



Environment and Natural Resources Committee

DRAFT Minutes

March 2, 2011 — 9:30 a.m.

Members Present: Jack Darin – Illinois Sierra Club, Lenore Beyer-Clow – Openlands, Patty Werner - Lake County SMC, Sean Weidel – City of Chicago, Joe Schuessler – Metropolitan Water Reclamation District, Martha Dooley – Village of Schaumburg, Christy Sabdo – Kane County, Marty Jaffe – University of Illinois at Chicago, Wally Van Buren – Illinois Association of Wastewater Agencies, Ashley Craig – Environmental Law and Policy Center

Staff Present: Jesse Elam, Ylda Capriccioso, Bob Dean, Tim Loftus, Patricia Berry, Randy Blankenhorn

Others Present: Josh Ellis – Metropolitan Planning Council

1.0 Call to Order

Jesse announced that Lenore had agreed to co-chair the ENR committee; because of other time commitments, Ingrid was not expecting to be able to attend regularly. The meeting was then called to order at 9:35 am by Lenore. A round of introductions followed.

2.0 Agenda Changes and Announcements

Jesse recommended changing the agenda to discuss the Local Technical Assistance program first.

3.0 Approval of Minutes from January 3, 2011

The minutes were approved with no changes.

4.0 Coordinating Committees Update

Jesse explained that the Planning and the Programming Committees are, respectively, being refocused as the Local Coordinating Committee and the Regional Coordinating Committee. They will meet on March 9 at 8:00 am.

6.0 CMAP Program Updates

6.1 Local Technical Assistance program update

Jesse introduced the program and described how the call for local technical assistance projects had gone out. CMAP received over 200 applications from local governments and nonprofits, and is now trying to identify 20 – 25 which are ready to begin and

another ~50 which could be begun later in the year. Several committee members noted that their organizations had proposed projects. A committee member said she presumed that most projects are keyed to GO TO 2040 Plan implementation. Bob said that this was only one of the criteria. Members said they were glad to see applications to develop water conservation ordinances and applications having to do with green infrastructure. A member asked how CMAP would be dealing with the City of Chicago proposals; Bob said he was looking for departmental coordination, among other things. Sean mentioned that the Chicago Department of Environment had put in a proposal to develop a Green Infrastructure Vision for the City which touched a number of departments.

It was mentioned that several local government projects would be within watersheds that have had watershed plans developed, and it was urged that CMAP examine these watersheds as part of the technical assistance process. Another member asked about whether more sustainability plans could be done, and specifically whether they would be energy and climate focused. Martha was asked to explain what the Village of Schaumburg had done. She said it took about one year and was based on the US Conference of Mayors approach, but was wider ranging than simply covering energy efficiency. Bob mentioned that CMAP would be partnering with ICLEI to do local government climate plans.

A member wondered if there was anything that could be done to add green practices to other projects, specifically transportation projects. It was mentioned that providing input into project development processes (corridor plans, NEPA, etc.) was like a “black hole,” where one was never sure if comments are having an effect and whether agencies were using available decision guides, like IDOT’s I-LAST manual. Jesse mentioned that IDOT had been scoring projects using the I-LAST manual; members noted that they were glad the manual was being employed.

5.0 Legislative update

Ylda announced the bills that CMAP is tracking, including the ones that had been re-introduced from previous sessions. A member asked how CMAP shows support for certain bills. Ylda responded that, at the most basic level, CMAP will sign onto fact sheets, but will also testify at the request of sponsors. It was mentioned that one bill not shown is legislation the Sierra Club and others are behind that would control the sweep of the NPDES fees into the General Revenue fund and out of the Illinois EPA budget. Wally mentioned that the DuPage River Salt Creek Workgroup has its own bill (SB 2081), which would create “Certified Local Watershed Organizations” and allow at least the fees from that watershed to be used for local water quality improvement projects. Another member suggested other watershed groups could benefit from such an approach. Jack mentioned that he wanted to support Illinois DNR and CMAP by helping educate lawmakers that cuts to DNR have already occurred (during the 2000s). Ylda said she would like to share more on those priorities.

7.0 Discussion of ENR committee role and priorities

Jesse noted that, at its January meeting, the committee had begun a discussion of its priorities for 2011. At that time, some of the committee leadership had not been able to attend, so he felt it would be appropriate to revisit the discussion.

Several members felt the committee should have a role in evaluating the impacts of transportation projects, specifically with the intent of trying to improve their environmental performance, such as through environmental enhancements. However, another member suggested that local governments may be stuck paying for the maintenance of these enhancements, and they may not go over well with local taxpayers if they seem extraneous. A member suggested that it would be helpful to have a coordination mechanism for ensuring that all agencies that would be interested in reviewing a transportation project proposal would be notified. Jesse suggested that it might not be appropriate for the committee to review individual projects, but that the committee might consider something like a policy statement. Jesse also mentioned that a representative from the Delta Institute, which has been working on a “transportation and environment collaboration,” would be sitting on the committee.

An item of ongoing interest is the DNR Coastal Management Program. It was suggested that consistency with GO TO 2040 could be one of the criteria in the grant program. Also, the implementation of Water 2050 fits within the committee’s area of interest; Tim Loftus agreed to give periodic updates to the committee on that topic. Updates on basin separation work were suggested at the January meeting, but a number of members emphasized this again. Josh suggested that there needs to be a clearer vision of what the Chicago region thinks about the proposals, considering that much of the investment will be coming from the Chicago region. Tim said he could also give periodic updates on basin separation work, mostly through the Great Lakes Cities Initiative.

Finally, it was mentioned that energy remains an important potential part of the committee’s work. Jesse mentioned that Ashley from ELPC had an energy background, and that an energy policy analyst from the Center for Neighborhood Technology had also been asked to participate. It was also suggested that many municipalities may have a hard time participating in state energy programs in the future because the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant is not expected to be funded again.

Including the items from the January 2011 meeting, the list of ENR priorities could be put as follows:

- a. Concentrate on energy more – bring in more representatives with those interests, and focus on potential CMAP implementation activities.
- b. Make the committee an opportunity to review legislation and form partnerships to work on legislation.
- c. Serve as an accountability mechanism for GO TO 2040 plan implementation.
- d. Review and suggest improvements to Local Technical Assistance program proposals.
- e. Review and provide recommendations on the FPA program and basin separation proposals.

- f. Examine additional opportunities to improve air quality beyond meeting transportation conformity requirements.
- g. Examine environmental impacts of transportation projects and how to improve transportation projects' environmental performance
- h. Track the development of the Coastal Zone Management program and offer recommendations, as needed, for improving it.
- i. Track the implementation of *Water 2050*.
- j. Help investigate sources of match for municipalities who wish to participate in state energy efficiency programs.

7.0 Other Business.

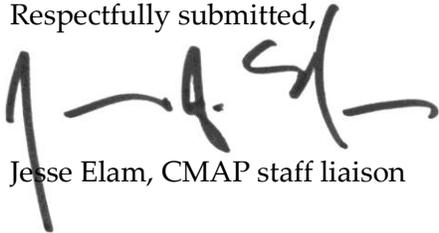
None.

8.0 Public Comment

None.

9.0 Adjournment.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jesse Elam', written over the typed name below.

Jesse Elam, CMAP staff liaison