



Planning Standards Working Group Meeting
July 27, 2006, 3:00 PM
CATS/NIPC Offices, DuPage Conference Room
Sears Tower, 8th Floor, Chicago

MEETING SUMMARY

Present:

Rick Boehm, Oak Brook
Dorin Fera, Downers Grove
Rob Cole, Oak Park
Bob Dean, Naperville
Tam Kutzmark, DMMC
Beth McCluskey, NorthCentral COM
Nick Pappas, DuPage County

Gideon Berman, RTA
Bill Lenski, RTA
Gary Mitchell, Wilbur Smith Associates
Michelle Ryan, RTA
Nancy Seeger, Nancy Seeger Associates, Ltd.

- I. **Attendance:** Bill Lenski, substituting for PSWG Chair Dave Barber, made introductory remarks and welcomed Dorin Fera of Downers.
- II. **Summary of Previous Meeting:** Bill Lenski gave a brief overview of the second meeting on March 23rd and referred to the meeting summary, about which there were no comments.
- III. **Community Values Survey**
 - A. Response

Bill Lenski said that RTA received 23 responses to the *About Your Town* surveys that were distributed to 51 corridor communities, which is a 40% response rate. Tam Kutzmark noted that she will try to make follow-up calls in an effort to obtain more survey responses.

Before finalizing the survey, the RTA and consultants tested it in Downers Grove with Dave Barber.
 - B. Preliminary Results

A hand-out entitled *Themes from "About Your Town" Community Values Survey* was distributed. Bill Lenski called on Gary Mitchell to

point out some of the highlights as summarized in this hand-out. Other aspects of the survey and responses were then discussed:

- Bill Lenski noted that the surveys resulted in significant information about local values, adding that many communities give their downtowns high priority.
- Gary Mitchell noted that many respondents highlighted the importance of neighborhood services and local amenities. Most respondents described their communities as not attracting significant daytime workers or visitors and that most residents leave for employment and other activities elsewhere.
- Nick Pappas questioned if one community has an advantage over another, such as opportunities for transit-oriented development.
- Tam Kutzmark asked about the origin of Question #14 (regarding better linkages to regional destinations), which was not on the draft survey. Bill and Gary said this question had come out of a April 26 review session with Dave Barber. Tam suggested that perhaps the question should have been more open-ended as the response options were limited. Gary noted that no respondent provided other destinations under the "Other" option.
- Question #12 (regarding motivation to use transit services): It was pointed out that the impact of recent high gas prices was not reflected in the survey. This was acknowledged, and Gary also noted that very few respondents selected "more commuter parking near stations/stops" as a priority.
- The committee agreed that communities should still be encouraged to complete the surveys.

IV. Corridor Profile Themes and Data

Bill Lenski briefly discussed the upcoming Corridor Profile as the next important step toward development of corridor planning standards. A hand-out entitled *Potential Themes for Corridor Goals and Planning Standards* was also distributed. Gary Mitchell explained that this single page boils down the survey results into five key themes for potential use in goals/standards development (Growth, Diversity, Transition, Quality, Mobility). Bill noted that Census data is also being compiled for use in the Corridor Profile, which will now be completed before the individual community profiles. This is a change from the original anticipated sequence but is a necessary component for the corridor planning standards workshop.

V. August 18 Corridor Planning Standards Workshop

Bill Lenski explained that a Corridor Planning Standards Workshop is scheduled for Friday, August 18 from 9:00 am to 1:30 pm.

A. Purpose and Content

- This will be an opportunity for local governments to provide essential input for the drafting of corridor planning standards. The

target message is: *We want local officials to shape these standards.*

- The expected attendance is 30-40 individuals from the 51 corridor communities.
- The format will likely include large-group exercises and small roundtable discussions. Lunch will be served.
- Suggestions for a meeting location included the Westchester Village Hall, Oak Park Public Library, Graue Mill, College of DuPage, or Brookfield Zoo.
- The initial target invitees will include planning and community development directors. Suggestions for other potential invitees included members of chambers of commerce, local plan commission chairs, regional plan commission chairs, municipal engineering and public works directors (especially in communities with no planning staff), and the CMAP Citizen Advisory Committee. It was also suggested that target invitees be encouraged to bring several guests.

B. Working Group Assistance

- The PSWG discussed the possibility of changing the August 18th workshop to multiple small-group meetings in different geographic areas at a later date as a way to boost attendance and input. However, after further discussion the group agreed to keep the original plan given the corridor study timeline and other considerations.
- Rick Boehm advised that the workshop needs to be very carefully designed, be well facilitated and include examples of values and planning standards in words and pictures to ensure good input and results. It was also agreed that plain language should be used and “corridor planning standards” jargon avoided.
- Gary Mitchell said whether one overall workshop or multiple small workshops are held, the focus should be on the overall corridor versus more localized issues and discussion. The point is consensus on potential corridor-wide priorities—and are they consistent with each community’s own local priorities and values.
- Bob Dean added that any discussion of values should focus on how they relate to transportation otherwise it will just be a rehash of NIPC’s Common Ground process.
- Tam Kutzmark suggested and the PSWG agreed that corridor planning standards might best be expressed as “should” and “should not” statements regarding possible beneficial and adverse impacts of the major transportation options under consideration for the corridor (e.g., major transportation investments ... *should* support local and regional economic development objectives; *should not* harm valued ecological resources).
- The PSWG will be involved in considering the results of the surveys, workshop and all other data collection to help develop quantifiable measures for corridor planning standards.

- Dorin Fera will send Bill Lenski a copy of results from a recent Downers Grove vision process, which was completed by village leaders over many months.
- It was noted that the RTA Strategic Plan team is conducting meetings in the corridor, which could affect Cook-DuPage study efforts and needs to be coordinated.

VI. Next Meeting: The next PSWG meeting is scheduled for August 24 at 3:00 pm following the Technical Committee Meeting. The next Policy Committee meeting is scheduled for September 28.

V. Adjourn: The meeting adjourned at approximately 5:00 pm.

Meeting Summary prepared by Nancy Seeger Associates, Ltd.