Discussion outline – Using forms, applications, criteria and checklists, and gathering technical information to make consistent and informed decisions

Plan Commissioner Network
Wed, May 28, 2008 @ T. Menasha Municipal Complex, 6-8pm

Learning and sharing checklists and processes that are useful in helping PCs evaluate development proposals and make consistent decisions.

Why is this topical?
- Consistency is required by law – the comp planning law requires that all decisions related to zoning and subdivisions are consistent with the plan. This usually means that the zoning code, and related codes, should support and help to advance the goals in your plan.
- Developers are happier if they know what is expected of them (timing, materials submitted, process), and what to expect of you
- Plan Commissions are in more control if they have clear processes, and understandable criteria and definitions

I. Decision-making criteria and processes - should be consistent with Plan content and reflected in codes
      a) Conditional Uses
      b) Rezoning
      c) CSM and Plat review processes
      d) Extra-territorial Plat review
      e) Variances

II. How/when to tap experts
      a) Finding data on your own – e.g. DNR Land use Tools, County GIS data and maps
      b) Role of consultants

III. Communication
      b) Good communication tools – brochures, websites, clear checklists and drawings
      c) Clear documentation of consistency and findings of fact

IV. Challenges
      a) 'Grey areas' in the text
      b) Definitions and interpretations of planning terms (e.g. land uses, allowed uses, agriculture, rural character, scattered residential development)

References: The Plan Commissioner Handbook and the Zoning Board of Appeals/Adjustment Handbook are useful for information on zoning, conditional uses, variances etc. Both can be found here: **http://www.uwsp.edu/CNR/landcenter/pubs-handbooks.html**