

**Summary of Proceedings**

**Open Space and Environmental Management Committee**

East Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission

ECWRPC Offices

April 10, 2007

In the excused absence of Chairman Albrecht, the meeting was called to order by Vice-chairman Toby Paltzer at 1:38 P.M. Mr. Fowle noted that Mr. Kleckner was absent due to illness today and that he would be handling all agenda items.

Committee Members Present:

Toby Paltzer, Vice-Chair..... Outagamie County  
Yvonne Feavel ..... Waushara County

Committee Members Absent:

David Albrecht, Chairman (Excused) .....Winnebago County  
Ruth Winter (Excused) ..... Menominee County  
Robert Danielson .....Waupaca County

Staff Present:

Eric Fowle ..... Executive Director

1. Report on Working Lands Initiative.

Eric Fowle distributed a small packet of handouts which provided a summary of the State’s Working Lands Initiatives program which was initiated to better address many of the agricultural planning and economic issues statewide. The program would lend support to local units of government to foster agricultural land perseveration. Mr. Fowle noted that several of the County smart growth plans which are in the process of being completed or adopted have strongly encouraged such policies and have further alluded to the development of local programs, of which the Working Lands Initiative would support or complement. Mr. Fowle stated that there may be a role for East Central in working with the Counties that comprise the urbanized area to assist in the development of purchase or transfer of development rights programs citing that a regional approach may work best from both an efficiency and flexibility standpoint. The rural Counties could also be assessed and integrated during such an exploratory process. The Committee members concurred that this is an important issue and the East Central should, if practicable, continue their involvement.

2. Update on Fox Communities Groundwater Protection Partnership

Eric Fowle informed the Committee of the recent formation of the Fox Communities Groundwater Protection Partnership which was a direct result of the preparation of the Fox Cities Sourcewater Protection Plan by the Wisconsin Rural Water Association. This plan identified threats to the communities’ aquifers and potential solutions to address the problems. Initial interest for the plan came from the East Central Regional Plan Commission and further interest and involvement and support was generated through the Fox Cities Chamber’s Local Issues Committee. Wisconsin Rural Water Association provided the planning assistance and further technical assistance at no cost through their federally funded source water protection program. East Central then provided additional assistance, support, and information through the development of the plan.

The FCGPP will be meeting every three months to seek ways which implement the recommendations of the plan through local planning and water conservation efforts. Participants thus far include several local and county officials, public water utility managers, Fox Cities Chamber and UW-Extension staff as well as some area planners. Mr. Fowle stated that group may ultimately be involved in the implementation of future state rules relating to the designation of a Groundwater Management Area. Mr. Fowle noted that the Committee should review Wisconsin Act 310 and Wisconsin Admin Code NR-820 for additional information and that the Commission staff will monitor the development of these requirements as they may ultimately involve the Commission per the recent Groundwater Advisory Committee's recommendations to the Legislature.

### 3. Progress Update on the Winnebago-Fox-Wisconsin State Heritage Corridor Plan

Eric Fowle stated that Ed Kleckner continues to work with area Community Foundations on seeking grant funds to support a ½ time position for coordinating the Heritage Corridor planning effort. To date, both the Oshkosh and Fox Cities Community Foundations have committed \$19,000 each over two years and that a similar commitment is being sought from the Green Bay Area Foundation. The Green Bay Foundation is still in the process of hiring a new executive director and a decision will not be made until this occurs. The Fond du Lac Foundation rejected a smaller contribution request, mainly due to budget constraints, but some work is being done by local supporters to get such a commitment. Mr. Fowle noted that much work needs to be done to ensure that people are aware that this is truly a regional effort, not just a "fox locks" associated project benefiting the lower valley communities.

### 4. Update on the Town of Oakfield Conservation Subdivision Ordinance Project

Mr. Fowle stated that the Town's request for technical assistance had been completed and the resulting subdivision ordinance was adopted by the Town in March. Mr. Fowle distributed copies to the Committee noting that this ordinance is fairly restrictive – perhaps more so than the few other ordinances within the region that staff is aware of. Mr. Fowle noted that the Town has had a good history and record of preserving agricultural lands and that the development of this ordinance implements the goals of its adopted (1998) Comprehensive Plan (originally developed by the Commission). The ordinance is available by contacting the Commission and a digital version has been placed on the website.

### 5. Update on Disposition of Picnic Point Property, Winnebago County

Mr. Fowle stated that he did not get to discuss this matter with Mr. Kleckner, and therefore had no information to report. Mr. Fowle did note that the Commission's Annual Meeting on April 27<sup>th</sup> will be incorporating a walking tour of the site.

### 6. Update on Northeast Wisconsin Stormwater Consortium Coalition (NEWSC) Funding Proposal.

Mr. Fowle described the Consortium's function in acting as a non-profit entity to assist many urban communities along the Lower Fox River in meeting the new EPA/WDNR stormwater requirements for education and awareness building. NEWSC had interest applying to the WDNR for funding consideration under the Non-Point Source Pollution Grant Program and the Steering Committee had reviewed and acted on an MOU with the Bay-Lake RPC which enables East

Central to be the actual applicant for the funds on NEWSC's behalf. If awarded, East Central will administer the grant and will be compensated accordingly.

7. Brief Activity Updates:

Eric Fowle reported that Ed Kleckner is assisting the Town of Menasha in exploring opportunities for the incorporation of the Fox River Heritage Corridor concepts into their planned expansion of Fritse Park.

Eric also reported that no additional progress has been made on scheduling a stakeholder meeting to discuss issues associated the repair, operation, and maintenance of the Eureka Lock in Winnebago County.

Eric also noted that plans continue to proceed for the development of a Whitewater Kayaking Park as part of the Gilbert Paper property redevelopment project in the City of Menasha. The Commission had provided assistance to a community group, led by City of Menasha Parks Director, Brian Tungate – and their outside consultant. The Commission is still seeking to reside in a new building as part of the overall redevelopment project and this will now make the site regionally significant in terms of providing this type of recreational opportunity.

8. Other Business/Next Meeting

The next scheduled meeting of the Open Space and Environmental Management Committee will be 1:30 P.M. on Tuesday, July 10th, 2007.

There being no other business to come before the Committee, the meeting was adjourned at 2:36 P.M.