

LAND USE COMMITTEE MEETING
NIRPC Dune Room
October 3, 2019
Minutes

Members & visitors: George Topoll, George Malis, Michael Barry, Nick Bellar, Kristina Kuzma

NIRPC Staff: Eman Ibrahim, Gabrielle Biciunas, Meredith Stilwell, Kevin Polette

George Topoll called the meeting to order at 10:32 am with the Pledge of Allegiance.

On motion by Nick Bellar and second by Michael Barry, the minutes of the June 6, 2019 meeting were approved.

Living Streets Presentation

Gabrielle Biciunas presented on the Living Streets policy. NIRPC adopted the Complete Streets policy in 2010 and is now moving forward with the Living Streets policy due to the significant increase in green infrastructure planning over the last 10 years. The objective is to merge the Complete Streets and Green Streets policies into the Living Streets policy. To accomplish this objective, NIRPC will create a Living Streets workshop to review the draft document in detail. The first meeting is scheduled for November 13, 2019, at 1:30 p.m. in the Lake Michigan Room at NIRPC. The final draft document will be discussed at the topical committees before being presented to the TPC and Full Commission meetings.

Regional Planning

Eman Ibrahim updated the committee on the Sensible Tools Handbook Update. The 2007 Handbook was based on the Indiana planning and zoning law of 2003. The updated Handbook will be compatible with the 2017 edition of the planning and zoning book. The updated Handbook is comprised of two parts, planning and making decisions. The working group met in September and 4 focus areas have been determined: public health, green environment, economic equality and sustainable transportation.

Eman Ibrahim updated on E-Commerce in Northwest Indiana. NIRPC is investigating impacts of e-commerce to offer recommendations to municipalities on how best to anticipate the impact of e-commerce and how to mitigate the effects of the land use and transportation while taking advantage of the opportunities and benefits offered. With completely new trends and without much research, it is a struggle to get the data. Meetings are being held with the NWI Forum and the Lake County Economic Alliance to help determine where distribution centers and warehouses are located. A map has been completed for each community to show distribution center and warehouse locations. Meetings are being held with the communities to get more information for this project.

Eman Ibrahim updated the Committee on the Transit Oriented Development Project. The RDA is working to define the TDD area along all the South Shore stations and proposed West Lake corridor. NIRPC is completing a different analysis, looking at not only these station areas, but also bus corridors and would like to create a funding program at the end of the project analysis. Different MPO TOD programs are being looked at for ideas.

Communities Update

Nick Bellar noted that 109th is currently being worked on. A lot of right of way acquisition is being done currently. There will be a passing blister at Arizona and 109th and A passing blister was installed at Fayette at the Wyndance subdivision. Right of way acquisition at Grant Boulevard is also in the works.

Michael Barry stated a high-end development has been proposed for the old water park in Porter. There is currently not enough sewer capacity and solutions to the issue are being looked into and priced out. A trucking company has expressed a desire to move to Porter at an existing gas station and parking area located where I-94 and US20 meet, but is very much preliminary.

Kristina Kuzma reported that Lake County is revising its subdivision and zoning ordinances. A consultant has been hired. They are focusing on farmland preservation.

George Topoll reported that the Lake Michigan Coastal program accepted Union Township's preproposal for a grant to incorporate a comprehensive plan.

Eman Ibrahim reported that Jeff Speck has been hired to complete the downtown Hammond plan. A train stop is being proposed on the Westlake corridor and an EIS has already been completed. George Malis noted Hammond recently had the official opening of the hiking/biking bridge near Conkey.

The next meeting of the Land Use Committee will be on February 6, 2020 at 10:30 a.m.

Hearing no other business, George Topoll adjourned the meeting at 11:30 a.m.