



Environment and Natural Resources Committee

DRAFT Minutes

July 3, 2013 – 9:30 a.m.

Members Present: Joe Schuessler – Metropolitan Water Reclamation District, Sean Weidel – Chicago Department of Transportation, Patricia Werner – Lake County Stormwater Management Commission, Martha Dooley – Village of Schaumburg, Martin Jaffe – UIC, Anne McKibben – CNT Energy

Staff Present: Jesse Elam, Jason Navota, Nora Beck

Others Present: Andy Kimmel – Lake County Forest Preserves, James Schmelzer – GSA, Beata Welsh – RTA, Valerie Poulos – CNT Energy, Willie Calvin – Forest Preserve District of Cook County, Cathy Geraghty – Forest Preserve District of Cook County, Laura Oakleaf – Cook County, Renee Brantley – Cook County.

1.0 Call to Order 9:30 a.m.
Sean called the meeting to order at 9:37.

2.0 Agenda Changes and Announcements

- **LTA project selection process.** Patricia Werner asked about how the committee could be involved in the selection process. Jesse Elam stated that the committee did help with the broader selection of model plans, codes, and ordinances and that method of input is helpful given the committee's expertise.
- **Cook County Watershed Management Ordinance.** MWRD has opened public comment on the Cook County Watershed Management Ordinance until August 9, 2013.
- **Illiana Highway review process.** IDOT has requested that the Illiana Corridor be amended as a fiscally constrained major capital project in GO TO 2040. CMAP staff is conducting an evaluation of the proposal, which will be released on August 2. Public comment period will likely be 30 days. The CMAP Board and MPO policy committee will be meeting in October to make a decision on whether to amend the plan. Committee members discussed how to provide input.

3.0 Coordinating Committees Update

The Local Coordinating Committee met on May 8; the Environment and Natural Resources committee lacked representation. Nora Beck read through the major agenda items, which covered the Priority Development Areas presentation by CNT, Fair Housing

and Equity Assessment, CMAP's Model Plans, Codes, and Ordinances, and an LTA program update.

The Regional Coordinating Committee met on June 12; the Environment and Natural Resources committee lacked representation. Nora Beck read through major agenda items, which included the Unified Work Program, Developments of Regional Importance, Status update on CREATE, Housing Policy Updates, and the GO TO 2040 Plan Update.

4.0 A New Commute: Bike Share Comes to Chicago – Sean Wiedel, Chicago Department of Transportation

Sean provided an overview of CDOT's complete streets efforts and the new Divvy Bike Share program, referring to a PowerPoint presentation. He reviewed the current mode share, as well as congestion and safety performance in the city. CDOT has established a new baseline mode hierarchy for all of their projects which places pedestrians at the top and they are trying to motivate not just the fearless and biking enthusiasts but people who are interested in biking but have concerns. Different infrastructure techniques, such as protected bike lanes, buffered bike lanes, and neighborhood greenways, are aimed at making biking safer and more comfortable for a broader audience. The Streets for Cycling 2020 Plan provides an overall plan for different infrastructure improvements.

Chicago's Bike Share program, Divvy, was funded through CMAQ funds (\$22 million, 80% CMAQ). It went through a "name-storming" process and the logo represents Sharrows, a shared lane marking. By next spring, the system will be composed of 400 stations and 4,000 bikes. This initial roll out consists of 75 stations and 750 bikes. CDOT will be rolling out most of the rest of the stations and bikes in a phased approach after a two week period. The station location was guided by a public involvement process where residents could submit location ideas. Goal is to place the stations on the sidewalk, but given the sidewalk widths, that is not always possible. The City is seeking sponsors.

Questions from the committee included whether CDOT was collecting bike counts. Difficult task, but bikes are estimated to be 2% of the commuters and they are working on automated sensors to provide better information in the future. A suggestion was made to include the bike map in the bike share mobile phone application. Currently, there are two phone applications – Spot Cycle and Cycle Finder, but the city will be developing a Divvy-focused application in the next few months. Committee members asked specific questions about the features of the bike and stations, as well as maintenance and insurance. The bikes have built in lights, the docks are free-standing, but heavy, and have a solar tube that powers the kiosk and provides cellular connection. Conditions of the bikes will be monitored and users have a way to notify that the bike needs maintenance.

CDOT will be tracking where bikes are taken out and returned and the length of the trip to monitor the program and improve the service. The committee discussed the ability to monitor trip diversion and air quality improvements.

5.0 The Value of Stormwater Utilities for Local Governments – Jesse Elam, CMAP

Jesse provided an overview of a recent report, The Value of Stormwater Utilities for Local Governments in the Chicago Region. Released in January, CMAP investigated the benefits and concerns of using stormwater utilities to address increasing challenges in managing

stormwater. A stormwater utility would allow a community to establish a user fee for providing stormwater services rather than relying on taxation. He identified some of the main benefits: provides a dedicated revenue stream for stormwater programs, establishes a more equitable fee based on the demands a specific property places on the drainage system, and creates an incentive for property owners to reduce the amount of runoff they generate.

Nationwide, there are approximately 1,300 utilities, but few in Illinois. In NE Illinois, CMAP identified 8 in the region though there may be others. A third of them use a flat fee, another third base the fee on impervious coverage of parcels, and the last third connect the fee to drinking water usage. Jesse outlined components of an ideal program: the fee for each parcel would be set proportional to the runoff generated from that parcel (using impervious surface as a proxy), all revenues would be used for providing stormwater services, and credits would allow property owners to reduce their fee with stormwater improvements to their parcel. Ideally, a credit manual would identify the different techniques that could be used paired with a fee reduction amount.

Stormwater fees have withstood legal challenges in Illinois. Jesse reviewed whether local governments have the ability to institute the fee: home rule municipalities should have no difficulty, while non-home rule communities have the power to own and operate utilities under Illinois Municipal Code. Jesse stated that it would be helpful for the General Assembly to explicitly grant non-home rule units that operate separate storm sewer systems the power to establish stormwater utility fees.

Jesse identified a four step implementation process: 1) Assess community stormwater needs; 2) Conduct stormwater utility feasibility study; 3) Conduct public outreach and education; 4) Develop local ordinance and credit manual. Residents may not perceive any new benefit from the new fee, pointing to the importance of the needs assessment and public outreach. With a credit system, it is possible that residents could save money. A stormwater utility should make it easier for local governments to earn credits under FEMA's Community Rating system, which could result in lower flood insurance premiums. Fees are not very high (\$2-8/month). Rate assistance could be provided, similar to what communities do for water and sewer services.

The committee asked if CMAP would be providing technical assistance in establishing stormwater utilities. CMAP is focused on outreach; private companies could provide the more technical expertise. The committee wondered how many communities are interested in this. Jesse listed Elgin, Wilmette, Winnetka, and Lombard as having expressed interest or are investigating options. DuPage County now has authorization to establish a utility. Jesse has spoken with councils of governments and watershed councils. A recommendation was made to target communities with combined sewers.

6.0 Approval of Minutes – May 1, 2013

The minutes were approved with no changes.

7.0 Other Business

None.

8.0 Public Comment

None.

9.0 Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for September 4, 2013 at 9:30 am.

10.0 Adjournment

Respectfully submitted,

Nora June Beck, CMAP staff liaison