



► PLACEMAKING: A TOOL FOR RURAL AND URBAN COMMUNITIES 1



► NEW WELL WATER QUALITY VIEWER 6



► LIVESTOCK SITING LAW PREEMPTS LOCAL REGULATION..... 8



Land Use Tracker

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PLACEMAKING: A TOOL FOR RURAL AND URBAN COMMUNITIES

By Eric Anderson, West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission

In late 2011, West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (WCWRPC) applied for and was awarded a Building Blocks for Sustainable Communities grant from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. This was one of only 10 grants awarded throughout the United States. The grant allowed WCWRPC to partner with the Project for Public Spaces (PPS) to conduct placemaking exercises in two local communities. This article provides an overview of placemaking and summarizes the results of a local placemaking exercise.

What is Placemaking?

Placemaking is a multi-faceted approach to the planning, design and management of public spaces. Simply put, placemaking allows people to make extraordinary improvements, big and small, in their communities. It involves looking at, listening to, and asking questions of the people who live, work and play in a particular space to discover their needs and aspirations. This information is then used to create a common vision for that place. The vision can evolve quickly into an implementation strategy, beginning with small-scale, do-able improvements that bring

Benefits of a Great Place

Great places have many far-reaching benefits:

- Places nurture and define community identity
- Places benefit cities economically
- Places promote a greater sense of comfort
- Places draw a diverse population
- Places create improved accessibility
- Places foster frequent and meaningful contact

immediate benefits to public spaces and the people who use them. Placemaking can be used to improve all of the spaces that comprise the gathering places within a community – its streets, sidewalks, parks, buildings, and other public spaces. The goals of placemaking are to invite greater interactions among people and to foster communities that are more socially, physically, and economically viable.

What Makes a Great Place?

Great public spaces are the “front porches” of our communities. They are spaces where celebrations are held, social and economic exchanges take place, friends run into each other, and cultures mix. They are spaces where we interact with each other and government. When these spaces work well, they serve as a stage for our public lives.

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What makes some spaces succeed while others fail? In part, it is having a variety of things to do in one spot. When a space becomes more than the sum of its parts, it becomes a place. For example, a park with a fountain, a

playground, a place to get something to eat or drink, and a spot for parents to sit in the shade is likely to attract people who will stay for more than a few minutes. If a nearby library featured an outdoor storytelling area for kids and exhibits on local history, people would likely come to both places and return again and again. Proximity to residential areas and easy access to a bus stop or bike trail are additional components that add up to create a successful place.

Four Attributes of a Successful Place

In evaluating thousands of public spaces around the world, PPS has found that successful places feature four key qualities: they are *accessible* and have *linkages* to other places; they actively engage people in a variety of *activities* and *uses*; they are

comfortable and have a good *image*; and they are *sociable* – meaning they are places where people meet each other and bring visitors.

PPS developed the Place Diagram on page 3 as a tool to help people judge a place using the four key qualities of a successful place. Imagine the center circle on the diagram is a specific place that you know: a street corner, a playground, or an area outside of a building. You can evaluate that place according to the four criteria in the orange ring. The green ring shows a number of intuitive or qualitative aspects by which to judge the place. The blue area shows quantitative aspects that can be measured by statistics or research. This is one of many tools used by PPS to evaluate the success of local places.

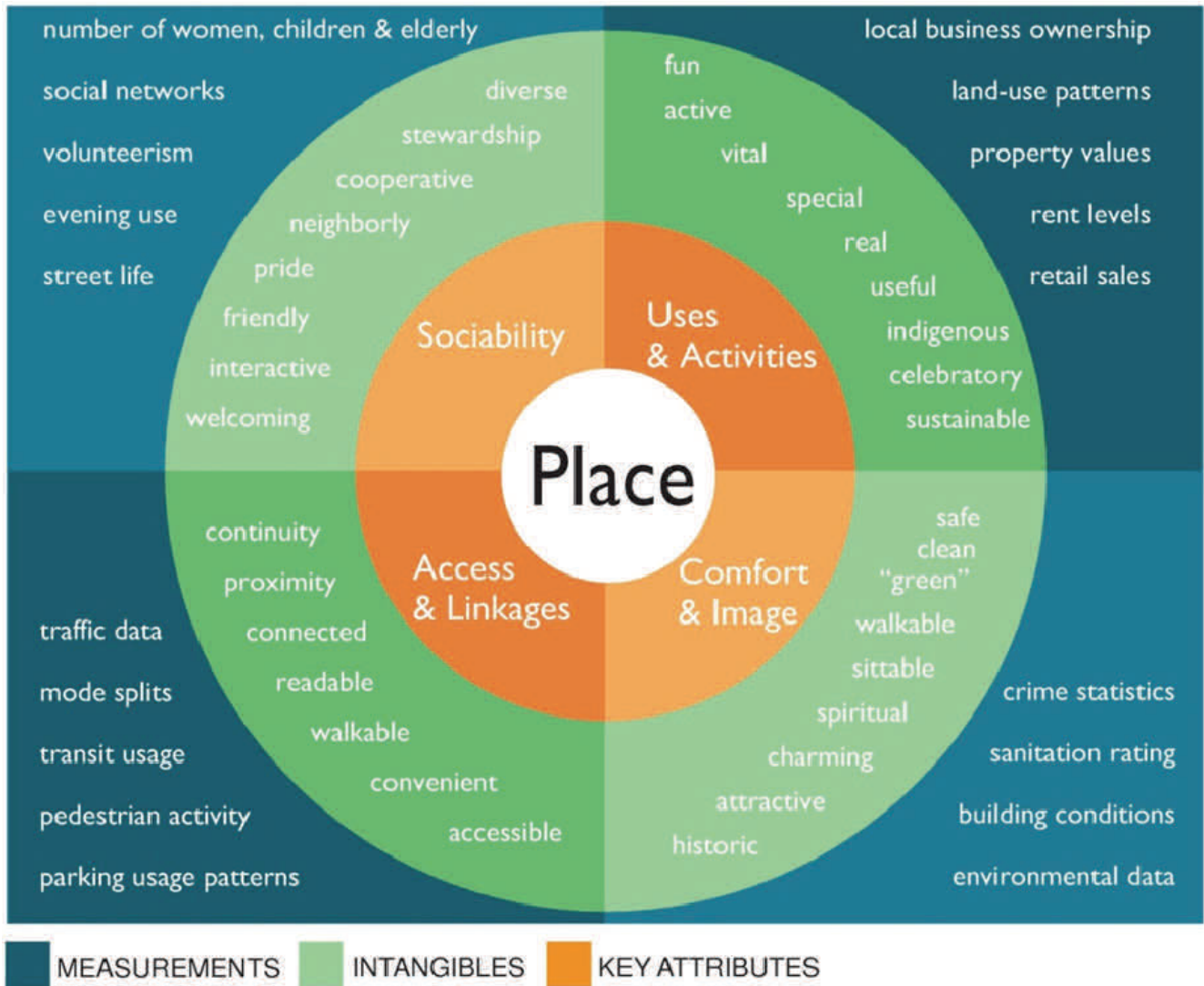
Principles of Placemaking

1. The community is the expert
2. You are creating a place, not a design
3. You can't do it alone
4. They'll always say, "It can't be done"
5. You can see a lot just by observing
6. Develop a vision
7. Use is more important than design
8. Cluster elements to foster activities
9. Start with simple, short-term solutions
10. Money is not the issue
11. You are never finished

Applying the Principles of Placemaking

On July 10, 2012 WCWRPC and PPS conducted local “Placemaking” workshops in the City of Owen and Village of Colfax. These communities were identified as candidates for local placemaking exercises because of their commitment to improve their downtowns as expressed in their comprehensive plans. During the three-hour workshops, participants

Figure 1: The Place Diagram was developed by PPS to help evaluate places. The inner ring represents key attributes, the middle ring intangible qualities, and the outer ring measurable data.



received an overview of placemaking and split into teams to conduct on-site evaluations of four key nodes within their communities. Each team identified short and long-term opportunities to improve the space, along with potential resources to work with. In addition, WCWRPC staff went to a high school class in each community to discuss what students liked, disliked, and what their visions were for their community.

The next day, WCWRPC and PPS hosted a regional “Power of 10” workshop for the west central Wisconsin region. The “Power of 10” tool was developed to analyze the strengths and weaknesses of a community based on the

premise that a great place must offer at least 10 things to do or 10 reasons to be there. At the regional workshop, participants reviewed the local placemaking exercises, participated in a





regional assessment of the seven-county region (Barron, Chippewa, Clark, Dunn, Eau Claire, Polk, and St. Croix counties), and were given tools to take back to their communities.

At the conclusion of the community meetings, WCWRPC created a report for each community summarizing the results of the local placemaking workshops and offering tips for moving forward. Following are some of the recommendations provided for the Village of Colfax. The full report can be found at: www.villageofcolfaxwi.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/10/Placemaking-in-Downtown-Colfax-Report.pdf

For More Information

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West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (WCWRPC) conducts areawide planning and provides technical assistance to local governments for seven counties in west central Wisconsin. You can learn more about WCWRPC at <http://wccwrpc.org>

Project for Public Spaces, Inc. (PPS) is a nonprofit planning, design, and educational organization dedicated to helping people create and sustain public spaces that build stronger communities. You can read more about the Project for Public Spaces and Power of 10 at www.pps.org/reference/the-power-of-10

The placemaking concepts discussed within this article, including the four attributes of a great place (‘Place Diagram’) and the ‘Power of 10’ are provided by or adapted from PPS and cannot be used without written permission of PPS.

Intersection of Main Street and Railroad Avenue

Recommendations	Priority	Potential Partnerships
Provide more outdoor seating	Short-term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WisDOT (signage, bump-outs, and pedestrian yield issues) • Village and County highway (street and sidewalk improvements) • School district (plantings, murals) • Legislators (WisDOT issues) • Businesses, Kiwanis, churches, other service organizations (seating, painting, murals, plantings) • Dunn County EDC
Remove overhead wires	Short-term	
Paint crosswalks	Short-term	
Paint murals on Little Italy building (on RR side)	Short-term	
Create gateway elements and wayfinding signs to better define downtown entrance	Short-term	
Correct Railroad signal	Short-term	
Work with State to address signage restrictions, bump-out restrictions, and restrictions on pedestrian yield in the road	Short-term	
Install screening to lessen visual impact of the loading dock and railroad tracks	Long-term	
Close off railroad company access along tracks to keep public from using it to access the parking lot	Long-term	
Plant flowers and add wayfinding signage on SE quadrant	Long-term	

LAND USE COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE: AN EXTENSION RESOURCE FOR WISCONSIN PLANNERS

By Mark Apel, Cooperative Extension Agent, University of Arizona

Cooperative Extension serves as the bridge between the rich resources of land grant universities and the communities that could use those resources. Planners in Wisconsin now have an opportunity to tap into those resources via the internet through eXtension's Land Use Community of Practice. eXtension (www.extension.org) is an interactive learning environment that delivers information and knowledge from land grant universities on a range of topics – from pest management to climate change. Its intended audiences include students, researchers, practitioners, professors, and the general public.

In 2009, a team of university-based planning professionals was formed to develop a “land use community of practice.” The team, headed by individuals from Michigan State University, made sure to include a representative from every region in the country. Wisconsin is represented by Anna Haines, Director of the Center for Land Use Education and Planning Official Development Officer for the Wisconsin Chapter of the American Planning Association.

In order to launch the community of practice (CoP), it was incumbent upon the team to gather and contribute peer-reviewed content to the website. An extensive list of frequently asked questions (FAQs) are also included addressing topics such as zoning and land use regulations, best practices, and public participation. The content-rich site was launched in March of 2010. Public access to these resources is titled Community Planning and Zoning and can be accessed at: www.extension.org/community_planning_and_zoning.

As you launch the website, you'll notice the banner at the top of the page will include the Wisconsin's Cooperative Extension logo. This serves as a portal to the University of Wisconsin Extension resources.



The Land Use CoP is currently recruiting planning professionals from around the country to join its general membership. Membership, currently at over 100 individuals, allows you to freely participate in the community of practice as a planning professional by: providing land use planning content and FAQs; networking with other planners; and accessing webinars via the internet. An hour-long webinar sponsored by the CoP entitled Conserving Biodiversity in Subdivisions, was attended online by more than 200 planners and practitioners from around the country and has been expanded into an online course available for AICP credit.

As a CoP member, this is an opportunity for Wisconsin planners to contribute their unique perspective on a variety of topics ranging from planning for sustainability to zoning regulations for wind power. In addition, you will have access to the profiles and contact information of all other members by state, providing an excellent opportunity for networking with planning professionals, including university resources, from all over the country.

Membership is free, but members must be approved by the leadership team. If you are interested in participating in the Land Use Community of Practice, sponsored by the national university land-grant system, please contact CoP Leadership Team Member, Anna Haines (anna.haines@uwsp.edu).

NEW WELL WATER QUALITY VIEWER PROVIDES A WINDOW INTO WISCONSIN'S BURIED TREASURE

By Kevin Masarik, Groundwater Education Specialist, Center for Watershed Science and Education

Have you ever wondered about the water quality near where you live? For private well owners and others who have a vested interest in groundwater quality there is a new tool developed by the Center for Watershed Science and Education that assists homeowners and community leaders in locating information.

Because groundwater originates as rain or snow melt that recharges locally, water quality problems are often a function of the nearby land-use or geology of a region. Water in typical private wells originates from an area no farther away than 1/4 to maybe 1/2 of a mile from the well. The age of the water is generally years old and in some cases may be decades old. However, in areas of the state where you have fractured dolomite aquifers, wells sometimes access water that recharged within days or even hours after large rain events or a spring snow melt.

For the nearly 900,000 rural private well owners whose water does not have the same testing or oversight as a municipal water supply, little may be known about the quality of their well water. Testing is the only way to determine the types and amount of contaminants in water supplied by a private well. While water quality problems can sometimes be specific to an individual well or even a specific point in time, there are many times where elevated levels are indicative of a broader water quality issue that can only be addressed as a community. Sometimes patterns clearly emerge that show the relationship between geology or land use and well water quality.

The Wisconsin Well Water Quality Viewer is an online mapping tool that allows people to obtain information about groundwater quality where they live. Data for the viewer comes mostly

from the Central Wisconsin Groundwater Center and the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. It relies on large amounts of information to characterize groundwater typically accessed by private wells across the state. It is designed as an educational tool. The data is not detailed enough to obtain information specific to an individual well or

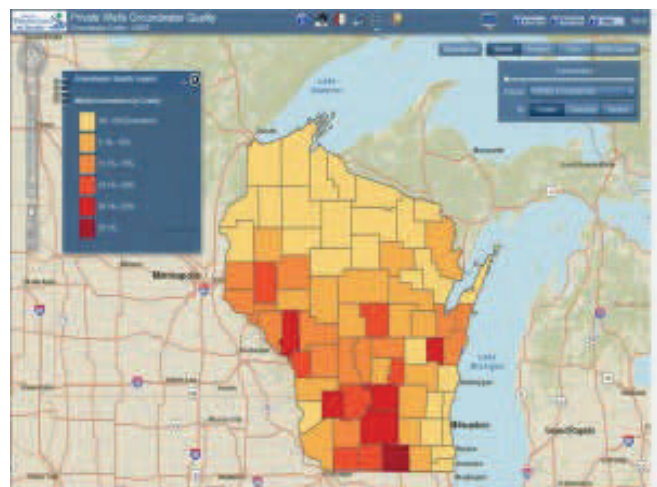
property nor should it be used for such purposes because of the nature of the voluntarily submitted information. Any inconsistencies in the data are generally smoothed out by the large amount of data used to generate the mapping viewer.

The viewer generates color-coded maps showing water

quality for common water quality constituents. Some of the tests such as nitrate and arsenic are health-related contaminants. Others have no health concerns but may indicate a greater likelihood for taste, color or odor issues. Still others are general water quality tests that show us how things like pH or total hardness vary throughout the state or even a particular county. Areas that are not color-coded are locations where insufficient data exists to

Often referred to as Wisconsin's buried treasure, nearly 75% of the state's population relies on groundwater to supply water to their homes and businesses.

Figure 1: Wisconsin Well Water Quality Viewer



characterize water quality. Another feature of the viewer is the ability to generate groundwater summaries for a specific county, town, section or other user defined area such as a watershed.

The interactive viewer is very useful for helping homeowners to better understand the variety of water quality tests to consider. It can also be used by community leaders to see areas where widespread groundwater contamination exists or conversely where there is a lack of groundwater quality information. Knowing more about groundwater quality allows well owners to make better decisions regarding their well water. Information generated by the viewer is one piece of information that homeowners can use to make these types of decisions.

The Center hopes the Wisconsin Well Water Quality Viewer will help communities target well testing and water quality improvement efforts where they are needed most.

For More Information

The Wisconsin Well Water Quality Viewer was created by David Mechenich of the Center for Watershed Science and Education. If you have questions about the viewer or would simply like more information about groundwater quality in Wisconsin, please contact Kevin Masarik at 715-346-4276 or kevin.masarik@uwsp.edu. The viewer can be accessed online at: www.uwsp.edu/cnr-ap/watershed/Pages/wellwaterviewer.aspx



Figure 2: The interactive well water quality viewer generates color-coded maps for common water quality descriptors. Data can be accessed at the county, town, section, watershed or other user-defined scale.

LIVESTOCK SITING LAW PREEMPTS LOCAL REGULATION

By Brian Ohm, JD, Professor of Urban & Regional Planning, UW-Madison. Excerpted from the July 2012 Case Law Update prepared for the Wisconsin Chapter of the American Planning Association.

Adams v. State of Wisconsin Livestock Facilities Siting Review Board, 2012 WI 85, is the first case to reach the Wisconsin Supreme Court involving local authority to regulate livestock facilities following the passage of the Livestock Siting Law in 2004 (Wis. Stat. § 93.90) and the related rules implementing the law adopted by the Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection in 2006 (ATCP 51). The rules establish procedures and standards that local governments must follow if they want to regulate the siting and expansion of large-scale livestock facilities. In a decision written by Justice Gableman, the Wisconsin Supreme Court acknowledged the broad scope of the new law.

The case involved provisions in a zoning ordinance first adopted by the Town of Magnolia in Rock County in 1977. The provisions attempt to protect water quality by prohibiting activities that result in discharges to navigable water that exceed the standards in NR 102 of the Wisconsin Administrative Code. The Town later amended the ordinance to include NR 140, 141, and 809 related to groundwater and drinking water protections.

In 2006, Larson Acres, Inc., applied under the state Livestock Siting Law for a permit to construct a facility to house 1,500 animal units. In 2007, the Town of Magnolia issued a conditional use permit (CUP) that included seven conditions imposed for protecting the town's surface and ground water. The Town believed it had the right to deny the application outright but concluded it was better to grant the permit with the conditions. Larson Acres appealed the Town's decision to the State Siting Board established under the 2004 Livestock Siting Law, challenging five of the seven conditions. The Siting Board reversed four of the five conditions challenged and modified the remaining conditions. The Town sought review of the Siting Board's decision in

the circuit court, the court of appeals, and ultimately the Wisconsin Supreme Court. The Wisconsin Supreme Court determined that since this was a case of first impression for the agency, the Court did not need to give any weight to the agency's interpretation of the statute. The Court then went on to make the following points:

► First, the legislature has expressly withdrawn local government power to regulate livestock facility siting by: 1) creating uniform state standards that all local governments must follow, 2) mandating that local governments may not disapprove CUPs for livestock facilities, with limited exceptions, and 3) requiring local governments to grant CUPs for livestock facilities.

► Second, by requiring the promulgation of state standards for livestock facility siting, the legislature expressly withdrew the power of local governments to enforce varied and inconsistent livestock facility siting standards.

► Third, the legislature has expressly withdrawn, with limited exceptions, the power formerly reserved for local governments to disapprove livestock facility siting permits.

► Fourth, the Siting Law not only expressly withdraws local government power to disapprove livestock facility siting permits absent some narrow exception, but also expressly withdraws local government power to impose certain conditions when they grant such permits. When local governments grant a livestock facility siting permit, they must condition the permit on compliance "with the applicable state standards." Wis. Stat. § 93.90(3) (ae). This requirement imposed by the legislature upon local governments that grant livestock facility siting permits pertains to all such permits, and leaves no authority to the local government to grant permits in a manner inconsistent with the Siting Law.

The Town of Magnolia attempted to make use of the provisions in the Siting Law that limit the types of conditions a local government may impose when granting a CUP. If a local government wished to impose a condition on a requirement not contained in the state standards, it must "adopt the requirement by ordinance before the applicant files the application for approval," and 2) "base the requirement on reasonable and scientifically defensible findings of fact, adopted by the political subdivision" (Wis. Stat. § 93.90(3)(ar)).

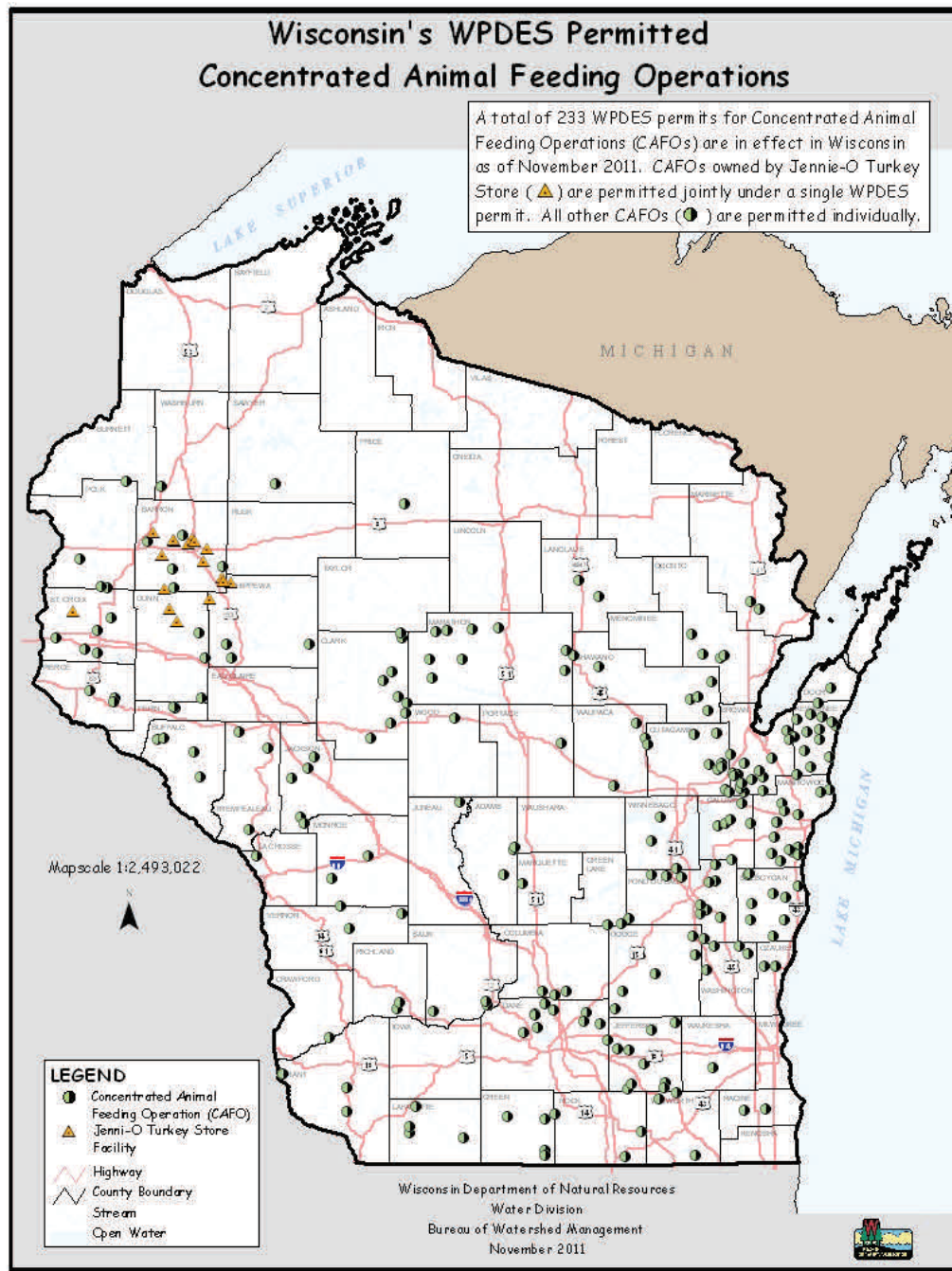
Despite the provisions in the Town's zoning ordinance siting water quality standards adopted by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, the court held that the Town could not rely on the facts found by the State. As a result, the Court concluded the Town failed to adopt fact finding to support the standards it sought to impose in the CUP. The Town therefore improperly imposed all of the challenged conditions. Nevertheless, the Court also held that the Siting Board had the authority to modify the conditions included in the CUP.

Chief Justice Abrahamson dissented in the case and was joined by Justice Bradley.

For More Information

The full text of this case can be found at: www.wicourts.gov/sc/opinion/DisplayDocument.pdf?content=pdf&seqNo=84725

The Livestock Facility Siting Law consists of Wisconsin Statute § 93.90 (<http://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/statutes/statutes/93.pdf>) and Rule ATCP 51 (http://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/code/admin_code/atcp/51.pdf).



NEW PLAN COMMISSION HANDBOOK AVAILABLE

By Rebecca Roberts, Land Use Specialist, Center for Land Use Education

A new Plan Commission Handbook is now available from the Center for Land Use Education. The handbook is designed to orient new members to the roles and responsibilities of the plan commission and to serve as a handy reference for veteran members of the plan commission. Planning and zoning staff, elected officials, and citizens will also find the handbook useful. Chapters in the new handbook include:

1. Introduction to the Commission
2. Procedural Responsibilities
3. Community Planning
4. Public Participation
5. Plan Implementation
6. Ordinance Administration
7. Zoning Regulations
8. Subdivisions Regulations

Each chapter is illustrated with examples from Wisconsin communities, references to applicable state statutes and case law, and worksheets and forms that can be downloaded and modified by local communities.

The handbook is over 200 pages in length and is printed on 100% post-consumer, chlorine-free paper. It is bound in a three-ring PVC-free binder to facilitate easy updating and insertion of local resources.

To order a printed copy of the handbook, please contact us with the information requested below. The handbook may also be downloaded and printed for free from our website at: www.uwsp.edu/cnr-ap/clue/Pages/publications-resources/PlanCommissions.aspx

HANDBOOK ORDER FORM

Title	Price Each	Quantity	Total Cost
Plan Commission Handbook, 2nd Edition, 2012	\$15		
Zoning Board Handbook, 2nd Edition, 2006	\$15		

Shipping address:

Name	
Organization	
Address	
City, State, Zip	

- Check enclosed (payable to Center for Land Use Education)
 Please invoice (indicate if address differs from above)

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Fracking: The Wisconsin Connection

October 30, 2012 – Fracking 101
November 13, 2012 – The Impacts of Frac Sand Mining in Wisconsin
November 27, 2012 – The Economics of Fracking
Mechanical Engineering Building, UW-Madison
(videos of these events will also be streamed live and archived online)
go.wisc.edu/5y84tr

Partnering for Healthy Communities

November 14-15, 2012 – Monona Terrace, Madison, WI
www.capitalregionscrpg.org/2012_Conference.html

Resource Conservation and Recovery Strategies for Greenhouse Gas Reductions

November 15, 2012 – U.S. EPA Webcast
www2.gotomeeting.com/register/580038538

Plan Commission Workshops

December 6, 2012 – Grand Rapids, Wood County, WI
February 27, 2012 – Juneau, Dodge County, WI
www.uwsp.edu/cnr-ap/clue/Pages/workshops/workshopspc.aspx

Wisconsin Active Communities Training

December 6, 2012 – KI Convention Center, Green Bay, WI
www.uwsp.edu/conted/ConfWrkShp/Pages/ActiveCommunitiesTraining.aspx

Badger Bioneers Conference

December 12-13, 2011 – UW-Madison Union South
<http://sustaindane.org/events/bioneers>

Midwest Value Added Agriculture Conference

December 12-13, 2012 – The La Crosse Center, La Crosse, WI
www.rivercountryrca.org/valad.html

Wisconsin Society of Land Surveyors Annual Institute

January 23-25, 2012 – Kalahari Resort, Lake Delton, WI
www.wsls.org

Wisconsin Local Food Summit

February 1-2, 2012 – Northland College, Ashland, WI
<http://wilocalfood.wordpress.com/summits/summit-2013>

New Partners for Smart Growth Conference

February 7-9, 2012 – Kansas City, MO
www.NewPartners.org

Wisconsin Land Information Association Annual Conference

February 13-15, 2012 – Grand Geneva Resort, Lake Geneva, WI
www.wlia.org



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Submit an Article!

If you would like to submit an article, please contact the managing editor, Rebecca Roberts. Your article should be 1,000 words or less, of statewide concern, and address a land use or community planning issue.

American Planning Association Chapter Webcasts

November 9, 2012 – Using Web 2.0 Tools for Better Public Involvement
November 15, 2012 – Ethical Challenges for Planning Consultants
November 16, 2012 – Ethics Skits
November 30, 2012 – Demystifying LEED ND
December 7, 2012 – TBA New Jersey Chapter
December 14, 2012 – TBA Mississippi Chapter
www.utah-apa.org/webcasts

APA Topical Audio/Web Conferences

November 7, 2012 – Ethics and Food Systems Planning
January 16, 2013 – Zoning for Small-Scale Businesses
February 13, 2013 – Fracking and Resource Extraction
June 5, 2013 – Pedestrian and Bicycle Planning
June 26, 2013 – 2013 Planning Law Review
www.planning.org/audioconference

APA One-Hour Lectures

December 5, 2012 – Design Guidelines for Historic Neighborhoods
March 13, 2013 – Environmental Systems, Assessment and Carrying Capacity
May 15, 2013 – Rethinking the Role of the Urban Freeway
www.planning.org/audioconference

For additional dates and information visit the online calendar of events

www.uwsp.edu/cnr-ap/clue/Pages/Calendar.aspx

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