

**Racine County Multi-Jurisdictional Comprehensive Plan Housing Work Group  
MEETING MINUTES**

**DATE:** April 30, 2008

**TIME:** 7:30 a.m.

**PLACE:** Racine County Ives Grove Auditorium  
14200 Washington Ave, Sturtevant, WI

**Attendance:**

Geoffrey Greiveldinger, Racine County  
Mike Lyman, Mike Lyman Home Services  
Joe Heck, Racine City Development  
Rebecca Ewald, Village of Waterford, MJAC  
Viki View-Peterson, Town of Burlington, MJAC  
Gai Lorenzen, Legal Action of Wisconsin and Homeless Assistance Coalition  
Karen Olufs, Society's Assets Inc.  
Jim Celano, Town of Dover, MJAC  
Julie Anderson, Racine County Planning & Development  
Dave Schilling, SEWRPC  
Tom Moes, SEWRPC  
Kristen Lie, Racine County UW-Extension

**Overview of Draft Chapter XI, "Housing Element":** Tom Moes of the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (SEWRPC) stated that the purpose of the third housing work group meeting was to conduct a page-by-page review of the draft element, and then a more thorough discussion of issues, objectives, and policies will be conducted at the fourth meeting, after all the work group members had more opportunity to consider the draft. Mr. Moes provided an overview of the draft element, and noted that its structure was similar to the other elements in the Racine County comprehensive plan, as well as other comprehensive plans across the Region. The element is divided into five sections: housing trends and projections; housing issues and needs; housing-related zoning provisions; housing goals, objectives, and policies; and housing programs and organizations.

Tom Moes briefly reviewed the housing trends and projections information, which included existing housing characteristics and population and household trends. Data presented in this section was collected primarily from the Census 2000 and the American Community Survey 2006.

Jim Celano asked whether SEWRPC had determined reasons why the median value of owner-occupied housing was increasing so rapidly (51 percent between 2000 and 2006), and whether SEWRPC had taken into account how many of these housing units were second, seasonal homes. Dave Schilling commented that the seasonal homes were more of a factor in the western part of Racine County around the inland lakes, and that from the mid-1980s through 2000, many seasonal homes were converted to year-round homes.

Jim Celano asked whether the household projections were countywide, and whether they could be divided into eastern and western Racine County. Dave Schilling responded that the projections were based on local government projections, which were one component of the local government meetings currently being conducted. When these meetings are completed, then it will be possible to determine where additional households are expected to develop.

Tom Moes then reviewed some of the information from the housing issues and needs, though he commented that this section would be discussed in more detail after work group members had adequate time to review the middle sections of the chapter.

Karen Olufs requested that an accessibility element be added to the issue of "Housing Needs of an Aging Population." Jim Celano asked whether she meant in-home accessibility or transportation accessibility. Although Ms. Olufs noted

that both were important, she clarified that her intent was for housing to be structured for accessibility, with features such as zero-step entrances and wide passage doors.

Tom Moes then reviewed information from the last section of the element related to countywide housing programs and organizations that address the housing needs in Racine County. He noted that the section was intended to reflect what is available in the County, not to evaluate the programs or organizations.

Jim Celano questioned the placement of TLC in the transitional housing programs section; he stated that he had previously been a board member, and knew that the organization provided emergency shelter. Gai Lorenzen commented that TLC reports to the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) as a transitional housing program, but that it could provide both emergency and transitional shelter. Viki View-Peterson also stated that TLC had presented itself to the Burlington Town Board as a transitional housing program. It was decided that SEWRPC would determine the full extent of TLC's programs and revise the draft as necessary. In addition, SEWRPC and Gai Lorenzen will try to determine the capacity/number of beds/number of units for the emergency shelters. Furthermore, Gai Lorenzen noted that the Center for Veterans Issues (CVI) is located in the Village of Union Grove and be included in that section. [SEWRPC determined that CVI is located in the Town of Dover, but will not change it in the chapter.]

Tom Moes then asked whether the work group members thought that readers who were unfamiliar with housing programs would easily comprehend some of the more governmental/technical language of this section; this was especially an issue with the descriptions of the Housing Authority of Racine County (HARC) and Society's Assets, Inc. Members offered some suggestions for clarification, including additional explanations of "shelter rent," "minimum income," and "representative payee."

Tom Moes then asked the group about the status of the Southeastern Wisconsin Housing Corporation, which had been reported as being on the verge of closing down. Viki View-Peterson noted that a few months ago, the organization's director, Arturo Gonzales, had stated that the SE WI Housing Corp were being asked to divest itself of all the properties they currently owned, but she also commented that the organization had been in precarious situations before and had always managed to continue. Kristen Lie noted that she had spoken with the organization two weeks ago, and they were still uncertain about their future. Dave Schilling stated that the SE WI Housing Corp would remain in the chapter, unless the organization closed prior to adoption of the comprehensive plan.

Gai Lorenzen suggested breaking down the supportive services section by programs that provide home ownership assistance and programs that provide other types of housing assistance. Jim Celano noted that several organizations provide a range of services, which would make such categorizing difficult. Geoff Greiveldinger commented that there were a couple programs listed that were not directly related to housing issues, including 211 Racine and SAFE Start. Ms. Lorenzen noted that SAFE Start was included since it provides services to homeless survivors of domestic violence. Joe Heck informed the group that OIC (Opportunities Industrialization Center) no longer offered the YouthBuild program, as its three-year grant had finished and had not been renewed. It was decided that 211 Racine and OIC would be removed from the draft, and that Tom Moes would revise the introductory paragraph to the supportive sections to indicate that these organizations are part of a collaborative effort to help maintain and secure affordable permanent housing.

Tom Moes asked the work group about subsidized housing in Racine County, and how subsidized housing should be presented in the element. Jim Celano noted that some local communities in Racine County did not offer subsidized housing, and he asked whether SEWRPC intended to recommend that such housing be available in all communities, considering that some are bedroom communities which require lengthy commutes for job opportunities. Dave Schilling responded that, in Racine County, it was expected that most subsidized housing would be located in the Cities of Racine and Burlington. He further commented that when recommending locations for subsidized housing, SEWRPC considered infrastructure, zoning regulations, employment opportunities and transportation, and the housing needs of the aging and young adult populations. Mr. Schilling also noted that of Racine County's 18 communities, only the Village of Waterford and the Town of Rochester have specified targeted housing mixes; the other communities opted to let the market drive what housing types are constructed. It was decided that Tom Moes would further discuss subsidized housing with Joe Heck, Gai Lorenzen, Linda Ring Weber, and Geoff Greiveldinger prior to completing this section of the draft.

Tom Moes stated that more data would be collected regarding the location of WHEDA home subsidies in Racine County: 3,500 subsidies are provided in the County, and Section-8 housing vouchers account for approximately 1,400 of those subsidies. However, Section-8 vouchers are not location-specific, so information on where they are applied may be difficult to ascertain. Dave Schilling also asked whether the USDA Rural Housing and Rental programs/loans were utilized in western Racine County. Gai Lorenzen replied that there was some assistance available in Burlington, administered by USDA Rural Development.

Tom Moes then returned to the middle sections of the element, which focus on housing definitions, housing needs and issues, zoning, and housing-related goals, objectives, and policies. In regards to the definition of four housing terms, the MBA suggested through email that “workforce housing” be revised to distinguish it more from the affordable housing two-part definition. In regards to Table XI-2, Jim Celano noted that, under HUD definitions of affordable housing, there was a \$6,000 gap between the County’s median income and its median housing cost. Tom Moes replied that the definition of “affordable” is a continuum, rather than a fixed number, and that the table was intended to show a range of affordability. The work group then discussed the issue of housing affordability, and the HUD definition of “30 percent of adjusted income.” Jim Celano, Viki View-Peterson, Joe Heck, and Geoff Greiveldinger all stated that the rapidly rising costs of transportation and food would impact how much families could afford to spend on housing. SEWRPC will add this consideration to the conclusions of the housing cost burden issue.

Under the issue of homeless persons, Gai Lorenzen requested that SEWRPC clarify that the number of homeless persons recorded in the “Racine Continuum of Care – Point in Time Survey” indicated only a one-day count of persons—that is, it represents a single point in time, and does not reflect year-round averages. She stated that she could obtain that information, if SEWRPC wished to include it. She also noted that the survey was a national effort, and though results were completed in January 2008, the count was for 2007. She will double check if there are any discrepancy in dates over the three-year time survey time period.

Dave Schilling briefly reviewed the zoning regulations section, which looks at regulations affecting housing development and housing costs in Racine County. These include, but are not limited to, requirements for lot size or density, housing square footage, and setbacks. The chapter also outlines the residential zoning districts in city and village zoning ordinances, residential zoning districts in the Racine County General Zoning Ordinance, and Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND) ordinances. Mr. Schilling noted that communities may adopt objectives or policies specifying a desirable mix of housing types.

Mr. Schilling transitioned to discussing the comprehensive plan goals, objectives, and policies section. The County comprehensive plan goals pertaining to housing are outlined in Chapter VIII, “Issues and Opportunities Element.” He briefly reviewed housing objectives and policies and stated that the primary purpose of the work group was to develop housing objectives and policies that would encourage sustainable, quality residential development to meet the needs of all people in Racine County (residents of all ages, income levels, and abilities) through the year 2035. He also pointed out that currently only the Village of Waterford and the Town of Rochester have a desirable mix of housing policies. Jim Celano asked whether SEWRPC was encouraging communities to specify a mix of housing, to which Dave Schilling replied that SEWRPC was not endorsing the idea of targeting a specific mix, particularly not to townships which might not be able to provide many units of affordable housing and/or multi-family housing. Julie Anderson added that water supply was a major issue for residential development in western Racine County, where the depletion of groundwater resources might result in an inability to support medium- or high-density development.

Mr. Celano also asked what the comprehensive planning team expected of the housing work group, whether group members were supposed to report on the current situation in the County or to envision what the communities should be in the future. As noted above, Dave Schilling again stated the work group was formed to address a range of housing issues, objectives, and policies through the year 2035. Tom Moes also stated that the Housing Element is based both on the Smart Growth Statute and grant requirements, as well as builds on the vision statement and issues and opportunities identified in Chapter VIII.

**Next Meeting Date:** Tom Moes noted that several work group members had indicated that May 14, 2008 was a preferable date for the fourth meeting. It was agreed that the group would meet on May 14 to complete revisions of the draft element objectives and policies.

**Action Items:** Tom Moes said that work group members not present at this meeting would submit comments and/or suggested revisions to the draft. Mr. Moes will incorporate comments made at the meeting and submitted comments through email in the “Track Changes” program of Microsoft Word. Mr. Moes will also follow up with work group members to: 1) Research reasons why the median value of owner-occupied housing has increased so rapidly between 2000 and 2006. New language will be added as a footnote to the fourth bullet point under “Housing Characteristics” to address these reasons. 2) Incorporate suggested changes from Karen Olufs on various sections of the draft. 3) Work with Gai Lorenzen to address work group member requests to revise specific sections of the countywide programs and organizations. 4) Revise the section on subsidized housing and include a table that indicates the total number of subsidized buildings units by community. This section should also address where LIHTC were used to rehabilitate and/or convert buildings into a mix of market-rate/low-income housing units and senior housing apartments.

Tom Moes and Dave Schilling requested that the work group members focus specifically on the housing goals, objectives, and policies section to ensure that all issues discussed by the group were addressed.

Minutes submitted by Kristen Lie

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