

Blueprint 2000 CAC Meeting Minutes
 Thursday, December 6, 2007
 Blueprint 2000 Office – Koger Center
 1311 Executive Center Drive – Suite 109

Jerry Conger called the Citizens Advisory Committee meeting to order at 4:37 p.m.

Committee Members present:

Jerry Conger	Kathy Archibald
Jess Van Dyke	Kevin McGorty
Nancy Miller	Diana Norwood
Tom O’ Steen	Gregg Patterson
Lamar Taylor	Scott Balog
Wilson Barnes	

Guests/Presenters/Staff:

Dave Bright	Angela Richardson
Jim Davis	Gary Phillips
Margie Quillman	Bill Woolery
Andrew Orr	Carlana Hoffman
Debra Schiro	Ed Ringe
Steve Nichols	Jim Sullivan
Harry Reed	Bryant King
Mark Llewellyn	Lindsey Cole
Jim Shepherd	Beth Hollister
Steve Hodges	Rick McCraw

Agenda Modifications

There were none, however, Dave Bright noted that Jim Davis would like to discuss issues related to the Performance Audit if time permitted and that a meeting with previous residents of the Smokey Hollow Neighborhood was scheduled to follow the CAC meeting at 6:30.

Presentations/Discussion

Item #7: Incoming CAC Members

Dave Bright recognized the three new members of the CAC who were approved for membership by the Intergovernmental Agency in September: Lamar Taylor, Scott Balog, and Wilson Barnes.

Information Items

Item #1: Leveraging Update

Dave Bright mentioned the status of the South Monroe Street Bridge Transportation Enhancement Grant that was submitted to the Capital Region Transportation Planning Agency (CRTPA) and was ranked the number one priority from Tallahassee-Leon County. The "Capital Connector Bridge" project had been submitted by CRTPA to the Department of Transportation – District 3, unfortunately due to the lack of funds, it has not been funded in the Draft FY 2009-FY 2013 Work Program. It could, and likely would be, resubmitted next fiscal year, and if it got into the budget, Blueprint 2000 could be reimbursed for the cost if it was already built.

Jim Davis stated that Blueprint was not awarded the Transportation Regional Incentive Program Grant (TRIP) for the widening of Capital Circle between Woodville and Crawfordville Roads. He stated that he was not surprised based on the current funding problems and was happy to have received 95% of the District's TRIP funds for the previous years. The good news was that the Woodville to Crawfordville project was the number one TRIP project for the CRTPA.

Mr. Davis also gave a brief update on the Capital Cascade Segment 2 Fundraising campaign. He noted that the Sales Tax revenue was down 4%, but as a whole, the Blueprint Master Plan was fine. If that decline was to be tracked for the full term of the Program, \$15,000,000 would be lost from the Master Plan as unrealized revenue.

Item #2: Design Services for Capital Cascade Trail Segments 3 & 4

Mr. Bright stated that the request for qualification statements were reviewed by the Evaluation Committee and resulted in three firms being short-listed: Dyer, Riddle, Mills & Precourt (DRMP), Kimley-Horn and Associates, and URS Corporation. A Pre-proposal Conference with the firms was scheduled for Wednesday, December 12, 2007, in order for the firms to ask questions about the project, and for information from the Purchasing and MBE Offices. The Proposals were due January 9, 2008. Oral presentations were scheduled for January 23, 2008 with scoring and ranking immediately following the presentations. By the next CAC meeting Blueprint would have chosen a design consulting firm for Segments 3 & 4.

Mr. Davis added that he was very pleased with the short-listed firms. He stated that they were all high quality firms and had previously worked with Blueprint.

Consent Items

Item #3: CAC Minutes: October 18, 2007

Kevin McGorty made a motion to amend the minutes on page 5, in the 7th paragraph. Mr. McGorty indicated the reference to "Frenchtown" should be for "Stearns-Mosley".

Jess Van Dyke also requested elimination of the first sentence on page 3, in the 5th paragraph related to reducing the snail population by hand removal.

Diana Norwood made a motion to accept the amended minutes. Kathy Archibald seconded the motion as amended; it passed unanimously, as amended.

Presentations/Discussion

Item #4: Election of CAC Chairman and Vice-Chairman

Kathy Archibald moved to nominate Jerry Conger as Chairman and Tom O'Steen as Vice Chairman. Diana Norwood seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

Item #5: Capital Cascade Trail Segments 3 & 4 Background Issues

Mr. Bright noted that this Agenda Item had been scheduled as a result of several questions brought up at the last CAC meeting concerning issues and projects along Segments 3 and 4 which were being completed or addressed by other Departments.

Mr. Bright introduced Steve Hodges from the Planning Department. He stated that Mr. Hodges would provide the committee with information on the proposed extension of the St. Marks Trail, north to Gaines Street.

Mr. Hodges distributed several handouts: a graphic aerial, a map of Lake Elberta and an image of the intersection of Lake Bradford and Gaines Street and spoke briefly of the project. The key points were that the City would like to acquire property from CSX and the Seminole Boosters (southeast corner of Lake Bradford Road and Gaines Street) in order to build a right turn lane from Lake Bradford to Gaines. This property acquisition would possibly get the land needed to make the Trail connection up to Gaines. Park and trail improvements at Lake Elberta, which was intended to serve as an interim trail head, was currently being permitted. The idea was to extend the trail north across Gamble Street to the Gaines/Lake Bradford intersection.

Rick McCraw, with the City of Tallahassee Economic Development Department, addressed issues related to the Stearns Mosley Neighborhood and areas along Gaines Street. Mr. McCraw discussed the locations of the property that the City owned around those neighborhoods and some of the options and tentative plans for it. The City was looking at a Landscaping Plan for Gaines Street but had come across two basic problems; one being that there was not enough right-of-way to put in landscape. The City made a decision to keep Gaines Street as a two-way street, which made it hard to acquire more right-of-way. The other issue was the amount of contamination that was in the soil around Gaines Street. Landscaping cannot be planted very deep. Additionally, the City was asked to relocate the utilities to either the right-of-way or to Madison Street.

Kevin McGorty asked if there was a plan for the business in the Gaines Street area that would guide them in updating their facades to make the businesses look more uniform. Mr. McCraw

stated, to some extent, that there will be design standards to enforce these changes. The idea is to give the Gaines street look an urban design feeling.

Mr. Bright stated that the Gaines Street corridor has at least a twenty year history in its attempt to get a PD& E completed. He stated that staff can keep the EECC and others advised of those other meetings for the Gaines Street project for those who are interested in providing input on that.

Mr. McCraw also stated that as for the Stearns-Mosley area, the area is close to both universities and has a lot of investor owned property in that area, both of which make it very susceptible to more high density development (versus keeping it in its current state). The FAMU Way extension could help open the area up by placing it near a new roadway.

Kevin McGorty stated that there are a lot of parallels with Stearns-Mosley and Frenchtown, being that there is high absentee ownership. The city has a commitment to keeping residential in Frenchtown, and that may not be the case here. He stated that this is a policy that the EECC was very cognitive about. The big parallel is that the City had a commitment to keep it a viable single family/residential in Frenchtown. Mr. McGorty also stated that in the original vision for Stearns-Mosley, that the EECC, thought that it should be a designated viable residential area, while keeping the ethnic character of Frenchtown.

Kathy Archibald stated that when the EECC started their work, the Stearns-Mosley neighborhood was still a fairly viable residential neighborhood and was made a priority that it needed to have some protection put on it and programs to bring the houses up to code. Ms. Archibald also stated that this area was populated with affordable housing opportunity, and as the city builds up it could become multimillion dollar penthouses, which will skew the economic diversity that was there and sacrifice the diversity for gentrification.

Mr. McGorty brought up the Firestone Building with some concern of tearing it down and losing more of Tallahassee's history. Mr. Davis stated that this piece of property is of concern with a lot of people, but it is not a high priority right now because of other issues. The City has its eyes on acquiring that block. Gregg Patterson mentioned that in Chattanooga, they created a separate entity and acquired all of this property that allowed them to avoid the property rights issue, which allowed them to preserve the architecture and help redevelop the neighborhood. Mr. Patterson said that by having private investors is the only way that he could see that would allow COT to overcome this issue.

Mr. McGorty summed the conversation up by saying that Blueprint 200 was created because of an attempt to add a holistic vision that brought in economic development, brought in livable cities, and brought in design. It is very important to keep this vision in terms of livable cities, and diversity of neighborhoods as part of this fabric and this whole effort that is trying to be achieved here. Kathy Archibald mentioned that it might be time for the EECC to reconvene and go to the city and county commission to remind them of those programmatic elements of Blueprint 2000, versus just the projects.

Mr. Bright introduced the last speaker, Bill Woolery, with the City of Tallahassee Public Works Department, to address the FAMU Way extension issues.

Mr. Woolery, stated that the City of Tallahassee would eventually take ownership of Gaines Street and the City will build the FAMU Way extension. The City of Tallahassee is working with DOT to get Gaines turned over to the City, hopefully within the next 90 to 120 days, and looking into the contamination along the corridor. Another issue is the utility relocations. Those issues are the first steps that need to happen before several other issues can be addressed. The Commission has adopted the concept of the two-lane Gaines Street, with parking on both sides. Staff was instructed to develop an implementation plan/schedule for the overall project, and subsequently, it was adopted and the City started on several project-related elements. Within this agreement there were several elements that needed to occur first: two-way Pensacola Street out to Jefferson Street (near the Stadium), two-way Madison Street to the St. Augustine Street connection, and add a north-south movement at the Gaines Street-Lake Bradford intersection. These items are crucial to everything else happening.

The city started the PD& E study on the FAMU Way extension, and formed a staff group from most of the departments in the City, including Blueprint 2000, FAMU, and FSU, and developed a concept. There were three alternative concepts that were identified in the scope that were mandatory for review. After a process of elimination, there are now two concepts that morphed into one. The Department plans to go to the City Commission after the first of the year to study the third alternative.

Kathy Archibald asked if there was an original plan that included Jackson Bluff running south of Gay Street. Mr. Woolery confirmed Mrs. Archibald question and added that the concept, Saint Francis, had been approved by commission but because of the conflict with the turn around and the railroad, it resulted in another alternative.

Jim Davis stated that one problem with the Jackson Bluff extension was because you couldn't get thru the All Saints neighborhood east of Railroad Avenue. Mr. Davis stated that if concept three is in fact adopted, then Blueprint 2000's plan to participate cooperatively between the City and Blueprint for construction dissipates. Mr. Davis stated that with that alternative there is not a whole lot of right-of-way that Blueprint 2000 can acquire that can be shared between the St. Augustine Branch and the roadway. Mr. Davis stated that the good thing is that, since the City is delaying this, that Blueprint can go ahead and do the design for Segment 3 & 4, which will go on concurrently.

Mr. Davis mentioned that Blueprint was still in negotiation with the owners to acquire the Myers Industrial Park, and Blueprint has made an offer.

Mr. Davis also mentioned that it was brought to his attention that if Blueprint would discontinue conducting the performance audits, it would save Blueprint \$22,000 annually. The Bylaws require Blueprint to do the audit, so it they would have to be amended to do it. Mr. Davis wanted to get feedback from the CAC as to whether or not the audit was still necessary, and if

they are worth spending that amount of money on them. Diana Norwood mentioned another idea of rather than doing the audits, annually, to maybe biannually. Gregg Patterson stated that he understood the cost and stated that Blueprint 2000 has done a tremendous job, but doesn't think that it would be a good idea to discontinue the audits.

Kathy Archibald stated that there was a huge distrust in the community in the past about Government's ability to use this money efficiently and to do what was promised. The EECC saw this in the public and that the performance audit was a key part of the confidence that the public had. The audit allows oversight that the work would be reviewed, and it gave the community the confidence that someone was looking after the money and projects.

Jerry Conger stated this economic downturn, and with the short fall of tax receipts, sooner or later it will become very serious to look at the amount of money that would be allocated to Blueprint 2000 and this performance audit will be one way to stay on top of that.

Kevin McGorty stated that if we can do this Program well, then this will provide and support other referendums needed in this community and this accountability will help those efforts in the future.

Jim Davis mentioned that he was going down to Gainesville to make a presentation and it will be the second time Blueprint has made this presentation. Blueprint visited Hillsborough County to explain how we are doing business. Regarding sensitive lands, Blueprint is still in the process of working with The Nature Conservancy to acquire the 202 acres near Wood Sink in the Headwaters of St. Marks and that conversations are on going and doesn't think that it is going to be a problem. The land is already protected. Near Capital Circle Northwest, there is a Request for Bids out to develop the stormwater pond into community park, with landscaping and a trail. This does not include the pond close to I-10, which was part of DOT design and out of Blueprint's control.

Capital Circle NW/SW is still under design, and for the study of Capital Circle SW, the consultant is starting the analysis of the several routes, which are due fairly soon. Blueprint is looking at the Broadmoor Pond, and bought some land to make another 15 acre Stormwater pond, and the right-of-way for Capital Circle NW/SW is still being. For Capital Circle from Woodville to Crawfordville, Blueprint has acquired about 85% of the right-of-way, at no cost to us. The property is in hand, our stormwater ponds have been sized but this was done under the old permitting requirements, not under the new requirements. We will have to revisit this under the new requirement, by recalculating the size of the ponds. Then the amount of right-of-way that is necessary, and based on that, go back to the Forest Service to get more land. Blueprint saved millions of dollars in right-of-way due to the Forest Service donations. Blueprint has talked to DOT for TRIP money. Blueprint Master Plan is getting very tight with money, and with the housing market going down, right-of-way should go down in cost, but it seem not to be happening. Our right-of-way incentive policy is still working very well. Capital Circle from Tram to Woodville, moving right along, ahead of schedule, so far on budget. Capital Circle from Tram up to Connie Drive, is on schedule, on budget, and Jim was very pleased about that. Capital Cascade Trail, has had wonderful press in the newspaper. A good fundraising kickoff

was held on December 5. The team of Janet Hinkel, Lorraine Ausley, Gil Ziffer, Gail Stansberry-Ziffer are doing a wonderful job. Jim noted that Capital Health Plan has made a large donation, while there is also another potential significant donor that is interested in sponsoring the stage.

Citizens To Be Heard

There were none.

Items From Members Of The Committee

There were none.

Adjourn

Kathy Archibald moved to adjourn the meeting; Kevin McGorty seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at 6:22 p.m.