

# REGIONAL PLANNING BOARD

Thursday, October 20, 2005

9:30 am

Cunningham-Williams Conference Room

300 West Adams, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor

Chicago, Illinois

## Minutes

### 1. Welcome and Introductions

Mr. Schielke welcomed all to the historic first meeting of the Regional Planning Board and expressed high hopes for the future. He said that IDOT Secretary Tim Martin sent his regrets for being unable to attend the meeting. The Regional Planning Board and audience introduced themselves. Those present were:

#### Planning Board members

Rita Athas, City of Chicago  
Frank Beal, City of Chicago  
Gerry Bennett, Cook County  
Tony Calderone, Cook County  
Zenovia Evans, Cook County  
Elliott Hartstein, Lake County  
Calvin Jordan, Cook County  
Al Larson, Cook County  
Ed Paesel, NIPC  
Raul Raymundo, City of Chicago  
André Rice, City of Chicago  
Steve Schlickman, CATS  
Dan Shea, McHenry County  
Mike Smith, Will County  
Rae Rupp Srch, DuPage County  
Nigel Telman, City of Chicago

#### Others in attendance

Tom Adams, Metropolitan Mayors Caucus  
Marcus Arnold, SMMA  
Mark Avery, DuPage County  
Shelia Azinge, Luking and Associates  
Jetta Bates, EMC  
Dave Bennett, Metropolitan Mayors Caucus  
Patricia Berry, CATS  
Randy Blankenhorn, IDOT  
Alex Blei, MPC  
Larry Bury, NWMC

Ralph Coglianesi, NIPC  
Tom Cuculich, DuPage County  
Rick Curneal, DMMC  
Jon Davis, Daily Herald  
Chris DiPalma, FHWA  
Catrin Einhorn, Chicago Public Radio  
Yvette Fisher, EMC  
Mark Fowler, NWMC  
Tom Garritano, NIPC  
Jacky Grimshaw, CNT  
Jack Groner, Metra  
Andrew Gruber, RTA  
Luann Hamilton, CDOT  
Joe Heinrich, SSMMA  
Chalen Hunter, NWMC  
Wally Kos, CCHD  
Don Kopec, CATS  
Jim LaBelle, Chicago Metropolis 2020  
Jill Leary, WCMC  
Leah McBride, Medill News Service  
Beth McCluskey, NCCOM  
Jan Metzger, CNT  
Hugh O'Hara, WCGL  
Holly Ostdick, McHenry County COM  
Mark Pitstick, RTA  
Andy Plummer, RTA  
Leanne Redden, Illinois Tollway  
Erin Royer, Kane County COM  
Jeff Schielke, City of Batavia  
Stephen Schindel, RTA  
David C. Seglin, CDOT  
Vicky Smith, SWC  
Doug Sullivan, Pace  
Ron Thomas, NIPC  
Stephen T. Vaughn, CCHD  
Mike Walczak, NWMC  
Ty Warner, Will County Land Use Dept.  
Dick Welton, AHA  
Rich Wronski, Tribune

## **2. Background Information**

Ms. Athas reviewed the membership of the CATS/NIPC Coordinating Committee and thanked all for their good work. The Coordinating Committee had input from the Metropolitan Mayors Caucus, the Chicago Area Transportation Study (CATS) Policy Committee, the Northeastern Illinois Planning Commission (NIPC), the

CATS Council of Mayors, the RTA and the counties. She commended Chicago Metropolis 2020 for its work in drafting legislation that was extremely helpful.

Ms. Athas discussed the work of the Regional Transportation Task Force, chaired by then-Congressman William Lipinski, which led to the creation of the Coordinating Committee. She expressed wonder and appreciation that all parties were able to reach consensus.

Mr. Smith noted that the legislation creating the Regional Planning Board and the final report of the Coordinating Committee were included in members' packets and urged everyone to carefully review the Bill and the report. The Board will enable the region to talk with a single voice when communicating priorities to Springfield and to Washington.

- 3. HB 3121 and what it means and**
- 4. Responsibilities of the Board**

Mr. Blankenhorn indicated that after discussions with Mr. Cuculich, they had decided to roll agenda items three and four into one item. He thanked Mr. David Bennett and Mr. Cuculich for their integral role in the development of HB3121, the Regional Planning Act.

Mr. Blankenhorn said it is important to acknowledge what the Planning Act does not change. It does not eliminate the functions or the boards of CATS and NIPC. By September of 2006, the Regional Planning Board must decide the role of these two organizations, but HB3121 does not change the status of the CATS Policy Committee as the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for northeastern Illinois. There are significant federal rules delineating the composition and charge of the MPO and the Policy Committee is critical to the flow of federal funds to the region. During the process of drafting HB3121, all acknowledged that it was important to maintain the MPO designation of the CATS Policy Committee. Another thing the Bill does not change is the right of local governments to make land use decisions. Finally, the Regional Planning Act does not change the role of local governments in programming Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement (CMAQ) and Surface Transportation Program (STP) funds, two important federal fund sources.

He then turned to what the legislation does do. It calls for locating the staffs of CATS and NIPC within the same office this year. Mr. Blankenhorn reported that the move into Sears Tower is already started. It is anticipated that the NIPC staff will move close to Thanksgiving and CATS staff will join them by the end of the year.

HB3121 creates a Policy level discussion group about land use and transportation. The Regional Planning Board is an umbrella under which regional plans will be developed. The Regional Transportation Plan, the

Framework Plan, and environmental plans will all come to the Regional Policy Board for consideration. The Board has the ability, with a four-fifths vote, to remand plans to the Northeastern Illinois Planning Commission or to the CATS Policy Committee. Mr. Blankenhorn said that he was sure that with at least two lawyers on the Regional Planning Board, the immediate question that comes to mind will be "What does remand mean?". The Regional Planning Board will decide if plans presented to them are consistent with regional priorities. If not, they can send the plan back to the CATS Policy Committee and the Northeastern Illinois Planning Commission, noting such inconsistencies.

Mr. Blankenhorn echoed Mr. Smith's comment that the essential role of the Regional Planning Board is to provide one voice identifying regional priorities for the region in Springfield and in D.C.

The specific responsibilities of the Board are to provide a policy framework to coordinate land use and transportation. We do that today, but not well enough. No one in the country knows how to do it. It is anticipated that there will be a bigger emphasis on good infrastructure and development policy. The legislation calls for development of a comprehensive plan every five years. That cycle does not fit with federal transportation requirements, which call for a four-year cycle. Mr. Blankenhorn said it is likely that the Board will adopt a four-year update cycle for that reason.

Another important function is the creation of the Citizens' Advisory Committee. Mr. LaBelle will address that function in a later agenda item and that Citizens' Advisory Committee will certainly have a significant role.

There are staff issues to address. The NIPC and CATS staff will be co-located as discussed earlier. The staffs will be merged if that's the direction the Board decides upon. For the short term, the Board must develop a funding and implementation strategy by September 2006. The legislation calls for the orderly transition of the CATS Policy Committee and the Northeastern Illinois Planning Commission to standing committees of the Regional Planning Board and there may be further legislation required. Funding is a key component and at a future Regional Planning Board meeting, staff will walk through the existing financing mechanisms for CATS and NIPC.

In effect there will be two transition periods. One being between now and September 2006 and the other being the thirty-six month timetable for full implementation of the funding and implementation strategy.

In summary, Mr. Blankenhorn acknowledged that many folks have been working on this process for more than two years and most never thought the region would get to where we are today. He said that it is a tribute to the local elected officials that they quit saying "why" and moved on to "how" to achieve one voice for the region. The mayors and the counties developed legislation unanimously

approved by the legislature. On behalf of Secretary Martin, Mr. Blankenhorn wished all the best of luck and offered IDOT's continued assistance.

## **5. Establishment of a Nominating Committee for Board Officers**

Mr. Thomas said he wanted to take a few minutes on the agenda to point out that NIPC has just released its Framework Plan. He said that NIPC had worked closely with CATS in this effort and he invited all to take a copy of the Executive Summary, which was available at the meeting.

Mr. Thomas described his charge as giving the Regional Planning Board its first task, that of appointing a Chair and a Vice Chair. The terms and duties of these offices are to be consistent with the yet to be developed bylaws of the Board. HB3121 calls for a Chair and Vice Chair, and Mr. Thomas encouraged the Board to consider two Vice Chairs and a Secretary. He suggested that the officers so selected could then serve the Board as an Executive Committee.

Mr. Thomas noted that when the Northeastern Illinois Planning Commission nominating committee brings its recommendations to the Commission, there are also nominations made from the floor. The legislation calls for a three member nominating committee and Mr. Schielke called for volunteers. Mr. Larson, Ms. Athas, and Mr. Hartstein volunteered. Ms. Evans suggested that the nominating committee identify their suggestions prior to the next meeting so members will be prepared if they are interested in other nominees. On a motion by Mr. Smith, seconded by Mr. Gerry Bennett, the nominating committee was unanimously approved.

Mr. Smith suggested that each member provide a brief bio and expression of interest in the various offices. Mr. Hartstein suggested that contact information for each member be distributed to all by Mr. Blankenhorn.

## **6. Establishment of Working Committees**

Mr. Kopec congratulated the Board on today's historic event. He said that a significant amount of work has already occurred and the Coordinating Committee has identified four working committees for the Board's consideration. The proposed committees are bylaws, personnel and operations, financial oversight and planning, and legal and legislative issues.

The charge of the bylaws committee is self-explanatory. The personnel and operations committee would tackle the job of protecting current employee rights and looking at personnel policies and benefits. The financial oversight and planning committee would look at how activities will be funded. As Mr. Blankenhorn stated earlier, most of CATS staff and a substantial part of NIPC's staff is funded through federal transportation funds. The federal funds must be used for transportation planning and should be kept separate which will entail

significant accounting and planning. The legal and legislative issues committee will address establishment of the municipal corporation.

The Coordinating Committee recommends three to five members for each Board committee. It has already been suggested that member bios be gathered and distributed.

Ms. Rupp Srch said these four committees sound like a good start, but there may be need for more in the future. Mr. Hartstein said that financial oversight and planning should be separated into two committees as we look at how we can and should coordinate transportation and land use planning. He asked if there were models around the country to use as a guide and speculated that models are probably not available. Mr. Hartstein said he had seen a chart about how all of the MPOs in the USA are funded and northeastern Illinois is at the low end of funding these activities.

Mr. Gerry Bennett made a motion to accept the four committees as a starting point for the work of the Regional Planning Board , Mr. Larson seconded the motion. Mr.Schielke opened the floor for further discussion.

Mr. Kopec clarified that the planning part of the financial oversight and planning committee refers to financial planning and not transportation and land use planning. Mr. Raymundo asked for a description of the tasks and schedules for each of the four committees. Mr. Kopec said he anticipated that all of the committees would start meeting in November.

Mr. Paesel asked for clarification on the personnel committee. Regarding the selection of an Executive Director, would that fall to that committee? That is a very high priority. Mr. Smith concurred and said that would be a specific task for the Executive Committee.

Mr. Beal said it was important not to lose sight of Mr. Hartstein's point. All of the committees discussed and most of today's discussion has been about administrative issues and the Board needs to get started on substantive issues. The report due in September 2006 must encompass overall planning activities of the Board as well as organizational work. Mr. Hartstein asked how the Board will approach those duties; will it be the purview of the Executive Committee? He asked what type of Executive Director search would occur, would it be statewide, in house, nationwide? These are all policy issues the Executive Committee should grapple with.

Mr. Raymundo reiterated his request that a description of the tasks for each committee be distributed to members so they can assess voids and decide where they want to serve. This should be separate from administrative issues.

Ms. Athas said the Board needs to get up and running quickly, and it is especially important to get the Executive Committee established. She said getting the bios distributed will facilitate composition of the committees. Mr. Schlickman asked who would be making the decision as to who would be on what committee. We need the nominating committee to report back quickly and perhaps develop temporary bylaws indicating how appointments will be made.

Mr. Schielke called the question and the four standing committees were established on a unanimous vote.

## **7. Creation of Citizen's Advisory Committee**

Mr. LaBelle distributed a hand out prepared by the Center for Neighborhood Technology (CNT). He said that when he was asked to discuss the Citizens' Advisory Committee with the Regional Planning Board, he requested CNT to provide a starting point. CNT has spent a lot of time thinking about public participation. He reviewed the language in HB3121 which calls for the Citizens' Advisory Committee to provide continuous and balanced public representation in the development of regional plans and policies. Mr. LaBelle emphasized that the Regional Planning Board is to be a single point of contact and direct all public involvement activities. This makes the Regional Planning Board accountable for citizen input. It is important to directly tie the Citizen's Advisory Committee to activities and decisions of the Regional Planning Board.

Mr. LaBelle noted that federal requirements that the MPO process be a comprehensive, coordinated and continuous effort dovetail quite nicely with HB3121. Early engagement of the public will help the Board think through decisions. The composition of the Citizens' Advisory Committee is important and there must be a direct connection between the Board and the Committee. He said that perhaps a Regional Planning Board member should chair the Citizens' Advisory Committee. It may also be wise to include members from the CATS Policy Committee and the Northeastern Illinois Planning Commission so that the Citizens' Advisory Committee is not something "over there"; it is integrated into the planning process.

He said that since the Regional Planning Board members are all appointed by local elected officials, they have to report back to those that made the appointments. The challenge for the Citizens' Advisory Committee is to provide representations for the other publics. There are a lot of citizens' organizations and then there is the broader public. The members of the Citizens' Advisory Committee could come from community organizations or from the public at large. There are organizations around the region representing a broad mix of people. If the Board gets all of these groups involved and they are with the Board in making decisions, the region will be in pretty good shape.

One of the charges of the Citizens' Advisory Committee is to go beyond organization and do some coordination of public information so that what is being presented is done so in a thoughtful and coordinated way. This will allow the Regional Planning Board to hear what is important to citizens.

Mr. Hartstein said the Citizens' Advisory Committee could be made up two ways. We could have representatives of various groups, which can cause a problem because everybody can not be there. A second approach would be to have representatives of the community at large, but not tied to any particular organization. Mr. Hartstein noted that we want to be sure that no organization feels left out. He suggested that there is a need for everyone to be looking at the big picture. Mr. Hartstein concurred that linkage between the Regional Planning Board and the Citizens' Advisory Committee is important. One of the officers of the Regional Planning Board should have responsibility for the Citizens' Advisory Committee.

## **8. Regional Planning Board Support**

Mr. David Bennett said the Board is charged with a lot of work that must be accomplished by September of 2006. He noted that the Board has neither staff nor budget. He said the Coordinating Committee had discussions this summer about how to secure the financial and personnel assistance required to do this work. They have come up with some preliminary ideas and need input from the Board on the recommendations developed. The MacArthur Foundation has been contacted about providing resources. The Foundation is interested and excited about the possibilities. There was a meeting earlier this week and, while not a fait accompli, it appears that if the Board submits an acceptable work plan, funding could be made available by the Foundation to support the Board's work.

Four different areas for the work plan have been identified. One of the areas is general staffing and meeting facilitation. Mr. David Bennett proposed that DePaul's Government Assistance Program (GAP) would be targeted for this work.

A second area is a Board retreat. Mr. David Bennett noted how useful the retreat held by the Coordinating Committee had been. It allowed the Committee to cut through the fat and worked out extremely well. The retreat would allow the Board to develop a strategic plan, get acquainted and build camaraderie. Mr. Schlickman asked how the Open Meetings Act might apply to a Board retreat. Mr. David Bennett said they would have to work within the Act. At the Coordinating Committee's retreat, part of it was open to the public and part was for members only. Mr. Blankenhorn said there can be exceptions for initiation of members.

The third area of the proposed work plan identified by Mr. David Bennett was organizational and development issues and the staff merger.

The fourth area of the work plan would be development of a financial plan and implementation strategy.

Mr. David Bennett suggested Joyce Hollingsworth of GAP as a facilitator for the Board retreat. Ms. Hollingsworth facilitated the work of the Coordinating Committee and so would come to the Board already familiar with the background and issues.

The Civic Consulting Alliance (CCA), a spin off of the Commercial Club of Chicago, could facilitate getting the best minds available to draft by-laws and establish the municipal corporation. The pensions and benefit issues for existing CATS and NIPC staff could be examined pro bono by the CCA. The CCA has a consultant on board that has dealt with corporate mergers. He can help the members make the new organization lean, mean and effective. The implementation strategies will require drafting of legislation. Mr. David Bennett proposed that the Metropolitan Mayors Caucus be the fiscal agent. They would be happy to fill that role and facilitate the relationships with the consultants.

Mr. David Bennett concluded his remarks, thanking Mr. Blankenhorn, Mr. Cuculich, Mr. Thomas, Mr. Kopec, Mr. Smith and Ms. Athas for all of their work in this area.

Mr. Smith said that GAP could provide the Board with staffing, but the Board Chairman will be the facilitator. The Chairman will need staff support. Mr. Blankenhorn concurred. Mr. Gerry Bennett said the MacArthur Foundation requires a not for profit as the agent and the fiscal agent should be the Metropolitan Mayors Caucus. Ms. Athas said these are preliminary ideas and the representatives of the Foundation can come to sit down with the Board members at the Board's next meeting. Mr. David Bennett asked if he and the Coordinating Committee are on the right track and if he should invite the Foundation and Civic Consulting Alliance representatives to the next meeting. Mr. Smith said he agreed that the Coordinating Committee benefited from the retreat and it would probably be of great benefit to the Regional Planning Board.

Ms. Evans said that the Board needs to get its committees in place and should not make a decision yet. She asked that the nominating committee provide the Board members with its recommendations prior to the next meeting so the Board can vote at that time.

Mr. Hartstein asked about IDOT's financial responsibility to the Board. Mr. Blankenhorn said that through a combination of federal and state funds, IDOT provides nearly all of the support for CATS and significant support of NIPC. Until there is a financial plan in place, IDOT's support will not be reduced. NIPC and CATS staff programs for the current state fiscal year are already in place. Mr. Kopec and Mr. Thomas and their staff have lots to do and we're not sure who

should provide the support for the Regional Planning Board. Mr. Hartstein said that he understands that the level of support for CATS and NIPC is in place and he is wondering about support for the Regional Planning Board.

Mr. Blankenhorn said that there is no funding in IDOT's budget for support of the Board. If the Board identifies specific activities they want funded, they should talk to Mr. Gordon Smith or Mr. Blankenhorn about it. IDOT will also fund the Executive Director's salary.

Ms. Rupp Srch said the Board retreat or workshop should be scheduled fairly quickly. Given that the members are all from different areas and have different background and need a lot of information to get started on their work, the event should prove quite useful. Mr. Calderone said advance scheduling will be a must.

Mr. Jordan said he agreed and suggested the emphasis of the retreat be on providing background—the Board has much to digest and analyze. He noted that as a new Board it is especially important that all become educated and understand the duties of the Board.

Mr. Calderone said that somebody has to step up and take control on an interim basis. The Board needs facilitation before the nominating committee comes up with names. He said the Board needs to have organizational things in place and should discuss accepting the Mayors Caucus' offer now.

On a motion by Mr. Larson and seconded by Mr. Calderone, the Board accepted the Mayors Caucus' interim institutional organizational help, especially having them act as the fiscal agent.

Mr. Rice asked why the legislature would create an organization with no budget. Many members welcomed Mr. Rice to the world of Illinois politics.

## **9. Meeting Schedule**

Ms. Athas said that given the deadlines imposed by the legislation, she suggests that, at least initially, the Board meet every two weeks. The Board agreed to meet November 3 at twelve thirty and November 17 at nine. Both meetings will be held at the Cunningham-Williams Conference Room at CATS.

Mr. Calderone asked if anybody in the room could do background work for the Board. Ms. Athas said she felt that DePaul's Government Assistance Project could get on board quickly. Mr. Gerry Bennett said the Metropolitan Mayors Caucus would be happy to do that in the meantime. He volunteered the Mayors Caucus to provide the Board members with a list of the committees and possible meeting dates for each.

## **10. Public Comment**

There was no public comment. Mr. Calderone asked if there was a de facto secretary for the Board. Mr. Blankenhorn said staff would provide minutes of the meeting.

## **11. Adjournment**

On a motion by Mr. Shea, seconded by Mr. Schlickman the meeting was adjourned.