

Minutes of the

MEETING OF THE LAND USE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Thursday, November 19, 2020

Committee Members Present:

Phillip Klein, Gerald Bruner, Dan Roe, Chair Wendy Wulff, Noah Keller, Karl Drotning, Kathi Hemken, Jennifer Geisler, Jonathan Bottema, Steve Morris, Kathi Mocol, April Graves

Committee Members Absent:

Mark Nelson, Vince Workman, Suado Abdi, Mitra Jalali Nelson, Trista MatasCastillo, Courtney Schroeder

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Wulff called the WebEx meeting of the Council's Land Use Advisory Committee to order at 4:01 p.m. on Thursday, November 19, 2020.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Chair Wulff asked for a consensus to approve the November 19, 2020 agenda. The agenda was approved.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

Chair Wulff asked for a motion to approve the September 17, 2020 minutes. It was motioned by Klein and seconded by Hemken to approve the minutes.

Secretary Dingle performed a roll call vote:

Ayes: 11 (Jonathan Bottema, Gerald Bruner, Karl Drotning, April Graves, Kathi Hemken, Noah Keller, Phillip Klein, Kathi Mocol, Steve Morris, Dan Roe, Wendy Wulff)

Nays: 0

Abstain: 1 - Geisler

The minutes were approved.

INFORMATION

Tax Base Revitalization Account Seeding Equitable Environmental Development (SEED) –
Marcus Martin, Livable Communities

Martin gave a presentation on the Tax Base Revitalization Account (TBRA) Seeding Equitable Environmental Development (SEED) as outlined in the presentation provided. He discussed place-based equity at the Council. He stated there are two types of grants – investigation and cleanup.

Martin discussed areas of concentrated poverty (ACP) and the Council's rethinking of their approach to poverty. He discussed how SEED grants are impacting equity as outlined in the presentation.

Martin proposed the first question: What do you consider 'equitable' real estate redevelopment?

Bruner stated he feels when this program was enacted it was to identify poor families and get them into decent housing. Martin stated this specific grant program looks at both cleanup and development.

Bruner asked if, by definition, this is to clean up hazardous waste and wait until development is proposed.

Wulff stated we need to plan in order to figure out how much cleanup is needed, i.e., more for housing versus warehouse. The problem with SEED is there's not a lot of applicants.

Geisler discussed the ‘catch 22’ – if cleaning up ACP – we’re displacing people. She asked are we moving folks in order to clean up sites from lead paint, etc. Martin stated these areas are often vacant sites, so there is not displacement or changes of use. The question is how to change without changing the nature of neighborhoods.

Drotning asked where are brownfields primarily located. Martin stated they are pretty common, i.e., old gas stations, dry cleaners, etc. – mostly in more central cities. Drotning stated it sounds like Hennepin and Ramsey County, and outlying areas are more spotty.

Wulff added that older community downtown areas will have areas that were developed pre-pollution regulations.

Klein asked, have we asked why developers have not sought these grants? Is this type of development too costly overall? Martin stated we’ve had success with those we’ve reached out to. As for SEED – developers are not sure what they would build, etc.

Bottema feels this program is really good as it addresses acute environmentalism. He asked if there is someone to be the tour guide of resources to tap into. Martin responded staff have not reached out to builder’s associations but have connected to related professional associations.

Drotning discussed a project in Lakeland that is not in an ACP and will not be affordable housing so it’s unlikely to get funding for a project like this. Wulff stated not with a SEED grant, but it would be eligible for a TBRA grant.

Martin stated we compare and prioritize the worst projects first and are looking to be good stewards of the money and look for the most beneficial uses of money.

Martin put out second question for discussion: Should we continue to use a place-based approach (e.g., Areas of Concentrated Poverty) as part of our approach to equity? And, how could we encourage more brownfield redevelopment in ACP?

Roe stated the biggest obstacle may not be thinking of a project; this is where a city or HRA (Housing Redevelopment Authority) could possibly partner. As for place-based, he suggested adding adjacency and uses of ACP. He asked, how do we encourage more – reach out to cities or agencies, i.e., HRAs to make properties more attractive for development.

Graves agreed with Roe’s comments. Bruner agree and stated we need to identify housing or business – either being acceptable.

2021 Livable Communities Act Scoring Criteria – Tara Beard, Livable Communities

Beard gave a presentation on the 2021 Livable Communities Act scoring criteria as outlined in the presentation provided. She noted this is done every year and gave a high-level overview of the changes and reviewed the timeline for adoption of the scoring criteria.

Beard discussed the evaluation questions used (high-level) and activities listed in the presentation, including outreach and engagement done and data collection and analysis. She discussed the principles for changes developed and reviewed recommendations for the 2021 scoring criteria outlined in the presentation.

Bruner questioned changing the criteria every year and asked, doesn’t that make it hard for people to apply? Beard stated lots of the criteria carries over. She stated often it’s about lessons learned, changes in the market, etc. She noted it’s more of a ‘tweaking.’

Klein asked what has been successful, what works, and why not stick with that. He feels it would be better to keep it simple. Beard stated she hopes that what we are doing has simplified the criteria. Beard also stated the analysis showed parts were not working well.

Geisler feels cleaning up the scoring criteria is great. As for tying it to Thrive and statutes, she felt developers don’t care. Beard agreed.

Drotning felt it's a great improvement and is very supportive.

Graves asked, are innovation and demonstration conflictive of how, what and who? Beard discussed the intent of how and who – how is looking outward and at the city and who it will benefit. Who is the project team doing development team work with cities. How is how to engage community.

Beard discussed four core tenants of the statute – removing demonstration or innovation. She asked, are we losing anything? She stated we take this to heart and feel there's confusion between high quality versus functional design.

Roe agreed and stated in Roseville they went away from planned unit development (PUD) where projects didn't meet zoning. He stated when they reconsidered, they looked at whether a project meets the city's goals. He commented on 'who' and asked, are there criteria looking at more diverse developers or maybe not the top five developers. Beard stated they are looking at deeper evaluation in 2021 specific to how to make these programs available to newer, smaller applicants.

Drotning agreed and stated local ordinances define a lot of architectural design and added that innovation can be so subjective.

Graves discussed the disconnect with smaller developers that may not have relationships with cities Graves said to build that capacity and more technical assistance. Beard stated she appreciates the comments and stated they definitely want to provide more technical assistance.

Bottema applauded the staff for focusing on the mission. We have a housing shortage and especially low income housing. He cautioned wanting to do 'so much', i.e., working with small builders, ACP, etc. He felt we need to focus on big building projects as little ones won't meet the need.

Wulff suggested Committee members watch the Community Development meeting on December 21. She stated the meeting will be live streamed and also recorded and encouraged members to share input with Tara Beard.

Economic Value Atlas Introduction – Dan Marckel and Joel Huting, Research

Marckel gave an introduction to the Economic Value Atlas tool as outlined in the presentation provided. He discussed two parts of the project – one is an online interactive tool. The other is an engagement and discussion process.

Bottema asked how much will this project cost. Marckel stated we are using existing staff time and noted it is largely a process of organizing data.

Huting stated there are several data scientist in-house and there may be some costs for outreach and engagement (minimal). He discussed Brookings paying though a McKnight grant.

Bottema stated he has a hard time justifying costs with data comingling. He feels everything proposed can be done individually feels it's a waste of time and money.

Bruner asked if this is another level of bureaucracy. He agreed with Bottema and feels it's redundant.

Marckel discussed the kinds of users for this tool and stated it is a source that saves time rather than having so many others 'mining' their data.

Morris agreed that it appears redundant and asked what exactly are we going to use this for. He feels the data is out there if you want it.

Drotning feels there needs to be actionable information.

Geisler discussed steps and creation of use cases – who are the users, and can they get access to this data elsewhere.

Wulff added she is also not sure how this would be useful.

Marckel stated he appreciated the comments and to make cost benefit case or use case, they look to Portland's example and the benefits they found from shared discussions regionally. "What's the value proposition" is great feedback, and staff will look into it.

Wulff added that it looks like census data.

Huting stated there's more to it but the idea is mashing up all the information to have a tool that shows relevant strengths of census tracks is not something that exists in the region.

Wulff explained she already knows the demographics.

Morris agreed and feels we're in a solution looking for a problem.

Bruner agreed as well.

2021 Draft Land Use Advisory Committee Work Plan – Wendy Wulff

Wulff reviewed the 2021 Draft Land Use Advisory Committee Work Plan as outlined in the materials provided and noted that it is fluid. She stated it will probably come back for approval at the next meeting.

Bruner asked how the budget deficits will affect the Metropolitan Council and would like to discuss further.

ADJOURNMENT

Business completed the meeting adjourned at 5:56 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sandi Dingle
Recording Secretary