



## Environment and Natural Resources Committee

### DRAFT Minutes

July 7, 2010 — 9:30 a.m.

**Members Present:** Patty Werner - Lake County SMC, Sean Weidel – City of Chicago, Mike Sullivan – Kane Kendall Conference of Mayors, Joe Schuessler – Metropolitan Water Reclamation District, Kate Agasie – Metropolitan Mayors Caucus, Martha Dooley – Village of Schaumburg, Kama Dobbs – DuPage Mayors and Managers Conference, Christy Sabdo – Kane County, Jack Darin – Illinois Sierra Club, Melinda Pruett-Jones – Chicago Wilderness

**Staff Present:** Jesse Elam, Bob Dean, Hala Ahmed

**Others Present:** Tina Seaman – Openlands, Janice Engle – US Fish and Wildlife Service, Shawn Cirton – US Fish and Wildlife Service

#### 1.0 Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 9:32 am; a round of introductions followed.

#### 2.0 Agenda Changes and Announcements

None.

#### 3.0 Approval of Minutes from May 5, 2010

The minutes were approved with no changes.

#### 4.0 Coordinating Committees Update

The Planning Committee met in May; Jack Darin attended the meeting in lieu of Ingrid Danler. Jack reported that he had presented the ENR Committee's comments on the proposed major capital projects, which he felt were short of what the committee wanted with regard to Rte 53/120. Patty noted that the ENR comments had not addressed the indirect effects of land use change, which she said should be the main thrust of a planning analysis by CMAP. Bob Dean said that there would be opportunities to plan for development near Rte 53 and 120 in cooperation with Lake County.

Jesse noted that the discussion of the major capital projects incorporated the main points brought up by ENR in its comments, especially the importance of conducting mitigation and environmental enhancement activities within ecological priority areas (as defined by the Green Infrastructure Vision). Shawn Cirton noted that he had some concerns about the recommendations for mitigation, considering that there are federal rules about how mitigation is undertaken. Jesse responded that CMAP is aware that there are rules to follow, but that *GO TO 2040* envisions enhancing priority natural areas as part of

transportation project development. He suggested having a conversation with FWS staff offline.

Patty said she saw political consensus around Rte 120 but not around Rte 53. As a result, she was concerned that the state would disregard the planning done by the Rte 120 Corridor Planning Council, and also that progress on Rte 120 could be held up by work on Rte 53 since they are being treated as linked at the planning stage. Bob responded that projects can be staged, and that although the state wanted to plan for the 120 and 53 simultaneously, Rte 120 would not have to be held up because of additional studies needed for 53.

## 5.0 **GO TO 2040 Summary Presentation**

Bob gave an executive summary of the *GO TO 2040* plan, saying that it is a policy document that tries to support economic growth, protect the environment, and that is fiscally responsible. Most of the plan is recommendations, and can be accessed through standalone chapters. It is broken down into four major sections. The ENR committee had seen and commented on most of the “livable communities” section, except for the recommendations on land use and housing, when it was being developed in the spring. Bob said the key recommendation was to fund local planning, but equally importantly, to fund revisions to local ordinances controlling land use. He noted that collaboration between communities was especially important and felt that the Councils of Government had an important role to play in that area.

Under the “regional mobility” section, the plan focuses on modernization and on maintaining existing transportation infrastructure. Very few new transportation facilities are proposed. The plan notes that new revenue is needed and recommends increasing the state gas tax as well as tying it to inflation. Using the state gas tax for transit as well as roads is also recommended. The plan also recommends the use of congestion pricing, with the caveats that alternative modes of transportation need to be available to capture drivers priced out of peak period travel, and that arterial roadways need to be improved to prevent excessive congestion, as pricing will push some drivers off expressways onto arterials. In the long term, parking pricing is also recommended. Patty asked whether the regional mobility section would deal with livable communities or “complete streets.” Bob said he hoped funding for livable communities infrastructure (such as sidewalks, bike lanes, etc.) would be part of state Surface Transportation Program and CMAQ programming. The regional mobility section also emphasizes the importance of investing in transit. The biggest priorities are system preservation and transit-supportive land use at the local level, but the biggest issue is funding. Finally, *GO TO 2040* addresses freight movement, noting that much of the Chicago region’s economy is tied to freight. The plan supports CREATE and recommends establishing a regional freight authority, which would likely be in an existing public agency, to raise local revenues and finance improvements to support freight system efficiency. A member asked how local revenues could be raised without container charges, as she thought that having container charges off the table was one of the conditions of railroad participation in CREATE. Another member asked how Asian carp would affect freight recommendations. Jesse said that CMAP was participating in the Natural Resources Defense Council study of options to control the migration of the carp.

*GO TO 2040* also examined tax policy in the region, concluding that the Property Tax Extension Limitation Law is injuring local governments, that the sales tax needs to be broadened, and that as a result of reliance on the sales tax, land use decisions are being made to a great extent with an eye toward sales tax revenue generation. CMAP proposes to put together a task force to provide tax policy recommendations 18 months after the plan is complete.

The plan also addresses so-called “unsiloing,” that is, making linkages between programs (such as in the Sustainable Communities program) or combining smaller programs and devolving expenditure decisions to the regional or sub-regional levels. A member suggested that CMAP had punted on the number of local governments in the region, and that CMAP should lead on that issue. Kate noted that the Mayors Caucus has been working on coordination or consolidation of government services and that some places are beginning to recognize the value of doing so. A member asked whether there could be a study to identify opportunities to consolidate. Bob thought it would be best for coordination or consolidation to happen as any kind of imposition from a higher level of government, but rather through local partnerships, perhaps mediated by COGs or by the counties. Kate suggested a major reason that more consolidation has not occurred is that pensions are specific to local governments and negotiated independently. A member suggested that CMAP staff bring a synopsis of public comments to the September ENR meeting, which Jesse agreed to do. Jack noted that the executive summary needed a bit more mention of biodiversity.

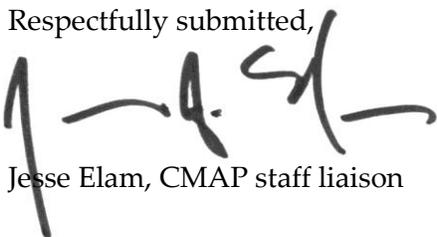
Jesse said that the committee should spend a bit of time reviewing the recommendations in the parks and open space chapter and discussing both next steps and measures of progress in implementing the plan for CMAP and partner organizations. For instance, he said that one measure could be the inclusion of the Green Infrastructure Vision in the (publicly available) acquisition plans of the forest preserve districts. Others said the districts would not be willing to do this. A member made a distinction between transparency and accountability after the fact. Another member suggested that next steps for the parks section would include assessing local capacity for developing new parks and to identify lands that could be converted to park use. On conservation design, several members suggested that it needed to be permitted by-right, so that CMAP needed to emphasize zoning text amendments for conservation design in addition to revisions to support other *GO TO 2040* plan goals.

**6.0 Public comment**

None.

**7.0 Adjournment.**

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jesse Elam', written over a horizontal line.

Jesse Elam, CMAP staff liaison