

Environmental Management Policy Committee

Lake Michigan Room

<https://www.youtube.com/live/JOxXk72Cpq4?si=G4I4HrGeSTvouUtl>

February 1, 2024

Minutes

George Topoll called the meeting to order at 9:01 a.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance.

In attendance were George Topoll (Union Township), Reggie Korthals (MS4), Susan MiHalo (Nature Conservancy) Bonnie Hawksworth (Dune Acres), Kay Nelson (Forum), Kathy Sipple, Nancy Moldenhauer, Jenny Dimitroff, Tara Dolfine, and Ryan Lisek (DCI).

NIRPC staff present were Kathy Luther, Jennifer Birchfield, Tom Vander Woude, Kevin Polette, and Flor Baum.

The meeting minutes of November 2, 2023, were approved on motion by Tim Kingsland and second by Susan MiHalo.

Public Comments

No public comments were submitted.

Sensible Tools Handbook+

Kathy Luther spoke on Sensible Tools Handbook+ (STH+). NIRPC previously adopted the STH+ in 2007, which covered the basic requirements of applying sensible growth principles in Indiana on planning, zoning, and subdivision of land for cities, towns, and counties based upon Indiana planning and zoning law. The 2023 Sensible Tools Handbook+ supplements the broad suite of planning tools and best practices available to address new opportunities and challenges.

The five sections of the STH+ are as follows:

- **Resilient:** Mitigation efforts undertaken before a natural disaster to reduce/eliminate risks from hazards. Hazard Mitigation tools (HMT) will update land use codes, zoning, development standards, incentive programs, and plans /policies to better prepare for stresses from natural disasters. HMT will assist in developing procedures that allow for action in an unexpected event. Green Infrastructure for s Stormwater runoff is a major contributor to water pollution in urban areas. Design and modeling tools were presented.
- **Healthy:** Integrates health considerations into cities' urban planning processes, programs, and projects with a focus on air and water quality, sanitation, green cities, transportation alternatives and transit, the aging population, school siting, and safety.
- **Sustainable:** Directs local governments to become low-carbon, resilient, and livable communities. The Sustainable element includes urban forestry, wetland protection, farmland preservation, water conservation, urban agriculture, affordable housing, energy, brownfields, and redevelopment.
- **Equitable:** This policy prioritizes and protects low-income and minority communities by ensuring equitable growth. The Equitable element includes environmental justice, equitable transit, universal design, and parks and recreation. Lower-income people near rapid transit will be displaced without a specific equity framework.
- **Smart:** Urges communities to shift to smart cities. Smart cities bring together infrastructure and technology to improve citizens' quality of life and enhance their interactions with the urban environment. The Smart elements include the Internet of Things (IoT), smart mobility, connected & automated vehicles, micro-mobility, and smart communication.

The Commission approved the STH+ on December 7, 2023, as it will continue to support cities, towns, and counties in making community-shaping decisions in the future. An STH+ training program is slated to roll out by the end of 2024.

Climate Action Plan Updates

Kathy Luther presented the Climate Action Planning (CAP) updates. Indiana is identifying potential projects for inclusion in IDEM's CPRG implementation application. This project intake proposal requests any projects a municipality, local government, non-profit organizations, or private sector companies that IDEM may partner with to receive funding under the CPRG Ph II Implementation Grants General Competition program (CRPG). IDEM used Implementation Grant Evaluation Criteria to develop a project intake proposal identifying the measures eligible for immediate implementation projects. IDEM's draft measures were discussed, which include sectors in transportation, waste & materials management, residential & commercial buildings, industry, electric generation, and agriculture/natural & working lands.

Announcements

Announcements were made.

Reports from Planning Partners

For more information on events and programs with Drive Clean Indiana, please visit <https://drivecleanindiana.org/>.

The next EMPC meeting is slated for May 2, 2024, at 9:00 a.m. in the NIRPC offices.

Hearing no further business, the meeting adjourned at 10:31 a.m.