



IMAGINE AUSTIN COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Citizens Advisory Task Force Meeting #10

June 8, 2010

Palmer Events Center (Meeting Room 1)
900 Barton Springs Road, Austin, TX 78704



MINUTES

Task Force members in attendance:

Roger Cauvin
Perla Cavazos
Scooter Cheatham
Kent Collins
Margaret Cooper
Patricia Dabbert
Greg Esparza
Frances Ferguson
Cecilia "Ceci" Gratijs
Lawrence Gross, Jr.
Jack Gullahorn
Mari Hernandez
Ora Houston
John Langmore
Mark Lind

Roberto Martinez
Frances McIntyre
Jennifer McPhail
Rebecca Melancon
Charles Miles
Karl-Thomas Musselman
Jonathan Ogren
Jose "Danny" Rodriguez
Regina Rogoff
Cookie Ruiz
Evan Taniguchi
Donna Tiemann
Carol Torgrimson
Mark Yznaga

Members of the public in attendance:

Jean Mather
Brian Rogers
Frank Harren
Bill Bunch
Jacob Primeaux
Debbie Russell
Stephanie Pope

Peggy Maciau
Girard Kinney
Jeb Boyt
Mary Arnold
Roy Waley
Paul Bileamowicz
Nazia Primeaux

Members of staff in attendance:

Garner Stoll (PDR)
Matt Dugan (PDR)
Sheila Balog (HRD)
Diane Dohm (PDR)

Rob Spillar (Transportation)
Karla Villalon (Transportation)
Matt Hollon (WPD)

Members of consultant team in attendance:

David Rouse (WRT)
John Fernsler (WRT)

Andrew Dobshinsky (WRT)

Task Force Chair Margaret Cooper called the meeting to order at 6:04 p.m.

1. CITIZEN COMMUNICATION

- a. Jean Mather said that the major premise of this current Master Plan appears to be that Austin must prepare for a doubling of the city's population. She felt that the Chamber of Commerce and RECA are doing everything in their power to make that premise a fact. They are joined by many good- hearted folks who are motivated by a desire to keep development off the aquifer and/or promote public transportation by forcing a densification of the inner city in preparation for this assumed growth. A real plan should: 1) address the harm to the aquifer by setting lower limits on impervious cover, preserving creek floodplains and implementing a strong tree planting and preservation ordinance; 2) expand our bus service with a sensible grid plan, improved connections and timing and limit funding expensive light rail; 3) end our contributions to the Chamber of Commerce who is inviting the world to settle here; 4) reevaluate incentives granted to large industries and/or retail for promised jobs when it has been proven that small businesses provide the most employment; and 5) recognize that spending hundreds of millions for a new water treatment plant, enormous waste water tunnels, a 20'x20' tunnel under Waller Creek (with no funding for the promised park and trails along the creek) and billions on roads are all fuel to development.
- b. Brian Rogers said that the vision component: "Development strengthens our economy, tax base, and quality of life" is a myth. He asserted that growth should pay for growth and not burden existing residents with the costs of added public infrastructure to service the new growth. Growth should not be subsidized by existing residents.
- c. Frank Harren handed out "EcoDensity, how density, design, and land use will contribute to environmental sustainability, affordability and livability" from the City of Vancouver. He said Vancouver liked density, wanted more of it and that we should look at that city now. He talked about how density helps in lowering carbon footprints, and that sprawl has done damage to Austin. He was not impressed with the four alternative future scenarios to be discussed, but liked the Centers scenario best.
- d. Bill Bunch with Save Our Springs Alliance stressed that the rate of growth should be the crux of the discussion – if you grow rapidly, you cannot grow in a smart, dense, careful, thoughtful way. Taxes skyrocket, and costs of living skyrocket. He supports a slower rate of growth. He was discouraged to find out that the Barton Springs Watershed was not on these maps.
- e. Jacob Primeaux asked why we seem constantly to be focusing on growth? We need to be slow - maybe focus on shrinkage. He said little towns like Granger are dying, and Austin needs to figure out how to export our culture to other towns.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

N/A

3. NEW BUSINESS

- a. *Discussion on possible action on draft outline of the Plan Framework.* David Rouse (WRT) discussed draft outline for the Plan Framework. David explained how the Plan Framework relates to the vision statement and the ten charter

elements. General discussion occurred on Plan Frameworks, and Task Force members commented on the need for setting up metrics for the plan elements, relating housing to prosperity and the need to include diversity.

- b. *Discussion and possible action on creating future alternative scenarios.* John Fernsler (WRT) explained the process for creating the four alternative future scenarios from the 63 chip exercise maps created by the public during Community Forum Series #2. John presented the highlights of the Crescent Scenario:

Crescent Scenario

- Min. Growth / max. protection of west
 - No development west of MOPAC
 - Water resource protection
 - Scenic protection
- Intensification / compact growth of east
 - Downtown intensification
 - Multiple activity centers
 - Airport employment hub
 - Neighborhood infill (consistent with neighborhood plans)
- Transportation
 - More new roads needed
 - Focused transit shift: regional transit / commuter, SE employment hub circulator

Andrew Dobshinsky (WRT) presented the highlights of the Dispersed Scenario:

Dispersed Scenario

- Spread out development
 - Development to the east, west, and at fringes of the entire planning area
 - Little differentiation between drinking water protection zone and desired development zone
 - Some concentration in centers, but more low-density / residential subdivision development than other scenarios
- Preserve existing green space, floodplain
 - Trail connections
- Transportation
 - Attempts to connect dispersed centers
 - Most new roads needed
 - Least potential for additional transit

David Rouse (WRT) presented the highlights of the Linear Scenario:

Linear Scenario

- Intensification along N-S “spine” through central part of city
 - Centers: downtown, Burnet/Gateway, “green economy” cluster at airport, etc.
 - Mixed use corridors
- Min. growth to east and west
 - Water resource protection to west

- Conservation development zone east of 130 (floodplain / open space protection, farmland, cluster development)
- Transportation improvements to support N-S spine
 - Transit, pedestrian/bicycle, roadway capacity improvements
 - Improve E-W connectivity through operational / complete street improvements to existing streets between 183 to the north, MOPAC to the west, the river to the south, and 183 to the east
 - Modest new roads

Garner Stoll (PDR) presented the highlights of the Centers Scenario:

Centers Scenario

- Concentrate most development in mixed-use centers
 - Downtown, Decker Lake, Airport, etc.
 - Significant redevelopment of existing corridors
 - Lesser amounts of infill (captured by centers)
- Preserve land for open space / agriculture
- Transportation
 - All streets are complete, but freeways use HOV
 - Maximizes potential for connecting development through new transit service (e.g., centers to the east via rapid bus)
 - New trails predominantly through open space areas
 - Reduced need for new highway / roadway construction

- c. *Presentation on Strategic Mobility Plan.* Rob Spiller (Transportation Dept) presented the Strategic Mobility Plan, followed by general discussion.
- d. *Presentation on Watersheds Protection Initiative.* Matt Hollon (Watershed Protection) presented the Watersheds Protection Initiative of the Eastern Suburban Watersheds, followed by general discussion.
- e. *Discussion and possible action on general direction for Community Forum Series #3.* Matt Dugan (PDR) outlined a proposed general approach to CFS #3 and scheduling the public meetings. The approach includes launching the next survey and Meeting-in-a-Box in late August with a City Council press conference after endorsement of the Vision Statement; using the survey and Meeting-in-a-Box to build toward public meetings; and designing the public meetings in an open house format, rather than a facilitated small-group activity.

4. OLD BUSINESS

5. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

ADJOURN

The meeting adjourned at 8:33 p.m. due to loss of a quorum.

For more information on the Comprehensive Plan Citizens Advisory Task Force please visit the website (<http://www.imagineaustin.net/taskforce.htm>) or contact Matt Dugan, Planning and Development Review Department, at 974-7665 or matthew.dugan@ci.austin.tx.us.