

METROPOLITAN COUNCIL
390 North Robert Street, St. Paul, Minnesota 55101

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Wednesday, November 7, 2012

4:15PM

Members Present: Chair Susan Haigh, Gary Cunningham, Jennifer Munt, Jon Commers, Steven Chávez, Roxanne Smith, Lona Schreiber, Steve Elkins, Sandra Rummel, Rich Kramer, Harry Melander, Gary Van Eyll, James Brimeyer, Edward Reynoso, Wendy Wulff, John Đoàn

Members Absent: Adam Duininck

CALL TO ORDER

A quorum being present, Chair Haigh called the Committee of the Whole to order at 4:14 PM on Wednesday, November 7, 2012.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

It was moved by Rummel, seconded by Chávez to approve the agenda.

Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

It was moved by Chávez, seconded by Kramer to approve the minutes of the October 31, 2012 meeting of the Committee of the Whole.

Fair Housing and Equity Assessment

Overview of the Metropolitan Council's Fair Housing Equity Assessment work—

Beth Reetz, Director of Housing and Livable Communities

The Fair Housing Equity Assessment is a tool or process to complete a regional scale identification and assessment of racial and ethnic segregation and integration in the region by asking questions such as Is the region segregated? Are areas integrated or in the process of integrating? Are certain racial or ethnic minorities more segregated than others? We are also looking at racially concentrated areas of poverty within the region, what percent of the population of the region resides in those areas of concentrated race and poverty, are particular racial or ethnic minorities acutely concentrated in those areas? We are also looking at the identification and assessment of disparity in access to opportunity. Where are the region's areas of high opportunity? Are there disparities of neighborhood opportunity for people of color? How do these inequities or lack thereof align with public investment? We are also looking at the identification and assessment of public investment triggers that impact access to opportunity. What major public investments are slated for the region (transportation or economic development)? Will these investments affect communities of race and poverty and what kind of opportunities can these investments offer to all? There is also an assessment of the current fair housing process.

Determining what areas of high opportunity look like is a key part of this process. Fair Housing and Equity Assessment understands opportunities in our region by analyzing data by many different measures. We are working to engage and hear from people who live in these areas of concentrated race and poverty, to learn what areas of high opportunity looks like to them. One of the key parts of the Assessment is ensuring the findings are considered during the preparation and implementation of Thrive MSP 2040.

Integration of the Fair Housing Equity Assessment and Thrive MSP 2040—Libby Starling, Thrive MSP 2040 Project Manager

Libby identified some of the opportunities for integration between the work of the FHEA and Thrive MSP 2040. Staff is being more transparent to the Council members about the work that we have been doing behind the scenes to ensure that these are not separate processes, but to be very clear about the integration and dependencies we are seeing between these two efforts.

The Council has already had discussions about the principles that will guide the actions in Thrive MSP 2040 and one of those principles is equity. This is one point of leverage and integration between FHEA and Thrive MSP 2040. The next piece, looking ahead, is in the conversation about indicators. A key part of the FHEA work that is currently going on is a discussion about what indicators would be used to understand the geography of opportunity, where the areas of high opportunity within our region are, and where are the areas that could benefit from increased access to opportunity within our region. Next month we will have an integrated COW meeting where we will talk about indicators used in the FHEA work and the indicators for Thrive MSP 2040. During the next few months the Thrive process will be looking at alternative policy scenarios.

Fair Housing Equity Assessment: The Federal Perspective—Salin Geevarghese, Senior Advisor, Office of Sustainable Housing and Communities, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

The Partnership for Sustainable Communities is a partnership between the EPA, HUD, and DOT; SCI is the Sustainable Communities Initiative.

Only 11% of those who applied actually got an award (regional planning grant), including the Metropolitan Council. Geevarghese stated that the Council is on the cutting edge of those who are doing this work. Completing the FHEA is a grant deliverable; all recipients of regional planning grants have to complete it. The concept is reflective of newer recognitions of HUD: a number of issues need to be examined at the regional scale, and a refined set of thinking about fair housing is starting to inform policy. HUD decided to give people a very simple frame about what's involved in completing the FHEA. The first bullet is data analysis, which is often where people stop. They analyze the data and may create some understanding around the data, but then they stop. The second bullet is deliberation and engagement, and the third is decision making.

HUD provides a great deal of support and capacity building devices. Thinking of HUD as a partner in the FHEA is important. It is imperative to focus on knowing, engaging, and doing during this unique opportunity. The FHEA, by design, was to get people to really think about the interconnection between people and place. It is about expanding the table and thinking about who is willing to work with us. We must think about what we want to accomplish and working together as a region to collectively address issues.

CM Smith asked if we had a data map. Geevarghese stated that yes, we have been provided with a map, but the Met Council also has a great deal of technology and will identify our region's indicators. CM Rummel asked whether the goal is to bring the opportunity to the people, or move the people to the opportunity. Geevarghese answered that it's both, but will be varied for different regions.

The Met Council, as a lead applicant, will work with other grantees to accomplish goals, as some partners may have purview where others do not.

Chair Haigh asked Geevarghese for his thoughts on what an implementation plan would look like. He stated that many grantees are incorporating what they are learning in the FHEA process into their equivalent of Thrive MSP 2040, and while he is excited to work with the Council, he is not exactly sure what an implementation plan would look like. He recommended mitigating risk with our partners.

THRIVE MSP 2040

Thrive MSP 2040: Status Report—Libby Starling, Thrive MSP 2040 Project Manager
Libby gave an update of the Council's progress on Thrive. The working principles were preliminarily agreed to on Sept. 19, the analysis of the regional development framework was presented and discussed on Oct. 17, and the outreach and engagement was presented and discussed on Oct. 31. The group's plan for this meeting was to begin discussing working goals and revisit the discussion on Nov. 21. Investment options will be discussed on Nov. 21 and Dec. 5 and high-level direction on scenarios will also be discussed on Dec. 5. Indicators and metrics will be discussed on Dec. 19, and discussions on baseline and alternative policy scenarios will continue through winter 2013.

The Council expressed their concern for possibly "wearing out their welcome" with engagement and outreach efforts, but Libby assured them that staff shares their concerns and is working out a plan.

Discussion of Goals for Thrive MSP 2040, led by the Thrive Working Group—

Gary Van Eyll, Chair

CM Van Eyll stated that CM Wulff had asked why the goals weren't distributed earlier in the week for CMs to ruminate on. CM Van Eyll stated that the Thrive Working Group is meeting often and likes to provide the Council members with the most up to date information. CM Đoàn suggested preservation of our current infrastructure as a goal before bringing on things we cannot fund. Chair Haigh stated that we should be using language similar to what our peer organizations are using in their frameworks. CM Chávez suggested the goals be written in outcome language instead of "what we are going to do."

OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business.

Business completed, the meeting adjourned at 5:50PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Emily Getty
Recording Secretary