



MEMORANDUM

TO: Wright County Northeast Quadrant Task Force

FROM: Mark Nolan

RE: Wright County Northeast Quadrant Land Use Plan
Task Force Meeting #2 Summary
SEH No. A-WRIGH0601.00

The following document summarizes the second Task Force meeting for the Wright County Northeast Quadrant Land Use Plan.

Date of Event: Monday April 3, 2006, 9:00am – 11:00am

Location: Wright County Government Center
Board Room

Introductions

- Mark Nolan kicked off the meeting with an introduction of the consultants present and asked each meeting attendee to introduce themselves (see above).
- Mr. Nolan discussed the purpose of the meeting, which was to discuss the time and location of future Task Force meetings as well as reviewing the results of the first public meeting held the week before.
- Mark asked attendees to make sure they signed in, and to provide e-mail addresses and phone numbers to update the Task Force list for future correspondence. Additionally, it was decided to post the Task Force contact information on the web site

Future Task Force Meetings

- It was determined to continue to hold Task Force meetings in the County Board Room and to keep this as the permanent location for consistency. Also, due to scheduling conflicts the July meeting will be moved to July 10th.

Review of First Public Meeting

- Mr. Nolan stated that approximately 130 people signed in for the March 28th public meeting, and actually over 170 attended. Preliminary results of the meeting (SWOT analysis – Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) were presented to the Task Force (see the public meeting summary for the final notes).

General Discussion

- Two mapping issues were raised. First, the Monticello Township land use map needs to be corrected to reflect the correct boundaries of the annexation area on the northern portion of Pelican Lake. Second, the Rockford Township land use map is mislabeled “Rockville” Township. These errors will be updated.
- SEH and Linberg Ekola are conducting key interviews with stakeholders and hope to have the majority of them completed by the May meeting.

- A general discussion and comment period was held where Task Force members were allowed to discuss issues relating to rural/agricultural policies and other related issues. The following is a brief summary of comments:
 - Farmers need larger equipment & larger parcels
 - Traffic vs. farming practices (slow tractors on roadways, etc.)
 - Preserving rural/agriculture is important, as it was in the 1988 plan, and still seems to be (according to the SWOT analysis and County Board)
 - What is the definition of “rural?” Can range from:
 - 40-acre lots with farming to
 - 2-acre lots
 - Farmland is expensive in the northeast quadrant - only horse farmers can afford to buy land and keep agricultural uses
 - To save farming, need assistance from Fed & State
 - Distinction between rural & agriculture
 - “Agriculture is on the way out in Rockford Township” as we know it -- parcels getting too small.
 - Does the goal change from agricultural preservation to “rural lifestyle” preservation?
 - Define “high density” – what is rural, what is urban:
 - # of units per acre
 - Clustered dev’t
 - Rural road edges (keep landscape rural)
 - Western half of St. Michael is 1:40 Ag (since merging with the Township in 1996)
 - Extend services
 - They stick to a plan, but have no annexation issues
 - Sherburne County as a comparison: not as successful as Wright County with controlling rural residential development (many 2-acre lots)
 - What about a different approach (“wild ball”)
 - Like St. Michael -- plan on transect, center to edge
 - Agriculture goes away -- let all development be 6 units per 40 acres (eastern part of County has been doing this already)
 - What about developing on land only city sewer/water
 - What about 2-acre lots
 - What is the plan horizon for this Land Use Plan? Currently: 2030
 - Watch for demands on infrastructure – we need to be efficient
 - Use tools like TDR (purchase land to preserve, transfer revenue to farmers)
 - Remember greenspace & woods preservation
 - 6 per 40 concept: must look at each piece of land (don’t do it on really prime soils)
 - People should be able to live and prosper with a wide variety of choices:
 - Freedom, liberty
 - Balance choice - one persons vs. another person’s

- Cities need to see into the future -- Monticello -- infrastructure is expensive
- How big do the cities want to be? When is enough, enough?
- Again, what about tools to set aside & preserve open space?
 - TDR
 - Ghost Platting
 - 20-30-year “permanent” growth area for NE Quadrant cities
- Planning on the edges of cities are important! Not random or “willy-nilly”
 - Come up with an agreement between cities & townships
- City of Rockford adapting comprehensive plan on April 13th -- has a future land use plan
- Rockford is growing -- cities don't want to see county's lifestyle disappear
 - Monticello has a limit of where it wants to grow (Rockford too? Deal w/Township?)
 - City benefits form adjacent rural lifestyle
- Tools/Partners: MN Land Trust, Land Conservancy
- Natural Resources standpoint (lakes, watersheds, scientific standpoint)