

Minutes of the

MEETING OF THE LAND USE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Thursday, September 20, 2018

Committee Members Present:

Chair Jon Commers, Gerald Bruner, Renae Clark, Karl Drotning, Chip Halbach, Phillip Klein, Marvin Johnson, James McClean, James Saefke, Kristina Smitten, Elizabeth Wefel

Committee Members Absent:

Bill Droste, Kathi Mocol, Bill Neuendorf, Kathi Hemken, Jamil Ford, Jennifer Geisler

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Commers called the regular meeting of the Council's Land Use Advisory Committee to order at 4:01 p.m. on Thursday, September 20, 2018.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Chair Commers asked for a motion to approve the September 20, 2018, agenda. It was motioned by Klein and seconded by Bruner. **The motion was approved.**

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

Chair Commers asked for a motion to approve the July 19, 2018, minutes. It was motioned by Drotning and seconded by Halbach. **The motion was approved.**

INFORMATION

Neighborhood Project - Angela Torres, Local Planning Assistance, and Baris Gumus-Dawes, Regional Policy & Research

Drotning asked for clarification on the term “ground truth.” Torres answered that there are various typologies within a community and staff is able to “ground truth” the data with local knowledge.

Klein asked why this study was initiated. Torres said that national models were looking at change and transition and how various cities change – the difference between urban and suburban areas – as well as gentrification. Torres added that Minneapolis and Saint Paul were pulling the data so by excluding them staff were able to provide more helpful data to communities.

Drotning shared the experience of a big development on an old gravel pit in Lakeville being economically-driven with money coming from developers and cities providing the land use. Drotning added that elementary school kids take the trails to get to school which is a land use that most agree was a success.

Clark asked how this tool helps cities like Lakeville creating plans in respects to equity. Torres said staff are still developing tools, one example being an online platform where there would be the ability to select different neighborhood types, allowing communities to connect with other communities who have had a similar experience. Gumus-Dawes added that it would be valuable for communities to see what other communities went through a decade previous and learn from that experience.

Drotning shared that different cities have different markets; Bloomington and Lakeville are drastically different, there is a different market, different buyers, different lifestyles so building needs to happen based on the market.

Commers commented that within cities, change is being evidenced in different ways and this Neighborhood Project helps challenge expectations.

Climate Vulnerability Assessment (CVA) - Eric Wojchik, Local Planning Assistance

Commers commented on the dramatic surface temperature of the high being 125.21 Fahrenheit. Wojchik said the surface temperature is a useful gauge when we think about planting trees, different colored pavements, etc., since all can lower surface temperature which can actually lower the air temperature.

Commers expressed his appreciation for this work and brought up that transit riders' perception of wait time is directly related to whether they are in shade and the data allows us to understand interdependencies in nuanced ways and how infrastructure can do multiple things at once.

Bruner commented on his experience of increased hot and muggy weather. Wojchik said climatologists have looked at decade-long trends and have not seen increased heat days.

Bruner asked if these reports are factored in when the Met Council grants permits so that more trees are not torn out to build houses. Wojchik clarified that housing permits are granted by cities, not the Met Council. Wojchik said 36 million trees have been lost in metro areas, and the emerald ash borer has been a reason. Wojchik added that because there is such robust planting taking place the Twin Cities is one of the few metros not seeing a huge loss compared to other metros.

Bruner asked for clarification on the Met Council role. Wojchik said the Met Council works with cities to ensure infrastructure is in place to build housing, helps to determine if expansion is justified, but the cities are deciding the type of housing allowed.

Bruner asked why trees are not planted alongside new roads as they are built, especially the sunny sides. Wojchik shared that some cities prioritize that, but other cities have taken away requirements for trees because of it becoming a maintenance issue. Hennepin County took this heat map and used it with other information to determine where to prioritize tree planting.

Klein asked if it has been shared with other communities that Hennepin County has used this data, to hopefully encourage them to reach the same level. Wojchik responded that Carver County looked at localized flooding to evaluate what areas are risky, which is another place that is an example of the maps being looked at and used.

Clark mentioned that flood resiliency along with aging infrastructure are some of the biggest threats to communities in the coming years and this data helps drive policy that drives land use decisions.

Clark shared that the long-term impacts to the communities in terms of dollars would be helpful in educating cities. Clark added that tying land use decisions and the impacts from extreme events with inadequate infrastructure in a way that provokes policy discussion is crucial.

Halbach asked about the intersection of this content and the 2040 plans, if the Met Council put out this information to help inform the 2040 plans the communities are currently working on, is the Met Council seeing plans come in that reflect this content. Wojchik said that the timing seemed to be that a lot of cities have already planned far down the road but when it comes to implementation this information will be helpful.

Halbach asked what advice is coming out of the White House for science and technology. Wojchik said the City of Minneapolis had applied the Resilience Dialogues hosted by the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy and asked the Met Council to be a part of it and helped us scope it. Wojchik shared that one of the challenges was making the data accessible and not overly technical. Wojchik added that this spanned two White House administrations.

Commers asked if the image shown of flooding in Roseville under Highway 36 had a clear impact on the regional transportation system. Commers commented that the City of Roseville put the sign up, and he inquired about the partnership to address the impact on regional transportation that events like this have. Commers wondered where the place where regional and local interest and responsibility come together. Wojchik said that there is more of a multidisciplinary approach taking place and he stressed

the need to work with local communities to solve issues. Wojchik said that even with hard infrastructure like sewers there has not been a lot of historical communication with cities despite the fact that flooding does not stay within a border. Wojchik said that the conversation is now changing because of this realization.

Clark commented that the American Planning Association recognized the disconnect of land use and planning and called for better integration; one way they matched their words and actions was by bringing together water and land use planners to stress the importance of green infrastructure.

LUAC members discussed the need for a cross-discipline understanding and the importance of having a regional entity to help facilitate the cross-discipline communication and collaboration.

Drotning commented that there is also the issue of neighboring communities striving to be competitive in the marketplace: engineers recognize it, but political leaders need to recognize as well that green is good even if no one is in the park.

LUAC-MAWSAC (Metropolitan Area Water Supply Advisory Committee) Collaboration - Jon Commers, Land Use Advisory Committee Chair, Deb Detrick, Local Planning Assistance, and Lanya Ross, Water Supply Planning

Klein shared that collaboration has been going well and headway is being made; a letter has been drafted to the Legislative Water Commission; and there is the need to get more in depth with what they want to do and ask for more results from the communities, government agencies, and the Minnesota Legislature.

Bruner said when he found out the Met Council had a water committee he asked the county and was told there are at least 13 different entities that deal with water; he asked for clarity on the MAWSAC role. Ross said it was formed by Minnesota statute in 2005 and membership is defined in statute to include water agencies, the Department of Natural Resources (DNR), Minneapolis and Saint Paul water utilities, and representatives from each of the counties and cities to provide a diverse perspective, since there is so much going on with water, there is the need to be more coordinated and streamlined.

LUAC members discussed that the committee is not trying to replace any of the agencies but trying to improve coordination.

Commers said that this issue is one of the most urgent, as the Council is involved as a convener, and it also provides one of the highest opportunities for success. Commers added that over the coming of the next two generations this will continue to be one of the top one or two issues that is critical.

Commers stated that the Council is in a position to add value by convening in a decentralized policy-making environment and bringing regional perspective to the conversation.

Bruner shared that water is important and there is news of other cities nationally that are having water quality issues; he asked who is at the “top of the heap” making sure we do not have similar issues happening here in Minnesota. Ross answered that water supply planning is not a regional system, but wastewater planning is. Ross said water supply is the responsibility of the individual communities, so in the metro area that includes over 100 water systems. Ross added that the Met Council has no regulatory authority with water supply but is the only agency that does long range planning, so the Met Council perspective is unique and can see combined effects that other cities/areas/communities cannot.

Klein said that Minnesota is one of four states that has been recognized in the U.S. as a leader in water supply planning, and that the biggest challenge to work interagency is to create policies that allow decisions based on water conservation and water quality and yet are flexible enough that if a project doesn't allow it we are able to adjust to help communities move forward.

Clark added that regulation is there to keep things from getting worse, but it doesn't generally help improve conditions.

Smitten asked how these two committees will best make policy recommendations, and how they will have access to each other's data to enable both committees to make recommendations that are in sync. Ross shared that staff will bring information to the committees and reports are a way to do that. MAWSAC has a requirement to help the Council write a Minnesota Water Plan report to the Minnesota Legislature, so that report would be a good vehicle for communicating priorities – review, public engagement, etc.

Detrick said suggestions are welcome as to what are good opportunities to get the committees working together.

Halbach said that so much is handled at the staff level, and the committee and staff is key in a timeline. Detrick added that she will ensure that information is disseminated well.

Bruner asked where the Minnesota Legislature is on the water issues; is there a sense that there should be one agency that should be over everything. Wefel said that it goes back and forth, and one of the many ideas recently talked about was the idea of an “uber agency” but right now there is a frustration that there are too many layers, and the current legislative atmosphere does not gravitate towards centralization.

Source Water Protection in the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area - Lanya Ross, Water Supply Planning

McClellan asked if the Burnsville overlay was a city council decision. Ross said it was city-led, not required by any agency, the City of Burnsville has groundwater but also a quarry that they are taking water from, so they are recognizing the public health risk.

Drotning commented that the freeway landfill is adjacent to that quarry and there is still an abundance of disagreement.

Bruner expressed his appreciation for staff reports being professional and thorough.

Commerz clarified that the area that source water originates goes beyond the map line shown, Ross answered in the affirmative.

Commerz noted that there is a conspicuous absence of a state planning agency for water despite the many agencies involved in the water discussion.

Ross shared that Glen Gerads from Minneapolis Water Works has a good presentation about source water protection for the Mississippi River, showing targeted ways many partners are getting involved.

ADJOURNMENT

Business completed, the meeting adjourned at 6:02 p.m.

Jenna Ernst
Recording Secretary