

## Land Use Committee Meeting

Wednesday, April 19, 2017

**Members & Visitors:** Greg Stinson, Mike Barry, Jeff Sheridan, Justin Kiel, George Malis, George Topoll, Cecile Petro

**NIRPC Staff:** Eman Ibrahim, Gabrielle Biciunas, Stephen Sostaric, Meredith Stilwell

### Call to Order by Chairman

Chairman Stinson called the meeting to order at 10:04 a.m.

### Approval of the minutes of January 18, 2017 Meeting

On motion by Michael Barry and second by Justin Kiel, the January 18, 2017 minutes were approved as presented.

### Presentation on the Town of Highland CLC Plan – *Cecile Petro / Town of Highland*

Highland is landlocked with very little green space and faces challenges of many daily commuters through town and a downtown that is 90% occupied with mostly commercial and not enough retail or entertainment components. The study area for the CLC Plan focuses on the Kennedy Avenue corridor which is just north of downtown Highland. SEH was contracted for the project. While the study area is good for bikes it is not very walkable due to a lack of sidewalks and safe crossings. The Town is working with a developer on a senior living area downtown. Initially the plan was to not only revitalize the area, but restore the town theater to also provide evening entertainment and use it as an amenity to attract private development. This was voted down in January 2017 and since the plan depends mostly on future growth and redevelopment for the area does not result in a significant change. Options have been provided to slow traffic down on Kennedy Avenue to allow people to see and go downtown, but a consensus has not been reached on a preference. Four design options were proposed by SEH and public sessions held to allow people to indicate which option they preferred. Mixed use is being looked into and would be accomplished by adding second and third stories onto buildings which are currently one story to incorporate retail, consumer and residential. Condit Street is being looked into as a flexible street and would allow for traffic during the day and then be closed in the evening for entertainment purposes. SEH has been asked to produce an implementation plan for the area.

### Regional Land Use Planning

Handouts were provided reflecting the total cost by community of 2016-2019 TIP projects within livable centers, totaling over \$274m and the amount of those projects by community that are livable center related elements, which totals over \$28m. The last round included mostly trails, but is only one item of the CLC program project types. Examples of implementation elements to be focused on for livable centers were detailed by Eman and provided in a handout to meeting attendees. She noted that competing with other projects for funding will be difficult so working with the Technical Planning Committee to specify funding for the CLC and support of the Land Use Committee is needed.

**a. NWI Food System – Gabrielle Biciunas, NIRPC**

Developing a robust local food system was an element to come out of the 2040 Plan. In March 2012 NIRPC conducted a local food study assessing conditions of food systems in the region. Two key recommendations came from the study. One, to create a group or committee to oversee and advance local food in the area, and the other to develop an agenda to move forward and to host summits to bring people together. NIRPC collaborated with regional partners and an initial regional food summit was held in April 2015. The result from the summit was to establish a food council. In December of 2015 the Northwest Indiana Food Council was established. NIRPC is on the board. The mission is to build a just, sustainable and thriving locally oriented food system for all through networking, education, advocacy and projects. The Council is essentially a regional clearing house for information on a regional approach for food systems and to connect and support different initiatives, innovation and groups. The board meets monthly and many different activities and events have been hosted and attended by the Council. A Food Expo and Discussions (FED) summit was held at County Line Orchard with over 180 participants and featured a lunch of locally sourced food. The Council's website is [www.nwifoodcouncil.org](http://www.nwifoodcouncil.org). Moving forward the Council plans to review and update their strategic plan, apply for grants, and plan for the next FED event. Suggestions for additions to the website were provided by meeting attendees.

**b. I-65 & US 30 Safety Planning Project Update**

A public workshop was held at Southlake Mall in February and gave opportunity for people to give their opinion on trail options, bike and ped amenities, US 30 crossing options, gateways and streetscapes by placing dots on display boards. The boards were also displayed in NIRPC's lobby on meeting days to allow meeting attendees to vote as well. A public meeting will be held with business owners and alternatives will be determined for the final plan. The project should be closing by June 30<sup>th</sup>.

**Announcements**

**a. Next Meeting: June 21, 2017**

The meeting adjourned at 11:32 a.m.