



MEMORANDUM

TO: Wright County Northeast Quadrant Task Force

FROM: Danyelle Payne

DATE: September 11, 2006

RE: Wright County Northeast Quadrant Land Use Plan
Task Force Meeting #7 Summary
SEH No. A-WRIGH0601.00

The following document summarizes the seventh Task Force meeting for the Wright County Northeast Quadrant Land Use Plan; it is not meant to be a complete record of discussions which took place, but rather a summary of the various topics and issues raised and discussed.

Date of Event: Monday September 11, 2006, 9:00am – 11:45am

Location: Wright County Government Center

Attendees:

Donald Schmidt (Task Force member)
Ken Felger (Task Force member)
Greg Eckblad (Task Force member)
Gordon Weber (Task Force member)
Tom Salkowski (Task Force member)
Shannon Bye (Task Force member)
Judy Weldele (Task Force member)
Nancy Carswell (Task Force member)
Jeff O'Neill
Patricia Waletick
Colleen Allen
Luke Johnson

Stacy Arp
Bill Warner
Kimberly Holien
Tom Perrault
Steve Gritman
Mo Rininger
Joanne Hanley
Scott Deckert
Dan Jochum, SEH
Danyelle Payne, SEH
Lindberg Ekola, Ekola & Associates

Introductions

- Dan Jochum kicked off the meeting with an introduction of the consultants present and asked each meeting attendee to introduce themselves (see above). He informed the group of his new status as project manager.
- Jochum discussed the purpose of the meeting, which was to discuss the draft future land use plan map. Jochum proposed that he and Tom Salkowski meet with city representatives “one-on-one” to inform them of the importance of this project and the importance of determining firm city boundaries for the duration of the project’s planning horizon.
- Jochum stated that the project is slightly behind schedule and that the schedule would be revised and distributed.

Finalize Future Land Use Map

- The new land use designations Resource Land and Aggregate Resources were introduced to the Task Force. Potential definitions were discussed but not finalized.
 - Q. definitions, density, (1 unit per 40 acres would be considered low density)
 - A. holds land at a low density to “protect area”.

 - Q. What about current land owners right to sell and make a profit?
 - A. Land speculation doesn’t guarantee a profit.
- The mapping of Hanover’s projected annexation area was not delineated on the display map and discussion was had over where the lines were and what it meant for the lands involved. A city of Hanover representative was not present in the discussion.
 - Q. What is reason for residential large lot development around Rockford?
 - A. It’s a carryover from 1988 plan.

Comment: Rockford and Hanover are annexing land and receiving requests from land owners who want to sell. There is interest in changing 1 per 5 limit to 1 per 2.5. There is also interest in Transfer of Development Rights.

- The concern of townships losing tax base and being held “hostage” while cities annexed land for development was discussed. A joint planning board/subcommittee between cities and townships was proposed to potentially alleviate the ambiguity of future development plans. The current relationship between Monticello city and township were discussed as a potential model.

Comment: Townships need to be able to develop at higher densities in some places to make up for loss of annexed land (tax base).

Comment: The cost of redeveloping land after the plan has expired is expensive. Which use is best for area... rural, urban?

Comment: When Hanover and Rockford did most recent comprehensive plans it was understood that Wright County would be planning soon, too. Expectation of reacting to Wright County plan by cities. 1 per 2.5 acre development outside Rockford and Hanover would not support the intention of the cities comp plan.

Comment: Hanover City and Township were at an impasse before NE Quad planning started. Sewer and water infrastructure was the sticking point.

Q. Who is making decisions for how fast cities grow?

A. Until recently (last 20 years – all were small towns) there was a lack of long-term planning.

Q. What are the current land use definitions?

A. To be determined. Planning to finalize map first and then work through definitions.

- The implications of future road development/expansion as it relates to surrounding land uses was discussed. The question was raised as to whether future highways should be part of mapping.

Comment: A major collector road is planning to connect on north side of Buffalo. Concern about rural residential being planned there. Land development should be prohibited wherever those highways are planned.

Comment: Cities should designate a growth area for such a reason. Township is vulnerable target otherwise.

Q. Why is large lot development planned so near existing Rockford bounds?

A. Decisions on the areas surrounding the City of Rockford have not been made as of yet. The map is simply showing what the 1988 land use plan had the areas designated as.

Comment: Light green area west of Monticello may be problematic. There is a high water table and low density development with septic may not be feasible.

Q. Continuity within the plan is important. How to justify case to case?

A. Policy statements within the plan will help.

Comment: Each township has unique issues. Buffalo Township residents are now showing more interest in 1 per 20 densities instead of 1 per 40.

Q. Could the 1 per 20 densities work in the OAAs?

A. Perhaps. A preservation model should be the stance of the Task Force.

- The Transfer of Development Rights model was discussed as a possibility for the NE quadrant. The value of seriously exploring such an option at this time versus setting the stage for it in the plan policy was discussed. A concern for the size of the NE Quadrant in relation to the rest of Wright County was raised.

Comment: TDR would be a lot of work. We should decide now if it is something to pursue?

Comment: Soil and Water Conservation District is in favor of exploring a TDR option.

Comment: Utilize the cities OAAs if a TDR model is pursued?

Aggregate Mining Policies

- The task force discussed concerns about how areas of aggregate resources were mapped. The group decided to take a less restricted view of where the resources are before finalizing aggregate resources areas.

Comment: What about areas in Residential Large Lot areas that are also prime aggregate resource areas? Mine aggregate before development? What about rights of property

owners? What about future threat of tearing down developments to access valuable aggregate resources?

Comment: Locations in southern project area with active “select granular barrow pit” near Crawford Lake.

- Concern was raised regarding development in aggregate resource areas. Soil borings prior to development was suggested. The value of aggregate resource areas for their “open space” quality was also discussed.

Comment: Aggregate areas (between Buffalo and Monticello also acts as a sort of buffer between the two cities.

Comment: If prime ag land is preserved so should prime aggregate land.

- The Task Force stated a preference for reviewing and reacting to an aggregate mining policy drafted by the consultant team.

Next Steps

Dan Jochum identified the next steps in the project including the writing of the draft land use plan text, and summarizing key interviews. Jochum asked the Task Force members for the opportunity to meet more often as draft documents become ready for review. He also said the next Task Force Meeting would be on October 2nd at the Wright County Government Center.