

SUMMARY OF PROCEEDINGS

Economic Development Committee
East Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission
ECWRPC Offices
January 9, 2008

Committee Members Present:

Duane Brown, Vice-ChairWaupaca County
Helen Nagler Outagamie County
M. Eugene ZeuskeShawano County
Mark Harris..... Winnebago County

Commission Members Excused:

Merlin Gentz, Commission Chair Calumet County

Staff Present:

Eric Fowle Executive Director
Kara Homan Associate Planner

Others Present:

Kelly Hoxtell Economic Development Specialist, Calumet County

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS, DUANE BROWN, CHAIRMAN

Mr. Brown called the meeting to order at 1:35 p.m.

2. STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE WITH WIS. STATS. CH. 19, SUBCHAPTER V, SEC. 19.84 REGARDING OPEN MEETINGS REQUIREMENTS

It was determined that the meeting was in compliance with Wisconsin § Chapter 19, Subchapter V, Section 19.84 regarding Open Meeting Requirements.

3. APPROVAL OF REVISED AGENDA

Ms. Homan explained that the agenda was revised to reflect the current committee member list and the corrected schedule for the next Economic Development Committee Meeting.

A motion to approve the revised agenda was made by Ms. Nagler and seconded by Mr. Harris, passing unanimously.

4. PUBLIC COMMENT

Public Comment was requested. No comments were received from the public.

5. APPROVAL OF OCTOBER 18, 2007 SUMMARY OF PROCEEDINGS

Ms. Nagler asked that the summary of proceedings be changed to indicate that she was "excused" and not "absent," and explained to Ms. Homan what distinguished the two. Ms. Homan agreed the oversight would be fixed, and that she would appropriately utilize the two terms in future summary of proceedings. No other changes were requested.

A motion to approve the October 18, 2007 Summary of Proceedings was made by Mr. Zeuske, and seconded by Mr. Harris, passing unanimously.

6. CHANGES IN COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Mr. Fowle informed the committee of Brian Kowalkowski's departure, due to a new position he took with the Menominee Nation Tribal College. As such, the Economic Development Committee is now without a chair. Mr. Fowle also expressed concerns regarding whether a new commissioner would be appointed from Menominee County, and indicated that Mr. Kowalkowski's dedication to the Commission could be hard to replace.

7. SELECTION OF REPLACEMENT VICE-CHAIR

With the departure of former chair, Mr. Kowalkowski, staff asked Mr. Brown, Vice-Chair, whether he would be willing to serve as the interim Chair of the Economic Development Committee. Mr. Brown voiced concerns that, typically, chairs of each committee serve on the Commission's Steering Committee. As a result, he had a problem with this given that Waupaca County already had Dick Koeppen serving as a representative on the Steering Committee. Mr. Brown put forth the proposal that he would be willing to continue serving as Vice-Chair, and lead the committee in this capacity until after the 1st quarter meeting. New member(s) will likely be added to the committee at this point, and selection of a Chair can occur then. Mr. Fowle concurred that this was a reasonable temporary solution, as did other committee members.

No action was taken on this item, as Mr. Brown remains as Vice-Chair and the position of Chair remains temporarily vacant.

8. REVIEW/APPROVAL OF 2008 WORK PROGRAM & BUDGET: 1500 ELEMENT – ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Ms. Homan distributed copies of the 2008 Work Program & Budget to committee members. Mr. Fowle indicated that this work program and budget reflects where the Commission will focus its work efforts as it pertains to economic development. The work program represents a more detailed view of the budget, as compared with the preliminary budget that was passed at the 2nd quarter, 2007 meeting.

Mr. Fowle indicated that this year's economic development work program provided a more detailed breakdown of technical assistance projects. For instance, the element pertaining to assisting Fox Valley Technical College in siting their public safety training facility was created as part of a project that was chosen through the Commission's new technical assistance selection process. In addition, the New North Regional Industrial Park Mapping project reflects a project that began in 2007 and that will wrap up in 2008. There is still funding designated for additional projects on a case-by-case basis.

Mr. Fowle pointed out that a large portion of funding was allocated to the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) development, as the Commission will be preparing a 5-year update to the plan.

Mr. Fowle stated that The Fox River Heritage State Parkway Implementation element was included in the work program, as the project is likely to receive funding from a variety of sources, including the community foundations in Green Bay, Oshkosh, and Fond du Lac. Ms. Nagler mentioned that it seemed to take quite a bit of time to pull this project together and get it started. Mr. Fowle responded that a part of this could be accounted by the fact that funding came from a variety of entities, including government sources, and that working with these entities takes time and patience.

A motion to approve the 2008 Work Program & Budget was made by Mr. Zeuske, and seconded by Mr. Harris, passing unanimously.

9. UPDATE ON COMPLETION OF REGIONAL COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Ms. Homan distributed two draft factsheets, *Affordable Housing* and *Changing the Regional Economy*, along with the Comprehensive Plan completion schedule. Mr. Fowle spoke about the intent of the fact sheets to act as a guide for activities the Commission should be engaged in for the coming years. He described the plan as being action-oriented, and containing a series of recommendations that the Commission should consider pursuing to achieve the goals set forth in the plan.

Ms. Nagler suggested that a table be included in the Affordable Housing factsheet to show what affordable housing really means. For instance, Ms. Nagler recommended that the table include what rent and/or home value different income levels can afford. Ms. Homan mentioned that affordable is defined as costing 30 percent or less of total income. Ms. Nagler reaffirmed that this 30 percent includes taxes, utilities, repairs, and anything else that goes into the upkeep of a residence. Discussion occurred between staff and committee members regarding the trend towards larger homes priced well over \$200,000, and how many of the jobs within the region simply cannot afford that housing cost. Ms. Nagler stated that if people saw what individuals earning minimum wage can really afford, many people would realize that this price-point in housing simply does not exist.

Mr. Fowle went on to explain the schedule for completing the plan. Mr. Fowle indicated that the Economic Development Committee would be mailed drafts of the plan in early March, along with all other ECWRPC standing committees. Mr. Fowle explained that the Economic Development element will contain five factsheets, and the Housing element will contain four factsheets.

10. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT UPDATES:

a. 2007 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) Update

Ms. Homan explained that the 2007 CEDS Annual Report was submitted to and accepted by the Economic Development Administration (EDA) in December of 2007. Ms. Homan stated that all deliverables were submitted to EDA and the requirements of the 2007 grant were fulfilled. Ms. Homan distributed paper copies to committee members, and pointed out that the CEDS will be made available for region-wide distribution through the ECWRPC website and will be distributed to local units of government in the coming months.

b. 2008 EDA Planning Assistance Grant

Ms. Homan stated that EDA has offered the annual Planning Assistance Grant to ECWRPC, and that the Commission had accepted this award. Ms. Homan made known that a condition of 2008 grant and EDA program is the completion of the 5-year CEDS update. A requirement of the CEDS update is the formation of a CEDS committee, to be comprised of 50 percent private sector representatives, and 50 percent as a mix of representatives from educational institutions, workforce development agencies, and economic development staff from throughout the region. Ms. Nagler wondered if that includes elected officials, and recommended that someone from this Economic Development Committee be included. Ms. Homan stated that she was not sure if elected officials were required to be a part of the CEDS committee, but stated that she would look into the EDA legislation for more guidance and was not opposed to the suggestion. Ms. Homan stated that including a Committee Member was a good idea.

c. General EDA Activities

i. T. Coloma Pre-Application

Ms. Homan informed committee members that the Village of Coloma was in the process of developing a pre-Application for EDA funding, as part of a development project focused west of I-39. Ms. Homan distributed maps of the project site. Mr. Harris asked for clarification as to which lines on the map indicated the redevelopment area. In response, Ms. Homan illustrated that a small sliver northwest of the STH 21 and I-39 intersection, and the larger area to the southwest, were all designated as the TIF redevelopment district. Ms. Homan explained that staff had coordinated a meeting between herself, Jack Price (EDA Chicago Regional Office), village officials, and Bill Wheeler (Tri-County Regional Economic Development Corporation), to discuss ways to make the project more fundable by EDA standards. Ms. Homan stated that the most significant problem with the proposal, in EDA's eyes, is that the redevelopment site was owned by several different private individuals. Ms. Homan concluded that Village staff is moving forward by meeting with landowners to determine whether development agreements could be reached.

ii. College of Menominee Pre-Application

Ms. Homan explained that the College of Menominee Nation has submitted a pre-Application to EDA. Although the Menominee Nation is not within the East Central Economic Development District (they are part of a separate tribal EDD), staff has stayed up-to-date on the project, as the effects of the proposal will have positive spin-off throughout the East Central Region. The proposal calls for a funding to assist with the construction of the *Center for First American Forestlands: Forest Industry Innovation Center—Construction Project*.

d. EDA NE WI Telecommunication Infrastructure Assessment Pre-Application Status

Mr. Fowle explained that East Central Wisconsin RPC and Bay Lake RPC staff will be meeting to discuss this project proposal and consider Pre-Application submittal to EDA. Mr. Fowle indicated that this project proposal has been in the works for a while and has undergone several changes. Nevertheless, EDA and others have continue to express their interest in the project.

e. WDNR Timber Utilization Program Grant update

Mr. Fowle explained that as part of the WDNR Timber Utilization Grant program, East Central established and has maintained a working relationship with Glacierland RC&D. As part of this relationship, Glacierland has administered the Woodlinks program, which has been fully funded through the grant. Mr. Fowle passed our a flier for a conference being cosponsored by Glacierland and East Central entitled *Global Markets for your Wood Products*. The conference will take place on March 19 in Appleton. Mr. Fowle explained that for 2008, East Central staff will embark on an in-house project similar to the one completed in 2006. Mr. Fowle stated that Ms. Homan will be getting more involved with the project later in the year, as she becomes more accustomed to her current job requirements.

f. Technical Assistance Project: New North Regional Industrial Park Mapping

Ms. Homan explained that the Regional Industrial Park Mapping and Database update was well underway. Ms. Homan explained that the project was a cooperative effort between Bay Lake RPC, East Central, and New North, Inc. Ms. Homan informed the committee that a good deal of counties had responded to the initial update request, and that she made additional reminders at the December Northeast Wisconsin Regional Economic Partnership (NEWREP) meeting.

Mr. Harris asked Ms. Homan whether she had received information from Winnebago County. Ms. Homan responded that she had been working with Chamco to get the needed information. Mr. Harris stated that he would be willing to have one of his staff persons look over the final information for accuracy, as it relates to Winnebago County.

g. Fox River Heritage Corridor and Fox Locks System updates (Fed. Funding appv'd)

Mr. Fowle explained that the long awaited funding for the Fox Locks system was finally approved by the federal government as part of a legislative Omnibus Bill. Mr. Fowle explained that Ed Kleckner, Principal Community Development Planner, would be the staff person in charge of the Fox River Heritage Corridor Plans implementation.

h. Update on FCED Partnership Activities: The Targeted Industry Cluster Program-new staff person

Ms. Homan explained that she knew only limited information about this item on the agenda, as Mr. Kleckner was unable to attend the meeting. Ms. Hoxtell offered to fill the committee in on the item, as she regularly attends the FCEDP meetings. Ms. Hoxtell explained that the FCEDP had not yet hired a staff person, but were still considering it. Ms. Hoxtell also explained some of the work the Partnership has been doing with industry clusters.

11. HOUSING UPDATES:

a. Fox Cities Housing Coalition

Ms. Homan indicated that there was several newspaper articles included in the meeting packets regarding recent activities of the Fox Cities Housing Coalition (FCHC). Ms. Homan informed the committee that the FCHC had formed a sub-group to help address the situation at the April Aire Mobile Home Park. Ms. Homan explained that the FCHC is working closely with the Town of Grand Chute and County agencies.

Ms. Homan pointed out that the FCHC also receive press related to a proposal for a wet shelter in the Appleton Area. Ms. Homan explained that the proposal was put forth by a group of volunteers who felt that there was a need for a warm place to stay for those who may be under the influence of drugs or alcohol ("wet"). Ms. Homan stressed that although the press had indicated the FCHC had recommended the group move forward with the shelter, the FCHC did not, given their concerns regarding safety and capacity.

b. Workforce Housing Committee

Ms. Homan stated that the Workforce Housing event was well attended. Ms. Nagler felt many of those in attendance were those already aware of the issues. Ms. Nagler also mentioned that she was disappointed with some of the information presented, as some of the available affordable units pointed out in Appleton were in fact mostly located in Richmond Terrace. In addition, Ms. Nagler pointed out that the data presented regarding commute times for the City of Appleton were more likely a reflection of fire fighters who lived in other parts of the state, than a reflection of lack of affordability in the Fox Valley.

Ms. Homan brought up the fact that low-income individuals often have to work multiple jobs or share residence with other individuals or families. Mr. Zueske and Mr. Brown concurred that they have noticed this happening in their respective counties.

c. Winnebagoland Housing Coalition

Ms. Homan informed the committee that the WinnebagoLand Housing Coalition had been working diligently to develop a relationship with staff from Father Carr's in Oshkosh. Ms. Homan explained the difficulties as the person in charge also works a full time job and resides in Green Bay. Ms. Nagler wondered if there was anyone living there anymore, and what kinds of activities were still going on. Ms. Hoxtell agreed, as when she drives by the shelter at night she never sees any lights on. Ms. Nagler brought up that it would be helpful to find out who Father Carr left his estate to, and whether there was a foundation directing the shelter.

12. OTHER BUSINESS.

There was no other business identified for discussion.

13. SCHEDULE NEXT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MEETING FOR APRIL 9, 2008.

Kara Homan mentioned that the next meeting would most likely be at the new Commission Office, and asked if anyone would be interested in receiving directions. It was agreed that directions should be included with the next meeting notice.

14. ADJOURN.

The motion to adjourn was made by Eugene Zeuske, with a second by Helen Nagler. The motion passed unanimously, and the meeting was adjourned at 3:25.