



# Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning

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## Land Use Committee Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, December 16, 2009, 2009

Offices of the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP)  
DuPage County Conference Room  
Suite 800, 233 S. Wacker Drive, Willis Tower, Chicago, Illinois

### Members Present:

Judy Beck, Robert Cole, Kristi DeLaurentiis, Lisa DiChiera, Curt Paddock, Kim Flom (for Karie Friling), David Galowich, Jim LaBelle, Robert Palmer, Heather Smith, Karen Stonehouse, Heather Tabbert, Kai Tarum

### Members Absent:

Mark Avery, Jerry Conrad, Roger Dahlstrom, Ed Paesel, Dennis Sandquist, Nancy Williamson, Nathaniel Werner, Norm West

### Staff Present:

Ty Warner (staff liaison to the committee), Bob Dean, Stephen Ostrander, Ryan Ames, Matt Maloney

### Others Present:

Robert Munson (CMAP Citizens Advisory Committee), Tom Chefalo (Lake County), Tam Kutzmark (DuPage Mayors and Managers Conference), Mike Walczak (Northwest Municipal Conference)

### 1.0 Call to Order

In the absence of the chair and vice-chair, Ty Warner called the meeting to order at 9:03 a.m.

### 2.0 Agenda Changes and Announcements

None.

### 3.0 Approval of Meeting Notes

Robert Palmer moved and Rob Cole second to approve the meeting notes of both October 21, 2009 & November 18, 2009. All in favor, the motion carried.

#### 4.0 Legislative Update

Kristi DeLaurentiis discussed the importance of Senate Bill 32 on rainwater harvesting. The legislation will encourage better stormwater management practices and enable a more streamlined approval process for green technology.

#### 5.0 Impediments to Mixed-Use/Compact Development: Land Use Committee Discussion

Ty Warner gave a recap of the discussion that took place at the last meeting (see November 18, 2009 meeting notes for reference) and gave a brief context for that discussion. In addition, an electronic survey was sent out to committee members to further explore the impediments to mixed-use development and more specifically, what CMAP could do to address the barriers. The results were conceptually divided between the, 1) structural, and 2) perceptual barriers to more compact development patterns.

One of the comments on the electronic survey was how there can be misunderstandings by municipal leaders about the true benefits of big-box retail developments – referring mainly to tax revenue. Curt Paddock spoke about this issue by saying how there are other costs not typically being taken into account when municipal leaders are considering big-box developments.

Judy Beck followed up on this idea by saying it is a question of timeframe. When you look at the short-term situations many communities are in - suffering from low sales-tax revenue - there is a different picture then if you extend the frame and look at a municipal cost-benefit model in the long-term.

David Galowich spoke about a comment made in the electronic survey regarding mixed-use and dense development. Galowich said that affordability is a critical factor shaping consumer decisions. What the consumer sees as value is of principal importance. At the end of the day, it is about what they can afford that will shape location decisions.

Robert Cole added to Galowich's comments by including tax policy, especially with regards to school funding as being a factor helping form decisions. The way taxes are distributed to schools and transportation are significant components of the issue.

Galowich expanded the discussion on mixed-use developments by speaking to the need to consider mixed-use as not just vertical developments, but also horizontal – meaning there are a number of uses within close proximity. So the issue may not always be about density, but about access to amenities such as a local grocer.

Kristi DeLaurentiis talked about affordability by highlighting some inner-ring suburbs as affordable communities. People do not necessarily need to keep moving further out to the fringe to obtain affordable homes; but reinvestment in schools and jobs in the inner-ring suburbs is vital.

Galowich replied by saying that if someone worked in Naperville, for example, they are not likely to locate in an inner-ring suburb over one on the fringe if the housing costs are the same. The commute time for the person would be roughly the same, and therefore it seems like the appeal would continue to be further out in the region for people in similar situations. There is a real need to address the job location issue. For many people, their jobs are not in Chicago and thus there is a different dynamic than there was in previous decades.

Beck added the importance that the ethnic make-up and cultural amenities in any particular community have in shaping location decisions. Moreover, those are things that may not show up in existing measures, but are very significant factors. How do we account for those components?

Karen Stonehouse added that the role of kids continues to be a strong factor in location decisions.

Galowich replied by saying while that is true, he is hearing about many more young families choosing to stay in Chicago and denser places.

Tom Chefalo commented, saying those days of central city exodus appear to be over. It is more likely that people are moving from inner ring suburbs to suburbs further out in the region.

Robert Cole reiterated the importance of education on decisions.

Galowich said the way new housing was being marketed (before the recession) in green field areas was to use new schools as a sales attraction. Warner added that older marketing for new housing emphasized the house, while current marketing tends to focus more on the community and setting. Galowich agreed that comparing marketing from 2000 and comparing it with those of 2006 shows a shift toward more highly promoting amenities and quality of life.

Stonehouse said the structure of financing schools needs to be directly addressed. Investments into infrastructure, transportation, and housing in close proximity to schools are big issues.

Bob Dean said that capital projects will be addressed in the upcoming months.

Robert Cole spoke about how CMAP can help shape how we think about these issues. For example, the environmental costs associated with transportation investments need to be measured and made explicit.

Jim LaBelle said CMAP could do more with the transportation/housing cost index. A new index could be developed that builds on CNT's affordability index that could even give scores to municipalities for both municipal leaders and residents to look to in order to make more informed decisions.

Curt Paddock built on that idea by saying while most choices are based on the market, the market is based on information. CMAP could play a stronger role in the dissemination of consumer-based information. The information would be largely objective, but also be used to encourage regional policy goals laid out in the regional plan.

Galowich replied by saying that many people's perception of where to locate is informed by resources on the web. Consumers are becoming much more sophisticated these days, and CMAP could help in this endeavor if they could plug into or adapt the kinds of normal sources people use to make these location decisions.

Kristi DeLaurentiis felt that if CMAP could help drill down on the common threads that factor into these decisions and deliver it in a user friendly way – like using a ranking system to highlight best places – then CMAP could be more effective. By adapting criteria that some other popular sources use to build their “best places,” CMAP may be able to highlight some communities that have real assets that are not as well known by the general population.

Judy Beck replied saying matrices are good for some, but many decisions are based on personal connections and exposure. While that trend is changing a bit, it is still a prevalent way people access information and make decisions. There is not just one thing CMAP can do, but a host of aspects need to be addressed and some of them may require different methods.

Galowich said that at the end of the day, the Internet is increasingly used to help make big decisions. CMAP could develop a site that acts as a clearing house of information on transportation, land use, schools, and jobs.

Robert Cole wondered if such a tool would help reinforce current trends or benefit some communities that are in need of reinvestment.

Karen Stonehouse felt business locations are also a vital component, and one about which CMAP could play a role in providing information.

Beck followed up with that by saying that CMAP could serve to make the linkages more explicit between schools, housing, and transportation in particular communities.

Curt Paddock said that while providing an education tool is an important thing CMAP can do, it is certainly not the only thing to do.

Jim LaBelle felt that information could be framed in such a way that provides for a broader understanding of someone's return on investment.

Heather Smith added to the broader understanding of the idea by saying how important transportation investments in local road networks are in encouraging connectivity, walkability, and the kinds of quality of life factors often spoken about by planners. Rather than looking at functional classifications of roadways, we should be looking at street connectivity as making a huge impact on these goals.

Beck included stormwater management into the discussion by referencing proposed stormwater ordinances in Cook County and highlighting how they may impact future infill development.

The committee and others in attendance were divided into small groups to discuss how CMAP could address the issues from the electronic survey, Robert Palmer said his small group spoke about how, 1) CMAP could develop an interactive tool to help show the real cost of transportation and housing, and 2) CMAP could host additional educational workshops and training to local officials to help communicate the true costs of development.

Curt Paddock spoke for his small group, saying there is a real issue over the way density is perceived by local leaders. By continually referring to density, and using that term, it may be a counterproductive way to promote the objectives of the regional plan. Another aspect that CMAP could focus on is education using other mediums in addition to the web-based ideas discussed earlier. Finally, the group discussed how transportation funding requirements could be used as stronger leverage to encourage policy objectives. While the requirements would not prevent large-lot development, they could make sure that transportation funding will no longer reward or be used for such patterns.

Robert Cole spoke about the need to make known the costs that are externalized with regards to large-lot developments. A full range of costs would be beneficial.

Kai Tarum presented her small groups' discussion: CMAP could develop a one-stop shop or act as a clearinghouse for information to help make more informed decisions (both by general consumers and public leaders). Moreover, the interactive tool could have a dashboard that helped gauge different components, as with the indicators project.

Kristi DeLaurentiis added to that by saying such information could be framed in such a way as to reward more sustainable thinking and prioritizing.

Karen Stonehouse said that a best practices newsletter or other communications about what communities are doing could also be a beneficial educational piece.

Ty Warner then relayed a list of responses that he documented from other focus groups asking these same questions about what the impediments to compact development are and what CMAP can do to address them.

## **6.0 GO TO 2040: Preferred Scenario Development: Bob Dean, CMAP**

Bob Dean clarified that the Preferred Scenario draft is being developed primarily to make sure the direction CMAP is heading is good as opposed to framing what the language will actually be in the plan. However, in regards to the earlier discussion on using the term “density,” it is very hard to get around using that term.

Robert Cole responded, saying “development supportive of regional goals” could be a way to refer to denser development patterns.

David Galowich suggested, “development that accommodates regional growth” as another phrase that may be worth using.

Curt Paddock said that density is not an end in itself. Therefore, it may be more appropriate to speak about the ends – the quality of life factors and social benefits that are desired - of which density is only a means.

Jim LaBelle reinforced this idea by saying access to amenities, jobs, and schools are the real drivers of the density issue.

Tam Kutzmark opined that the opportunity to become more compact is of real importance. If the plan framed density in such a way as to help show municipalities how they could become denser, that would be a real way to connect to local leaders. By appealing to outcome-based density (walkability, amenities) and providing design principles or guidelines that can be followed, an effective way to address the density issue may be realized.

Judy Beck said that CMAP needs to make sure the link between density and open space is more explicitly addressed. Additionally, CMAP needs to highlight the exceptional natural resources of the region.

Kristi DeLaurentiis added to that idea by including the need to showcase northeastern Illinois and frame it as what the region will need to do to be economically competitive in the future. Dean responded by saying that the actual language of the plan will directly address the regional advantages as well as how the region compares globally.

Karen Stonehouse was concerned that the Preferred Scenario draft did not address employment distribution as it should.

Curt Paddock felt that the language could be more effective if it was based on what motivates people. A number of the statements in the draft are to reduce something instead of speaking to the positive side of the equation.

Robert Cole said there is a real need and advantage to really engaging the youth with the regional plan and future efforts.

Jim LaBelle asked if there was a way to measure resident satisfaction – such as surveys. The measurement could then be repeated in the future to track perceptions.

**7.0 Next scheduled meeting:**

February 17<sup>th</sup> 2010

**8.0 Other Business**

There was no other business.

**9.0 Public Comment**

There was no additional public comment.

**12.0 Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 11:15 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Ty Warner".

Ty Warner AICP  
Staff Liaison to the Land Use Committee

*Notes compiled with the help of Ryan Ames*