Summer

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UW Extension

THE LAND USE DIGEST

WIND FARMS IN WISCONSIN

Wind farms are collections of turbines that create electricity by converting wind kinetic energy into electrical energy. Farms are typically developed on private property by independent companies from across the U.S. who then sell the energy generated to local utilities like Alliant Energy and Wisconsin Electric.

Currently, there are 55 turbines at five sites in Wisconsin (Brown, Fond du Lac, Manitowoc, and Iowa Counties) generating about 53 megawatts in power. These turbines provide power each year for about 11,500 homes (the city of West Bend has about 12,000 homes; Sheboygan has about 22,000).

Wind farms have been spurred at least in part by state legislation mandating that 50 megawatts of new renewable energy had to be on-line by December 31, 2000. This number has been increasing as the state complies with its new renewable portfolio standard, which requires that Wisconsin utilities and cooperatives include some percentage of renewable energy in the mix of resources they sell to customers. Required percentages increase biannually until December 31, 2011, when renewables must comprise 2.2% of sales.

A property tax incentive in Wisconsin exempts taxpayers from any value added by a qualified renewable energy source for property tax purposes. This exemption mainly encourages the use of passive solar space heat, active solar space heat,

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The Riverfront Boardwalk, City of Sheboygan.

FIVE TYPES OF REDEVELOPMENT

Redevelopment can take place in several different ways. Each method has different objectives and strategies, and accomplishes different outcomes.

Reconstruction: An entirely new development is constructed on a vacant property, or a pre-existing structure is torn down and replaced with a new one. This "clean slate" allows the most flexibility, but it foregoes structural assets that may already be there. Nevertheless, it is sometimes the only alternative.

Restoration: Rundown facilities are returned to their original condition. Depending on the age and detail of the facility, restoration may require outside expertise and be quite expensive. A faithful restoration presents challenges, because restrooms, central air and heating, and modern building code requirements are often incompatible. Once completed, however, a restored facility may become a community landmark.

Retrofitting: Carefully reworking a facility to meet a new standard or different theme. Retrofitting can occur in restoration, when, for example, fiber optic cable is added to a 19th century building.

Renovation (or Rehabilitation): Work is done to make a decrepit facility usable again. All facilities deteriorate over time, so renovation is occurring continuously in a community. There is much more flexibility with renovation than restoration, since its objective is not necessarily to make the facility exactly like it first was, but to simply make it fully usable again.

Reuse: A facility's current use is no longer viable, so it is adapted to a different use. This may or may not require extensive renovation or retrofitting. Examples include warehouses turned into loft apartments, churches converted into fitness centers, and railroad right-of-ways replaced by bike trails. ■ *K.S.*



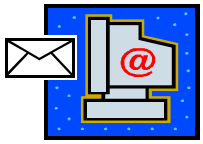
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Please Help Me Cut Costs

Newsletter

In an effort to lower my costs for producing and distributing this newsletter even more, I would like to *decrease* the number of paper copies I mail and *increase* the number of digital copies I send out via email. You can help by emailing me at the following address and requesting future copies of this newsletter be sent to your email address.

kevin.struck@ces.uwex.edu



You would no longer receive the paper copy version, but you could print out the digital version, or parts of it, if you so desired. The version I send out via email is a PDF file, which looks exactly like a full-color hard copy version. PDF files are a nearly universal format that just about any computer can read.

Educational Certificate Program

This program is a training manual for local officials who are interested in learning more about planning, zoning, and growth management. I have mentioned it several times before in the newsletter and also by direct mail. About one-quarter of the communities in Sheboygan and Washington Counties have signed up.

The full-color manual itself is about 250 pages and costs about $40 to produce. This is still relatively inexpensive, but an even better alternative is the digital version, which is available either on the Internet or on CD. Both versions are available for only $10 and can be completed at your own pace.

Recent feedback from individuals taking the course has been extremely positive:

"I plan to suggest this manual to new plan commissioners."

"This could answer many of the questions that are referred to attorneys, or, because of reluctance to pay the cost, not referred to them."

"It's nice being able to go at your own pace."

Enjoy the rest of the summer! ■

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active solar water heat, solar thermal electricity, photovoltaics, and wind energy equipment. It applies to industrial, utility, residential, and commercial sectors.

In Kewaunee County, where 31 turbines are located, the Town of Lincoln and the County receive an annual payback based on the state's existing "Shared Revenue" tax formula. Based on initial project cost estimates of about $10 million, the town would have received about $23,000 and the county would received $45,000 for the first year. This annual payback decreases every year as the equipment depreciates over 30 years. The total net revenue over 30 years is $200,000 for the town and $375,000 for the county. Private landowners who lease land to wind farm companies typically receive between $3,000 and $7,000 per turbine per year.

Together, the tower and blades of a turbine reach a height of about 325 feet. Blades spin at a rate of one revolution every two to three seconds. In the most recent project, in Iowa County, the 20 turbines and access road required 16 acres of land. The project generated five construction jobs and requires three full-time employees for ongoing operations and maintenance.

Concerns about wind farms include noise and bird mortality. Efforts, such as slower blade speeds, are being made to lessen these problems. Noise from the newer turbines is generally about 50 decibels at about 300 to 600 feet, which compares to the sound of light traffic at a distance of 100 feet. Other issues and the amount of concern can be gleaned from a series of surveys conducted among the residents living close to the wind farms in Kewaunee County. The survey results can be viewed on the Internet at:

http://www.uwex.edu/ces/cty/kewaunee/crd/windturbines.html

The state Appeals Court ruled in March 2001 that local boards and commissions cannot restrict wind farm projects on the basis of concerns over aesthetics or property values. Restrictions can, however, be imposed to alleviate concerns about impacts on public health and safety.

The Wisconsin Division of Energy and the Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission are both in the process of developing model wind turbine ordinances for local communities. Wind farms developed in the state thus far have been governed by conditional use permits and traditional zoning ordinances. ■ *K.S.*



Debora Sielski
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WASHINGTON COUNTY 2020 PARK & OPEN SPACE PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS

Throughout the past year, the Washington County Planning and Parks Department, has been developing the Washington County 2020 Park and Open Space Plan. Park acquisition and development is an investment in the future well being of individuals and contributes to the viability of communities throughout Washington County. The plan recommendations consist of two major elements.

The open space preservation element contains recommendations for the preservation of primary environmental corridors, secondary environmental corridors, natural resource areas, critical species habitat sites, geological and archeological areas, protection of open space lands located within established Department of Natural Resources project boundaries and protection of prime agricultural land. It is recommended that a total of 77,334 acres of open space lands, or about 28 percent of Washington County, be protected through a combination of public or non-profit conservation organization ownership or through the application of protective zoning.

Of the total 77,334 acres of recommended open space lands, 17,758 acres, or about 23 percent, were protected in 2002 and are recommended to be preserved in current ownership or maintained in recreational or open space uses. It is recommended that an additional 16,228 acres, or about 21 percent of proposed open space lands, be acquired by public agencies for natural resource protection preservation purposes or for public park or trail use. The remaining 43,348 acres of open space lands should be placed in protective zoning districts to prevent incompatible development.

The recommended park and outdoor recreation element identifies the proposed sites and facilities to be provided include major parks and resource-oriented recreational facilities, trails, and boat access facilities. Washington County would continue to acquire lands and provide additional facilities throughout the park system and would be responsible for the provision of three new major parks. The proposed parks include a 200-acre park in the northwestern part of the County, a 304-acre park in the northern part of the Village of Germantown, and a 325-acre park in the southwestern part of the County.

Major recommendations for outdoor recreational facilities at the major County parks include the development of: a nature center at Glacier Hills Park; additional formal picnic areas at Heritage Trails Park, Ridge Run Park, and Sandy Knoll Park; formal picnic areas at Family Park/Washington County Golf Course/Joseph P. Marx Woods Nature Preserve Complex and at the three new major park sites; additional picnic shelters at Ackerman's Grove and picnic shelter improvements at Homestead Hollow Park; boat access facilities at Glacier Hills Park; a swimming beach at Heritage Trails Park. The addition of a dog exercise area is also recommended.

It is recommended that the County acquire and develop two new County park sites: a new 10-acre park site on Big Cedar Lake, and a new 20-acre park site on Tilly Lake near the Village of Jackson.

About 52 miles of recreation trails would be provided to enable participation in such activities as bicycling, hiking, nature study, and ski touring. The County should develop a detailed bike and pedestrian plan for Washington County to determine specific locations for bike and pedestrian trails and explore additional connections not shown in this plan. The plan proposes that the Canadian National Railway trail be developed. The trail is envisioned to include a total of about 4.4 miles within the County.

It is recommended the County develop a natural resource management plan for the lands included in the evolving Washington County park system. This management plan would assure the long-term preservation of native species by restoring and maintaining conditions to allow natural processes to function.

The associated costs for the acquisition and development of County park and open space sites are estimated at about $29.2 million. The acquisition costs associated with the open space preservation element would be $5.7 million. The acquisition and development costs for the park and outdoor recreation element are estimated at about $23.5 million. This amount distributed over the 18-year planning implementation period would approximate an expenditure of about $1.6 million per year and would be about $11.82 per capita per year.

The County is holding a series of public input/information sessions throughout the County on September 9 at Glacier Hills County Park, September 10th at Kewaskum Municipal Building Annex and September 11th at the Washington County Public Agency Center. The sessions will start at 7:00 pm. To view the draft plan chapters, please visit the County website at www.co.washington.wi.us/landuse. If you have any questions or comments regarding this plan, please contact me at 262-335-4445. ■

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SURVEY

Through a joint effort by Washington County Planning and Washington County Economic Development, both divisions of the Washington County Planning and Parks Department, as well as several community and business representatives, a comprehensive survey regarding economic development is currently being conducted.

A random telephone survey of Washington County residents just wrapped up and featured questions about quality of life issues in Washington County, as well as the residents' employment status and satisfaction with that employment status and Internet usage in the home.

A survey of all businesses in the County is underway to learn what Washington County can do to help local businesses succeed. The survey asks for information about future intentions and growth opportunities, workforce evaluation, notable short term changes in local firms' viability, and current needs for development assistance.



A survey to educational representatives was mailed in mid-July and requested information about training needs of businesses and residents in Washington County as well as entrepreneurial development opportunities. Also, a handful of students from UW-Washington County and Moraine Park Technical College have participated in focus groups that address a variety of workforce and quality of life issues.

At the end of August, a survey will be sent to all elected and appointed public officials in Washington County to gain insight into their views regarding economic development. A draft report of the surveys will be completed in November.

All surveys and interviews are being conducted through a partnership with UW-Oshkosh's Center for Community Partnership and UW-Milwaukee's Center for Urban Initiatives and Research. The surveys are expected to provide Washington County with guidance for public policy decisions affecting local economic development programs.

If you have any questions regarding the forthcoming survey, please contact Debora Sielski, Assistant Administrator for Planning, or Brenda Hicks-Sorensen, Economic Development Coordinator, at (262) 335-4445. ■

Ask the Expert

(Answer based on input from selected "experts" in the field of growth management.)

Question: I know that farmland is assessed differently than its full value, but is it true that open space that is *not* being farmed is also going to be assessed at a lower rate than full value?

Answer: You're right on both counts. For the last couple of years, land that has been actively farmed and classified "Ag" by the local assessor has been assessed for tax and equalization purposes at the value of its present agricultural use rather than its potential development value (full value).

Rural lands that were *not* being farmed, however, continued to be assessed at their full value. In fact, the value of other lands often increased to offset the lowering of the agricultural parcels. This meant that open space lands classified as "woodlands" or "swamp and waste," already assessed at high values based on their development potential, were assessed even higher. If these open space lands were owned by farmers, there suddenly was a big incentive to either develop the lands and sell them off or at least put them into agricultural production — even though these lands might not be the best for farming or development.

To lessen this incentive, the Legislative Joint Finance Committee, using language supplied by the Wisconsin Farm Bureau, added a section to the 2003-2005 state budget that requires 1) woodland meeting certain criteria to be reclassified as "agricultural forest" and assessed at 50% of its full value, and 2) all land currently classified as "swamp and waste" to be reclassified as "undevelopable land" and assessed at 50% of its full value. The governor partially vetoed one aspect of the woodlands reclassification, but the substance of the proposal was left intact. ■ *K.S.*

[Based on conversations with Dave Milius, district supervisor for the Wisconsin Department of Revenue, and Jordy Jordahl, Agricultural Advisor to Governor Doyle.]



NEWS & EVENTS

2nd Graduate of Educational Certificate Program
The *Educational Certificate Program in Planning & Growth Management,* launched in late 2002, awarded its second certificate to Jeffrey R. Klug, plan commissioner, Town of Richfield, Washington County. Congratulations!

Currently, there are 16 participants in the program. To sign up, contact Kevin Struck.

Sheboygan County Smart Growth Workshop – Thursday, August 14
The Sheboygan County Planning & Resources Department and UW-Extension are sponsoring a workshop for local officials who want to learn more about the county's fall 2003 state planning grant application. The application will include local communities that wish to partner with the county.

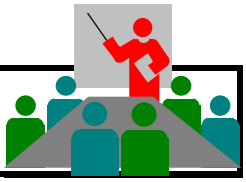
Also on the agenda are a discussion of the potential costs for creating a local plan, and a review of the results for the survey conducted by Bay-Lake RPC at the last workshop. The meeting will be held at 7:00 PM at the UW-Extension office, 650 Forest Avenue in Sheboygan Falls.

Hazardous Waste Clean Sweep — September 19 & 20, 2003
An Agricultural Clean Sweep will be held on Friday, Sept. 19th for Washington County farmers and small business owners. A Household Clean Sweep will be held on Saturday, Sept. 20th for Washington County residents. Both collections will take place at the new County Vehicle Maintenance & Storage Facility located at 900 Lang Street in West Bend. Collection hours are from 8 AM -12 PM for both days.

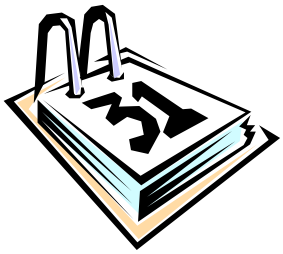
Pre-registration is required for the Agricultural Clean Sweep. Contact the Clean Sweep Hotline at 262-335-4803 for more information or check the Land Conservation Department Website at:

http://www.co.washington.wi.us/lcd/

Consultant's Corner . . .



(Each newsletter will spotlight a different consultant. Appearances by consultants in this newsletter does not constitute an endorsement by UW-Extension.)



Due to staff vacations, heavy summer workloads, and looming deadlines among planning and engineering firms and consultants, "Consultant's Corner" will take a break for this newsletter issue but will resume with the Fall 2003 issue.

Consultants who have appeared in this section in previous issues include:

Planning & Design Institute, Inc. (PDI), Milwaukee, 414-271-2545
Nov.-Dec. 2001 issue

Ruekert / Mielke, Waukesha, 262-542-5733
Jan.-Feb. 2002 issue

Planned Progress, LLC, Saukville, 262-284-4890
Summer 2002 issue

HNTB, Milwaukee, 414-359-2300
Fall 2002 issue

R.A. Smith & Associates, Inc., Brookfield, 262-786-1777
Winter 2003 issue

Technical Assistance Company (TAC), Sheboygan Falls, 920-467-6711
Spring 2003 issue

If you missed any of these issues, single back issues are available for no charge by contacting the editor, Kevin Struck (see back page for contact info).

Scheduled for the Fall 2003 issue is **OMNNI Associates** from Appleton. This space is available to any legitimate planning, engineering, or related consultant simply by contacting Kevin Struck and arranging to be slotted into the publication schedule. The consultant is expected to supply a 200-300 word article summarizing any or all of the following: basic services, products, corporate vision / philosophy, history, past customers, staff expertise, etc. A logo or graphic and contact information is also requested.

Several of the consultants listed have worked with or are currently working with communities in the Sheboygan and Washington County area. ■ *K.S.*



Open Meetings Law
- Quiz -

True or False?

Citizen advisory committees created by a local governing body are subject to the Wisconsin Open Meeting Law.

Answer: True.

The committees, commissions, and boards of local governing bodies or special purpose units of government are subject to the Open Meeting Law, even when none of the members of a committee are elected officials.

A corporation created by a governing body is also subject to the requirements of the Open Meeting Law, as are the corporation's committees, other sub-units, and officials.

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