

Minutes of the

SPECIAL MEETING OF THE LAND USE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Thursday, May 8, 2014

Committee Members Present:

Amy Ihlán, Jon Commers, Bill Neuendorf, Chip Halbach, Phillip Klein, Marvin Johnson, Kristina Smitten, Elizabeth Wefel, Kathi Hemken, Bill Droste, Tami Diehm, James McClean, Mary Hershberger-Thun, Aimie Mims

Committee Members Absent:

Colleen Ratzlaff-Labeau, Elizabeth Kautz, Andrew Hestness; Jon Ulrich

CALL TO ORDER

Committee Chair Commers called the regular meeting of the Council's Land Use Advisory Committee to order at 4:05 p.m. on Thursday, May 8, 2014.

INTRODUCTIONS

Chair Commers introduced new member, Mary Hershberger-Thun, representing District 4 (Carver County).

APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES

It was moved by Johnson, seconded by Hemken to approve the agenda of the May 8, 2014 Special Meeting of the Land Use Advisory Committee. **Motion carried.**

Johnson asked for an amendment to the January 16, 2014 minutes in the 11th paragraph on page 3. He clarified that Hennepin County has a lot of ag preserves including the City of Independence.

It was moved by Johnson, seconded by Diehm to approve the amended minutes of the January 16, 2014 meeting of the Land Use Advisory Committee. **Motion carried.** Halbach asked if there is an update on the land use policies. Commers stated he will look to further clarify and will determine if they'd prefer a memo or a conversation. Halbach suggested a memo first then a possible conversation.

It was moved by Johnson, seconded by Klein to approve the minutes of the March 20, 2014 meeting of the Land Use Advisory Committee. **Motion carried.**

INFORMATION

1. Roster and Parking Information – Jon Commers and Sandi Dingle, Recording Secretary

Commers noted the packet contained a new roster and parking information (mainly for new members). Dingle noted there is a slight change in parking validation process.

2. Update on Thrive MSP 2040 and Public Input – Libby Starling and Dan Marckel, Regional Policy and Research

Marckel gave an overview of the public comments received thus far and discussed the four phases of outreach described in the handouts provided.

Marckel discussed the public comment statistics and noted they've received around 141 comments total. He discussed the themes from the public comments and talked about support they've received with the process, outcomes and principals. Marckel discussed some of the requests received for simple clarification and also the policy concerns in the comments.

Markel discussed the next steps. The goal is for the Council to adopt Thrive MSP 2040 (Thrive) on May 28th. After that, he stated they will be looking at System Statements and Policy Plans.

Halbach discussed the framework document that had benchmarks and indicators that aren't found in the draft of Thrive. Starling stated that there will be a separate document for more give/take and evolution of what are best ways of measuring progress. Marckel noted that the draft says in the development of those indicators there will be continued engagement.

The Committee discussed identifying a metrics that will be a little different than what has been developed in the past. Marckel noted that each Policy Plan will have its own set of metrics.

Hershberger-Thun asked how comments have been addressed. Commers replied that there are a couple of ways that this has happened. On an individual level, individual council members from that district have been made aware and have made contact. Also there has been a Workgroup of five council members that have reviewed the comments in depth.

Marckel noted that tasks have been doled out to experts within the Council to give feedback as well.

Starling stated that many comments have been on how we frame and communicate rather than suggesting a change of policy.

Klein asked what determines community designations. Marckel stated they're determined by a combination of factors – what is urban core, etc.

Detrick stated community designations are really geographic planning areas largely developed by this group. She noted there are more community-wide designations and stated policy layers are now special features. Marckel stated that these indicate what the development stage of a community is.

3. Updates on Regional Policy Plans

Transportation Policy Plan – Connie Kozlak, Metropolitan Transportation Services

Kozlak noted the first draft of the Transportation Policy Plan (TPP) will be completed tomorrow. By July it will be ready to be published for public hearing. She discussed the process and schedule of the TPP and noted that she will come back in July to this Committee for comments.

Kozlak stated that the TPP is a 20 year plan that needs to be revised every 4 years. She reviewed the 2040 Draft TPP Document Outline contained in the materials provided. She noted that under Federal requirements this plan needs to be fiscally constrained.

Halbach asked how this relates to the Transportation System Plan. Kozlak reviewed the 'systems' under the Council's purview and stated Transportation is one of them. The TPP and the Transportation System Plan are one in the same. She also noted that the TPP contains the Aviation Plan as well.

Halbach asked where LUAC's comments on Land Use will be. Kozlak pointed out Part II, C. Land Use, Transportation, and Local Transportation Investments.

Introduction: Commers introduced Aimie Mims, representing District 9 – who arrived late to the meeting.

Regional Parks Policy Plan – Jan Youngquist and Raintry Salk, Regional Parks and Natural Resources

Youngquist gave an update on the 2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan (RPPP) currently being revised. She discussed the requirements, by MN State Statute, and the specific direction from Thrive on four main directives outlined in the materials provided.

Youngquist discussed the System Plan Additions/Revisions Map and talked about the ten implementing agencies that plan, operate, and maintain our regional parks, trails, special recreation features and park reserves within the region.

Salk discussed the process for the plan development and noted that they've engaged both internal and external stakeholders. She gave an overview of what was done as well as some of the findings. She discussed the plan development process details as well as the process requirements and reviewed the timeline.

Commers commented that the survey findings of community of color surprised him.

Salk discussed the four main questions that were asked in the focus groups and stated that lack of safety and lack of awareness were two major themes that emerged throughout the 16 focus groups held.

Smitten stated she was surprised at the results of the survey as well. She asked if the users are inherent in the comment related to healthy communities. She stated she wants to ensure that with this policy plan that we are guiding our implementing agencies in a way that will ensure that we have a broader spectrum of users. Salk stated that their approach has been to look at how they can strengthen equitable usage of the regional system and learn how we can better serve everyone. This gets at the idea that some people utilize the parks for health reasons however this wasn't really apparent in the research findings.

Smitten stated that we talk about fostering healthy communities but wonders if that is where the emphasis should be based on the feedback of why/why not people are using parks. Youngquist stated that the discussion on fostering healthy communities is driven by the large focus (metro-wide) of active living and we want to acknowledge that and highlight how the regional park system helps provide opportunities for that.

Commers stated this relates to a conversation at the Community Development Committee where many council members expected transportation to be a bigger issue. This shows how important surveys/research is.

Halbach talked about Trust for Public Land working to get more park space within central cities and asked if this comes up in the plan. Youngquist stated that she did hear those comments and they have done a mapping exercise to see how the regional parks system is serving the region. She noted that they did a survey in 2008 and got visitor origin information. From this they have developed service areas for each individual regional park within the metro area. They found that that Minneapolis and Saint Paul have the highest concentration of overlap of service areas to regional parks. She noted that people in the central cities have access to 8-12 regional parks within their service area so the focus is on strengthening equitable usage rather than new parks.

Water Resources Management Policy Plan – Bryce Pickart and Judy Sventek, Environmental Services

Sventek gave an update on the Water Resources Policy Plan (WRPP) as outlined in the materials provided. She discussed water sustainability and the overall goal of sustainability.

Sventek discussed the projected growth of the region and how it relates to water supply and also assessing and protecting water supplies. She discussed local communities that have their own municipal well and will be required to do their own water supply plan.

Commers asked about aquifer level information. Sventek stated that the staff can provide this if a community calls. Information regarding aquifer levels will also be included in the system statements.

Johnson asked about the history of wells. Sventek stated we have maps/data for over the past 20-30 years.

Neuendorf asked about local water supply plans. Sventek stated that they are required to be updated every 10 years. They need to be approved by the DNR and reviewed by the Met Council. She noted that they are due two years prior to the comprehensive plan updates.

Droste asked if staff is doing research on financial costs of switching from ground water to surface water usage. Sventek stated they are doing a study of financial feasibility.

Droste asked if they have looked at business usage. Sventek stated that they do have data regarding those impacts.

Pickart noted that the Council is updating the Water Supply Master Plan as well. He noted that most demand is from residential/commercial with the exception of a few industrial usage areas and staff are looking into those areas as well.

Sventek discussed cost effectiveness of surface water policy.

Sventek discussed providing leadership and the Council's effort to foster collaboration and convene discussions on regional issues related to water resource protection and restoration.

Pickart gave a presentation regarding wastewater sustainability. He discussed maximizing regional benefits from regional investments. He also discussed the wastewater growth policy.

Sventek discussed the schedule outlined in the materials provided.

Halbach questioned what 'sewer availability charges (SAC) will be uniform within the urban area.' Pickart stated the rate for connection has been universal for many years. The last policy cycle that was adopted considered wastewater service in rural areas that have their own wastewater treatment plants and compromised on financial implications for those.

Halbach discussed Thrive's encouragement of integration in the different aspects of the work of the Council and asked about a waiver of SAC charges for affordable housing or in areas of racial concentrations of poverty. He noted that the Council encourages local governments to waive WAC and SAC charges. He wants to make sure the Council is consistent in supporting its affordable housing goals and also being consistent in what they're asking of local governments. Pickart stated that this was a point of debate in the workgroup. Commers stated that the 2013 SAC Workgroup recommended to the Council that there not be a waiver. The Council has yet to incorporate what the recommendation will mean in the system plans. Halbach stated that he recalls that particular recommendation from the workgroup was not adopted by any committee of the Council. Commers stated that the Council accepted the recommendation however did not adopt or approve it and noted it is still an open topic.

Pickart discussed the objection and also finding a way to finance that doesn't raise other objections.

Halbach discussed spreading the cost noting this is what you have to do. Hemken stated this puts a strain on cities and noted that it's a delicate balance.

Smitten asked about the capacity of treatment plants and if they can accommodate growth. Pickart stated that capacity is close to being adequate and added that our wastewater flow has been steady for 20 years. He discussed expansions planned.

Smitten stated that she appreciates the investigation of reuse of wastewater and discussed the Council's role in eliminating barriers so that we may be effective in our policies. Pickart stated we're in the early stages of investigating reuse of wastewater. He noted the broad need is for irrigation (residential/commercial) and flushing toilets. He discussed the large cost of non-potable water distribution, etc. He discussed plumbing codes, PCA regulations, etc. that need to be looked at. Sventek added that there is a sub-team looking at reuse of water.

Smitten stated we have come a long way in conservation but also have a long way to go.

Commers noted that the University recently built a dorm that uses non-potable water for toilets.

Klein recommended a book – *The Big Thirst*. He asked about communities forming their own wastewater treatment reclamation plants. Pickart stated that they are looking into this and also looking at groundwater reclamation as well.

Droste discussed research done by IBM that shows people's usage compared to their neighbors. Consumers have no knowledge – information drives behavior. The Committee talked about how Xcel Energy is doing that and it does motivate folks to do better than their neighbor in conservation.

Housing Policy Plan – Tara Beard, Regional Policy and Research

Beard gave a presentation on the Housing Policy Plan (HPP) and noted that it is not a system plan. She discussed the key elements of the housing role including: 1) Metropolitan Land Planning Act, 2) Livable Communities Act, and 3) Housing Performance Scores.

Beard discussed the goals of the HPP outlined in the materials provided. She also discussed why there is a need for a HPP. She then reviewed who makes up the HPP Workgroup as well as smaller Subgroups including: Allocation of Affordable Housing Need; Housing Performance Scores (HPS); and HPS and Transportation Advisory Board.

Beard discussed emerging themes from the HPP Workgroup and Subgroups as listed in the materials provided.

Beard discussed the timeline and the implementation of the HPP.

Next, Beard discussed the topics they'd like input on from LUAC.

Halbach noted that in the past, the Council has awarded points in the HPS if they waive various fees or charges for affordable housing development. If they do that, someone else has to pick up those costs and asked Beard what she knew about this. Starling responded that the Council charges the community for SAC and they in turn charge users at the local level, so it's up to each city's discretion where to get that money.

Hemken asked about keeping affordable housing up and asked if this is a part of the HPP. Beard stated this would fall under the discussion of preservation and would be a part of the plan.

Halbach stated that this is one of the biggest struggles we have. He discussed studies for better management, better restoration, etc. He noted that it's a tough issue.

McClean discussed transportation policy and affordable housing and asked if affordable housing should be located along transit lines and asked if this is something staff are looking into. Beard stated they are trying to get away from divisive issues and get to where everyone can agree. She stated everyone should have the option to live where they want to. People should have a choice and this policy plan will drive policy along that line of thinking.

Beard's contact information was provided for further comments.

Next Meeting – July 17, 2014

ADJOURNMENT

Business completed, the meeting adjourned at 6:10 p.m.

Sandi Dingle
Recording Secretary