

**Minutes of the Seventeenth Meeting
Racine County Comprehensive Plan Multi-Jurisdictional Advisory Committee**

DATE: June 19, 2008

TIME: 6:30 pm

PLACE: Racine County Ives Grove Auditorium
14200 Washington Ave
Sturtevant, WI

Attendance:

Mary Kacmarcik (Chairperson), Town of Waterford
Connie Mellem (Vice-Chairperson), Village of North Bay
Jim Moyer, Town of Yorkville
Dave Pattengale, Village of Rochester
Tom Roanhouse, Village of Waterford
Matt Sadowski, City of Racine
Joe Heck, City of Racine
Bob Miller, City of Burlington
Tom Kramer, Town of Norway
Mark Januik, Village of Sturtevant
Jim Celano, Town of Dover
Audrey Viau, Village of Elmwood Park
Ken Hall, Racine County Economic Development & Land Use
Pete Christensen, Village of Wind Point
Ingrid Tiegel, Village of Mt Pleasant
Julie Anderson, Planning & Development
Dave Schilling, SEWRPC
Tom Moes, SEWRPC
Kristen Lie, Racine County UW-Extension

1. Roll Call

Mary Kacmarcik called the meeting to order at 6:35 p.m. Roll call was taken by circulating a sign-up sheet.

2. Approval of May 15, 2008 meeting minutes

Ken Hall made a motion to approve the minutes of the previous meeting. Motion was seconded by Connie Mellem. Mary Kacmarcik corrected the spelling of her name under “roll call.” Tom Moes corrected the date of the prior meeting minutes. Upon a voice vote, the minutes were unanimously approved.

3. Continued review of preliminary draft Chapter XI, “Housing Element,” of the SEWRPC Community Assistance Planning Report No. 301, *A Multi-Jurisdictional Comprehensive Plan for Racine County: 2035*

Tom Moes and Dave Schilling of the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (SEWRPC) reviewed the information in Part 2 of Draft Chapter XI, “Housing Element.” Tom Moes briefly summarized information presented at the previous MJAC meeting, including Parts 1 and 3 of the draft chapter and information about the Racine County Multi-Jurisdictional Comprehensive Plan Housing Work Group. He further noted that two of the Work Group members, Joe Heck of Racine City Development and Jim Celano, were present at the meeting, and he invited them to provide additional information.

Tom Moes reviewed housing needs and issues presented in Part 2 of the draft chapter. He noted that several definitions regarding housing issues were provided, including “affordable housing,” “workforce housing,” “special needs housing,” and “fair housing.” He also stated that, although the traditional definition of “affordable housing” is a

household spending 30% or less of its gross income on housing (HUD definition), the Work Group had tried to further define “affordable housing” as what is provided by the market, including housing types and sizes, local economic factors, and long-term energy efficiencies. Tom Moes continued to review information on housing affordability in Racine County, presented in Tables XI-2 and XI-3, and subsidized housing, presented on page 12. He stated that, according to 2000 CHAS (HUD’s Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy) data, about 17,400 households in Racine County (25% of all County households) reported housing problems; these households were predominantly low income (i.e., households earning 80% or less of the area’s median income). Mary Kacmarcik asked whether the housing problems were due entirely to housing costs, or whether they indicated substandard housing. Dave Schilling answered that it was primarily households paying more than 30% of their income on housing costs.

Jim Celano commented that it was interesting that median income increased 6%, while the cost of homeownership increased 27% and the cost of rentals increased 16%. Pete Christensen asked whether comparison studies had been conducted between Racine County’s foreclosure situation and those of the Region, State and Nation. Julie Anderson stated that the data had not been compared beyond what is reported in the draft chapter. Jim Celano commented that Racine County had a good mix of urban, agriculture, manufacturing and other land uses, which may have lessened the local impact of the foreclosure crisis. Dave Pattengale noted that the data on the number of households reporting housing problems may be inaccurate, since some households choose to spend more than 30% of their income on housing.

Tom Roanhouse requested clarification about the source of the data presented in this section; Tom Moes confirmed most of the data came from the 2000 CHAS and the 2006 American Community Survey (ACS), which is conducted annually by the U.S. Census Bureau.

Dave Schilling reviewed the County zoning provisions and how they may impact the County’s ability to accommodate a range of housing choices, as presented in Table XII-8. These included housing densities, minimum lot sizes, minimum floor requirements, and setback requirements. Jim Moyer noted that no one constructs houses at the minimum size; they are all built much larger. Jim Celano passed along data provided by J. Scott Mathie (Metropolitan Builders Association) about the recent trend of home sizes increasing while the household size decreases.

Connie Mellem asked about the effect of rising property taxes on the ability of elderly and/or disabled residents to stay in their homes. Discussion followed regarding measures that communities might take to assist persons living on fixed incomes to stay in their homes, as well as whether such measures should be taken, given the aging population and how the increased number of retiree households will affect the tax base. It was decided that SEWRPC staff would research the possibility of adding a policy to address this issue.

Jim Celano questioned whether there could be mandatory training for residents newly joining plan commissions. Julie Anderson noted that a basic plan commission workshop had been conducted in the Ives Grove Auditorium last March, as a joint effort between SEWRPC, UW-Extension, and the Metropolitan Builders Association. Both she and Dave Schilling commented that the attendance had been to capacity (approximately 100 persons), which indicated there was a need in the area for such educational opportunities. Jim Moyer added that the Wisconsin Towns Association frequently offered trainings for local government officials. It was decided that additional links to planning workshop opportunities would be added to the Racine County Smart Growth website.

Jim Celano made a motion to approve the preliminary draft of Chapter XI, “Housing Element,” subject to changes as suggested by the MJAC. Motion was seconded by Ken Hall. Upon a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.

4. Review of preliminary draft of “mineral resources” section Chapter III, “Inventory of Agricultural, Natural, and Cultural Resources,” of the SEWRPC Community Assistance Planning Report No. 301, *A Multi-Jurisdictional Comprehensive Plan for Racine County: 2035*

Dave Schilling reviewed information regarding the mineral resources in Racine County, which will be inserted in Chapter III, “Inventory of Agricultural, Natural and Cultural Resources.” This included data from the Wisconsin Geological & Natural History Survey, Racine County, and SEWRPC on Racine County’s mineral resources, including existing nonmetallic mineral sites and potential sources of nonmetallic mineral resources. Jim Celano made a motion

to approve the preliminary draft of “mineral resources,” which was seconded by Connie Mellem. Upon a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.

5. Review of preliminary draft of additional text to be included in Chapter XII, “Transportation Element,” of the SEWRPC Community Assistance Planning Report No. 301, A *Multi-Jurisdictional Comprehensive Plan for Racine County: 2035*

Dave Schilling reviewed the additional text to be added to Chapter XII, “Transportation Element,” which included the issue of congestion problems during peak travel times on Main Street in the Village of Waterford, and a new objective and policy to address the provision of county-wide private on-demand door-to-door transit service. Ken Hall made a motion to approve the preliminary draft of the additional text. Motion was seconded by Dave Pattengale. Upon a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.

6. Discussion of the Racine County Comprehensive Plan Public Opinion Survey

Kristen Lie reviewed the additional analysis of the comprehensive plan public opinion survey that was requested by Ken Hall. Mr. Hall stated that, due to the over-representation of persons age 65 or older and the under-representation of the City of Racine, he had asked for an examination of the survey results by age group and by City of Racine residents, as compared with the overall survey sample. A summary of these findings is available on the Racine County Smart Growth website. Mr. Hall further commented that he was particularly interested in how younger people viewed quality of life issues, such as their support for more bike and pedestrian paths in the County. A brief discussion of potential future bike trails and their benefits ensued between Mr. Hall, Jim Celano, and Bob Miller. Ken Hall requested that SEWRPC consider strengthening the language of the policy recommending the preparation of the countywide bicycle system plan in the transportation element.

7. Other Business

Mary Kacmarcik reminded the MJAC that the Racine County Fair would be taking place July 23 – 27, 2008, and she invited members to volunteer at the Smart Growth information table. Kristen Lie handed out Smart Growth bookmarks, which will be distributed at the Fair. A volunteer sign-up sheet was circulated.

Dave Schilling provided an update about the local government meetings, 2035 land use maps, and population, household, and employment projections. He stated that meetings were still being conducted with the Cities of Racine and Burlington, the Villages of Caledonia, Mt. Pleasant and Sturtevant, and the Towns of Burlington and Dover. The Village of Waterford expects to finalize their land use map this summer. The other communities have endorsed maps for use in the comprehensive plan; these maps are available online.

Dave Schilling also noted that there would be discussion about “Higher Expectations,” a Workforce Development Strategy for Racine County, at a future MJAC meeting, as it pertains to Chapter XIV, “Economic Development Element.”

8. Determination of next meeting date

Mary Kacmarcik announced that the next meeting date will be Thursday, August 21, 2008, starting at 6:30 pm in the Ives Grove Auditorium. There will not be a meeting in July, due to the Racine County Fair. Dave Schilling stated that the Agricultural, Natural, and Cultural Resources Element would be reviewed at the August meeting.

9. Adjournment

On a motion made by Jim Celano and seconded by Ken Hall, the meeting was adjourned at 8:15 pm.