Lee, Lindstrom, Vento, Wulff, Zeran, Chair Zelle

Nay: 0

Absent: 3 Fredson, Gonzalez, Muse

Not Recorded: 2 Lilligren, Sterner

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Council Members did not have any comments or changes to the agenda.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

It was moved by Vento, seconded by Atlas-Ingebretson to approve the minutes of the May 5, 2021 regular meeting of the Committee of the Whole. **Motion carried** on the following roll call:

Aye: 12 Atlas-Ingebretson, Barber, Chamblis, Cummings, Ferguson, Johnson, Lee, Lindstrom, Vento, Wulff, Zeran, Chair Zelle

Nay: 0

Absent: 3 Fredson, Gonzalez, Muse

Not Recorded: 2 Lilligren, Sterner

INFORMATION

1. Comp Plan Composite: The Healthy Community Planning Project with the MN Dept of Health and the Public Health Law Center

Angela Torres, Manager, Local Planning Assistance, gave an introduction to the Healthy Community Planning Project, as well as the purpose of today's meeting. Eric Wojchik, Planning Analyst, Local Planning Assistance, and Jerome Benner, Senior Planner, Local Planning Assistance, gave an overview of the history of the project as well as introduced the discussion. The intent of the Healthy Community Planning Project is to align project framework, process, and outputs to support cross-cutting goals of partner agencies, including

the Minnesota Department of Health and the Metropolitan Council. The goals of this project are to: elevate priority public health challenges, support community-to-community learning and grow the network of allied professions, showcase local strategy and policy examples that advance priority public health issues, build from foundational partner agency work in this area, and to identify opportunities where partner agencies can provide coordinated technical assistance. The core team for this project is the Statewide Health Improvement Partnership, the Minnesota Department of Health, the Metropolitan Council, and the Public Health Law Center at Mitchell Hamline School of Law. The planning research assistants for the project are Doug Benton, Anna Crouch, Matthew Gabb, and Sarah Paulus. Benton, Crouch, and Gabb were present and led the discussion. Of the 106 comp plans submitted by April 2020, 49 community plans were randomly selected for review. Based on work from 2012, 11 indicators were chosen for evaluation within the plans: mixed use, healthy food access, affordable housing, multi-modal transportation, transit-oriented development, greenspace preservation, recreation opportunities, greenhouse gas reduction, extreme heat, at-risk populations in climate change, and intense rain. The two indicators that were discussed at the meeting were healthy food access and recreation opportunities.

The first indicator discussed was healthy food access. Healthy food access includes concepts such as access to healthy food through grocery stores, food shelves, farmers markets, mobile markets, community-supported agriculture, and drive-throughs; small scale food production such as urban agriculture, community gardens and orchards; planning centering food deserts, food resources, and food security and insecurity. Healthy food access addresses the Thrive MSP 2040 outcomes and principles of equity, livability and sustainability. The overall themes from the comp plan review were food production through community gardens and healthy food retail. The ranked themes are food access through programming, mobile food distribution, urban agriculture ordinances, promoting farmers markets, transportation planning, healthy retail collaborations, and collecting data on food access. The approaches included supporting mobile food distribution, stronger, urban agriculture ordinance with dedicated resources, as well as food security assessments.

The second indicator discussed was recreation opportunities. Public recreation includes concepts such as access to trails, parks and recreation, culturally appropriate programming, change of recreation opportunities, and dial-a-ride availability for recreation. Recreation opportunities addresses the Thrive MSP 2040 outcomes and principles of livability and equity and is required as part of the Regional Parks Policy Plan. The overall themes from the review were parkland dedication, as well as walking and biking. The ranking themes were pedestrian safety, regional connectedness, new recreation opportunities for new development and redevelopment, emphasis on new trail systems, partnering with local school districts, strategies for long-term system maintenance, focus on recreation for all ages, culturally relevant programming, community trails network, neighborhood parks, acquiring new park land, variety in programming, and partnering with local school districts. Some of the approaches used are developing strategies for long-term system maintenance and partnering with local school districts.

The panel had a set of questions for Council Members to consider during the presentation: 1. What other themes do you see in your work with different communities that you do not see here? 2. What opportunities or challenges do you see with implementing these themes? 3. How might these themes influence future planning processes? Council Members had questions and comments about how the equity in these areas could be considered a detriment in other areas such as affordable housing availability, building capacity that meets community needs, as well as the importance and impact of mental health in the region. Council members also discussed the importance of food as an economic tool as well, including food inequities and food production.

Comments from chat:

Matthew Gabb: Things like habitat and wetlands were highlighted in our greenspace and water/increased precipitation indicators, and we're happy to talk more or send additional information about those! We also did individual indicators around climate change and resilience.

Eric Wojchik: These are only 2 of the 11 indicators that were analyzed. We can provide the CMs with further details of the study.

Doug Benton: Thanks for your question Robert and thank you for bringing up the connection between food and resilience. We also reviewed a subset of plans for how they incorporated resilience in their plans. And one of our main findings was that food was only discussed in connection to resilience in 32% of those we looked at, which felt notably low as something that is a key social determinant of health. We have that presentation recorded and I believe we can share the link to that as well, if you would like

Matthew Gabb: Resilience presentation recording: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nA6ugkV1Sm4>

ADJOURNMENT

Business completed; the meeting adjourned at 5:24 p.m.

Bridget Toskey
Recording Secretary