

**Blueprint 2000 CAC Meeting Minutes**  
 Thursday, February 11, 2010  
 Blueprint 2000 Office – Koger Center  
 1311 Executive Center Drive – Suite 109

Lamar Taylor, Chair, called the Citizens Advisory Committee meeting to order at 4:34 pm.

**Committee Members present:**

Tom O’Steen	Erin Ennis
Lamar Taylor	Ron Pease
Kevin McGorty	Stephen Hogge
Nancy Miller	Dale Landry
Burt Davy	Windell Paige
Scott Balog	

**Guests/Presenters/Staff:**

Jim Davis	Angela Richardson
Phil Maher	Harry Reed
Dave Bright	Alisha Wetherell
Dave Snyder	Paco de la Fuente
Jim Shepherd	Luciano Ramos
Latesa Turner	David O’Keefe
Ray Youmans	Mark Jones
Gary Phillips	Rita Stephens
Margie Quillman	

**Agenda Modifications**

Item #6 was moved to the beginning of the Agenda, otherwise there were no modifications.

Dave Bright noted that the Blueprint Program had received an award from Storm Water Solutions Magazine for Martha Wellman Pond and Park, and Blueprint also had been notified that the Big Bend Chapter of the American Public Works Association had chosen the Martha Wellman Park project and the Capital Circle Southeast project (Tram to Connie) as local APWA award winners.

**Information Items**

**Item #6: Acceptance of FY 2009 Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR) and Appropriation of FY 2009 Operating Fund Balance**

This item was informational only. Phil Maher distributed the Management Letter for the CAFR and noted that the Blueprint Program received another clean audit.

**Item #1: Leveraging Update**

This item was informational only.

**Item #2: Capital Circle Southeast: Woodville Highway to Tram Road – Design/Build Project**

This item was informational only.

**Item #3: Capital Circle Southeast: Woodville Highway to Crawfordville Road – Design/Build Project**

This item was informational only.

**Item #4: Capital Circle Northwest/Southwest: US 90 to Orange Avenue**

This item was informational only.

Mr. Davis provided clarification regarding the terminus of the project. He stated that Blueprint needed \$55M to construct through the SR 20 intersection. With only \$40M available, Blueprint did not have the option of going through the intersection. They could not get permits approved to build to the north side of Blountstown Highway without redesigning the stormwater portion of the project. Blueprint needed to do what they could for the benefit of the community even though stopping north of SR 20 was not the perfect solution.

**Item #5: Sales Tax Receipts Update**

This item was informational only.

Consent Items

**Item #7: CAC Minutes: December 3, 2009**

It was noted that on page 5, the word “conscious” should be “conscience”.

Kevin McGorty moved approval. Tom O’Steen seconded; it passed unanimously.

Presentations/Discussion

**Item #8: Cascade Trail Update**

Jim Davis stated that bid openings for the Park’s construction occurred on February 4, 2010. Blueprint placed a \$23M cap on the bids for construction of Cascade Park. They were retaining a 15% contingency (compared to the typical 10%) due to the “unknowns” with contamination, utilities, etc., within the park. Two of the four bids received were less than that cap; Sandco at \$22,980,000 and M. Inc at \$22,994,000 were the low bidders with a difference of \$14,000. As was standard practice, Blueprint was exercising their due diligence in the review of the bids. In the course of doing so, the City of Tallahassee MBE office was investigating “issues” related to the bids. While the bids were in and the lowest bidder identified, Blueprint was not in a position to announce who actually won the contract until the MBE issues were resolved. Erin Ennis questioned the odds of a bid challenge. Mr. Davis stated the probability of a challenge was high in light of the issues. Blueprint would follow the City’s procedure in that event with the City Manager having the final decision; legal challenges would also be an option. It had the potential

to significantly delay the project.

Gary Phillips stated that staff had identified options A-D for the bidding process. Option A incorporated everything related to the Amenities in the design plans; subsequent options had amenities deducted (by staff) with option D having only five of the amenities included. The bids came in for option C. The items that **would not** be constructed in the first phase were the Hydrological Cycle Fountain (underground vaults and electrical would be constructed, however, the pumps and fountain would not be included), Boca Chuba (the concrete pad it would rest on would be constructed), the Shade Canopy over the amphitheater, and the History Fence. Blueprint would proceed with design, as with other amenities, so that they would be construction ready should donors step forward.

Stephen Hogge questioned if the amenities, such as the Shade Canopy, would be constructed at a later date. Mr. Davis stated that all of the amenities could be added in an iterative process. Blueprint had decided that if, prior to approximately six months of finishing the contract with the existing contractor, they were to receive funding (from private donations) they would probably amend the existing contract to allow them to complete the work. If it was less than six months until the end of the contract, Blueprint would probably wait for the existing contract to expire and advertise for the construction of the newly funded amenity.

Mr. Phillips stated that other items in the plans would be constructed: the structures, bridges, drainage, utility relocation, trails, landscaping, lighting, the Interactive Fountain, the Cascade Fountain, the Meridian Plaza, restroom facility, and community room. The Smokey Hollow Plaza would also be included. It was currently under design however was not included in the bid price because the donation had not been received when the RFP was posted. Once the design was completed it would be added to the final selected contractor or someone else. It would be opened when the overall park opened.

Kevin McGorty stated that of the amenities not included in option C he felt the shade structure over the plaza, if delayed for a few years, would affect performances at the amphitheater. It would take a "major bite" out of the park. Mr. Phillips understood and stated that it all depended on the contingency funding and what might be available at the end of the contract. The members of the committee requested that the Shade Canopy be made a number one priority when residual contingency or other funding was available.

Tom O'Steen questioned the plans for private fundraising that they had not initiated yet. Mr. Davis stated Blueprint had received \$4.2M in private and public funding and gave examples of the donations and the amenities they were funding. He further stated that the brick program was on-line (Blueprint had sold two bricks to date). There was discussion of selling benches, garbage cans, etc. There was one gentleman, who requested to remain anonymous, stated Mr. Davis, that intended to raise \$500,000 for the Meridian Plaza. If that came to fruition Blueprint dollars could be reallocated to, perhaps, the Shade Canopy because the Plaza would already have been constructed. There were ongoing activities to fund Centennial Field Memorial Garden; it had not yet materialized but Blueprint felt "fairly comfortable" about it.

Lamar Taylor suggested that the CAC inform the IA of priorities for residual contingency funds. Mr. Davis stated that he felt that was premature. He requested holding that sentiment until closer to the end of the project. However, the CAC would be on record (via the minutes) of their position regarding contingency fund and the Shade Canopy.

Dale Landry stated that he could anticipate that with a project being developed in the area of the former Smokey Hollow community, capitalizing on money being spent, there would be donors who would ask, "Why wasn't Smokey Hollow considered as a part of it, not as an 'add on' to it?" He anticipated comments because he knew there was movement in the community about Smokey Hollow and not losing the significance of that community. It was good to know there was something being planned, in all fairness he wanted to alert Blueprint that folks would question why there was no sensitivity to it from the beginning.

Mr. Phillips stated that Blueprint was sensitive to Smokey Hollow; they had to find the funding for it and that took time. Mr. Landry concurred; he reiterated that at the time of construction however, there would be people who would say that Smokey Hollow should have been on the forefront not a follow up to it.

Dave Bright stated that Blueprint met with community representatives three years ago and Blueprint staff attended the Smokey Hollow Reunion at the church on Holton Street. They had done their best to gather information from the community but it had been extremely difficult. Staff continued to work with Althemese Barnes, of the Riley House, because they understood the seriousness and significance of Smokey Hollow to Tallahassee and what would be put on that site. Mr. Landry stated that his statements were not intended as condemnation of anyone or anything. Based on his experiences, he stated, when construction began the folks who had an interest in Smokey Hollow would "all of a sudden" surface (despite efforts made by Blueprint for the past three years). As president of NAACP and a member of the CAC, he anticipated the phone calls questioning the process. He stated that he was asking so that he would be informed of the plans and efforts of Blueprint staff.

Mr. Davis stated that the general concept for the Park was that Blueprint funding would pay for the baseline infrastructure to include the stormwater ponds, sidewalks, and those types of things. The goal had been all along to fund the amenities from private donations. Blueprint had been successful at securing private funding for Smokey Hollow. Nothing in the park that was attributable to any one special...testimony to any one thing would be funded with Blueprint dollars. Centennial Field, the Lake Hall School House, the Veteran's Memorial were all on hold because their funding fell apart, stated Mr. Davis. The only reason Smokey Hollow was not included in the base line of the bid process, for phase one of construction, was that the funding was not secured in time to incorporate it.

Kevin McGorty stated that the public expectation was that it would be a gathering place that would tremendously suffer if there was not the ability to have a functional amphitheater. Delaying, by a few years, being able to have entertainment there...to not have the synergy of having entertainment and performances there...it (the Shade Canopy) needed to be made a high priority.

Windell Paige stated that “an ounce of prevention was worth a pound of cure.” He strongly recommended that Blueprint have the Public Involvement Office develop speaking points on the history, sensitivities, deliberations, and coordination efforts as they related to Smokey Hollow to be prepared when (if) people spoke out negatively about it as Mr. Landry suspected would happen. Mr. Hogge confirmed that Blueprint was not saying Smokey Hollow Plaza would not be constructed but simply that it was not included with the baseline bid. Funding was now available but as it was not designed, it was not included with the initial package.

Mr. Davis stated that Blueprint did not have the funding available to design to 100% each of the amenities in the park. They had a limited amount of design funding and it was imperative that the basic infrastructure (stormwater, trails/sidewalks, etc) was completed. Without a donor or sponsor for Smokey Hollow (or any other amenity) Blueprint did not initiate the design. They were able to surreptitiously fund the Meridian Plaza therefore it was designed to 100%. Everything that was designed was bid as part of the \$23M package. Smokey Hollow Plaza could not have been included in the bid packet because it had not been designed; therefore the contractor would not have known what to bid on.

Mr. Davis further stated that Blueprint had since secured the funding and initiated the design. At the appropriate time, Blueprint would implement a change to the contract to build it. Blueprint had become aware of rumors that citizens were concerned about the proposed concept for the Smokey Hollow Plaza. Mr. Landry stated that Mr. Paige's comments were critical. Mr. Landry was concerned that Blueprint would wear the mask of all the problems or what was not done with Smokey Hollow. He and Mr. Paige were suggesting Blueprint be even more pro-active regarding Smokey Hollow and the community.

Tom O'Steen stated, for the benefit of everyone (except longstanding members), that it was reminiscent of another aspect of Cascade Park, Franklin Boulevard. Enclosing the St. Augustine Branch along Franklin Boulevard, to assist with flooding, had always been part of the Capital Cascade Trail project. It was only after Blueprint 2000 had been approved by citizens that the after-the-fact-criticisms surfaced. He ensured Mr. Landry and other new members of the CAC that Smokey Hollow had been recognized as a component of Cascade Park from the very beginning. He was concerned that the new members were under the impression that it was only when funding recently became available was Blueprint inserting it into the project. That was not the case. From day one, on every concept plan created, there was a Smokey Hollow component, he emphasized. It was part of every public hearing, drawing, always.

As Mr. Davis indicated, Mr. O'Steen continued, the various components or amenities; things other than the grading of the property, the installation of utilities, or the stormwater fix that was the main environmental component of the park program, those became the backbone or the base of Cascade Park. It had always been the idea, but Cascade Park continued to get more and more expensive. Therefore when the project was put out to bid it was to be for the base infrastructure; all additional amenities would be funded some other way.

Mr. O'Steen further stated that various organizations began funding the amenities. At that point it was a matter of timing, when the funding (donations) hit, as to whether those amenities could

be incorporated into the plan set that was put out for bid. Do not be mistaken, he stated, that Smokey Hollow was a "tacked on" component.

Mr. Landry stated that it was important for the CAC and Blueprint to understand that this was his first time hearing about it. The way it was presented left him thinking, "Where is Smokey Hollow?" His point was that, as a member of the CAC, it was his first time hearing about it; imagine what the reaction would be out in the community. He suggested including that Smokey Hollow was a part of the concept from the beginning needed to be included in the presentations so that the descendants of that community would feel honored, and feel that their area was respected.

Mr. McGorty stated that the descendants were honored and respected. Also there were public hearings and public input. He did not understand what staff was struggling with in terms of documenting the history of Smokey Hollow. It was well documented and could be found at Riley House, FAMU Archives, or the Tallahassee Trust.

Jim Davis stated that was not the issue. Blueprint had received subtle feedback and could not attest to whom it was from, that some of the descendants were upset with the proposed concept to memorialize Smokey Hollow. Staff had made repeated attempts to contact Althemese Barnes for assistance, but to date had been unsuccessful. Commissioner Gil Ziffer had also been involved. Bottom line, Blueprint did not know what the concerns were and could not get any representative of Smokey Hollow to speak openly about it.

Mr. Paige interjected that the people that would raise the most cane were the ones that did not come to the public hearings, did not know there had been public hearings, and frankly, did not care that there had been public hearings. Blueprint did their due diligence however it was a situation that required extensive public involvement. Blueprint just needed to get ahead of it. Jim Davis concurred.

Dave Bright impassionedly declared that the real issue was that Blueprint needed leaders of the black community to help them. For all of Blueprint's efforts they were either not accepted or not trusted. Staff attended the reunion; they held meetings, presented aerials trying to get the layout of the neighborhood, etc. Their concerns were a mystery to Blueprint because of the lack of response from community representatives to Blueprint's questions of: "*What is the issue? What do you want? Do you want to commemorate the culture? ...the artists? What?*" It was an issue that staff had spent a minimum of 100 hours working unsuccessfully on. Mr. Landry and Mr. Paige agreed to help staff resolve the outstanding issues.

Mr. McGorty stated that the important thing was that they had consensus and that there was a memorial because it was a vestige of the city's history that should not be forgotten. Mr. Davis stated that would not be. It was always Blueprint's intention to include Smokey Hollow with all due honor and respect. Of all the amenities in Cascade Park, Blueprint staff spent more hours on Smokey Hollow and was more frustrated by it as well. Dale Landry stated that everything Blueprint had done thus far was fantastic. He suggested going to Smokey Hollow and having the descendants meet staff and CAC members there to exhibit the concept design and the changes

that would be happening in Cascade Park, as well as ask their ideas on how to memorialize Smokey Hollow.

Nancy Miller stated that she felt it had been an enlightened conversation for a number of reasons. For one, they developed an action plan. She suggested modifying how the late funding and inclusion of Smokey Hollow would be presented in future (IA) presentations to clarify for people that may not have the historical knowledge of staff and some CAC members. Mr. Landry requested other members of the CAC be present at the subsequent meetings to assist as well.

Jim Davis stated that his only concern, as a result of the conversation, was that Blueprint had a concept that they were prepared to go to design with and it could potentially be wrong. Several members disputed that it would be "wrong." Mr. Landry stated that there was nothing wrong when people were brought to the table to discuss the issues.

Burt Davy questioned who developed the concept for the Smokey Hollow Plaza. Dave Bright stated that Peter Martin with Carr, Lynch, and Sandell created it as a result of his research with Althemese Barnes and readings of old time Tallahassee. It was presented at various community meetings that had been held over the past several years. The bronze relief was to replicate Smokey Hollow building by building. That information came from a meeting with the descendents of Smokey Hollow at Blueprint and at the Reunion. While some information was gleaned from those meetings, it was not enough to complete the concept. Mr. Bright repeated that the concept had been presented at multiple public meetings. Granted many minorities were not in attendance, and the ones that were presently voicing dissatisfaction obviously were not in attendance. However, it had been included with the park since the unveiling of the first major Master Plan.

Steven Hogge questioned who the concept was unveiled to if the NAACP and Capital City Chamber were not familiar with it. Dave Bright stated that it was unveiled at a public meeting at City Hall that was advertised city wide as well as at multiple well attended (20-100 people) presentations by Jim Davis, Gary Phillips and himself over the past three years. Kevin McGorty stated that representatives of the Riley House had been involved with the project from the beginning.

Staff frustrations were obvious, stated Jim Davis. Althemese Barnes had been instrumental to the Cascade Park project and an asset to Blueprint and Peter Martin and would continue to be. He acknowledged that she was an extremely busy lady and staff had difficulty reaching her to figure out specifically what the concern was. A meeting had finally been scheduled for the following Tuesday to hopefully work it out. Members of the committee volunteered to participate in that meeting and future/additional ones as well, to help facilitate a positive outcome.

Nancy Miller requested elaboration on the Veteran's Memorial. Jim Davis stated that it was in the plan, a concept had been developed, and as "an old soldier" it gave him goose bumps to see it. The local Veteran's Association tried to raise \$1.5M to \$1.8M and unfortunately, were not able to, and it died. Mrs. Miller noted how difficult it was to raise money, certainly in the

present economy. However, she felt that once the project came on line more people would share in the excitement and would take on a dynamic of its own. Mr. Davis stated that the beauty of the park was that space was reserved for each of the unfunded amenities. As donations materialized the space was reserved, the grading would be complete, and in some cases the foundations and electrical work would be in place for them to be added. It could be 10 years, he stated, before the park was fully built out; it was an iterative process.

With the exclusion of Boca Chuba, Mrs. Miller questioned the "alarm" feature that had been included to warn visitors of a rapid rate of rise of water levels in the lower pond. Mr. Phillips stated it was not a serious element but more fun. Mr. Davis stated that the water would not rise nearly as quickly because of the installation of the double box culvert.

Dale Landry questioned if the park had been named and who was responsible for naming it. Mr. Davis stated that it had been Cascade Park and Capital Cascade Trail... Mr. Landry interjected his reasoning for asking was to determine if it had been formally named by the City or County Commissions. He felt that naming it Smokey Hollow Park might resolve the problem. Mrs. Miller stated that various components within Cascade Park or Capital Cascade Trail could be named something other. Mr. Hogge concurred. Mr. McGorty stated that he did not think they would be able to take the name "Cascade" out of the park because it was the "cascade" that was the reason for the founding of Tallahassee.

Nancy Miller questioned the high water levels and if there would be effects from erosion. Mr. Davis stated that with the double box culvert running through the park, the majority of stormwater would never actually be "in" the park. It would pass beneath and fill the lower pond. It was designed so that as water levels in the lower pond increased it would flood the park gently from the lower end. Ergo when the water was released downstream, in a controlled method, the erosion would be minimal.

In response to Mrs. Miller's inquiry about ramifications of flooding at Leon High School, Mr. Davis stated that Blueprint had met with Bill Montford when he was Superintendent of Leon County Schools. They discussed potential partial solutions realizing that flooding could probably never be fully resolved; when one constructs anything in what was formerly a lake, Lake Leon, it was near impossible to keep it from flooding. A plan was developed with Mr. Montford to move the parking lot to the north and turn the present parking lot area into a small, mostly dry, stormwater pond. It would not work without the improvements on Franklin Boulevard as well as upstream improvements in the Lafayette Park area, which was where the problem began. Then there would be opportunity to significantly reduce flooding in that area. However, it had not moved forward since the IA made the decision to make Segment 1 the last segment constructed. Furthermore, improvements to Franklin Boulevard were currently completely unfunded. There was the potential for Blueprint to receive \$1.7M from the funding received by Leon County and the City of Tallahassee as part of the FEMA reimbursement from Tropical Storm Fay. In hopes of that, Blueprint had developed a \$1.7M design for interim improvements to Franklin Boulevard. Interim in that case referred to approximately 15 years, he stated.

Mr. Davis, in giving additional history of the Capital Cascade Trail project, he noted that the stormwater that was presently being stored on Franklin and at Leon during rain events would be stored in the park. The gross volume would be equivalent to one football field 140-feet deep.

**Item #9: Capital Cascade Trail – Segment 3 and 4 Update**

Gary Philips stated that the Coal Chute Pond was being designed to treat retrofit stormwater as well as redevelopment stormwater from Railroad Square and Gaines Street redevelopment. That was consistent with the EECC in that it was a regional stormwater facility rather than individual ponds on each development site. The Coal Chute Pond would treat the stormwater from the three mentioned areas. It would also generate revenue from developers looking to use the pond for treatment. Alisha Wetherell stepped in to give a PowerPoint presentation of the preliminary design concepts for Coal Chute Pond.

Dale Landry questioned the safety precautions that would be taken at the park in regards to the pond and the railroad tracks. Jim Davis stated that the pond was at grade level with 4:1 gradual slopes. It would be a dry pond, with the exception of during and after rain events, therefore Blueprint had no plans to fence it. As for the tracks, there was currently a park on site ... right or wrong but it was there now.

Furthermore, Mr. Davis explained that Railroad Square wanted to put their stormwater into Coal Chute Pond because it would save them a significant amount of money. They owned property nearby / across the street from the pond that could be used to relocate the playground amenities to that location. Mrs. Wetherell stated that Coal Chute Park would have less of a playground effect encouraging children not to be there without their parents. Mr. Davis reiterated that the pond would be shallow and decorative; if a reflecting pool was incorporated, it would be shallow as well. It was not a pond, quite frankly, that Blueprint would encourage people to visit.

Mr. Davis stated that Blueprint philosophy had been to design and construct the pond to the greatest capacity for the real estate they were able to acquire. The pond had enough capacity for all of the retrofit for the whole basin, new development (new business would not need to build stormwater ponds on their property), and attenuation as well.

Nancy Miller suggested additional field trips for the CAC to see, in person, the sites that were being discussed. Mr. Davis agreed and as in the case of the October 29, 2009, meeting staff could have shown dozens of pictures of the ditch and CAC members would not have had a true appreciation for the depth of it. The on-site meeting was effective and he could see staff scheduling more like that in the future.

Tom O'Steen questioned if it would be mainly shallow, decorative, and would encourage people not to frequent it, why would Blueprint spend the money to construct it. Mr. Davis stated that the reflecting pool would be done mainly for Railroad Square IF they contributed to the project. Staff would follow up with additional presentations as the design concept was developed.

#### Citizens To Be Heard

There were none.

#### Items From Members Of The Committee

Ron Pease stated that in listening to the discussions he had become educated on stormwater, the budget, and the hard work of Blueprint staff and consultants. He suggested that there might be a need for additional education and communication for the larger community. However, it was a give and take. Blueprint had dedicated hours of hard work to educating segments of the community. Conversely it was also the responsibility of members of the community to involve themselves in the process.

#### Adjourn

**The meeting adjourned by consensus at 6:53 pm.**