

**Land Use Committee Meeting**  
**May 9, 2012 ~ Minutes**  
**NIRPC Auditorium**

**Members & Visitors**

Sergio Mendoza, Bob Thompson, Mia Goulding, George Malis, Bob Nickovich, Greg Stinson, A J Bytnar, David Wright, A J Monroe, Kevin Breitzke

**NIRPC Staff**

Eman Ibrahim, John Swanson, Steve Strains, Kathy Luther, Bill Brown, Tom Vander Woude, Kevin Garcia, Gabrielle Biciunas, Meredith Stilwell

Chairman Breitzke called the meeting to order at 10:08 a.m.

On motion by Greg Stinson and second by Sergio Mendoza, the Land Use Committee Retreat Meeting Minutes from March 2012 were approved.

◆ **US 6 Corridor Study/Overlay District Presentation**—*Bob Thompson, Porter Co. Planning Commission*

In 2009 the US 6 Corridor Plan was adopted that provided ideals for US 6, including a campus plan around the hospital for health care related facilities. Other items included South Haven redevelopment issues as well as an idea of how to develop the intersection of US 6 and Meridian. In order to develop additional standards and ordinances for US 6 only, a corridor overlay was developed and is now before the Board of County Commissioners to be heard in June for adoption. As an economic development corridor one of the ideas to come out of the corridor plan was to have multipurpose trails and paths to offer alternative transportation around the hospital area. During the study it was determined the corridor has four established districts which are the Central, West Central, South Haven, and Eastern. Boundaries and sub-districts, purpose and intent, regulations, and character survey for signs were established. Proposals in the ordinance are for South Haven redevelopment, West Central District to keep continuing with the same type of current development, Central District high quality medical offices, and Eastern District to preserve the character. The ordinances address land use, building envelope, landscaping, building materials, signs, and access management. The steering committee as well as some public comment helped determine some of the items using a visual preference survey. Further detail was given on those areas. *Following the presentation discussion was held regarding various topics including highway 6 access, increased pavement area and its effect on surface runoff. Once the completed the hospital and medical facilities will be able to be accessed by a means other than Highway 6 and pedestrian pathways are also proposed in a development to the west to connect and give alternative transportation options. There are islands required in the parking lots to limit heat effect and there are landscaping plans with water quality features to aid with stormwater quality measures. Further concerns were raised regarding traffic flow around the entrance and exit of the hospital area and NIRPC Planner Bill Brown made suggestions to Bob about Porter County working with NIRPC on the congestion management process and placing technology to monitor the traffic flow to be able to quantify the issue and study alternatives through the congestion management process. There is a permit in place for a traffic signal to be placed at the entrance to the hospital.*

◆ **Committee Retreat Results/Vision/Roles & Responsibilities** –

Eman led a discussion regarding the March 2012 Retreat results regarding the vision and roles and responsibilities of the Land Use Committee. The Land Use Committee functions both as a working group and as a Committee which votes on recommendations to the Board. It was suggested to amend the vision statement to, *Implement a strategy for regional land use planning by continuing to improve the collaboration of facilitated planning processes and partnerships that build links between jurisdictional boundaries.* The roles and responsibilities that were in place in regard to implementation of the 2040 Plan will remain, and there were a few others added as a result of suggestions made at the March retreat. After discussion, it was also suggested to amend one of the roles and responsibilities bullet points. What resources, information, and data can be asked

for from NIRPC by the communities was questioned and it was noted communities can ask for what they need and it can be determined if the request is able to be completed. John Swanson spoke briefly on the shift occurring in the new NIRPC two year work plan. Staff is being asked when developing programs to consider what they can do to make a difference in securing plan adoption which in many cases will be the form of technical assistance or meeting with planning commissions, and city and town councils to help them understand the Plan and the relationship to their planning efforts. Chairman Breitzke noted there will be a new Director at NIRPC next year who may have different direction. John also spoke about the Local Government Assistance Committee, chaired by Mayor Snedecor, has gotten heavily into information sharing. After every meeting there is a call for resources for information sharing between local communities and has resulted in the sharing of salary compensation plans, fringe-benefit programs, and nuisance ordinances. John mentioned that while trying to see how to provide additional service to local governments, it is a challenge doing it with a budget that does not change very much over time. Community recommendations and input are welcome to help figure out what can be done with the resources available. Helping to establish model ordinances and outreach efforts were discussed. It was also recommended to work with smaller municipalities who do not have adequate staffing to even attend meetings and help facilitate communities working together. Bill Brown noted about once every 10 years the urban area boundary is developed to implement the census and is on the radar screen for the next three to four months. He also remarked the need to smooth the census designated boundary and is appropriate for the Land Use Committee to look at. Lastly Eman stated one of the main roles of the Land Use Committee this year will be oversee the Creating Livable Communities and Livable Centers Initiative programs developed for the implementation of the 2040 Plan. On motion by Greg Stinson and second by A J Bytnar it was voted to approve the vision statement and roles and responsibilities of the Land Use Committee as amended. The vision and roles and responsibilities can be reviewed at the start of each year for updates if necessary.

#### ◆ **Regional Land Use Planning**

##### **a. Livable Centers Initiatives Project**

Two new programs have been created as part of NIRPC's new two year Unified Planning Work Program and as reflection of the implementation of the major Livable Centers Initiative part of the 2040 CRP.

##### **i. Creating Livable Communities:**

On July 1<sup>st</sup> the Creating Livable Communities funding program will begin and was established to support compact development, mixed use, town centers, transportation relation projects which support land use, station areas, commercial cores, and transit corridors within urbanized areas or livable centers. The first six months of 2012 were used to determine eligibility, criteria, and projects available for funding. Portions of current transportation funds (STP, CMAQ, Transportation Enhancement (TE), FTA, etc.) will be used for this new funding. Allocating separate funds for transportation related land use projects will enable expanded options available in the market.

##### **ii. Livable Centers Initiative:**

During the 2040 Plan development NIRPC staff met with communities to determine livable centers for each of the 41 communities. Because the livable centers idea plays such a prominent role in the 2049 Plan, NIRPC staff will meet with communities again in order to better define and map the geographic boundaries of each center and to look at plans and ordinances to determine whether or not livability elements have been incorporated into existing centers. From those studies a typology of Livable Centers in Northwest Indiana will be developed that includes desired urban design elements and transportation options that can be applied throughout the region. The program kickoff will be July 1, 2012. Eman shared a similar funding program from the Houston/Galveston, TX area. *It was suggested to illustrate and tout the successes in the Northwest Indiana area which were achieved through various funding sources and it was noted the new funding source might best serve those communities outside of other funding areas. It was clarified that the money stipulated on the handouts in the meeting is strictly for staff to set the programs in place. The funding will be a combination of percentages from current transportation funding sources. It was voiced that instead of a model ordinance for downtown planning, maybe this funding should be specifically dedicated to a community and facilitate the view of NIRPC as a resource by sending staff to the*

*community in need of help. Chairman Breitzke reminded the Committee that the full cooperation of property and building owners is needed. Bill Brown noted project selection criteria is in place for the Plan and the TIP and has multipliers for location and gives livable centers a higher multiplier than non-livable center. He voiced that if it is a competition process instead of having a set aside, maybe the multipliers can be tweaked so the multiplier is higher for livable centers.*

◆ **Local Communities Update**

**a. Current or Proposed Studies, Plans, and Projects**

AJ Bytnar announced the Hobart Marsh Area Plan funded by a Coastal grant should be wrapping up with a final public hearing for adoption in June. It is a subarea plan for around 355 acres of wetland mitigation having to do with the Little Cal Project and also incorporates Shirley Heinze Land Trust and Save the Dunes properties as well as the City of Hobart Park which is Robinson Lake and is bisected by the Oak Savannah Trail. All of the property owners worked together to form a cohesive work plan moving forward which will avoid duplications of facilities and will see what other land uses will be compatible in the area and how to connect the site to other potential bike paths and neighborhoods in the area. There has been good public participation and the agencies who are the property owners have been very easy to work with and very helpful.

Bob Nickovich noted they participated in the Hobart Marsh Area Plan and have a few other projects which are coming along and key acquisitions that have been worked on from five years to twenty years look like they may be coming into place.

**Announcements**

**a. Green Infrastructure Pilot Projects Application**

Kathy Luther announced NIRPC obtained a \$50k Donnelley Foundation grant to begin implementing the Green Infrastructure Network which is part of the 2040 CRP. The money will be used for technical support projects. A technical team, that includes NIRPC staff, Sea Grant, The Nature Conservancy, Save the Dunes, Shirley Heinz, Coastal Program, as well as contractor support, will be assemble to do three pilot projects in three different communities. The projects will focus on green infrastructure. The application is available on the NIRPC website and is due May 25.

**b. CRP Outreach**

Gabrielle Biciunas announced as part of the Plan outreach they hope to present to each of the municipality's town or city council or planning commission about the strategies and recommendations of the 2040 CRP. She asked for assistance in getting in to the communities for the presentations.

c. The next Land Use Committee will be held Wednesday, July 11, 2012 at 10:00 a.m. at NIRPC.

d. Pathway to 2040 Implementation Committee for the Comprehensive Regional Plan – 9:00 a.m., Thursday, July 12, 2012.

e. The Coastal Program is hosting their Coastal Advisory Board Meeting at NIRPC June 20, 2012 at 6:00 p.m. The meeting is the public meeting dealing with setting grant priorities for the 2012-2013 funding cycle.

The meeting adjourned at 11:58 a.m.