

Smart City Planning Consortium Meeting
February 9, 2010
Minutes

Laura Carstens
City of Dubuque

Beth Bonz
City of Asbury

Bill Einwalter
City of Farley

Anna O'Shea
Dubuque County

James Bodner
Dubuque County

Michelle Schnier
ECIA Housing Director

Janet Berger
City of Epworth

Karen Snyder
City of Peosta

Eric Schmechel
Dubuque SWCD

David Harris
Housing Director
City of Dubuque

Randy Lansing
City of Cascade

Staff Present: Chandra Ravada, Jake Ironside, Dan Fox, Gail Kuhle

Call to Order

Anna O'Shea called the meeting to order at 10:07 a.m.

Comments on the IDED Smart Planning Contract

O'Shea presented the original and revised version of the Iowa CDBG Grantee Program Description & Budget, Attachment A for review. She stated that in the original version, under Performance Target, Item one stated, "All participation governing bodies have adopted the county plan and updated their comprehensive plan". The revised version was changed to state, "All participating governing bodies have adopted the regional plan and have committed in writing to update their comprehensive plan to reflect the goals and objectives of the regional plan". She also noted that item three, Watershed Management Authority established was changed to read Watershed Planning Authority established that can implement conservation practices and establish regulations that are advisory.

Discussion followed regarding whether the plan should be a county plan or a regional plan. Ravada stated that an issue with having a regional plan is that you would need a governing body responsible for making changes to the plan.

O'Shea stated if a regional plan was the objective, then the county could review the regional plan and update the plan anytime the county plan was updated.

Einwalter asked what and who would a regional plan encompass. O'Shea stated that a regional plan would cover all the cities and the county of Dubuque. She stated the county plan deals only with the unincorporated sections of the county whereas the city plan would include the city and a 2-mile radius of the county surrounding the cities. Therefore, a regional plan would include the City of Dubuque, the county and the municipality plans.

Discussion followed.

Bonz stated that her vision was for creating a plan that was agreed upon by all and incorporate that plan into each individual municipalities plan.

The consensus of the consortium was that there would be a regional plan.

Discussion followed regarding the change of the Watershed from an authority to an advisory.

The consensus of the consortium was that the Watershed should be changed from an authority position to an advisory position.

Discuss topics covered at the Smart Planning Workshop in Des Moines

O'Shea reported that she attended the Smart Planning Workshop in Des Moines and one of the biggest issues presented was that those who have received a smart planning grant "shall consider, shall apply," all of the ten Smart Planning principles and elements in the Plan. O'Shea referred to the Iowa Smart

Planning Principles/Comprehensive Plan Element Matrix stating that every square of the matrix must be addressed to meet the goals and objectives of the Plan. She indicated that some of the principles/elements could be condensed or combined as long as they mean the same thing. She stressed that the public participation is a critical part of the plan. There will need to be extensive public participation as well as documentation of the public participation for the regional plan and local plans.

Ravada suggested that the Consortium have one large public input meeting prior to the beginning of the planning process. The meeting would be held to explain to the public the planning process and to ask for public input in helping to establish goals and objectives for the region.

Discussion followed.

O'Shea continued with reviewing information she received at the Workshop training. She indicated the first step would be to prepare an analysis of the critical issues and trends. Then establish goals and objectives and put into the plan action steps on how you will meet those goals and objectives as well as who is responsible for meeting the goals and objectives. Ravada noted these steps would need to be followed for the regional plan, but the city and counties would not be required to follow the steps.

O'Shea reported that those looking for help in revitalizing their downtown area should contact, Jim Thompson at Main Street Iowa. She indicated that the organization is successful in revitalizing downtowns and add new energy to downtown areas.

Presentation on the Smart Planning process

Ravada referred to the Smart Plan Structure worksheet, indicating that Regional Plan will address all thirteen Smart Planning elements. Staff's goal is to address each element individually; each element will have a county and a city goal. Under the city goals, each city will identify the cities objectives. Under County goals, Dubuque County will list their objectives. When identifying projects they will be broken down in the same matter, but when analyzing the data it will be analyzed as a region.

Ravada indicated that the Plan must be completed within two years; therefore staff would like to address at least one element per month.

Discussion followed.

It was questioned whether the state has given any guidance on setting up the goals and objectives. O'Shea stated that the state has not given any direction for goals and objectives but notes that the thirteen smart city principles must be addressed.

Ravada reiterated that the goal of the Consortium was to gather information regarding population, development, annexation, employment and trends for the region by early summer. Have the first public input meeting which would explain the planning process to the public and have the Consortium address one or more Smart Planning element per month.

Technical Assistance for Sustainable Communities Building Blocks

Fox stated that he had received a letter from the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) offering Technical Assistance for Sustainable Communities Building Blocks. The assistance will be offered to 20 communities on eight different tools which will help in implementing sustainable communities' development. If selected, the EPA will conduct a one day visit to the community to gather data and evaluate the community, based on the tool the community applied for. Within one week the community would receive recommendations from the EPA. To apply, the community must send a letter of interest to the EPA, identifying one of the eight tools for which you are seeking assistance. The Consortium agreed to apply for Tool #4, Smart Growth Zoning Codes for Small Cities and Rural Areas. It was agreed that staff would draft a letter today and send it to all members for review, with the understanding that the members would review the letter for changes and be returned today so staff could forward the letter to the EPA.

Set up future meeting dates

Fox stated that he set a 2nd Wednesday of the month for the Consortium meetings. It was agreed that the 2nd Wednesday would work unless additional meetings were needed, then they would be scheduled as needed. Ravada stated that the March meeting would be to establish a vision.

Discussion followed regarding the first public input "Kick Off" meeting. It was suggested that the first public input meeting be held before the next Consortium meeting on Wednesday, March 9, 2011. Ravada indicated that he would work on scheduling the meeting and each city would be in charge of inviting their community to the Kick-Off meeting. O'Shea stated that she would do some press releases to the media regarding the meeting.

O'Shea suggested that the Consortium do a tour of the Region to see what each City is doing in their community.

O'Shea suggested that before the next meeting, each city review their Comprehensive Plans to see what the Cities have in their plan which addresses any of the Smart Principles/elements and bring copies of the Plans to the March 9th meeting.

Adjournment

The Smart Planning Consortium meeting adjourned at 11:20 a.m.