

**MINUTES**  
**of the Madison Area Transportation Planning Board (MPO) –**  
**Capital Area Regional Planning Commission Workgroup**

**November 7, 2017**

**City-County Building, Conference Room 103A**  
**210 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd., Madison WI**

**7:00 p.m.**

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Committee Members Present: Larry Palm, Al Matano, Bruce Stravinski, Ed Minihan, Lauren Cnare  
Committee Members Absent: Ken Golden  
Staff Present: Bill Schaefer, Steve Steinhoff  
Others Present: Jon Becker

**1. Roll Call**

Palm called the meeting to order at 7:02 pm. Quorum was established.

**2. Public Comment**

No members of the public wanted to speak.

**3. Purpose of the Workgroup**

Schaefer explained that the need for the workgroup was identified at a joint meeting of the MPO and CARPC in March of this year. Subsequently, each organization passed resolutions establishing the workgroup. He briefly reviewed the history of the separation of the MPO from the former RPC, the Dane County Regional Planning Commission.

Palm identified a purpose being to develop short-, mid- and long-term goals for greater inter-agency integration.

Becker mentioned Wisconsin statute section 59.58 regarding transportation powers of counties, including establishment of a transit commission, and its potential relevance to the workgroup.

**4. Recap of Existing Collaboration Between the Two Agencies**

Schaefer and Steinhoff reviewed current collaborative activities between the agencies, including data coordination and review of applications for revising Urban Service Area boundaries. There was discussion about coordinating development of agency work programs and solicitation of grant funds.

**5. Open Discussion Regarding Increased Interagency Integration Opportunities and Challenges**

Discussion included the following points:

- Board members should take responsibility at board and commission level, such as standard updates at board/commission meetings on activities of the other agency. However, much of the integration activity will happen at staff level.
- Meeting notices can be copied to members of the board of the other agency.
- We can learn from other RPCs in Wisconsin and should obtain information on their board and staff structures.
- Colocation of staff could facilitate greater integration of activities and produce efficiencies in terms of space, support staff, and equipment. Schaefer said the MPO lease expires at the end of 2018 with three additional optional years to renew.
- Joint board committees might be created.
- There are many challenges to merging the two agencies, including different funding sources, jurisdictional differences, and politics. The MPO would have to be re-designated with the process involving communities making up 75% of the planning area population having to pass resolutions authorizing the new structure. Schaefer said that the city of Madison currently provides most of the local share funding for the MPO's budget, but four communities voluntarily contribute based on their proportionate share of the population.
- In discussing a potential longer term merger, we must "think big" in terms of an ideal structure.
- A stronger regional planning entity leads to better regional planning. It was noted the former DCRPC did airport and solid waste planning as well as land use and transportation planning.

- Political obstacles to stronger regional planning: At County level, the comprehensive plan update was put on hold because of Towns opting out of county zoning, and the potential for additional state legislation aimed at the County.
- There are two regions: the urban core and outlying area, although politics is shifting as suburbs become more integrated into urban core and become partners.
- Who are our “clients”? What is the level of support among outlying areas for regional planning? It varies by jurisdiction.
- We should communicate that these integration conversations are happening.
- If merged, staff of one agency can assist the other when that agency has challenges. A past example was given of the MPO producing a wetlands study when DCRPC was dissolved.
- Work program integration is a good idea. What about joint strategic planning?
- We should solicit ideas from other boards and the public.
- Ideas for better integration should be solicited in the short term from Executive Committees of each agency.
- Short-term decisions regarding integration affect (increase or decrease feasibility) potential merger.
- People don’t know enough about either organization. People who will weigh in are special interests.
- Consider the recently established county climate council and climate change because transportation is second biggest contributor of greenhouse gas emissions.

Round table summary:

- Stravinski: We are on a learning curve. Windsor recently transitioned from Town to Village. It will be interesting to hear conversations from a town/small village standpoint. There may be the perception of Madison wanting to control everything.
- Minihan: The Town of Dunn doesn’t have problems with the City of Madison; their planners have been cooperative. We should learn about other models in state.
- Cnare: Look at each other’s’ plans to see how they are the same, how different.
- Schaefer: Concern about committing significant resources before knowing whether merger is viable, especially given lack of support of RPC from the County Executive.
- Steinhoff: There is support from County Board. Integration should be addressed in stair step manner: one leading to another.
- Matano: keep immediate goals small. Don’t initially discuss merger. We are just having a “first date, let’s not talk of marriage”. Focus on what is already happening (work group). Conduct marketing with regional cooperation the theme.
- Palm: Merger is 10-year horizon that will be carried out with different cast of characters. Ground work leads towards, and opens up possibilities towards eventual merger. People “date with expectation of marriage down the line”. We need to make a decision that merger is the light at the end of the tunnel. Spend time looking at what the ideal model might be, to get people to aspire to this. Give people a vision of what it might look like.

Additional Discussion:

- A Greater Madison Vision will help build support for good regional planning and joint planning.
- Bring in other major bodies – city and county planning departments – at some point.

## 6. Workgroup Meeting Schedule and Timeline

Next steps: articulate ideas, ballpark timelines, look at other RPCs, identify how to engage other entities and individuals (develop lists), board members reach out, start conversation with County Planning.

Work group has six-month timeline. Next meeting scheduled for Tuesday, January 23, 7pm, likely in City-County building.

## 7. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:45 p.m.