



6100 Southport Road
Portage, Indiana 46368
(219) 763-6060
www.nirpc.org

Land Use Committee

Thursday, August 5, 2021, at 1:00 pm

Zoom Info:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/82322647817?pwd=V2VSdkl6QndtU0oydzRBRUYwem1BUT09>

Meeting ID: 823 2264 7817

Passcode: 117747

+1 312 626 6799

Agenda

- | | | |
|-----|---|----------------------|
| 1.0 | Call to Order by Chairman | <i>George Topoll</i> |
| 2.0 | Minutes of May 6, 2021 (pp. 1 - 2) | |
| | <i>ACTION REQUESTED: For Review</i> | |
| 3.0 | Sensible Tools Handbook Final Draft Report | <i>Eman Ibrahim</i> |
| 4.0 | TOD Funding Program Project Update | <i>Eman Ibrahim</i> |
| 5.0 | Communities Update | <i>Everyone</i> |
| 6.0 | The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, November 4, 2021, at 10:00 am | |
| 7.0 | Adjournment | |

Requests for alternate formats please contact NIRPC at (219) 763-6060 or nirpc@nirpc.org. Individuals with hearing impairments may contact us through the Indiana Relay 711 service.

For Interpreter Services please contact NIRPC at (219) 763-6060 or nirpc@nirpc.org 72 hours in advance of the scheduled meeting.

The Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission (NIRPC) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities based on race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, disability, marital status, familial status, parental status, sexual orientation, genetic information, political beliefs, reprisal, or because all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program.

LAND USE COMMITTEE MEETING
NIRPC Virtual Meeting
May 6, 2021
Minutes

This meeting was convened as an electronic meeting, pursuant to Governor Holcomb's extended Executive Order 21-03. All persons were meeting remotely on a Zoom platform that allowed for real time interaction and supported the public's ability to observe and record the proceedings. When the agenda item was provided for public comment, this was supported as well. A roll call was taken to motion and approve the agenda items.

George Topoll called the meeting to order at 10:02 a.m. with a roll call. In attendance were George Topoll (Union Township), Ashley Sharkey, David Wright (GPTC), Katie Vallis (IDNR), Bryan Blazak (St. John).

NIRPC staff present were Eman Ibrahim, Meredith Stilwell, Scott Weber, Candice Eklund, Kevin Polette, Joe Exl, Kathy Luther, Mitch Barloga, Lucas Ecklund-Baker, and Flor Baum.

On motion by David Wright and second by George Topoll, the LUC approved the minutes of the January 6, 2021, meeting.

Eman introduced the 2021 Sensible Tools Handbook update. The handbook includes five main themes: Resilient, Healthy, Sustainable, Equitable, and Smart.

Joe Exl presented on the Resilient section which discusses hazard mitigation, coastal hazard, and green infrastructure (stormwater). The multi-hazard mitigation plan identifies great risks for disasters and creating strategies to mitigate risks. Green Infrastructure focuses on natural ways of treating stormwater runoff. Design and modeling tools were provided through resource manuals that would best benefit the Midwest and its climate.

Joe Exl, Kathy Luther, Eman Ibrahim, and Mitch Barloga presented on the Healthy section which discussed the following:

- Air Quality - Under air quality, clean air is important to public health, economic development, and quality of place. Diesel emissions can be reduced by incentivizing private investment in lower emission construction equipment through procurement policies. Public investment in retrofitting, purchasing lower emission or alternative-fuel school and transit buses, sanitation, and maintenance equipment. The handbook also includes tools and checklists for energy efficient built environments.
- Water Quality and Healthy Sanitation - Onsite sewage disposal systems were discussed for the water quality and sanitation. Five key factors for a successful septic system include: accurate site soil information, proper design based on soil information, construction of accurately followed design plans, installation under favorable weather, and ongoing care and maintenance after installation.
- Green Cities - There are four key dimensions to determine if a community classifies as a green city. 1) The environment focuses on low emissions, green space, good water, and population. 2) Transportation focuses on percentage of commuters, bike scores, street design that promotes walkability, jobs accessible through public transit, and alternative fuel stations per capita. 3) Energy sources such as PV installations and electricity from renewable sources. 4) Lifestyle and Policy focuses on agriculture.
- Transportation Alternatives - Complete Streets accommodates all intended users such as pedestrians, cyclists, and vehicle commuters. An active transportation facility includes multi-use trails, cycle tracks, bike lanes, shared routes, sidewalks, and mid-block crossings.
- Aging population - Guidelines of safe routes for senior citizens was outlined. Streets should be as flat as possible. Bus stops near senior centers should provide shelters and benches. Curbs should be extended into cross walks. Drivers will have regulations to further protect senior citizens.
- School siting - Smart growth strategies include renovating existing schools and building new ones close to where the students and teachers lie. Also, the Walking School Bus Program is to promote more students to walk and bike to school.
- Safety & sense of security - Tools to create safe routes to school include engagement, equity, engineering, education and evaluation of program effectiveness.
- Transit - The eight principles of Transit Oriented Development (TOD) standards for designing better streets and better cities promote walking, cycling, street and path connection, transit, mix us, optimized density, compact commutes, and a shift in increased mobility by parking regulations and road use.

Joe and Eman presented on the Sustainable section of the Sensible Tools Handbook. He discussed urban forestry and Tree City USA. Wetland protection benefits was also discussed. Wetland regulations adopted by communities include special wetland protection ordinances, zoning regulations, and sanitary codes. community gardens, affordable housing, energy, and brownfields. Indiana farmland is at high risk because its conversion threat is higher than its policy response, relative to other states. Policy tools and recommendations to protect farmland and support agricultural viability were outlined. Farm Link programs connect land seekers with landowners who want their land to stay in agriculture. Tools to promote and support Urban Agriculture include updated zoning codes reducing agricultural restrictions. Recommended tools for affordable housing was discussed. Sustainable energy tools include tax incentives, public education, zoning & permit process updates, wind, and solar energy development processes. Brownfield redevelopment is another aspect in the Sustainable section. Eligible Indiana communities can apply for a Phase I environmental site assessment to be done on properties that may be brownfields. A brownfield determination may also be eligible for a tax waiver.

Mitch and Eman spoke on the Equitable section of the Sensible Tools Handbook. This section discusses Environmental Justice (EJ), Universal Design, Transportation Projects, and Park & Recreation. Seven universal principles of a Universal Design were presented and are as follows: Equitable use, flexibility in use, simple and intuitive use, perceptible information, tolerance for error, low physical effort, and size and space for approach of use. INDOT has recognized the need to integrate equitable transportation measures for transportation projects. Vision Zero is a goal to integrate preventive traffic deaths approach.

Scott Weber and Eman presented on the Smart section of the Sensible Tools Handbook discusses Internet of Things (IoT), Smart Mobility, Connected & Automated Vehicles, Micro Mobility, and Cell Towers. There is momentum in Indiana for Smart Mobility. The four elements include: commercial integration of autonomous and connected vehicle technology, ITS architecture and real-time data integration, user portal/mobile application, and live modeling traffic modeling and dynamic trip pricing.

For more questions and/or more information on the Sensible Tools Handbook update, contact Eman Ibrahim at eibrahim@nirpc.org.

Legislative Updates were announced. A copy was emailed to the LUC. Click [here](#) to view.

The next meeting of the Land Use Committee will be on August 5, 2021, at 10:00 a.m. at the NIRPC offices.

Hearing no other business, the meeting adjourned at 11:33 a.m.