

Blueprint 2000 CAC Meeting Minutes
 Thursday, August 23, 2007
 Blueprint 2000 Office – Koger Center
 1311 Executive Center Drive – Suite 109

Terence Hinson called the Citizens Advisory Committee meeting to order at 4:34 p.m.

Committee Members present:

Terence Hinson	Jerry Conger
Jess Van Dyke	Michael Sheridan
Anita Davis	Kevin McGorty
Nancy Miller	Steve Amnott

Guests/Presenters/Staff:

Dave Bright	Randy Matheny
Phil Maher	Gary Phillips
Margie Quillman	Marek Romanowski
Ed Ringe	Angela Richardson
Doug Martin	Paco de la Fuente
Steve Nichols	Jim Davis
Harry Reed	Gil Ziffer
Janet Hinkle	Raymond Ashe
Scott Balog	

Agenda Modifications

There were none.

Information Items

Item #1: Leveraging Update

Phil Maher briefed the CAC on the details of the agenda item, as well as updated them on the bond sale. Michael Sheridan requested an update of the new ratings. Jim Davis stated that the rating moved up one rank, from A+ to AA-, with the exception of S&P, who had not previously rated Blueprint 2000. He further stated that S&P normally rated government entities with an A-, and Blueprint was rated A+. Insurance costs were discussed and the approximation given was \$195,000 in saving due to the increased rating. Terence Hinson asked Jim Davis about the availability of federal and state funds. Mr. Davis answered that it currently would be harder to obtain grants but that everything was cyclical and that over a period of time it would balance out.

Item #2: Capital Circle SE Ground Breaking (Tram Road to West of Woodville Hwy.)

This item was informational only.

Item #3: Capital Circle NW Ribbon Cutting Ceremony

This item was informational only.

Item #4: Capital Circle NW/SW: Orange Avenue to West Tennessee Right of Way Acquisition and Resolution

A question was raised regarding the loss of the Florida Forever green space money for the Capital Cascade Pond. Jim Davis noted that they did not want an extension on it nor would it be a blemish on future projects. He further stated that they would most likely recoup the money from other sources.

Item #5: Capital Circle NW Landscaping and Regional Pond Park Construction Procurement

Dave Bright discussed construction of the Regional Pond Park and the landscaping of the roadway project, stating that they would begin procurement following approval by the IA. He further discussed wetland plantings and the \$565,000 acquired from Fish and Wildlife, with the help of Jess Van Dyke. As of then, FDOT owned the pond, and neither they nor Blueprint had any control over the snail population infesting the pond. There were ongoing discussions with state officials at FWC and DEP, contractors, and Leon County regarding removal of snails.

Jess Van Dyke elaborated on the exotic snail and distributed pictures showing the abundance of them. Mr. Van Dyke was dismayed at the inaction and believed efforts should have been made weeks earlier to collect the eggs. He stated that there seemed to be an abundance of blame shifting when questions regarding previous efforts are asked. He warned that the press could get hold of the information and shine a negative light on Blueprint 2000. He further stated that all ponds in the region were potentially at risk, in terms of plantings, until the snails were eradicated. Mr. Van Dyke suggested that the pond be replanted with Bald Cypress trees because the snails would not eat them. Furthermore, the Division of Forestry would sell them to Blueprint or other government entities in lots of 1000 for \$250.

Anita Davis asked if other water management districts had similar issues and if they could recommend solutions. Mr. Van Dyke stated that it was a new, global issue that threatened several aquatic ecosystems, many of which were in the state of Florida.

Kevin McGorty asked what some eradication solutions might be. Mr. Van Dyke responded that FDEP was paying for research on this issue. The eradication effort currently used by some areas was toxic and they are not interested in using such measures. Vegetable oil on the eggs seemed to kill them, so that might be an option in the early stages because it would prevent the transfer of oxygen; there were non-toxic baits as well. They needed to have the eggs stripped off on a weekly basis, Mr. Van Dyke stated. There was no commercial value to the snail however because they carry parasites which cause meningitis in humans.

Jim Davis assured the committee that Blueprint was doing all that they could; that they were

working with the County, FDOT, and the contractor on the issue. The preferred method at that time was to pick them manually. Quotes for that ranged from \$30,000 to \$67,000. Due to contractual issues Blueprint could not hire a third party contractor to complete the task because they risked damaged to the plants which were under warranty by the construction contractor. Blueprint staff was making every effort to determine the best course of action. However there were several questions to be addressed such as how long would the measures be effective? If one egg spore was missed, would the cycle begin all over?

Michael Sheridan suggested the idea of a Constitutional Officer elected by the public to make certain kinds of decisions (Sheriff Campbell, for example). He also questioned the possibility of work release county prisoners to pick up snails. Jim Davis stated that they had investigated that but the liability issue was too great and it raised the same responsibility and warranty issues as with the third party contractor.

Jim Davis stated that they did not want to jeopardize Blueprint's relationship with Florida Fish and Wildlife for future funding, noting that there were additional ponds in the Blueprint projects to which this funding may be appropriate. While he liked the idea of the Bald Cypress, they would not provide sufficient water quality treatment that was necessary. He further stated that if the plants could not survive, they would need to find a solution to the overall wetland plant water quality issue. He emphasized that it was a major problem.

Nancy Miller asked for clarification on the liability issues. Jim Davis stated that M, Inc was hired to install the plants, which would typically have a one-year warranty. However, it was recognized that there were certain things beyond the contractor's control: watering, maintenance, etc. The fact that there was a known, proven infestation of snails with no known method of eradication, M, Inc could not be held responsible for that. If Blueprint contracted with a third party (prisoners, another contractor, etc), they would have violated all the rules of responsibility because M, Inc. could claim that the third party damaged the plants, etc. In the big picture, he stated, the plants were only a small portion of the liability warranty because it was related to the entire pond.

Michael Sheridan stated that Jim Davis and staff should be commended for attempting to find a resolution. He encouraged the staff to mention in their next IA report the importance of the issue. He suggested that an article in the Tallahassee Democrat might bring information from the community. Furthermore, he recommended that progress reports be included in future CAC agendas. And CAC members with expertise on the matter should continue to be included in the search for solutions.

Jess Van Dyke stated that the "channeled apple snail" was from Argentina. Kevin McGorty discussed the structural integrity of the pond system. It was noted that aquatic ecosystems of the south are being threatened. It was also suggested that the Science Advisory Committee review the issue. Steve Nichols questioned if there were animals that preyed upon the snail. Mr. Van Dyke stated that the limpkins and adult snail kites, gators, and soft-shell turtles eat the snails but also noted that Lake Munson had been stripped of vegetation because of the snails.

Jim Davis stated that all potential solutions were temporary at best; there were no guarantees with any of them. Jess Van Dyke and Kevin McGorty agreed that recognizing the problem and asking for help was important and that a letter to the appropriate people, including a call for help would be a good idea. Jim Davis agreed and requested they assist staff in drafting a letter that could be copied to the Democrat. Terence Hinson requested status updates on future agendas.

Mr. Hinson inquired about parking for the park. Jim Davis and Dave Bright noted the parking area designated in the graphic that was attached to the agenda. It was stated that multiple designs had been discussed however neither of the people who owned the property adjacent to the area were willing to look at reasonable acquisition prices.

Item #6: Blueprint 2000 Legal Support Contract Extension

This item was informational only.

Consent Items

Item #7: CAC Minutes: May 17, 2007

Kevin McGorty moved to approve the May minutes; seconded by Jerry Conger. The item passed unanimously.

Presentations/Discussion

Item #8: Introduction of New Blueprint Program

Steve Nichols was introduced by Jim Davis.

Item #9: CAC Appointments

Lamar Taylor and Scott Balog have been nominated for the CAC. Mr. Taylor would replace Michael Sheridan; Mr. Balog would be filling the previously vacant Education position. Anita Davis agreed to assist staff in recruiting a representative from the Civil Rights Community. Michael Sheridan moved to approve Misters Taylor and Balog. Nancy Miller seconded the approval. The motion passed unanimously.

Item #10: 2008 CAC, TCC, and IA Meeting Schedules

Michael Sheridan moved to approve the 2008 meeting schedule; Nancy Miller seconded the motion; it passed unanimously. After some discussion Jim Davis noted that November 1st would be the official start date for new members. Therefore, all current members would serve through October 31st even though the last scheduled meeting date would be October 18, 2007.

Item #11: Capital Cascade Trail Segment 2 Marketing Plan Update

Mr. Davis introduced Janet Hinkle who had recently agreed to co-chair the Capital Cascade fundraising committee along with Representative Lorraine Ausley.

In a moment of levity and with some degree of sincerity Gil Ziffer offered the idea of "Snag a Snail" as a fundraiser for amenities at Cascade Park. Following a brief introduction and recap of previous CAC discussions by Jim Davis, Mr. Ziffer presented the marketing outline (see attachment). He also noted that Ziffer-Stansberry had acquired the domain name www.cascadepark.org. It would have a link back to the Blueprint website however cascadepark.org would be specifically for fundraising efforts.

Kevin McGorty stated that he felt it was an incredible opportunity regarding branding and sponsorship. Mr. Ziffer stated that a subcommittee would be created to determine levels of funding and what type of brand/plaque/etc would be associated with each level. Furthermore, each would be tasteful, discreet, and consistent throughout the park.

Janet Hinkle stated that she was excited and honored to be associated with the project.

Item #12: Capital Cascade Trail: Sequence of Construction and Design Services Authorization for the Next Segment

Dave Bright offered a brief overview of the agenda item and explained the history of the sequencing and staff's reasoning for the request to change it. He stated that earlier that day in the TCC meeting it was suggested to design Segments 3 and 4 concurrently to coordinate with the FAMU Way and Gaines Street projects parallel to Segment 3 and in addition to the Segment 4 water quality benefits. The decision regarding which segment would be constructed next would be determined over the next couple of years.

Jim Davis stated that the suggestion by the TCC was not one that staff had considered but acknowledged that it was an excellent recommendation. By designing Segments 3 and 4 concurrently the designs could be tied together rather than independent of each other. It would allow staff to view the system from a much larger scale. And finally, it seemed that Blueprint had volunteered or at least agreed to be the Agency that would design the FAMU Way extension; with funding by the City of Tallahassee but Blueprint filling in the Project Management responsibility. Furthermore, Mr. Davis stated, by moving in that direction there was potential for significant savings, in right-of-way costs in particular.

Mr. Davis stated that the down side to the recommendation was funding. Blueprint would most likely have to tap into the Land bank to fund the design of both Segments because while funding would be available in October 2007 for the design of Segment 4 there was no additional funding for Segment 3 until 2010. The worst case scenario however, he stated, was that construction could potentially be delayed of one or the other segments. He stated that Phil Maher had assured him that Blueprint could manage the money in such a way to design them concurrently.

Kevin McGorty stated that he liked the new recommendation however he requested that Jess Van Dyke elaborate the original justification for doing Segment 4 next. Mr. Van Dyke stated that water quality issues at Lake Munson were the reasoning behind Segment 4's position in the sequencing. He supported the staff recommendation of concurrent design of the segments because it would be a more unified approach. His only worry was in taking funds from the land bank. Phil Maher stated that they would not reallocate land bank funds but simply shift them around over the next few years; it was only \$3 million out of \$9 million.

Several members spoke in support of the staff recommendation. Jerry Conger moved to combine the design of Segments 3 and 4 and to shift money from the land bank to supplement the Master Plan and to reconstitute the land bank dollars; Nancy Miller seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Item #13: Capital Circle SW PD&E Study: Weighting of Evaluation Criteria

Dave Bright reminded the CAC of the history regarding the agenda item. Raymond Ashe stated that the purpose of the weighting was to establish the relative importance of the criteria as they related to each other. Michael Sheridan questioned why it was necessary to go through that process. Jim Davis stated that was to generate a defensible starting point for discussion for the IA to select the preferred alignment. Staff wanted the Board's guidance and buy-in into a methodology which they had whole heartedly supported. Staff could not evaluate the political will and the different values the IA would place on certain issues. He reiterated that it was simply a logical start point for discussions.

Kevin McGorty stated that he felt it was an extremely important exercise because without the weighting evaluation the decision process would be even more subjective. The project was with Blueprint because of two key values of the EECC; one was an assessment of alternative corridors that would protect the ecological integrity of the lakes in that quadrant; the other was to review alternatives from a standpoint of a southern strategy for economic opportunity. He was quite concerned with how the complexities of the scale and the criteria associated. Additionally, he was not sure that once the evaluation was completed if it would generate an outcome that everyone would be pleased with because there were multiple conflicting values involved; the values of the neighborhoods that would be impacted, of the environment, etc.

Terence Hinson stated that considerable input had been received from the residents of that area and the CAC needed to keep in mind that any changes they suggested needed to be balanced throughout. Michael Sheridan stated that a lot of money and energy had been spent in engineering, scientific, and hydraulic studies of that segment; in addition to public hearings and citizen input. He was reasonably satisfied with the process and was concerned with a process that could supplant that.

Nancy Miller stated her concern was that the entire community voted on the projects and that they belonged to everyone within the (larger) community not just the residents of the project areas. She felt that it was her responsibility to stay true to the original commitment. She

described the history of misinformation that was commonplace in neighborhood associations meetings (based on personal experience) of that area. She felt that the decisions of the weights could not be determined from input from public hearings alone because, as she said earlier, the projects belonged to the larger community.

Raymond Ashe stated, in explanation of the weights, that they were multipliers with the higher number (3) having the least negative impact and the greatest enhancement. Simply put, the higher number wins. There was no cumulative impact based on subsets. Jim Davis stated that the criteria were grouped at his suggestion to keep the similar ones together for the sake of discussions.

Terence Hinson suggested they move through the list to identify which criteria they agreed on (thus needing no discussion) and the ones they did not agree on (which were pulled for discussion).

Regarding (2) Surface Water Protection and (4) Wetlands, Nancy Miller stated that she would hate to see decisions made that were based on poor quality wetlands and deteriorated surface water bodies. Where in the process would they evaluate whether they were high-quality or low-quality wetlands? Mr. Ashe stated that would be addressed in the "effects column" at a later date. Where they were in the process was determining if the wetlands were important enough that they needed to consider them a priority in setting the alignment.

Jess Van Dyke stated he was concerned with number (4) Wetlands because of the Delta site. If it was considered sacrosanct and it was determined that the roadway could not traverse it, the roadway would be placed closer to Cascade Lake. Mr. Ashe stated that would be considered in the effects column.

Nancy Miller pulled (12) Residential Neighborhoods for discussion. She stated that she felt the emphasis was more on mixed housing rather than untouchable neighborhoods in the area. She felt there was a misconception on the Blueprint position that the emphasis was more on (10) Mixed Housing than (12). It was pulled for discussion.

Kevin McGorty pulled (3) Vegetation and Wildlife, (8) Economic Development, and (1) Floodplains for discussion.

Before further discussion Jim Davis explained they needed to maintain as close to a 1/3 each balance of 1, 2, and 3 weightings as possible for a valid distribution. Earlier that day the TCC recommended that (3) Vegetation and Wildlife be elevated to a 3 (keeping with the 1/3 balance). Furthermore, he stated that in a phone conversation with Kathy Archibald that afternoon, she rated (3) at 1 because it was covered by the other environmental issues and did not see it as a major concern; (6) Cost as a 1 and (8) Economic Development as a 3 because it was the second most important concern in the original Blueprint concept. Ms. Archibald's suggestions, Mr. Davis stated would skew the weights with a majority of 1's.

Regarding (1) Floodplains, Mr. Ashe stated that the purpose of that criterion was the hydraulic

capacity; habitat and vegetated value would be determined in the effects. As far as mitigation, it would be provided in the same floodplain that was filled. Mr. McGorty stated that he felt the bottom line was the integrity of the system and the impact that a pond might have on that integrity. He felt it was of paramount importance.

Jess Van Dyke stated that he almost hated to limit the capacity to build in floodplains because it was about design and conveyance. Limiting themselves to "high and dry" would not be effective especially if it was not environmentally valuable but simply wet, low, or commercial (i.e. a parking lot). He was not as concerned about floodplains as he was about surface water and healthy wetlands. When asked if he was comfortable with the weighting of a 1, Mr. Van Dyke stated, yes because the lakes of concern were to the west and south of the proposed alignments. Mr. McGorty acquiesced.

Nancy Miller questioned who regulated the floodplains. Mr. Ashe stated that they were regulated by the City of Tallahassee, Leon County, and the Northwest Florida Water Management District. She stated that she would rather see it as a 2 or even 3 because she did not feel that the regulations were strong enough to provide protection. Furthermore, the regulations were under discussion for change. Mr. Van Dyke stated that it came back to design and the quality of the floodplain itself. Mr. Ashe reiterated that it was simply about evaluating the capacity of the area and that was tightly regulated. Ms. Miller, while not happy, acquiesced.

Regarding (3) Vegetation and Wildlife, Kevin McGorty recommended following the suggestion of the TCC, which increased the weighting from 2 to 3.

Regarding (8) Economic Development, Mr. McGorty stated that the EECC felt it was a critical opportunity for a southern strategy along the corridor as well as a gateway into Innovation Park. Sprawling, random development of the Airport corridor was not sound economic development. He felt it was a double-edged sword. Ms. Miller acquiesced.

Regarding (12) Residential Neighborhoods, Ms. Miller stated that she assumed they would try to go the route of the least impact to residential neighborhoods. Mr. Ashe stated the point of that criterion was to determine if people's homes were as important as wetlands, for example. It was currently weighted at a 3 because it was felt that yes, they were equally important. Mr. Van Dyke stated that he felt it was realistic. Mr. McGorty stated that because it was a fairness and human dignity issue that it should be a factor. He stated that they needed to respect the fact that people had invested their lives, raised children, etc and therefore neighborhoods should always be part of the community value in the consideration of a major infrastructure project.

Mr. Ashe stated that the concerns of proximity, etc would be evaluated with the effects because they would have secondary impacts. He further stated that there were four corridors that would be evaluated. The final outcome however, would be three recommendations: a new alignment, the existing alignment, and a no-build. Additionally, he explained that the expanded definitions of the evaluation criteria would be distributed to the IA.

Jim Davis clarified that after the discussions there was only one change, to follow the TCC

recommendation to change (3) Vegetation and Wildlife to a 3. The committee unanimously expressed their consent.

Citizens To Be Heard

There were none.

Items From Members Of The Committee

There were none.

Adjourn

Nancy Miller moved to adjourn the meeting; everyone seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at 6:59 p.m.