

Date: December 7, 2007

From: WEC Land Use and Transportation Committee

To: WEC

**Re: Need for a Community Design *Process* Consultant**

**Need**

At a meeting on December 5, the WEC Land Use and Transportation Committee discussed how to carry out the work plan adopted by the WEC on November 20:

1. Background (January 2008).
2. "Design Storming" (February 2008).
3. Focused Analysis and Evaluation (March to May 2008).
4. Design Refinement (June to July 2008).

The committee noted that expertise beyond that provided by our facilitators is needed to successfully complete these steps. Broadly speaking, the committee sees a need for a consultant with expertise in land use and transportation planning and design, what the committee terms a Community Design *Process* Consultant.

The committee acknowledged that expertise within the WEC itself could be drawn on. But the committee sees the need for someone *outside* the WEC with expertise in land use and transportation planning and design to provide impartial guidance to the WEC and to help the WEC itself do the community design that is needed. The term "process" indicates that such a consultant will advise and guide the design work of the WEC, not actually do the design work, which would be a much bigger task.

The committee noted that our facilitators have indicated that they do not offer land use and transportation planning and design expertise, for example, expertise organizing a charrette. But the committee sees our facilitators as essential to the smooth functioning and success of the WEC. Thus the committee was led to the idea of a team of consultants with different skills working together.

**Suggestions**

Specifically, the committee recommends the following next steps for hiring a Community Design *Process* Consultant to join the team already consisting of our facilitators:

1. The Coordinating Committee should review these suggestions and consider recommending that the WEC form a Hiring Committee.
2. The Hiring Committee should identify promising candidates who meet the desired qualifications, interview the strongest candidates, and recommend a preferred candidate.
3. The WEC should approve hiring a Community Design *Process* Consultant.
4. Elaine Hallmark should administer a contract with the Community Design *Process* Consultant.

# **Conceptual Qualifications for a Community Design Process Consultant for the WEC**

## **Understanding and Commitment**

- Planning and design track record reflects an understanding that contemporary community design calls for investment in urban core areas, economic and racial integration, the prevention of placeless sprawl, preservation of farmland, accessible natural open space, and wildlife habitat, environmental restoration, and stewardship of our built heritage, and that these are interrelated opportunities that must be addressed urgently and with integrated solutions.
- An understanding of the cost/benefits of sustainable urbanism, such as the ability to address issues of climate change, energy consumption, water and resource conservation, critical species protection, traffic VMT and congestion, transit effectiveness and efficiency.
- Commitment to community-driven urban design, democratic planning processes, and the WEC operating Principles including consensus decision-making.

## **Vision and Communication**

- An ability to effectively engage a full range of community stake-holders including those unfamiliar with sustainable urbanist planning theory and practice.
- Demonstrated success as a minority voice within the broader spectrum of status-quo planning and development.
- The ability to build bridges with diverse stakeholders to help them understand the value of an integrated land use, transportation, and environmental planning approach that features comprehensiveness, smart growth, and sustainability, integrated with improved transportation modes, and smart infrastructure.

## **Experience**

- Demonstrated participation in sustainable urbanist projects such as transit-oriented development, mixed-use development, traditional neighborhood development, and form-based codes, which also incorporate high-performance buildings and infrastructure.
- -Demonstrated success in community design projects that preserve, restore and integrate significant natural habitat corridors or areas.
- Demonstrated success in community design process facilitation including consensus-building among diverse stakeholders. Demonstrated ethical commitment to process facilitation according to client community values, including formal consensus process.

## **Skills**

- Excellent public speaking, professional publication, and graphic design/communication capabilities.
- Willingness to work in diverse environments and communities; demonstrates abilities to support and incorporate individual and team initiatives.
- Technical expertise in geographic information systems, spatial analysis, and performance modeling including traffic, wildlife, etc.
- Accomplished in facilitating group process techniques including design-storming, community design charettes, geographic asset mapping, formal consensus decision-making.

## **Expertise**

- Professional expertise in one or more subtopics within sustainable urbanism - for example, sustainable development, street network design, urban infill, open space preservation, mixed-use housing development, zoning and policy, natural stormwater engineering.
- Master's degree in urban planning, urban design, or architecture, with academic exposure to the spectrum of urban planning and design theory, public administration, public policy, social sciences, and engineering.
- Professional practice in sustainable urban planning or community design, with appropriate professional accreditations.
- Community design process coordination.