

**Duluth-Superior Metropolitan Interstate Council
HARBOR TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

Meeting Summary

December 5, 2007

WITC Conference Center, Superior, WI

HTAC Voting Members Present		HTAC Voting Members Absent	
Organization	Representative	Organization	Representative
City of Duluth	Chuck Froseth	Douglas County	VACANT
City of Superior	Jason Serck (<i>Chair</i>)	Industry-Coal sector	Fred Shusterich
Duluth Seaway Port Auth	Jim Sharrow	Industry-General Bulk	Jerry Fryberger (alt)
Industry-General Bulk	Mike McCoshen	Industry-General Bulk	Bill McGiffert (alt)
Industry-Harbor Engineering	Ted Smith (<i>Vice-Chair</i>)	Industry-General Cargo	Gary Nicholson
Industry-Pilots/ Vessel Ops	Bob Libby	Industry-Grain sector	Mick Sertich
Isaak Walton League	Gary Glass	Industry-Harbor Services	Ed Montgomery
MIC	Ed Anderson	Industry-Ore Sector	Tom Steele
MN DNR	Patty Fowler	Industry-Recreation	Joel Johnson
MnDOT	Denny Johnson (alt)	NWRPC	Jason Laumann
MPCA	Pat Carey	Save Lake Superior Assoc	Nancy Paisley (alt)
St. Louis River CAC	Ted R. Smith	St Louis County	Barbara Hayden
USCG Marine Safety Office	CDR Gary Croot	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers	Steve Brossart
US Fish & Wildlife Service	Dave Warburton	USDA-NRCS	Paul Sandstrom
WI DNR	Duane Lahti	US EPA	David Cowgill
WisDOT	Martin Forbes	WLSSD	Jack Ezell
Others Present			
Organization	Representative	Organization	Representative
City of Duluth	Bob Bruce	SEH Consulting	Charlene Johnson
City of Duluth	Chris Kleist	Technical Advisor	Bill Majewski
JGP Group	Lisa Neitzel	UMD Dept of Economics	Jim Skurla
MIC	Ron Chicka	USCG Marine Safety Office	Larry DiDomenico (alt)
MIC	Andy McDonald	US Customs Service	Barbara Lambus
MIC	Rondi Watson	UW-Extension	Becky Sapper
MIC	Lora Skarman	UW-Extension	Cathy Techtmann
MN Sea Grant	Dale Bergeron	UW-Superior	Dr. Richard Stewart
MPCA	Marc Hershfield (alt)	WI Sea Grant	Gene Clark

1. Agenda Review / Introductions

HTAC Chair Jason Serck called the meeting to order at 9:07 a.m. All participants introduced themselves. No changes to the agenda were put forward.

2. Committee Business

September 5, 2007 HTAC Meeting Summary

Chair Serck called for changes to the Meeting Summary as presented. He noted that he had incorrectly been listed as chair for that meeting – Vice-chair Ted Smith had presided in his absence.

Motion by Bob Libby/Martin Forbes to approve the September 5, 2007 Meeting Summary with revision as noted. Motion carried unanimously.

2008 Meeting Calendar

A calendar of 2008 quarterly HTAC meetings was distributed. Chair Serck asked that members make note of next year's meeting dates and locations.

HTAC Work Program

Andy McDonald presented the 2008 Harbor Planning Work Program. MIC Director Ron Chicka announced that this year's activities may warrant a small organizational contribution in accordance with the Harbor Partnering Agreement, as harbor planning has become a larger portion of the MIC's work program.

3. 21st Avenue West Wetland Habitat/Stormwater Management Project

Bob Bruce, Duluth City Planning Director, explained that there has been interest in constructing a wetland habitat in this area of the harbor since 1999, but the project was stalled because of contamination concerns and a scope that was thought to be overly broad. He noted that the current concept now favors multiple uses, including a constructed wetland, a stormwater garden and a park with public access via the planned Munger Trail extension. The land is owned by the city and WLSSD. No funds have yet been dedicated to this or any project--they want to conduct preliminary work to better visualize the potential uses. The city council recently voted to form a working group and is putting together a list of potential members. When it gets underway, they plan to work with the Army Corps and the MPCA to develop the project.

Charlene Johnson, Environmental Scientist at SEH, spoke briefly about her own history with this project, including graduate research which focused on the constructing a wetland from dredged materials. She expressed enthusiasm for the potential for habitat design and restoration in this area.

Gary Glass noted that the project area's proximity to WLSSD represents an opportunity to utilize the waste heat for commercial and industrial purposes.

Ted R. Smith commented that it makes sense to build on the work conducted for the earlier proposals. He added that although it's been difficult to get a clear answer to how contaminated materials could be handled, the way the new SLRIDT superfund site functions may provide some concrete practical answers to that issue.

4. Erie Pier Processing and Re-use Facility Cost Analysis

Jim Skurla, Acting Director of UMD's Labovitz School of Business and Economics, presented information about a research project currently underway to determine cost

accounting and capital budgeting for a proposed Processing and Re-use Facility (PRF) at Erie Pier. He explained that in late 2007, he and co-researcher Rodger Brannan received a research grant from the Great Lakes Maritime Research Institute (GLMRI) to follow up on the proposal, put forward by the MIC's Erie Pier Management Plan, to extend the service life of the current Confined Disposal Facility (CDF) by converting it to a facility that processes the materials dredged from the Duluth-Superior harbor for re-use instead of simply storing them. Key to the success of the plan is the ability to market those materials for municipal and commercial uses. Skurla noted that his own background is in business planning and market analysis, which is how he is approaching the project. He explained that the study methodology will be based on cost minimization rather than profit maximization, because the main value of the proposed Erie Pier PRF is that it would create capacity and extend the life of the facility indefinitely. He added that this is not a cost-benefit study, but rather a financial analysis—i.e., it does not attempt to identify environmental and/or other benefits associated with a PRF. He further noted that the research will utilize a standard methodology which can be applied to CDFs at other ports. The final report is to be completed by October 2008; he offered to return to the HTAC for a follow-up presentation.

5. National Estuarine Research Reserve System (NERR)

Cathy Techtmann, Department Head and Education Coordinator for the University of Wisconsin-Extension at the Ashland Visitor Center, and Becky Sapper, Lake Superior Freshwater Estuary Coordinator, presented information about the site designation process currently underway for the National Estuarine Research Reserve (NERR) System.

They reported that beginning in 2003, more than twenty partner organizations wrote letters of support requesting a site selection process and feasibility study for a NERR designation along Wisconsin's Lake Superior south shore. NERR is a federal-state partnership, funded through the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), which designates sites for long-term estuary research and monitoring, education and infrastructure maintenance. The final result of developing a NERR site on Lake Superior would be better understanding of Lake Superior's coastal ecosystems and greater integration of research and education for Wisconsin's coastal communities and would receive annual funding totaling approximately \$750,000. The majority of the designated sites are along saltwater coasts; this would be only the second freshwater estuary in the NERR network. The three sites under consideration in this area are estuaries at Fish Creek and Bark River on Lake Superior's south shore, as well as the St. Louis River in the Superior harbor.

They noted that the multi-year site selection process is nearly complete. A site selection technical team provided leadership and scientific expertise by local individuals and

organizations, and a public involvement team has been giving presentations to gather local input and involvement. The final designation is expected by the year 2010 at the latest.

In answer to questions, they noted that no private or tribal lands will be taken—they are looking only at lands that have public ownership; no local taxation will be required to support NERR activities; and people will still be able to hunt and fish and access the sites—no additional regulations would be imposed. Ted R Smith emphasized that there would be no conflicts with the current working port activities, or to maritime industries generally.

For more information, see the following websites:

<http://www.uwex.edu/ces/nlvc/estuary/>

www.nerrs.noaa.gov

6. Wisconsin's Harbor Assistance Program

Superior Planning and Port Director Jason Serck gave details about two project applications submitted for funding by the WisDOT-administered Harbor Assistance Program (HAP), for improvements to the CLM Superior Lime Plant and the Cenex Harvest States facility. The latter is the first project specifically related to the harbor corrosion issue to replace sheet piling and apply coatings. Jason stated that the State of Wisconsin had significantly increased its cash allocation to the HAP program and that there was a good chance that both Superior proposals would be funded through the competitive application process. He noted that private entities now eligible to apply, although they will generally fare better if they partner up with a local unit of government.

In discussion that followed about the corrosion issue: Gene Clark reported that about \$100,000 funding had been obtained for the City of Superior from a state DNR program (recreational boating fund), plus \$30,000 in Coastal Management Program funding, for the D-S Harbor corrosion study. He added that corrosion studies to date have been directed at causes, upcoming studies to focus on protective measures.

7. NE Minnesota/NW Wisconsin Regional Freight Study

Andy McDonald, MIC Principal Planner, reported that although this study has not yet been funded by MnDOT, based on the need for this information and the likely emphasis on freight in the next federal transportation bill, MIC staff is moving forward to get this study underway in 2008.

Study recommendations would be geared to identifying possible designated freight routes and incorporating freight considerations into future transportation investments.

Regional issues include the transport of natural resources and multi-modal transportation needs. Ron Chicka described the possible future need for transporting oversize loads between the Duluth-Superior and Canada—planned tar sands operations in Alberta require sub-assemblies that are too large to be shipped by rail, will need to go by truck on dedicated routes. Andy added that several years ago, the MIC gave input into the design of the Piedmont reconstruction based on our awareness of the need to transport high, wide and heavy loads in and out of the port; one goal of this study would be to make this type of information available region-wide.

Barbara Lambus commented that her agency has been contacted by the railroads because of their interest in a switching facility in this area, instead of heading down to Chicago.

Dr. Stewart recommended that we utilize the input of the Shippers Advisory Group conducted by MnDOT.

8. Subcommittee Reports

Dredging

Gene Clark reported that subcommittees based on the Erie Pier management plan are up and running. The issue of purple loosestrife (invasive plants generally) turned out to be more significant than previously thought—Jim Sharrow is leading a subcommittee to specifically address this high-priority issue so as to move forward with beneficial re-use.

He added that the UMD cost analysis study is only one component of an overall marketing plan; Dale Bergeron is leading a subcommittee to draft a broader marketing plan which will incorporate findings from the UMD study.

He reported that letters had been sent to the Army Corps Detroit office from the Port Authority, the City of Superior and the MIC to recommend that the current DMMP be amended to update the designated disposal options and possible projects.

He noted that there was lots of interest expressed by the National Dredging Team in beneficial re-use (only piecemeal efforts are taking place currently)—reinforcing the idea that the Erie Pier plan could have widespread application across the Great Lakes.

Advocacy

Ted Smith reported that the annual meeting of Great Lakes Maritime Task Force was held recently in Cleveland, and that membership had significantly increased since last year. He noted that if and when the current congress passes a budget, we stand to benefit substantially, based on the new WRTA bill. He also attended an Army Corps stakeholders meeting, good participation, encouraged that they're hearing the message higher up the Corps hierarchy. He noted that the Great Lakes used to have plenty of water; now with low water levels stakeholders are energized. With the Lakes and Rivers division being managed out of Cincinnati, significantly more money went to river

maintenance rather than the Great Lakes, they are attempting to get funding restored that was taken away in the nineties. He added that the Corps has become a strong partner with the Great Lakes Maritime Task Force, they provide a lot of information that we can use. They basically advised the Lakes interests that we need to lobby more heavily--they are not objecting to our effort.

Modeling

Gary Glass reported that we still don't have a "home" for the WARMF model, problematic because it could be useful in modeling applications for various harbor issues such as the VHS fish virus. He suggested that the Arrowhead Regional Development Commission (ARDC) might serve in this capacity (as a home base for the model), stressed that it needs to move forward, goal is to get the model up and running. Ted R. Smith suggested that if funded, the NERR program might be a natural partner for this effort and a better match, mission-wise.

9. Project Updates / Roundtable Discussion

Jim Sharrow announced that the Port Authority will host a luncheon for Maritime Administrator Sean T. Connaughton of the United States Maritime Administration (MARAD) on January 8. He will be making his first visit to the Port of Duluth-Superior, where he will give an address regarding Great Lakes/St. Lawrence Seaway system infrastructure. Jim added that HTAC members will be invited, along with maritime industry leaders and the local press.

Richard Stewart announced that GLMRI has been appointed to advise the Secretary of Transportation on maritime issues.

10. Adjourn

No other items were brought forward for discussion and Chair Serck adjourned the meeting at 11:40 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Rondi Watson, MIC Secretary