



Comments from Conservation Design Panel Meeting and CMAP Staff Responses

February 4, 2009

Attendees

In person	Darin, Jack	Sierra Club
	Jaffe, Marty	University of Illinois at Chicago
	Beyer-Clow, Lenore	Openlands
	Rogner, John	USFWS (representing Chicago Wilderness)
	Kramer, Karla	US Fish and Wildlife Service
	Harmet, Pete	Illinois Department of Transportation
	Agasie, Kate	Metropolitan Mayors Caucus
	Van der Kloot, Jim	US Environmental Protection Agency
	Werner, Patty	Lake County Stormwater Management Commission
	Schuessler, Joe	Metropolitan Water Reclamation District
	Van Buren, Wallace	Illinois Association of Wastewater Agencies
	Anderson, Ken	Kane County Environmental Management
	Dooley, Martha	Village of Schaumburg
	Miller, Jason	US Fish and Wildlife Service
	Heltne, Paul	Center for Humans and Nature
	Peemoeller, Lynn	Food Systems Planner
	Hill, Janice	Kane County Development Department
Via web	Mengler, Jeff	US Fish and Wildlife Service
	Dubois, David	Will County Land Use Department
	Paddock, Curt	Will County Land Use Department
	Radde-Gallwitz, Kristen	Village of Highland Park
	Smith, Lee	Village of Highland Park
	Mulvaney, Christopher	Chicago Wilderness
	Kennedy, Julia	Center for Neighborhood Technology
	Dobbs, Kama	DuPage Mayors and Managers Conference
	Williamson, Nancy	Illinois Department of Natural Resources
	Lobbies, Dan	The Conservation Foundation
	Sheetz, Stephanie	The Conservation Foundation

Comments and Responses

- How does conservation design relate to LEED-ND standards? Could these be used instead of the benchmarks in the conservation design sample program?
 - CMAP is using the LEED-ND standards to define the components of urban design that could be used in new development and to retrofit older developed areas.

- There are a few areas where LEED-ND¹ lacks performance standards or promotes standards that are weaker than those we used to define conservation design for analytical purposes:
 - There are no limits for total imperviousness, although there are standards for volume reduction under Smart Location and Linkage Prerequisite 4 and Green Construction and Technology Credit 9. This may be considered a reduction in effective imperviousness, but CMAP staff is unsure whether the biological effect of engineered volume reduction is ultimately the same as reducing total imperviousness. We have elected to measure both runoff reduction and imperviousness reduction.
 - Protected conservation areas under LEED-ND are treated in Green Construction and Technology Credit 6. There the open space percentages range from 10% to 20%, much lower than the 40% to 50% in the CMAP sample program. This is primarily due to the much higher development densities contemplated in LEED-ND. Please remember that the conservation design sample program was prepared as a means of limiting the impact of development in a scenario where growth patterns and prevailing densities continue as they are today. This scenario is *not* the final plan recommendation.
- The sample program appears to conflate conservation design with low impact development.
 - This is intentional, although the text does not call attention to it. The goal with what is now called “conservation design” is to include (1) preservation of open space as part of development and (2) “green” stormwater management, including redevelopment areas, within the same overall approach. We will make this explicit in the text.
- Shouldn’t the analysis include other land use categories besides residential and commercial?
 - Ideally, yes, but the primary driver in this strategy is household and employment projections, and the employment projections do not provide the detail necessary to break down non-residential land uses much further than we have. However, we will clarify the assumptions behind residential and non-residential conservation design.
- The runoff reduction values for commercial development are too ambitious.
 - We agree. We will try to find more plausible values for runoff reduction from commercial sites.
- CMAP’s depiction of the Green Infrastructure Vision shows Kane County’s agricultural areas as targets for conservation design. This signals that development will happen there. If conservation design is to be used, it should be used within areas where new growth is to be channeled (critical growth areas).

¹ <http://www.usgbc.org/ShowFile.aspx?DocumentID=2845>

- The graphic we used in the write-up of the sample program could easily be misinterpreted. It is being retired. What we tried to show is not that a certain area *should* be developed, but that if it *does* develop conservation design should be employed. Conservation design is part of a scenario in which growth patterns and prevailing densities continue much as they are today. This is not a plan recommendation, but one alternative scenario being evaluated.
 - Please note that the GIV, which is the guidance for all conservation strategies in the *GO TO 2040* plan, recommends using conservation design in certain places within the GIV Resource Protection Areas – but it does not indicate where precisely it should occur. Within the scenario planning context, the conservation design sample program is CMAP’s attempt to identify locations that would be most appropriate for conservation design.
- Conservation design should focus on achieving environmental benefits as part of compact growth or redevelopment.
 - The paper notes that we are doing that as a next step. The application of conservation design in redevelopment is being analyzed, but was not presented in this paper. Combining low impact development and conservation design allows us to deal with greenfield development and redevelopment in somewhat similar ways.
- The cost savings for conservation design are not net savings that show the difference in maintenance costs between green and gray infrastructure. Also, it appears that some of the public sector savings are due to shifting costs to homeowners associations.
 - Although it is not clear in the text, the cost savings are the net of maintenance for green and gray infrastructure. The Green Values Calculator provides costs for both. On the second point, it is to some extent true that costs are shifted. However, the total maintenance savings, including savings accruing to private parties, is even higher than the public sector savings reported in the paper.
- Any property tax base increases attributable to a price premium associated with conservation design will not be relevant to municipalities that do not have a property tax.
 - This is true, but the vast majority of municipalities in northeast Illinois do rely on a property tax.
- Housing affordability should be addressed if there is the possibility that conservation design will cause a general increase in property value.
 - We agree.
- The main mode of implementing conservation design is changing local government zoning and subdivision codes to encourage conservation design, generally by making it a by-right form of development. Municipalities should be involved in reviewing CMAP strategy analysis if they would be the primary implementers of a strategy.
 - We agree.