

COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING AND TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
August 9, 2010

Subcommittee Members: Council Member Sheryl Cole
 Council Member Laura Morrison
 Council Member Chris Riley

1. Citizen Communication (3 minutes to speak).

No speakers signed up to speak.

2. Approval of Minutes from the June 7, 2010, regular subcommittee meeting, and July 26, 2010, Special Called Meeting.

Minutes approved by a vote of 3-0.

3. Staff Briefing on the Imagine Austin Comprehensive Plan Vision Statement

Greg Claxon and Matt Duggan, Planning and Development, provided a history of the Imagine Austin Vision process to date and discussed the various components of the Vision Statement.

Carol Tormlinson, Comprehensive Plan Task Force, said the Task Force was divided into various committees to draft the components of the Vision Statement. Although some of the committees vetted various components of the Vision Statement with specific stakeholders, there was no concerted effort to vet the entire Vision Statement with the public. The final document is a compromise, and although it is not perfect, it represents the many interests of citizens that served on the various committees.

Kent Collins, Task Force Member, stated that committee members spent a great deal of time on the statement and the end result is a vision statement that was agreed to by the task force..

Sheryl Cole thanked the committee for their hard work and their commitment to the process.

Dave Sullivan, representing Planning Commission, encouraged citizens to provide comments via the Imagine Austin website. He said the 40+ people who worked to develop the Vision Statement represent a broad spectrum of the community and they worked very hard to put it together.

Jeff Jack, said that the Austin Neighborhoods Council was not sought for input on the Vision Statement. He questioned why the Vision Statement was not vetted to boards and commissions, especially the Zoning and Platting Commission. It is the Council's responsibility to make this Vision Statement something that can be supported by the entire community. He questioned whether staff had reviewed the 1979 Comprehensive Plan with regard to its goals and objectives and compared it to this Vision Statement. He noted that many of the goals that were pertinent in 1979 are still valid today, but are not included in the Vision Statement. He said the Statement needs governance to ensure that it becomes a reality. He said the 1979 had many goals that have not yet been achieved. He questioned what mechanism would bring the Statement to reality and ensure that it does not sit on a shelf.

He also spoke about the affordability component, and said there is nothing in the document that says the city will be made affordable and livable to moderate and low income citizens. He said the working class people are what make Austin such a great city, but the economic component seems to focus on the creative class. He questioned why there isn't a simple statement that states the city is trying to find economic affordability for the entire city instead of a specific sector.

The committee discussed the various components of the Statement, and made the following recommendations/amendments:

- Recommend the addition of the "Colorado River" to the component "Natural and Sustainable" that speaks to the "beauty of the Hill Country and blackland prairie."
- Recommend adding "beautiful" before "accessible public spaces" in the last bullet under "Austin is Creative"
- Recommend adding a bullet corresponding to "leadership comes from its citizens" in the Preamble, possibly under the section "Austin Values and Respects its People"
- Under "Austin is Livable", recommend adding a statement on how neighborhoods can be improved or enhanced.
- Provide a distinction between downtown and urban neighborhoods in the section under "Austin is Livable" that speaks to a vibrant day and night time urban lifestyle for residents, workers and visitors.

Council Member Morrison questioned when staff would begin integrating the neighborhood plans, and also what staff would be doing in terms of analyzing development capacity and providing an economic analysis.

Greg Claxton, Planning and Development Review Department, said staff is working on a development capacity analysis and will also examine how the neighborhood plans compare with the various growth scenarios identified in Community Forum Series #2. The sense is to identify the overall growth rate and determine where growth can be accommodated. The fiscal impact is an indicator that will be brought to the public and used to rate the growth scenarios.

Matt Duggan, Planning and Development Review Department, noted that a public workshop would be held on September 1, 2010, to discuss integration of the neighborhood plans into the comprehensive plan.

Meeting adjourned at 10:50 a.m.