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Bioregional Calendar

Good words
And you may ask yourself,
"What is that beautiful house?"
And you may ask yourself,
"Where does that highway go to?"
And you may ask yourself,
"Am I right? Am I wrong?"
And you may ask yourself,
"My God, what have I done?"
—from the Stop Making Sense album
by the Talking Heads

Americans will get it right,
but only after they have exhausted
every other option.
—Winston Churchill

SAVING FARMS BY SAVING CITIES

Farmland Task Force debates
the stewardship of Ohio's 26 million acres
See pages 3-9
Backward Ohio

Sometimes it's embarrassing to be from Ohio—a state behind the times on many environmental issues. It's like living in a 1950s time warp.

Just recently, Governor George Voinovich and other state officials denounced U.S. EPA's proposal to strengthen standards for smog and soot, a stand by Ohio which drew an angry response from eastern states downstream of our air pollution. And state officials are not being a progressive force in the rearrangement of the major federal transportation bill, ISTEA.

Ohio also is way behind other states with respect to land use planning. The development strategy in Ohio is to spread out available jobs and population to every acre of the state. Regional planning and growth management are still seen as a Communist plot.

Why the antipathy toward rural land use planning? One factor, of course, is the strong home-rule tradition of a "small box" state with many political jurisdictions. In addition, Ohio has a complex mixture of agriculture and heavy industry, a relatively large population and small land area, and lots of developing edges around the state's many metropolitan areas. There's also a lingering rust-belt mentality, which prompts public officials to court growth at any cost. And, sadly, so much of the state's natural beauty has been destroyed that people have a hard time imagining what's left to save.

The issue of EcoCity Cleveland focuses on the need for Ohio to come to grips with its land use problems—the need to plan wisely and create sustainable patterns of settlement. Without change, Ohio will likely slip behind other states in the race to achieve economic efficiencies and a superior quality of life in the 21st century.

Thanks

Thanks to the Katherine and Lee Chilcote Foundation for a grant to support continued planning of our Cleveland EcoVillage project. Thanks to The Nord Family Foundation for a recent grant for operating support. And thanks to The George Gund Foundation for continued operating support and funds to pay for a second printing of our popular publication, Moving to Corn Fields: A reader on urban sprawl and the regional future of Northeast Ohio.

Note on timing

In the past few months we have been spending a lot of time getting some new projects off the ground, so the publication of this journal continues to be behind schedule. We still hope to catch up in the coming months. Subscribers will get all the issues coming to them.

—David Beach Editor
Farmland Task Force Hearing

"Let them eat asphalt!"

Paul Oyaski
Mayor of Euclid
(speaking at the Ohio Farmland Preservation Task Force hearing on February 19 on behalf of the First Suburbs Consortium, which includes the cities of Euclid, Cleveland Heights, Shaker Heights, Lakewood, Garfield Heights and South Euclid)

If Marie Antoinette were alive today and looked upon urban sprawl invading farming communities, she might say, "Let them eat asphalt." But alas, we humans have evolved to think of the land as a means to make our cities, homes, vineyards, but if Marie Antoinette were alive today and looking upon the domain that is real estate development, she would be tempted to say, "Let them eat asphalt."

Urban sprawl is a direct threat to several areas of 20th century Ohio as we know it. Cleveland is an example, and our state's agricultural base is weakened. Food will be imported in greater quantities at higher prices. The environment cannot possibly benefit from the latest trend to develop new communities in outerbelt areas. Wetlands are endangered, commuting and gas usage increases, and historic and sanitary sewer demands are increased in areas without facilities. Brownfields in older areas are forgotten and bypassed, trees disappear and older neighborhoods are overlooked.

If we want to preserve newer neighborhoods, preserve farmland. If we want to preserve the central city, preserve farmland. If we want to conserve gasoline, preserve farmland. If we want to protect the environment, preserve farmland.

Last month, I spoke in Columbus at the Transportation Policy Conference where ODOT officials said they have enough money to maintain existing roads but meanwhile were hard at work trying to design a system to decide where to build major new construction projects. Why build more new when we can't take care of the old?

There was much talk of developing a consensus and building a coalition. While these would be helpful in a bureaucratic milieu, I think it is crucial that we determine where we are and what we want.
Farm Land Task Force Hearing

"Bring some rationality to county and regional development"

Sara Pavlovicz
Medina County Commissioner and board member of the Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating Agency

I speak to you today as both an official of the Board of the Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating Agency (NOACA) and an elected member of the Board of Commissioners of Medina County. From these dual roles, I feel I can address the issue of farmland loss from both an urban perspective and a rural understanding.

From my experience with NOACA, it has become clear to me that conversion of farmland to residential and commercial uses has severe consequences for urban areas. Addressing the agricultural land problem will be a step toward solving those urban problems that seem to be exacerbated by growing developments. The solutions will not be found solely in the cities. Some part of the solution will come from the rural response to the development trends that threaten to overwhelm us.

In my county, in this light, I first tell you about my county. Between 1970 and 1995, Medina County's population has grown by over 56,000 people and 23,000 housing units. This growth has occurred during a time when Northeast Ohio has lost over 10 percent of its population. Our county's population density has increased from 196 persons per square mile to 311. The Ohio Department of Development projects an additional 35,000 people will enter the county in the next 20 years. These new residents will require an additional 12,130,000 new housing units.

There is a clear relationship between these trends and our county's overall development trends. This relationship holds and if the state's population projections are correct, the county will lose an additional 50,000 acres of farmland and over 400 farms in the next 20 years. As agricultural land is converted to other uses, the spreading development pressure that tax base has been transferred from urban areas to rural lands. Some studies have shown the increased tax base rural areas receive from new development is insufficient to offset the increased costs which accompany that development. The cost of new roads, additional safety forces and schools and other services tends to exceed any additional revenues. Our county, example, has had to construct a new jail and create a transit authority in response to what are obviously widely divergent demands that have accompanied our growth.

Further, and perhaps more importantly, our development trends are worsening through rural areas, the opportunity for building in a more thoughtful way is lost. The result is even more inefficient from a public perspective. That is to say, infrastructure must be extended over ever greater distances, farms must monitor a larger area, and costs must inevitably be higher.

The Northeast Ohio region is perhaps the best to Ohio to examine. The region's population reached a peak in 1970 and has declined over 10 percent since. Concurrently, developed land has increased over five percent. In 1970, 74 percent of the region's population and 84 percent of its jobs were in Cuyahoga County. By 1990, those figures had fallen to 67 and 70 percent, respectively. The number of work trips into Cuyahoga from the surrounding six counties increased 36 percent over this period.

Thus from a metropolitan perspective you must understand the growth in this direction. It is required by every county to prepare a land use plan which would limit the problem of agricultural uses explicitly into public discussion where public resolution can be achieved.

In addition, the state must explicitly acknowledge the importance of agricultural uses. The development rights programs are probably good strategies. I won't go into detail on these because I know there are others who will maintain control of their land use. A couple of examples that come immediately to mind are Hudson's battle to maintain growth limits and Hinckley's battle to keep its two-acre lot limits in the face of someone who wants to develop at smaller lot sizes. A community's right to determine what type of future it envisions for itself is a very important piece of the question of farmland preservation, and the task force should look into this to learn from counties to see how it affects the farmland preservation question, and what might be done at the state level to counteract it.

Regional solutions
From my regional and rural perspective, I want to report to you the issue of farmland loss has implications for both rural counties and metropolitan regions. As I noted, virtually all the new development I have discussed have come from Cuyahoga County. Cuyahoga is attempting to stem the problem of outmigration, but it cannot do it alone, especially when the state and federal government are not interested in trying to do it. A related issue to these programs, and to this whole question of agricultural use planning and land use planning in general, has to do with the larger question of zoning. State laws pertaining to zoning should be examined to identify impediments to comprehensive planning. In the five-county NOACA region, except for one township which has minimum ten-acre lots and one township which has no zoning, all land, including farmland, is zoned at five acres or less. Five-acre minimum lots will not save farms. The way the laws state encourage the use of smaller lot zoning must be examined. Also, there is a huge amount of recent litigation where local zoning codes are under attack, and jurisdictions are constantly battling, often without adequate resources, to

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"The pain does not stop at municipal boundaries"

Chris Warren
Director of Economic Development
City of Cleveland

First, I pass along Mayor Michael R. White's appreciation for the work being done by this Task Force and for the Voluntary administration's resolve to address the issue of farmland preservation.

And, the City of Cleveland, through its Mayor and its City Council, are in complete accord with the positions taken by the First Suburbs, as ably articulated by Mayor Gwyneth and others today. The pain caused by exurban sprawl is suffered by both the suburbanite and the city-dweller within Cuyahoga County. Unbridled out-migration of people, industry, and commerce, within a region that is not experiencing corresponding growth, inevitably means disinvestment and abandonment at the core. The pain does not stop at municipal boundaries.

In this spirit, Cleveland wholeheartedly endorses the resolution adopted by the First Suburbs, especially the portion that reads, "State of Ohio policies, programs and activities should be modified so as to favor redevelopment and maintenance of built communities over development of new communities," and "The State should require that the counties that comprise each metropolitan region jointly and cooperatively devise a plan for meeting the State's objectives and establish mechanisms for implementing a plan to preserve farmland and open spaces."

The City of Cleveland pledges to be an active partner with our suburban neighbors in the creation of such a plan.

More pointedly, we have two short and direct suggestions for your deliberation:

1. Ask the Ohio Department of Transportation to change project selection policies to favor the addition of new or widened roadways to the detriment of investments in the repair and maintenance of existing state routes.

The extensions to Route 422, the ever-increasing widths and access points to I-73, I-71, I-90, and I-271, and other major ODOT-funded projects have contributed greatly to the redistribution of people, industry, and commerce and, with it, to the loss of farmlands and open space. At the same time, hundreds of state roads in Cuyahoga County, all essential to the well-being of our residents, erode away as we wait in line for ODOT's attention.

The thrust of ODOT's ranking should be reconstruction and repair first, new capacity last. We cannot afford both.

2. We urge you to recommend changes in state law that would place constraints on where and under what circumstances state below-market loans, grants, tax abatements, and tax credits may be used to encourage new development.

Most Ohio Department of Development loans, grant, and tax incentives are available without regard to the effect the desired development may have on farmlands or, for that matter, the economic stability of Ohio communities from which assisted companies leave.

Recently, I had a sobering experience while traveling to visit a friend in Geauga County. I passed miles and miles of beautiful countryside interrupted only by occasional huge brightly-lettered signs telling the world:

PRIME INDUSTRIAL SPACE FOR SALE
BUILD TO SUIT
CALL SO-AND-SO BROKER
(and in the brightest letters of all)
TAX ABATEMENT AVAILABLE

My friend, a long-time Geauga County resident, said matter-of-factly, "Oh yes, we (meaning his family and neighbors) will be gone soon. The bulldozer is on its way."

Very simply, the state should enact rules prohibiting the use of economic development incentives to assist developments that cause the loss or diminution of farmlands.

To adopt these two straightforward measures—the reform of ODOT's major project criteria and the ban of state subsidies for developments that result in the loss of farmlands—would broadcast an important signal, a warm welcomed, I believe, in towns, suburbs, and cities throughout Northeast Ohio. The message would be: "Your government will not abet private real estate and development practices that diminish the quality of your lives, violate your environment, increase future public infrastructure expenses beyond your means, and steal away your heritage."

My message is not anti-growth. We want development in Ohio. My message is that it matters where the development occurs. The state must help channel growth into more sustainable forms. It's a matter of fiscal responsibility, good stewardship, environmental quality, and fairness to the majority of property owners in the state.

We need to ask ourselves, are we serious about this? Do we have the guts to take a stand for the future of Ohio? Do we believe in Ohio as a special place? Or will we continue to let sprawl undermine our quality of life and our sense of place?

In closing, I urge the governor to think about his legacy—what he will leave Ohio. If he does the right thing, the bold thing, he may be remembered as Tom McCall is fondly remembered in Oregon, as the father of state land use planning, a governor who helped create the framework that has enabled Oregon to grow and prosper while maintaining a high quality of life.

We need such leadership in Ohio.

David Beach
EcoCity Cleveland

Thank you for the opportunity to comment about these important land use issues which are shaping the future of our state.

The farmland task force has a challenging task—task that is made even more difficult by three things in your charge from the governor. First, the problem was defined too narrowly. Second, the tools you have been asked to think about are not sufficient. And third, the state and the governor himself are undermining your efforts in countless ways.

The problem

We don't just have a farmland preservation problem in Ohio. We have an urban sprawl problem. We're losing prime farmland because our cities are bleeding over the countryside.

Therefore, the best way to save farmland is to redevelop the cities of Ohio by promoting compact development patterns. We need to invest in our existing communities, increase development opportunities in the cities, make them wonderful places in which to live and work so that we will reduce the demand for new subdivisions out in the countryside.

By doing this, we will also get at the root of many other serious problems. We will save money on infrastructure, protect the environment, and begin to address the social and economic problems of the cities.

The tools

Voluntary efforts to save farmland, such as the purchase of development rights, aren't going to do the job. You might nibble around the edges, but in the end the forces of sprawl will overwhelm you.

We need strong land use tools that will enable every community in Ohio to control its destiny, We need tools that will help the metropolitan regions of Ohio to plan in a rational manner.

Frankly, we need to start taking about far more controversial tools than we've talked about before in Ohio—mandated regional planning, urban growth boundaries like they have in Oregon, regional tax base sharing like they have in Minnesota.

The state and its development policies

While we are here talking about saving farmland, the state is already promoting urban sprawl—through its development policies, transportation policies, tax policies, education financing, and countless other ways. The sprawling way we develop isn't just the private marketplace at work. It's the result of massive government intervention.

The de facto state policy is to open up every acre of the state for development, spread it all out, take our fixed population and employment base and sewer it over the state in a thin film—ignore the devastation left behind in older communities, ignore the infrastructure costs we are passing on to our children, ignore the environmental damage. So the whole structure of state policy needs to be changed. Again, this is far more than a farmland preservation issue.

Unless the state is willing to change all its policies and programs which now actively promote sprawl, we're not going to get anywhere. The state can be either—or it can keep on causing the problem.

We have a choice

We can let things continue as they are—leading to more sprawl, more destruction of farmland and open space, more shoddy strip malls, sprawling infrastructure costs, the loss of our cities, and more controversial tools than we've ever had to use. Or we can focus our resources, our incentives and our policies to promote development where it will be an enduring asset for all Ohioans.

Let's be honest, sprawl only benefits a few speculators, a few communities around the edges of our metropolitan areas. Most of us are losers. Our communities and our property values are being undermined by outmigration.

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We need such leadership in Ohio.
Rethinking planning and zoning reform in Ohio

By Stuart Meck

Two decades ago, the Ohio General Assembly created a land use study commission to review state land use laws, programs, and systems of land-use control and make recommendations to the state legislature. The committee was chaired by former State Sen. Kenneth Cox, with then Rep. Arthur Brooks, from Cleveland Heights, as vice chair. It held two sets of public hearings and published its final report in 1977.

The report's recommendations (see EcoCity Cleveland's Moving to Core [Readers on urban sprawl for a summary] were eminently sensible then—and still are. In 1976, Cox introduced an omnibus bill incorporating the committee's recommendations. But due to opposition by agricultural interests and some local government groups, as well as lack of support by the fledgling environmental community and some of the planning professionals in the state, the bill went nowhere.

What went wrong?

From a technical perspective, many of the committee's recommendations reflected modern trends in planning statute reform. They included an emphasis on planning underlying and guiding regulation and public investment, a recognition of state interests in land-use control such as protecting environmentally sensitive areas and preserving agriculture, and an acknowledgment of the intergovernmental context of contemporary planning. The recommendations were hard to fault.

However, the committee itself never emerged as a champion for its own recommendations or helped local and state officials take the necessary action.

Indeed, how can we come together and plan a sustainable future for Ohio's 26 million acres?

of agricultural land to apply to the county auditor to place their land in agricultural districts for five years. Once placed in such a district, the land is taxed at its agricultural value rather than its market value, theoretically removing or easing pressure on farmers to sell off the property for development. There are modest penalties for early withdrawal of land from the district and no connection to any type of plan that prioritizes the quality or viability of the district for the future. But is this agricultural use valuation law effective? To order to answer that, we need more than anecdotal evidence from public sources. But land use and planning is property, and it is uncomfortable about regulating land use for the common good.

We need to come to grips, however, with how land use sets the stage for everything else—the character of our communities, the health of our rivers, the amount we drive our cars and pollutes that is preserving valuable farmlands and wetlands, the survival of other species.

Back in the 1970s, there was an attempt to come to grips with land use in Ohio. The state legislature appointed an Ohio Land Use Review Committee, which hired consultants and made recommendations for managing growth in a more rational, coordinated way.

Unfortunately, the recommendations were ignored, and for many years land use issues disappeared from Statehouse politics. While other states took a progressive turn toward managing growth, Ohio stuck its head in the sand.

Today, however, land use is back on the agenda. Urban sprawl is a hot topic around the state. The governor's Ohio Farmland Preservation Task Force will soon be issuing its recommendations.

And the Ohio State University Extension, along with a host of other groups, sponsored a major conference in Columbus at the end of March 1997.

In recognition of the renewed interest in land use issues, we called three men who, participated in or were part of the planning and land use Committee; Peter Henderson, who was the staff director of the committee; and Stuart Meck, an expert on Ohio planning and zoning law. We asked them for their reflections on why the land use reform effort in the '70s and how we can do a better job in the '90s.

Indeed, how can we come together and plan a sustainable future for Ohio's 26 million acres?

systematic, and useful documents will result from the planning process that will provide constitutional support for governmental decisions.

A planning workplan for all. Planning statute reform must ensure a balancing of interests for all Ohioans. Issues like agricultural land preservation, suburban transportation congestion, and "urban sprawl" are finding the current round of concern. But what about the "affordable housing" in the growing areas on the urban fringe, especially in areas where there is growth in moderate-income jobs? Preserving "rural" character cannot just be a code word for huge-lot zoning and minimize density. We need a good hard look, with supporting statistics collected over time and several detailed case studies, as to whether the law is in fact promoting a particular agenda. We should instead see the law as a way to advance the general welfare—and that means everyone, not just those people who can afford the tab on the big house.

Transcend political boundaries. Planning statute reform must deal with the intergovernmental dimension. Counties, townships, and municipalities are exercising their different authority and must be able to cooperate. That means that all local governments must be able to cooperate. There is no powerful incentive to work together and have a single system to achieve common objectives or across local governmental boundaries to minimize adverse impacts of development and spread around its benefits.

Ohio, for this may be the major obstacle to overcome, and it is here where the upshot of the "development" process can be the most meaningful. In Oregon, the success of the urban growth areas—clearly delineated areas in which compact development will occur that is supported by urban-level infrastructure and services, simultaneously protecting prime agricultural land from encroachment—which has resulted from clear, consistent, thoughtful state guidance over time. While urban growth areas may be regarded as a tool in a planner's tool kit, they are also, at bottom, a device for intergovernmental cooperation—getting municipalities and counties in the case of Oregon, to talk to one another and together decide where urban-level development is going to occur over the next 20 years.

Ohio's statutes must clearly acknowledge that planning and development decisions are affected by and affect a variety of governmental units. They include adjoining and nearby local governmental units, special districts (such as school, water and sewer, and conservation districts, which plan, construct, and operate facilities, and state agencies themselves. The planning system must contain mechanisms to ensure that plans and policies that have intergovernmental consequences are viewed and assessed in a manner that addresses the concern by making them a systematic, and useful documents will result from the planning process that will provide constitutional support for governmental decisions.

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Retracing the steps of the Ohio land use review committee

By Peter Henderson

Origins of land use debates in the '70s

The creation of the Ohio Land Use Review Committee (OLURC) had three immediate precursors. First, several land use bills were under consideration in the Congress in the early '70s (Rep. John Seiberling from Akron was a principal sponsor of one of these) of which none ultimately were enacted.

Second, a major conference, the Ohio Assembly on Land Use, was held at Kent State University in November 1974 (jointly sponsored by the KSU Center for Urban Regionalism and the Ohio Conservation Foundation, neither any longer in existence).

And third, in December 1974 the Ohio Legislative Service Commission issued a report entitled, "A State Role in Land Use Management." The Ohio General Assembly then was persuaded to create the OLURC in August 1975.

The pending federal legislation was a principal motivating force in items two and three above, and, also, in creation of the OLURC. Among the land use problems debated at the federal level were:

- Areas of critical environmental concern, including forest, historic lands (shores, wildlife habitats), natural hazard areas (flood plains, unstable geological formations), and renewable resources (water, agriculture, and forest lands).
- Areas impacted by key facilities (airports, highways).
- Areas subject to large-scale development (building developments, shopping centers).

Generally, the various bills would have provided federal funds in support of eligible state land use management activities. Thus, there was an inducement to become eligible. And there was also a perception that some of the provisions would intrude upon states' rights; state first get in house in order, and/or would also intrude upon local government home rule.

In March of 1977, the second of a two-year record of the 1974 Ohio Assembly on Land Use, in which I was not a participant, but my impression is that its participants were viewed as committed academic and professional individuals and civic activists, all or most of whom did not, however, represent broad constituencies.

The Legislative Service Commission report reviewed the current status of federal legislation, land use management activities in other states, and the current status of state and local government land use management activities. It then offered some policy alternatives for state and regional land use planning, improving the land use planning base, land use control, and other methods for implementing land use management policies. It provided a useful resource for the OLURC staff and consultants, but was not evidently and independently a significant influence on the members of the committee.

It might be noted that in all of the above the problem of "urban sprawl" was not specifically identified, although some of the problems which were identified certainly are related to sprawl.

Charge given to the review committee

The OLURC was given a broad charge by the General Assembly:

"The committee's studies shall include but are not limited to the means of coordinating state agency decisions affecting land use policies; the appropriate roles of local governments, regional agencies, and state agencies in regulating large-scale development activities and in managing and protecting agriculture and environmentally significant lands; the adequacy of existing enabling legislation through which local governments plan and exercise the police power regulation of zoning and subdivision control, the effect of taxation on desirable land use patterns; and the most effective review procedures to assure that the views of citizens and government officials at all levels are adequately considered when decisions are made about major public capital investments and major private development proposals."

This charge defined a scope of study which embraces all conceivable aspects of land use management. Only by implication were any problems or solutions identified and then only in broad terms. There was no sense of any commanding and specific problems or solutions demanding attention.

Over the course of the committee's study, identification of problems and solutions were offered by the staff, various consultants, a few state and local officials, and some statewide organizations of interest groups. These sources contributed much to the content of the committee's final report.

But the committee looked primarily to problems and solutions as identified by local governments, state and other public agencies, civic organizations, and citizens. To this end, the committee conducted hearings at 13 locations throughout rural and urban Ohio.

The hearings

The Ohio Conservation Foundation (OCC), which had led the lobbying for the creation of the committee, was well represented during the testimony from land use planners and other environmentalists. It was the hope of OCR and their allies that existence of the committee would both stimulate and coalesce interest in land use.

The hearings were well attended and a vast amount of oral and written testimony was received. The result was a massive database of information which shaped the committee's work.

A great amount of testimony was in defense of individual property rights and local government home rule. Much of this testimony was from representatives of a conservative statewide organization which feared the committee was part of or at least influenced by an international Communist conspiracy and for whom "land use" and "regional" were buzzwords which evoked fear of the impending destruction of American values.

But the testimony also was presented by many moderate individuals and spokespersons for local governments, civic groups, and statewide organizations.

The most commonly expressed specific problem was loopholes in state law permitting avoidance of subdivision regulation. This problem was identified by representatives of Scio, principal and several county planning commissions. Presumably, this reflected the fact that in many suburban municipalities and "growth counties", regulation of subdivision is a principal function—together with zoning regulation, perhaps the only function.

Otherwise, there was little testimony of problems encountered by city and regional planners, especially from the larger municipalities. This category of testimony was presented either indirectly, inconsistently or ineffectually. To paraphrase the comment of one of the more progressive members of the committee: "This is hardly serviceable call for the planning profession."

There was a good deal of testimony from educators, planners associated with such issues as open space, scenic rivers, watersheds, etc., not, however, much with "urban sprawl" per se. Some of this was repetitive inasmuch as it derived from or was simply a reading of a position paper developed by a statewide organization. However, it was not specific but rather was more in the nature of book reviews. It had the value of showing concern, at least by an educated constituency, but not of identifying specific problems or solutions which might be effectuated by legislative action.

Broader concerns

There was a fourth type of testimony which was more specific and described a broader concern of some citizens and professionals:

- Coordination of state agency decisions affecting land development.
- The impact of large-scale developments on multiple local government jurisdictions.
- Preservation of prime agricultural lands.
- A fair farm taxation should be given the hope of land use decisions.
- For all kinds of agricultural lands, the Ohio Farm Bureau was especially effective in identifying the problems and proposing a solution (what has become the agricultural use value assessment for property taxation). Their material was well presented and constructively presented. It was also evident that they represented a large constituency.

No problem

At a meeting of the committee just following these hearings, one member expressed the view that no problems had been identified, that the committee might just as well dissolve. Others earlier had privately expressed similar views. But the chairman, State Sen. Kenneth Fox, determined to continue. It is a credit to his moderate, diplomatic, and non-partisan leadership qualities, as well as his ability to maintain commitment by the more active members, that he persevered in this view.

In June 1976, the committee published a report of its findings of problems and concerns. In March of 1977, it followed up with a document called "Testimonial Recommendations of the Ohio Land Use Review Committee."

Public hearings on this document were conducted at six locations throughout the state, and each was preceded by a week or so at each location to a large by the staff of the committee. Copies of the document were distributed and explained. Much of the same kind of testimony was received at this second round of hearings.

Advice from 20 years of experience with Ohio land use

By Arthur Brooks

What can we learn from the experience of the '70s?

- Develop the state mechanisms for support.
- Work within existing frameworks to achieve objectives (land trusts, soil and water districts, advocacy groups) before gaining greater large-scale, statewide reforms.
- Mobilize affiliated professional groups—planners, architects, "good government" groups, etc.
- Link to other "issue-oriented" groups, such as those working on environmental issues, transportation, and affordable housing.
- To gain support throughout the state, work with coalitions such as farm groups, hunters and outdoors groups, and business groups. And cultivate the support of local elected officials.

How is the current situation different from the '70s?

- Greater dissatisfaction with the status quo. Development activities have proven the necessity for some steps.
- Growth of fiscal conservatism, right public budgets, and problems with school funding.
- Greater understanding of the need for work places to be near homes, especially for entry-level workers and those coming off welfare.
- A general sense that this is a "new" time.

Mistakes to avoid

- Thinking that "government can" solve the problem from the top. We must have "citizen-based" solutions.
- Not recognizing the unique roles of states. In much of the state, it has not grown; we have sprawl without growth.

Priorities for change

- Eliminate incentives for development in rural areas (such as state financing of new highways) and encourage redevelopment of existing urban areas.
- Promote a framework for regional cooperation, tax-sharing which remains within regional joint land use controls for major projects.

Art Brooks was state representative from 1974 to 1979. He currently practices law in Columbus.
Regardless of whether or not these committees recommended which policies to end, or why policy recommendations were not made, or made instead a choice to ignore the recommendations of the committees, rather than simply expressing them as a broad and overarching set of policies that would, or otherwise effectively organize or otherwise effective.

Defining the problem and framing the solution is an important step in planning. Planning is an important step in developing a new policy framework. Planning is an important step in developing a new policy framework. Planning is an important step in developing a new policy framework.

March 27 Wide ranger walk for Old Mill Trail in Farmington, MI, 9:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

April 28 Wide ranger walk for Old Mill Trail in Farmington, MI, 9:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

May 10 Ohio Greenways Conference May 16-18 The second annual Ohio Trails & Rivers Conference will take place May 16-18 at Akron. The conference is sponsored by the Ohio & Erie Canal National Heritage Corridor. The conference will cover the history of greenways in Ohio and map out a vision for a statewide greenways program in Ohio. The conference will focus on greenways and the natural environment, and will highlight the social, economic and environmental benefits of greenways development.

April 28 Meeting on urban sprawl for local religious compassionate sponsored by WE-CANT and BOLD for Progress is sponsored by Myers Orfield from Minneapoloa, 7 p.m. at Berea United Methodst Church, 170 Seminary St. in Berea. Call 216-481-2344 for more information.

April 20 General meeting of the Cleveland Waterfront Coalition to discuss plans for the lakefront, 5:30 p.m. at Cleveland State University's Mather Mansion, 3605 Euclid Ave. Call 216-371-4024.

May 2 Forest Hill Park cleanup. 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. Meet at the tennis courts off Lee Rd.

May 4 Meeting in rural Geauga County, 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. at the Geauga Park District's Big Creek Park, 9160 Robinson Rd. Chardon. Sponsored by the Geauga County Parks & Recreation, 170 Seminary St. in Berea. Call 216-371-4024 for more information.

May 7 3:30 p.m. at the Geauga Park District's Big Creek Park, 9160 Robinson Rd. Chardon. Sponsored by the Geauga County Parks & Recreation, 170 Seminary St. in Berea. Call 216-371-4024 for more information.

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Population density in Northeast Ohio


From The Face of Northeast Ohio 2010 prepared by the Center for Urban Studies, University of Akron.