

SUMMARY OF PROCEEDINGS

**Open Space and Environmental Management Committee**  
East Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission  
First Floor Conference Room – City of Menasha City Hall ECWRPC Offices  
January 8, 2008

Chairman Paltzer called the meeting to order at 1:31 P.M.

Committee Members Present:

Toby Paltzer, Chair ..... Outagamie County  
Robert Danielson ..... Waupaca County  
Jim Erdman..... Winnebago County

Committee Members Absent (Unexcused):

Don Grissman ..... Outagamie County

Staff Present:

Eric Fowle ..... Executive Director  
Trish Nau ... ..... GIS Coordinator

**1. Statement of Compliance with Wis. Stats. Ch. 19, Subchapter V, Sec. 19.84 regarding Open Meetings**

Compliance with Wisconsin’s open meeting requirements was acknowledged.

**2. Public Comment**

There being none made Chairman Paltzer moved on to item 3.

**3. Appointment of a new Vice-Chair of the Open Space and Environment Committee**

Mr. Fowle noted that, with the passing of Yvonne Feavel, the Committee was without a Vice-Chair. Mr. Fowle stated that the Waushara County Board will be appointing a new Commissioner shortly to replace Ms. Feavel and that the Committee should consider the appointment of a new vice-chair. The committee members discussed the matter and concluded that, with Committee re-appointments occurring in April, in conjunction with the Annual Meeting, this designation would be temporary. Mr. Erdman was nominated to serve as vice-chair for the April committee meeting. A motion was made by Mr. Danielson and seconded by Mr. Paltzer to appoint Mr. Erdman as vice-chair. Motion carried.

**4. Review/Approval of 2008 Work Program & Budget: 1400 Element – Open Space & Recreation**

Staff presented and discussed both the draft 2008 Work Program and budget elements for the Open Space & Recreation planning program (1400 Element) and the Environmental Management planning program (1600 Element) which were prepared for the Committee’s and Commission’s consideration at the January Quarterly meeting. Mr. Fowle noted that several of the dollar amounts and person day allocations may change slightly in the final version, but for the most part, the allocation of time to the programs was comparable with previous years. Mr. Fowle specifically noted the prior

requests for technical assistance and that these items were now contained in the 2000 Local Assistance work program element.

Mr. Erdman asked several questions regarding WDNR funding for these programs and the proposed assistance for the Town of Neenah Open Space Plan Update under the technical assistance. Mr. Fowle noted that Trish Nau is assisting communities with such projects and that staff hopes to initiate this plan late in 2008. Mr. Erdman also asked, with respect to the potential Whitewater Kayaking Park project in the City of Menasha, why Winnebago County did not/does not do the mapping for this item and wondered if this was duplicative of their abilities. Mr. Fowle noted that it was not considered to be duplicative as the County department does not typically involve itself with custom mapping projects. Mr. Fowle further noted that East Central has had good communication and a good relationship with this (and all) County GIS departments in the exchange and use of data for such purposes.

The Committee elected to approve both plan elements via one motion under the next agenda item.

#### **5. Review/Approval of 2008 Work Program & Budget: 1600 Element – Environmental Management**

Mr. Fowle presented the 1600 Element to the committee in conjunction with the previous agenda item. During discussion, Mr. Danielson noted the importance of addressing the groundwater issues within the region. Mr. Fowle agreed and noted that additional information regarding this will be discussed later as part of the regional plan.

Mr. Fowle noted that there were no technical assistance projects selected by the Commission under the Environmental Management category, however; some assistance is likely to be provided and can be accommodated under the 1630 Niagara Escarpment Management sub-element. Mr. Fowle further described ongoing and upcoming projects related to the 1630 element, including the impending award of a National Park Service Technical Assistance award for the preparation of a corridor-wide (Door County to Dodge County) Niagara Escarpment Greenway Plan. This was a joint effort in conjunction with the Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission. Mr. Erdman asked whether the Commission had a formal position on the wind energy projects affecting the escarpment. Mr. Fowle elaborated on past Commission involvement in this issue, but concluded by saying that no formal position was adopted. Mr. Fowle further noted that wind energy is being looked at as part of the regional comprehensive plan project.

Mr. Erdman asked several questions regarding the ongoing administration of the NR-135 Non-metallic Mining Reclamation Program and Mr. Fowle elaborated on the history of the program and its requirements. Additional discussion on abandoned mine sites occurred amongst committee members.

A motion was made by Mr. Danielson and seconded by Mr. Erdman to approve both the 1400 and 1600 Elements of the 2008 Work Program and Budget. Motion carried.

#### **6. Update on Completion of Regional Comprehensive Plan**

Mr. Fowle distributed a sample fact sheet regarding groundwater for the Committee's review stating that this document should give them a good feel for the overall content of the Year 2030 Regional Comprehensive Plan, once completed. Mr. Fowle also displayed a draft regional 'framework' map which was being prepared as a tool to illustrate some of the plan's major recommendations. Mr. Fowle also distributed a schedule for the completion of the plan stating that a draft should be in the hands of Commissioners and the general public for review and consideration by late March, 2008.

Some discussion of the plan's content occurred by Committee members and Mr. Fowle noted that the plan was intentionally developed in a very 'action-oriented' manner.

**7. National Park Service Rivers & Trails Program, Technical Assistance Award for development of a Niagara Escarpment Greenway Plan**

Mr. Fowle stated that an impending award from the National Park Service was being waited on for the proposed Niagara Escarpment Greenway Plan project. Mr. Fowle elaborated on the NPS's Rivers and Trails Program and the proposed content of the planning project, stating that it would essentially identify one or more broad corridors for consideration in the development of a hiking or multi-use trail along with linkages to existing or planned local trail systems. Mr. Fowle noted that this project is the result of the ongoing Niagara Escarpment Resource Network efforts in conjunction with the WDNR and the Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission.

**8. Update on American Viticultural Area (AVA) designation for NE Wisconsin**

Mr. Fowle updated the Committee on the status of the AVA application being prepared by the Trout Springs Winery with assistance from East Central through the Niagara Escarpment Resource Network efforts. Mr. Fowle noted that it is nearing completion but may be delayed by the availability of time to put toward the project by the winery's owner. Mr. Fowle stated that East Central will continue to assist on the mapping and review portions as necessary.

**9. Status Report on the Winnebago-Fox-Wisconsin State Heritage Corridor Plan Activities**

Mr. Fowle reported on this item in Ed Kleckner's absence. Mr. Fowle stated that partners for the project have been lined up and upwards of \$57,000 has been preliminarily committed, primarily by the three urban community foundations (Green Bay, Fox Cities, and Oshkosh). Other funds were being sought from various entities and the project will be coordinated with the Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission and other RPC's along the Wisconsin River corridor. Mr. Fowle also noted that the federal appropriation of 4.2 million dollars was also made regarding the Fox River Locks restoration by the Fox River Navigation Authority.

**10. Report on Recently Completed Projects: City of Menasha Open Space Plan / Waushara County Ice Age Trail Plan**

Ms. Nau briefed the Committee on the final Ice Age Trail Plan for the Waushara County segment, stating that it was approved and now available for distribution. This project was completed by Ms. Nau after Fred Scharnke's retirement and the Commission expects some additional work for the Marquette County segment to develop within the next year or two.

Ms. Nau also distributed and reviewed the final City of Menasha Park and Open Space Plan update which was prepared by her under the Commission's technical assistance program. The final plan was printed and distributed to the City for their use in seeking funding for specific projects.

**11. Schedule Next Meeting**

The next Committee meeting was tentatively set for Tuesday, April 8<sup>th</sup>, 2008 at 1:30 p.m.

**12. Adjourn**

A motion was made by Mr. Danielson and seconded by Mr. Erdman to adjourn. Motion carried.