

Minutes of the

MEETING OF THE LAND USE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Thursday, January 15, 2015

Committee Members Present:

Jon Commers, Colleen Ratzlaff-Labeau, Chip Halbach, Phillip Klein, Mary Hershberger Thun, Bill Droste, Marvin Johnson, Kristina Smitten, Amy Ihlán, James McClean

Committee Members Absent:

Kathi Hemken, Andrew Hestness, Elizabeth Wefel, Elizabeth Kautz, Bill Neuendorf, Aimie Mims

CALL TO ORDER

Committee Chair Commers called the regular meeting of the Council's Land Use Advisory Committee to order at 4:06 p.m. on Thursday, January 15, 2015.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES

Chair Commers noted that he would need to leave the meeting by 5:15 p.m. and asked that the agenda be amended so that he may present his items first under Information. A motion was made by Johnson, seconded by Droste, to approve the amended agenda for the January 15, 2015, meeting of the Land Use Advisory Committee. **Motion carried.**

A motion was made by Hershberger Thun, seconded by Klein, to approve the September 18, 2014, and the November 20, 2014, minutes of the meetings of the Land Use Advisory Committee. **Motion carried.**

BUSINESS

Planning Assistance Fund – Lisa Barajas, Local Planning Assistance

Barajas gave a presentation on the Planning Assistance Fund and noted that there is an update to the materials provided. She reviewed the timeline of the process through 2016 and noted staff is looking for a recommendation from this committee to bring forward. She then discussed the Met Council's statutory authority. Barajas reviewed the 2008 planning grants that were awarded in the last planning cycle. She then discussed the criteria for proposed options and the costs for each. She reviewed communities' eligibility for each option as shown on the maps provided.

Halbach discussed the issue of affordable housing and communities that don't have goals for affordable housing. Others do and do a good job. There's a third group that have an assignment but don't do a good job. He questioned giving money for planning to those that don't do a good job of planning for affordable housing.

Barajas stated that as part of the grant award process we do require that they conform to System Plans and policy plans of adjacent communities. If they do not, we may require them to pay that money back. Secondly, she noted that consistency is one of the requirements for our LCDA program. If their plan is not complete (consistent with Council policy), they are not eligible to be in our LCDA program.

Halbach noted that he has had discussions with the Community Development Director regarding eligibility. Barajas explained timing and requirements and noted that grant payments are made in two parts and if the plan is inconsistent, the second half of the payment is not made.

Johnson discussed cities like his (Independence) that have a lot of old housing stock that are affordable.

Droste noted that when looking at rural areas, land value can increase in value. He also discussed net tax capacity and how it complicates things.

Smitten agreed with Droste and stated she would be more in favor of looking at median net tax capacity. She stated she has looked at the need for cities without planning staff and their needs seem to be met more with Option 1.

Halbach feels it is important that the Council makes it known what the expectations for affordable housing are for each community. He is also in favor of Option 1.

Ratzlaff-Labeau feels that Option 2 or 3 make more sense. She noted those that have planners have tax payers paying for them and that shouldn't disqualify them from receiving grant money.

Barajas noted that only communities who typically apply were included; there could be others as well.

Smitten asked what a comp plan update costs for sewerage or unsewered. Barajas noted that going by the last planning cycle, an update for an unsewered area was roughly \$20-25K. She noted that grants for sewerage areas were about half of the actual costs, however, there were some communities with big issues that spent quite a bit more.

McClellan asked how many eligible communities applied. Barajas stated they all did.

Commerz stated he is looking for high value for the dollars spent.

Klein made a motion and it was seconded by Hershberger Thun to recommend Option 3 of the planning grant program to the Metropolitan Council.

Hershberger Thun asked about the budget. Barajas noted that the adjustments were done and shown on page 2 of the report provided.

Johnson noted that he would vote against the motion. He stated we need to do something where everyone could be eligible.

Hershberger Thun asked Johnson if in the last cycle they had a representative from the Met Council helping them and if this is an option for this planning cycle. Barajas stated, yes, and noted that sector reps on staff are here to help.

Droste asked if there's other funding available. Barajas stated there is no other funding available; however, there is assistance in the form of tools and sector reps.

Halbach asked if we can say that any community under Option 1, 2 or 3 would be eligible for some form of grant.

Commerz asked if this could be done and if the committee would want to recommend that. Barajas stated it could be done and stated she could run the numbers for that type of scenario.

Ihlan agreed with looking at which communities need the support. She felt the problem with including all the options would be reducing the grants too much. She noted she would support Option 1.

Johnson asked if sewerage areas show on the map and noted that Independence has some sewerage areas now. Barajas stated she will make that change.

Klein stated he supports Option 3 because more communities would have the opportunity for these funds.

Smitten pointed out that populations of small cities cannot support all their needs – their taxes would be too high. She asked if Option 3 could be median rather than net tax capacity.

Barajas explained that Option 1 doesn't use the median due to their smaller populations.

Halbach noted that if all communities participated in the plan it would add 17 communities – this would be a 25% reduction per grant. He stated he would support inclusion of all three options or Option 1.

Chair Commers called for a vote. Four members voted for the motion, five voted against. **The motion failed.**

Hershberger Thun pointed out that Option 1 eliminates a community with a lot of minorities.

Hershberger Thun made a motion to recommend Option 2. **The motion failed** due to a lack of a second.

Halbach motioned to support or make eligible all communities that qualify under Options 1, 2 and 3 and that overall the budget be held under \$1.4 million. It was seconded by Johnson.

Halbach feels there's good logic under all three scenarios.

Hershberger Thun asked for clarification if this would make a fourth option that would decrease the overall grant totals to each community. Barajas stated it would.

Smitten asked staff for their reaction. Barajas stated her concern would be that the grant amounts would not get communities very far in the process.

Johnson asked if this should be tabled and staff could come back with a refined sheet giving new grant amounts.

Johnson made a motion to table this item until the next meeting in order to create an Option 4 showing all the dollar amounts.

Smitten stated that she feels we all understand what Option 4 would do to the numbers.

Chair Commers asked if there was a second to Johnson's motion to table. Halbach seconded the motion. Chair Commers called for a vote. **The motion failed.**

McClellan asked about the timeline. Barajas stated we do have flexibility in our timeline.

Chair Commers asked for a vote on Halbach's motion to support or make eligible all communities that qualify under Options 1, 2 and 3 and that overall the budget be held under \$1.4 million; seconded by Johnson. Five voted in favor of the motion. Four were opposed to the motion. **The motion carried.**

Commers noted that he will bring this item to the Community Development Committee and will inform them of this committee's dialogue.

INFORMATION

Membership – Jon Commers

Commers noted that tomorrow is the deadline for applications and stated he hopes that all members reapply. Detrick clarified that the application process is open, so it will be possible to apply after 1/16/15.

Draft 2015 Work Plan – Jon Commers

Commers stated that the goal is to guide a work plan based on the interests raised by this committee. He discussed the main topics included in the memorandum provided as well as additional topics suggested.

Commers added that he met with the Communications Director for the City of Eagan and noted that an open access network has clear regional significance.

Klein asked if there are legislators involved in looking at statewide high speed internet.

At this point Commers excused himself from the meeting and Smitten took over as Vice Chair.

Droste stated that all cities struggle with infrastructure of technology. He feels fiber would benefit all. He discussed open data and stated he feels it is a positive opportunity for engagement.

Halbach discussed housing and feels that CDC [Community Development Committee] could get perspective from this body on diversity of this body's ideas on the affordable housing component of the Land Planning Act.

Klein discussed water supply planning, convening programs/water conservation. Smitten agreed that this is an important topic.

Hershberger Thun agreed and noted that she would be least interested in the topic on GIS mapping.

McClellan discussed looking at health impacts of transit. Smitten stated that it may fit under economic competitiveness.

Local Planning Handbook Website Demonstration – Raya Esmaili and Angela Torres, Local Planning Assistance

Torres gave a presentation and noted that maps are a very large part of the local comprehensive planning process. She discussed mapping tools in the Local Planning Handbook website that will be available.

Esmaili gave a demonstration of the mapping tools available on the Local Planning Handbook website. Each community will have a page specific to their community. She discussed the operational layers available for each community's map. She noted the ease of using these maps.

Droste asked if there is controlled access to who is allowed to see each community's maps. Esmaili stated that this is all public data and can be used by anyone. She noted it is put here to aid in the comprehensive planning process.

Hershberger Thun asked if this will be used by planners and asked how they will learn how to use the tool. Esmaili confirmed and stated when the website is published there will be a variety of tutorials. She noted that sector reps will also be available to help.

TOD Guide – Deb Detrick and Michael Larson, Local Planning Assistance

Detrick and Larson gave an introduction to the TOD Guide. Detrick discussed the project goals to produce a go-to-resource for TOD policy, planning, and implementation. She discussed the project timeline and noted they plan to complete the guide in August 2015.

Detrick discussed the scoping and needs analysis that was done and what was heard. She also discussed the survey of local planning staff that was done.

Larson further discussed the survey results and also the results of experiences related to TOD of those surveyed. He discussed the top TOD challenges discovered and the preferred ways to present material.

Detrick discussed the next steps after the survey and noted they will continue to engage people. She noted this topic will be brought back to LUAC. The role for LUAC after August will be to receive feedback.

Halbach asked how this relates to the work of the TOD Office. Detrick noted that the TOD office is on our TOD Guide project management team and efforts are being coordinated with this office.

Droste discussed planners and marketing data. Larson stated we are very sensitive of economic realities. He noted there's a lot of research on the value that transit adds to land.

Detrick stated the Council will be encouraging communities to include TOD in local comprehensive plans.

Johnson asked why transit corridors never seem to go straight west or northeast. Larson stated that transit corridors will be a future discussion.

Droste asked how often transitway corridor maps are updated. Smitten noted that this is part of the Transportation Policy Plan (TPP) Update. Detrick confirmed and noted the TPP was just adopted yesterday but may be amended. She noted that it is updated every four years.

Next Meeting – March 19, 2015

ADJOURNMENT

Business completed, the meeting adjourned at 6:07 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sandi Dingle
Recording Secretary