



Environment and Natural Resources Committee

Minutes

Thursday, January 7, 2021

9:30 a.m.

Via GoToMeeting:

Members Present: Keary Cragan – U.S. EPA, Jack Darin – Illinois Sierra Club, Martha Dooley – Village of Schaumburg, Aaron Durnbaugh – Loyola University Chicago, Elena Grossman – BRACE-Illinois at UIC, Andrew Hawkins – Forest Preserve District of Will County, Paul May – Northwest Suburban JAWA, Stacy Meyers – Openlands, Ted Penesis – IDNR, Tom Rickert – Kane County, Vanessa Ruiz – IDOT District 1 Environmental Studies Unit, Deborah Stone – Cook County Department of Environment and Sustainability, Sean Wiedel – Chicago Department of Transportation

Members Absent: Lindsay Birt – Xylem

Staff Present: Erin Aleman, Claire Bozic, Sarah Buchhorn, Brian Daly, Kate Evasic, Caitlin Goodspeed, Holly Hudson, Victoria Jacobsen, Elliott Lewis, Tim McMahon, Jason Navota, Jared Patton, Russell Pietrowiak, Kelsey Pudlock, Gordon Smith, Laura Wilkison

Others Present: Andrea Cline, Edith Makra

1.0 Call to Order / Introductions

Chair Jack Darin called the meeting to order at 9:33 a.m.

2.0 Agenda Changes and Announcements

Chair Darin stated that as permitted in the Governor's Disaster Declaration from November 13, 2020, the determination has been made that an in-person meeting is not practical or prudent for this committee. To ensure as transparent and open a meeting as possible, staff posted the meeting materials one week in advance, will provide a recording of this meeting linked on the CMAP website, and will take all votes by roll call.

3.0 Approval of Minutes—November 5, 2020

A motion by Martha Dooley to approve the minutes of the November 5 meeting, seconded by Sean Wiedel, carried with all present in favor.

4.0 CMAP Board Meeting Updates

Executive Director Erin Aleman provided key updates from the CMAP Board meeting. She discussed the purpose, leadership, and structure of the Regional Economic Recovery Task Force that CMAP is supporting. She also discussed CMAP's ongoing conversations about service sharing and intergovernmental coordination. She shared recent media discussion of ON TO 2050 recommendations. Lastly, she thanked recently retired ENR Committee member Mike Warner for his contributions to CMAP and the region.

- Open space and tourism. Stacy Meyers asked how much open space agencies were involved in the discussion about tourism for the region, especially in terms of transportation access and impact on agriculture and other land uses, and what role nonprofits can play. Erin Aleman responded that the Convention and Visitors Bureaus, Restaurant Association, and other groups have been involved, and that the task force is talking about how to bring in conservation and open space groups in the coming months as well as how to make tourism hyperlocal. She and the task force welcome suggestions of groups to include. They hope to lift up the opportunities that exist and hope that can be catalytic for further investment. Stacy Meyers suggested the Cook County Land Bank Authority as a group to contact. Aaron Durnbaugh agreed that the tourism impacts from conservation work are not well understood or communicated, with the exception of Millennium Park. He suggested that Chicago Wilderness can be a resource for partnerships.

5.0 2021 Meeting Schedule Change

Staff proposed to change the March meeting date to Monday, March 22 at 9:30 a.m. to allow for a joint meeting with CMAP's Economic Development Committee. Kate Evasic explained that the committee will meet as a way to foster discussion of the connection between CMAP's work on climate change and the regional economy. Stacy Meyers' motion to change the schedule, seconded by Aaron Durnbaugh, passed with all present in favor.

6.0 GHG Mobile Source Emissions

Russell Pietrowiak and Sarah Buchhorn presented an analysis of existing on-road mobile source greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions modeling.

- Fuel source shifts. Sean Wiedel asked to what extent MOVES 3 and other models capture potential changes to other fuel sources. Sarah Buchhorn responded that MOVES 3 does not by itself include any assumptions about fuel transitions, but only includes fuel economy regulations that have been passed by the model's release date. She explained that CMAP can model

scenarios using different fuels, which is something CMAP will want to look at.

- Other pollutants. Aaron Durnbaugh noted that it would be helpful for CMAP to share information about other pollutants, including volumes and percent contributions to climate change and local pollutants by impact and source. He said that having impacts, users, and sources identified drives development and prioritization of mitigation strategies. Russell Pietrowiak responded that it is important not to look at greenhouse gases in a vacuum. The presentation shows that the region should be concerned with other pollutants as well, particularly because it is not in achievement for all of them. He noted that there are some strategies that may be beneficial for reducing greenhouse gas emissions and CMAP will want to see what effect they would have on other pollutants and whether strategies to reduce other pollutants will have benefits for GHGs. Aaron Durnbaugh remarked that looking at local pollutants is more complicated as you look at more slices of where those are being generated. Russell Pietrowiak replied that in addition to what the presentation covered, weather has a big impact that policymakers cannot influence. Modeling is an exercise requiring assumptions about what the future weather will look like.

7.0 2021 ENR Committee Work Plan

Kate Evasic led the committee in a discussion of the work plan for 2021 and meeting logistics.

- Transportation and land use. Stacy Meyers asked how the nexus of transportation and land use is addressed in the work plan. She noted that the committee has had the benefit of having LTA plans and other projects brought before it, but that these steps are often reactive rather than a fundamental, policy-level discussion. She recommends that the freight work CMAP is doing have a nexus at this committee, particularly given the crossover between freight, transportation, and the environmental impact on open space, as seen in developments and proposals in Will County. She said that evolving our regional view of freight and conservation at the same time could help the region avoid future conflicts. Kate Evasic replied that staff will look for opportunities to discuss the topic.
- Member initiatives. Sean Wiedel suggested inviting the City of Chicago's Chief Sustainability Officer come before the committee. Elena Grossman said that it would be great to hear sustainability officers from health care facilities, which are big implementers. She said it would be good to hear what some large and small health care systems are doing to address their

challenges and opportunities in sustainability. Edith Makra recommended hearing from the Chicago Community Trust's corporate sustainability group.

- Legislative agenda. Jack Darin asked for an update on the timetable for committee input on CMAP's legislative agenda given the uncertain nature of the spring session. Gordon Smith responded that CMAP is currently in the process of developing the state and federal legislative agendas, which staff will present to the Board at the January meeting. He noted that it is not much different from what staff have presented in the past. He said they hope to have it approved at the February Board meeting and that there will be opportunity to comment before then.
- Virtual meeting format. Jack Darin asked whether, given how accessible online meetings are, whether CMAP has seen more public participation. Andrew Hawkins noted that online meetings are working well to get their boards together, but that they are not seeing more public participation. Brian Daly said that CMAP is not really seeing more public participation, although member attendance is high, and said that the lack of networking opportunities compared to in-person meetings may be one reason. Kate Evasic noted that meeting recordings are also being put online, which may result in people watching afterwards rather than attending. Russell Pietrowiak said that he sits on a lot of committees and that public participation hasn't increased, although it was low to begin with. He said that engagement by members, attendance, and reaching quorums is much better in all kinds of meetings. He noted that IDOT has put together an online public involvement plan that has been pretty successful. Sean Wiedel said that for CDOT, some topic-specific meetings have been really successful. He said that 85 people attended a meeting about e-scooters on December 22, 2020, compared to 30-40 who attended an in-person meeting following the first project pilot. He said that if people are passionate about a topic, they will often take advantage of the ease of attending. Martha Dooley stated that with staff travel budgets eliminated, virtual meetings provide an opportunity to still attend meetings. Ted Penesis agreed.

8.0 Fox River Corridor Plan from Burtons Bridge to Johnsburg

CMAP is working with McHenry County and the City of McHenry to develop a corridor plan that improves river-related commerce, natural resources, multi-modal transportation, as well as public access and recreational use to/on the river. The planning area spans four municipalities, nature preserves, and parks over a distance of eight miles from Burtons Bridge at Route 176 to Johnsburg at North Chapel Hill Road. As the project heads into the visioning and plan

development phase, Kelsey Pudlock provided a brief overview of the project to date and solicited feedback from committee members.

- Climate change. Aaron Durnbaugh asked how the project approaches incorporating future climate scenarios and whether there was any sort of future variability that was identified or incorporated, especially regarding flooding. Kelsey Pudlock responded that the team did not look at future climate scenarios, but did look at CMAP's flood susceptibility index and think about where floods could occur. She explained that the previous McHenry County Fox River Corridor plan was part of CMAP's NOAA-funded project to incorporate climate science. She said the current project will not be able to consider climate change in as much depth, but that it can look at regional factors and incorporate.
- Trail planning. Martha Dooley said the lack of trail connectivity in the study area is an issue and noted that some of the trails on the maps that were shared are identified as planned and programmed. She asked whether there is a timeline for completing those trails. Kelsey Pudlock responded that the map is pulled from CMAP's regional trails and greenways dataset, which contains some timelines. She said that a few of the trails are in the process of being built and could be implemented soon. Brian Daly said that in CMAP's Regional Greenways and Trails Plan, any trail that was included in a local plan could be listed as planned but that trails listed as programmed have had funding programmed, resulting in a wide range of implementation timelines. Kelsey Pudlock said that the McHenry County Council of Mayors is currently working on a trail plan, so some of the trails could move ahead soon.
- Bike clubs. Martha Dooley asked whether local bike clubs are involved in the planning process. Kelsey Pudlock said that they haven't engaged local bike clubs in particular, but that McHenry County Bicycle Advocates are involved.
- Educate policymakers. Tom Rickert said that quite often we see our policymakers come and go pretty quickly, and a lot of these plans end up being one-time efforts that are adopted and often forgotten about. He suggested it would be beneficial for CMAP to work with some of the various stakeholders participating in these plans to bring them up with new policymakers and educate them on past planning work.

9.0 Indian Creek Watershed-based Plan

In collaboration with local partners, CMAP is developing a watershed-based plan for Indian Creek in the Lower Fox River Basin. Working with stakeholders, the plan will identify planning, policy, outreach and education, and on-the-ground project recommendations

that upon implementation will help improve and protect water quality throughout the Indian Creek watershed as well as the downstream Fox River. The watershed resource inventory phase is nearing completion, and CMAP will be moving into the plan development phase over the winter including public engagement and BMP identification. Holly Hudson provided a brief overview of the project to date and asked to hear the Committee's ideas and suggestions toward effective virtual public engagement.

- Outreach approaches. Sean Wiedel said that conducting outreach through steering committee members, who are often participating as part of their paid jobs, is probably the most meaningful way to get started. He also said there are a lot of ways to get to broader audience, such as social media and newsletters. He said that having the professionals on the steering committee to reach out to their networks is an effective way to do it. Holly Hudson said that in Aurora, reaching out through Aldermen is key. She also noted that the study area has a large Hispanic community and finding networks that reach them is important. Brian Daly said that going through trusted partners from past plans, such as the downtown Aurora plan, can be a way to re-engage those networks
- Online platforms. Holly Hudson asked members whether there have been any particular online platforms for meetings that they have found to work well. Sean Wiedel said he believes Zoom is most familiar to people because a lot of people have already used it for social calls, and it is a bit more intuitive. Kate Evasic noted that it will be interesting to see how using new CMAP engagement tools, such as EngagementHQ websites with forums, maps, and pre-recorded presentations, will help as staff continue learning how to do use online tools to open up planning processes to larger audiences. Andrew Hawkins said that there are limits to how many people can join a meeting on many platforms, such as a 100-person limit on Zoom. Ted Penesis replied that users can increase the number up to 500 or 1,000 by paying for other licenses. Martha Dooley said that planners can get on municipal calendars to promote meetings. Edith Makra said that live polling using Menti Meter is a good way to engage within meetings. She also stated that Aurora and Batavia also have very engaged citizen sustainability commissions that can help pull in engaged interest groups. The chair in Batavia has been very active, as has the one in Aurora. Tapping into them can help planners reach people who have a lot to give. Aaron Durnbaugh said that people with kids are often familiar with Google Meets due to online teaching. Ted Penesis said he and others have had problems with video on Google Meets. Sean Wiedel said Google Meets take a large amount of bandwidth.

- Study area. Edith Makra asked whether any of Naperville is in the study area. Holly Hudson said there are no incorporated parts of Naperville within the watershed planning boundary. Edith Makra suggested looking to HOAs, including through a citywide group of HOAs that might be helpful.

10.0 Other Business

- None

11.0 Public Comment

This is an opportunity for comments from members of the audience. The amount of time available to speak will be at the chair's discretion. It should be noted that the exact time for the public comment period will immediately follow the last item on the agenda.

- None

12.0 Next Meeting

The next meeting will be March 22, 2021 at 9:30 a.m.

13.0 Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 11:28 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Brian Daly and Kate Evasic
January 7, 2021