

Blueprint 2000 CAC Meeting Minutes

Thursday, May 15, 2008

Blueprint 2000 Office – Koger Center
1311 Executive Center Drive – Suite 109

Jerry Conger called the Citizens Advisory Committee meeting to order at 4:30 p.m.

Committee Members present:

Jerry Conger	Lamar Taylor
Jess Van Dyke	Kevin McGorty
Steve Amnott	Dianna Norwood
Greg Patterson	Scott Balog

Guests/Presenters/Staff:

Dave Bright	Margie Quillman
Jim Davis	Angela Richardson
Phil Maher	Ray Youmans
Dave Snyder	Harry Reed
Jim Shepherd	Paco de la Fuente
Andrew Orr	Echo Gates
Latesa Turner	Ward Miller
Gary Phillips	Steve Bailey
Ed Ringe	

Agenda Modifications

Dave Bright stated that Dianna Norwood's term on the Planning Commission would be ending, therefore the May CAC meeting would possibly be her last. The Planning Commission would need to appoint a new member as their CAC representative, however that person's application would not be received in time to be included in the June 2, 2008 IA agenda. It would be included in the September 2008 agenda. He stated that Ms. Norwood or her incumbent could attend the August 21, 2008 CAC meeting but she/they would not have a vote. He would confirm that through the CAC By-Laws. Ms. Norwood stated that according to the Planning Commission By-Laws, her position would not be vacant; she would continue to serve until someone was available to replace her. Jerry Conger questioned if Ms. Norwood could continue as a member of the CAC even though her term with the Planning Commission was ending. Jim Davis stated that would have to be determined from the CAC By-Laws.

Information Items**Item #1: Leveraging Update**

Phil Maher stated that it was a slow time with leveraging. They were working out the details and documentation for the \$1.5M that was received from FDEP in the Legislative appropriation.

Item #2: Capital Cascade Trail – Segment 2 Update

Echo Gates of Genesis stated that the Dog Park had been removed from the park design. The main issues behind the decision were animal waste in close proximity to St. Augustine Branch and concerns about it further degrading water quality. She emphasized however, that removing the Dog Park would not eliminate animal waste from the park itself or St. Augustine Branch.

There was a proposed Veterans Memorial that would be located near the existing Korean War Memorial, a rendering of which was included in the agenda. Mr. Davis spoke briefly on the symbolism included in the memorial: the replication of the Silver Star, the third highest award for bravery, the five points of the star represented each of the five military branches. Also there was potential for smaller stars within the large one to represent all of the fallen from Leon County. Admiral Rick Grant, Ret. was in charge of fund raising for the memorial (\$1.5M).

Ms. Gates further stated that the site plan was on hold until the submittal (to COT Growth Management) and approval of the Public Infrastructure Variance by the City Commission.

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

Ward Miller of Kimley-Horn stated that due to budget constraints there had been changes to the project scope. They would complete 30% plans for the primary stormwater management system in Phase 1 (1A-data collection and assessments, 1B-design engineering and construction documents). Phase 1 would provide enough information to determine which of the two segments should advance to 100% plans. The park programming elements and permitting would occur in Phase 2.

Dianna Norwood questioned how the FAMU Way extension would affect Segment 3 and Segment 4. Mr. Miller stated that there was a direct relationship between planning and design of Segment 3 and that various FAMU Way alignment alternatives were under consideration with a decision expected in late summer 2008. Blueprint and their consultants would coordinate closely with the City on Segment 3 to identify shared stormwater opportunities and to complement each other. Mr. Ward stated that Kimley-Horn and Blueprint would participate in the related public forums on the FAMU Way project.

Mr. Davis stated that based upon the emphasis put on completing the FAMU Way extension by the City Commission, it would be well under construction, possibly nearing completion before Blueprint began Capital Cascade Trail Segment 3 or Segment 4. He stated that coordinated ROW acquisitions and stormwater facilities could still be a possibility.

**Item #4: Capital Circle NW Landscaping and Regional Stormwater Pond 1 Landscaping/
Park and Item #5: Regional Stormwater Pond 1**

(Discussion of items #4 and #5 were combined.)

Dave Bright noted that there was a summary report in the agenda of the efforts to eradicate the snails. Jess Van Dyke stated that while they had made considerable progress, snail reproduction had also increased. The pond was stocked with 130 adult shell cracker fish that would eat the juvenile snails. He estimated that only 25% of the plants remained of what was originally installed.

Mr. Davis stated that a working group had been developed among Blueprint 2000, City, County, Northwest Florida Water Management District (NFWFMD), Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission (FWC), and Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) District 3 with all agencies hopefully providing funding for it. The NFWFMD, who have staff biologists, have agreed to craft, in conjunction with everyone else, a scientific study methodology suitable for future publication to establish parameters for long-term control of the snails. Lamar Taylor questioned if there was a feasible alternative other than plants in the ponds. Several staff members interjected that it could not be done, however several options had been considered but all were cost prohibitive. It was stated that it was possible that the working group could come up with other alternatives.

In regards to landscaping of the pond site and Capital Circle NW, Dave Snyder stated that staff was working through the permitting process and expected comments back from the FDOT by the end of May 2008. Recycled plastic benches had also been included in the design. The request for bid information would be out by the end of June 2008.

Item #6: Capital Circle SE May 21 Ribbon Cutting Ceremony

This item was informational only.

Item #7: Mahan Drive

Gary Phillips stated that the recommended action from the June 4, 2007 IA Meeting was included in the agenda item. Blueprint 2000 had recently received a letter from FDOT that better defined the proposed sources of the \$40M in funding, \$10M of which was from Blueprint. Additionally there would be \$13.9M from the Department of General Services for the Capital Circle Office Center DRI, \$7.8M in FDOT Federal Boxed funds, and \$7.6M in FDOT statewide funds for a total of \$39.3M for the project. He stated that key dates in the schedule were that the project would be production ready by May 2008, construction letting in September 2008 and ready for construction to begin in early 2009. The project would have a 1,200 day construction schedule. The details of the project were included in the agenda item.

Mr. Davis noted that several large oak trees that were loved by all in the community would be removed in the construction process. Jess Van Dyke asked if the median could be reduced in size to save money and trees. Mr. Davis stated that the median was at the minimum width (18-foot) which would accommodate a turn lane at intersections. The project had been under re-design for several years and the project engineers at LPA had been over it repeatedly to minimize impacts and save the trees. Kevin McGorty stated that it was a project that was widely supported by both City and County Commissions but in looking at the typical section, he was not proud of it as a Blueprint project. Mr. Davis clarified that it was not a Blueprint project; it had some funding from Blueprint but that FDOT was the lead on it.

Item #8: Capital Circle NW/SW: US 90 to Orange Avenue – Right-of-Way Acquisition (Additional Parcels) and Resolution

This item was informational only.

Consent Items

Item #9: CAC Minutes: April 3, 2008

Kevin McGorty moved to approve the minutes; seconded by Jess Van Dyke. It passed unanimously.

Presentations/Discussion

Item #10: Headwaters of the St. Marks River: Wood Sink Parcel

Dave Bright stated that in 2004, the Sensitive Lands Working Group identified Wood Sink as a priority 1 parcel for acquisition. In partnership with the St. Marks Consortium, Blueprint requested that the entire 1,057 acre St. Joe-owned parcel be added to the state list of St. Marks property slated for acquisition. The property was added to the list and it was later acquired by The Nature Conservancy in 2007. A "hand-shake deal" was made in that process, that if one of the partners could acquire the land in advance, Blueprint would work with them to buy back what was desired as Blueprint or as Leon County.

The 200-acre parcel, including Wood Sink, identified in the agenda item had been proposed for purchase by Blueprint from The Nature Conservancy. Callie DeHaven, The Nature Conservancy, communicated to Dave Bright recently that the FWC would like to purchase the entire contiguous 1,057-acres. Blueprint was amenable to the scenario of FWC purchasing and maintaining the entire tract. If however, that arrangement fell through, Blueprint might present it to the Board in the future for acquisition of the area surrounding Wood Sink.

Lamar Taylor questioned if there was any resistance to moving forward with the "hand-shake deal" if the arrangement with FWC fell through. Mr. Davis stated that he did not feel there would be. The committee agreed that the Gentlemen's Agreement should be honored.

Dianna Norwood questioned if the agreement moved forward as stated with FWC purchasing the property, how would Blueprint ensure that the \$1M would remain available as an allocation for preserving sensitive lands. Mr. Bright stated that the funding was in the Master Plan as part of one of the Headwaters of the St. Mark's line items. It would take Board action to reallocate it.

Kevin McGorty moved to honor the verbal commitment if the arrangement with FWC did not come to fruition; it was seconded by Lamar Taylor. It passed unanimously.

Item #11: CAC Attendance

Jerry Conger reminded the committee of member attendance commitments and of the Chairman's prerogative in making exceptions listed in the By-Laws. He noted that Steve Amnott had been unable to meet the requirements due to medical and dental issues. Mr. Amnott had previously stated to Mr. Conger that he would like to continue serving on the CAC. Mr. Conger proposed to allow him to continue unless there were objections from the remaining members. There were no objections to Mr. Conger's decision.

Public Hearing

Item #12: Proposed FY 2009 Blueprint 2000 Operating Budget

There were no speakers for the public hearing.

Phil Maher stated that staff was requesting an approximate 4% decrease in the overall budget. He briefly covered the breakout of line item allocations that was included in the agenda item.

Gregg Patterson stated that he disagreed with the 3% increase for salaries. He felt that "you get what you pay for" and would not like to see any impairment of Blueprint's growth and success due to a lack of "taking care of employees." Mr. Davis stated that the original operating budget presented to the City Manager did not include any increase to salaries. The Manager requested that the placeholder of 3% be added to avoid any misperceptions. Furthermore, with Board approval, Blueprint staff would not be limited to 3%. They would receive the higher of the raises given to the City or the County.

Kevin McGorty questioned if the decreases to the operating budget were due to the overall revenue shortfalls. Mr. Davis stated that staff felt it was incumbent upon them to conserve wherever possible. **Gregg Patterson moved to accept the FY 2009 Operating Budget. It was seconded by Kevin McGorty. It passed unanimously.**

Item #13: Revised Master Plan and Proposed FY 2009 – FY 2013 Blueprint Capital Budget

There were no speakers for the public hearing.

Phil Maher stated that at the latest Finance Committee Meeting, Blueprint, the City, and the County agreed that they would all use the same growth rates, based on statewide trends, for the next five years. The Finance Committee recommended a -3% decrease for FY08/09, 1% increase for FY 09/10, 2% increases for FY10/11 and FY11/12 and returning to 4.5% increases after that. The adjustments equated to \$109M to be cut from the budget by either delaying or eliminating projects. Based on that, Mr. Maher discussed the process they used to arrive at that figure as well as the Master Plans (both the approved and the proposed) and options for cutting \$109M from them.

Kevin McGorty questioned if commitments had been made for the \$25M in water quality funds to each the City and County and what the trend of expenditures were. Mr. Davis stated that both governments had committed \$10M to specific projects but he could not attest to actual expenditures. The City identified \$10M for stormwater and water quality improvements in Frenchtown. The County identified \$5M in that category and \$5M for Lake Iammonia and the Killlearn Lakes sewer system clean-up, which had already been received by the County. Mr. Davis clarified that the \$25M was accumulated at the same rate as Blueprint accumulated the overall revenues. If the City or County needed the money earlier, they pay the interests on those early draw downs, since Blueprint would essentially be their banker. Dave Bright noted that the County has also completed the Okeeheepke Pond and a second pond in the Lake Jackson area as well. Mr. Davis further stated that the County had identified approximately \$37M worth of projects for their \$25M. He could not speak to what their priorities or schedules as Blueprint did

not track that.

Dianna Norwood questioned why the Landbank was reduced so drastically (\$2.8M). Mr. Maher stated that Blueprint did not, in his opinion, have financial or legal commitments that would be affected by reducing the total amount. She felt that while Blueprint might not have legal commitments, they had a philosophy to fund sensitive land acquisitions. Mr. Davis clarified that the Land Bank funds are for any purchase that become necessary.

Kevin McGorty stated that he would like staff to present additional options other than the one that was included in the agenda item because he could not support or vote for it. Mr. Davis reminded him that in the original Blueprint Master Plan there was \$22M allocated for greenways and stormwater retrofit, not in conjunction with the corridor improvements but in the vicinity of the west side of Tallahassee. The Board reallocated that \$22M toward the completion of Capital Circle NW/SW to Orange Avenue. Blueprint was able to, through grants, to reconstitute those funds in the out years of the program. Blueprint had acquired approximately \$4.5M in greenways and mitigation property in that same area.

Mr. Maher discussed each project listed in the Master Plan:

- CCNW (I-10 to US 90) was virtually complete at a total cost of approximately \$81M;
- CCNW/SW (US 90 to Orange) while not under contract it was a top priority of the Board (getting to the airport). Furthermore, Blueprint entered into a Joint Participation Agreement (JPA) with FDOT and received \$42M for ROW and \$8M, in Federal funds, for construction. The only funding available to be cut was in the out years in stormwater retrofit and greenways. However, \$4.2M worth of mitigation remained in the project that could be used to reconstitute Gum Swamp;
- CCSE (Tram Road to Connie Drive) was virtually complete with a total cost of approximately \$44M;
- CCSE (Woodville to Tram) was currently under contract and under construction. Additionally, Blueprint received \$9.5M from FDOT for construction and a SIB loan for Blueprint's share of the match with FDOT, and there was \$4.3M for ROW given as well.

Mr. Davis noted that it would cost Blueprint a fortune to terminate a signed contract. Mr. McGorty stated that he felt that the environmental projects were hit extremely hard with the proposed cuts. He understood that the money had to come from the out-years. Staff had aggressively pursued the road projects, for great reasons – leveraging, the cost of acquisition, etc. However, the voters of Leon County did not vote strictly for road projects. He reiterated his request for options that would benefit the environment as well.

Mr. Maher continued his discussion of the Master Plan:

- CCSE (Woodville to Crawfordville) was completed to 60% design only;
- CCSW (Crawfordville to Orange) retained funding for the PD&E study only. The remaining \$27M (design, ROW) was eliminated;
- Capital Cascade Trail Segment 1 – construction was eliminated and \$5M was reconstituted for interim improvements to Franklin Boulevard;
- Capital Cascade Trail Segment 3 – funding for all of the ROW and enough construction dollars to make some improvements, was retained but pushed farther out;

- Capital Cascade Trail Segment 4 – funding was increased by \$5.4M due to inflation and moved out, but was intact.

Mr. Maher stated that the only options for projects to cut funding for would be sensitive lands/environmental projects, Capital Cascade Trail Segments, and CCSW stormwater retrofit.

Lamar Taylor stated that the cost benefits were in favor of honoring present commitments. The cuts might not come to pass but it was a necessary exercise given the decrease in sales tax revenue. He suggested a construction moratorium – so that when money became available it was not immediately routed to a road project but siphoned back to a previously cut environmental project. He felt it was as important to have a prioritization of which projects would be reintroduced as it was to prioritize the cuts.

Mr. McGorty stated that he would agree that there were contractual obligations; however, there was a larger obligation, in his opinion, to the committee and upholding what the voters requested. He agreed with Mr. Taylor that if no other options for cuts could be found, at a minimum the CAC should recommend prioritization for when funding returned.

Jess Van Dyke stated that when the EECC developed the Blueprint 2000 Program, they discussed whether or not percentages should be designated for roadway and environmental projects. The “green” side originally suggested a 50/50 split but then realized that road projects were so expensive and 50/50 would be disproportionate. They compromised on one-third to environmental and two-thirds to roadway projects as their rule of thumb. He was curious how the percentages were distributed in capital budget, both the approved and proposed Master Plans.

Mr. Davis, added the totals, and estimated that environmental issues were at \$220M out of \$520M; that was 40%. He stated that the 40% did not include any of the environmental components that were handled within the road projects themselves. Furthermore, the environmental projects were 100% funded at the expense of the road projects; which were not fully funded in the first place. Additionally, the original Master Plan for Blueprint was for \$520M, only \$7M more than the proposed Master Plan. He further stated that the cuts related to the sales tax decrease had essentially negated the leveraging successes of the past few years. Moreover, the Headwaters of the St. Marks was \$9M total; it was much more than that even with the cuts. Also, Capital Cascade Trail Segment 4 was not funded in the original Master Plan except for ROW; it was currently fully funded.

Mr. McGorty stated that the roadway projects were at or near completion, for good reasons, compared to environmental and green infrastructure projects that would be taking the brunt of the cuts. Mr. Maher stated that CCSE Woodville to Tram was unfunded until staff won a TRIP grant for \$4.3M, found the match, and received \$9.5M in a second TRIP grant and a SIB Loan from FDOT for construction. Mr. McGorty stated that in the EECC and when Blueprint went out on referendum they recognized that they would do the best they could to leverage funds; he commended staff for their leveraging successes. In terms of the finished project lists however, some were concerned that it would not contain the expectations and promises that were made.

Mr. McGorty stated that everyone took the cumulative responsibility. With the reality of revenue shortfall, it was a skewed picture. He was unsure if there was anything that could be

done about it however due to contract obligations, etc. At minimum however, he felt there should be a priority ranking to return revenue to environmental projects if/when the revenue picture changed in a few years. Mr. Van Dyke requested staff create pie charts to simplify the statistics and easily identify the percentages allocated to environmental and roadway projects.

Mr. Davis stated that Blueprint was not trying to raid the environmental money at the expense of the roadways. He further stated that there were some legal and financial ramifications that were necessary to consider in the process. Capital Cascade Trail for example, the process of designing and permitting it had been the most difficult one for Blueprint. Staff had been working on that project for five-years, that was the reason it was not moving forward as rapidly, not because it had not been emphasized, it was simply a much more complicated design and permitting process.

Mr. Davis questioned how much of the \$44M for CCSE Tram to Connie for example should be credited to environmental issues, recreational issues, or additional holistic amenities. He guaranteed that the \$44M did not represent asphalt on the ground. If he did not include those amenities then the numbers would be distorted. Gregg Patterson stated that the CAC members needed that tool to explain it to their communities not just to see it for themselves. Mr. Davis stated that for the major categories staff would create that for them.

Mr. Maher reiterated that \$109M had to be cut from the Master Plan before it was submitted to the IA for approval in September. The \$109M could only come from Sensitive Lands, Capital Cascade Trail, or stormwater retrofit. Mr. Davis stated that staff was seeking CAC guidance on whether or not staff had used the correct priorities in working the financial plan or specific recommendations regarding projects. Staff would be happy to work the details and incorporate those before presenting it to the Board.

Mr. McGorty stated that governments change contracts all the time and he would like to get an opinion from City and County legal staff of what the legal obligations would be in terms of altering some of the road projects. The scenario painted provided very few options and he would like other alternatives. Mr. Davis stated that there would be some legal and financial ramifications because there was a JPA with FDOT to construct CCNW/SW as well as commitments related to the \$42M for ROW and \$8M from the Federal government.

Mr. Taylor clarified that the legal ramification was that Blueprint might lose the \$42M. Mr. Maher stated that it would not free up any of the \$109 that needed to be cut. Mr. Davis stated that it was worse than that because Blueprint had spent a considerable amount of that \$42M acquiring ROW. He did not anticipate FDOT allowing Blueprint to keep that money if we did not build the road. Mr. McGorty stated that he felt that type of analysis would be very important to do on a project by project basis.

Mr. Taylor stated that he was fairly cautious but did not know all the facts, they could speculate on ups or downs of the market or what FDOT might or might not do. He questioned what would the implication be of not following through because CCNW/SW was the biggest transportation project. Mr. Maher stated that they were in the best case scenario only talking about \$40M. Mr. McGorty stated that would be one third and removing Capital Cascade Trail Segment 1 would be another third. Mr. Maher stated that was exactly what he was hoping to achieve through their discussion. Mr. McGorty stated that the objective was to keep some of the projects intact to have

completed corridors and environmental projects that were not so fragmented that they no longer meant anything to the public.

Mr. Davis stated that he understood Mr. McGorty to say that he would prefer staff to revisit Capital Cascade Trail to fully fund as many of the segments rather than partially fund all. That seemed contrary to what the CAC recommended at the last meeting. Mr. McGorty agreed it was 100% contrary but that was with a deficit of \$70M and the deficit was currently at \$109M. He further stated that would get them through one project. He would also prefer staff to perform the analysis in terms of legal liability on certain road projects outside of any currently signed contracts.

Mr. Davis stated that staff could do that. He felt fairly certain that he knew what the response would be from FDOT but would pursue it anyway. Moreover, the Agency Board had always told staff that their number one priority was to "get to the Airport." He did not think that they would approve a staff recommendation to not build past Tennessee Street. Mr. Maher pointed out that from an environmental standpoint there were many positive impacts to Gum Swamp that would not occur if Blueprint did not construct CCNW/SW.

Mr. Taylor stated that the flip side was that by the nature of road construction, a contract was necessary. That was not the case with environmental projects. He suggested fully funding one segment of Capital Cascade Trail and entering into a contract to secure those funds. Mr. Davis stated that he could not do that without the design or permits. If he had those two pieces, segments of Capital Cascade Trail would be under contract already.

Mr. McGorty stated that he felt they had raised concerns on some items and would like to explore the issue regarding segments on Capital Cascade Trail. He would argue the review of road projects with non-contractual obligations as well; recognizing that it could be down to one project. Lastly, when the CAC returned in August, with the benefit of the IA's discussion available to them, they could offer a priority if the funding prospects improved in the future.

Kevin McGorty moved approval of the Master Plan subject to re-examination of Capital Cascade Trail, in terms of funding of complete segments and Capital Circle Northwest/Southwest for legal and financial ramifications of termination or delay of that project. Dianna Norwood seconded the motion. It passed seven to one with Scott Balog casting the dissenting vote.

Mr. Davis questioned if the committee as a whole supported or if it was the opinion of the majority that Blueprint to investigate not constructing CCNW/SW. Mr. Patterson stated that he was not sure because he was not clear on what the ramifications would be. Mr. Maher stated, besides the legal and financial, the ramification would be not getting to the Airport. Mr. Davis stated that the impact would be, \$39M would be available to put onto another project. Mr. Patterson stated that he did not think the IA would approve that course of action. Mr. Davis concurred.

Mr. McGorty stated that was the prerogative of the IA however, it the responsibility of the CAC to say that the one dimensional option for cuts did not reflect the broader goals of Blueprint 2000. He acknowledged that the CAC was merely an advisory board to the IA. He was not

suggesting that the road system never be constructed but that staff examines it from the use of Blueprint dollars. So that funding could be reallocated into other projects.

Citizens To Be Heard

Steve Bailey stated that he was present to speak to a wetland/floodplain mitigation site that was recently cancelled by Blueprint. He spoke of his, and on behalf of his family, their disappointment at the cancellation of the purchase due to the flooding of the area. He stated that millions of dollars were being spent on roadways and parks however in an area where residential tenants and owner-occupants were being impacted Blueprint cancelled the acquisition of property. He distributed photographs of flooding in the Tanglewood mobile home park. Mr. Bright noted that some of the images had been previously distributed (at the April 2008 CAC meeting).

Mr. Bailey described the location of Tanglewood, the locations of the swamps, creeks, and ditches and how it was channeled past Tanglewood. He also spoke to the recent history of their experiences, correspondence with Blueprint, and concerns; as documented in the February and April 2008 CAC minutes.

Mr. McGorty stated that the CAC was given a full presentation at their previous two meetings. The CAC had taken action on it and concluded that Blueprint staff had done their due diligence with it as well. Mr. Bailey stated that he appreciated the CAC's time and acknowledged the previous presentations because many people would be impacted by Blueprint's decision. Furthermore, he sat through the full CAC meeting, listening to their discussions and as a member of the public he would continue to give his input because it really impacted people.

Items From Members Of The Committee

There were none.

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned by consensus at 6:58 p.m.