

COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING AND TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
June 6, 2011

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

Call Meeting to Order

1. **Citizen Communication (3 minutes to speak).**
2. **Approval of minutes from the March 7, 2011, regular subcommittee meeting.**

Minutes approved by a vote of 3-0.

3. **Staff Update on Imagine Austin Comprehensive Plan**

Garner Stoll, Planning and Development Review, provided an update on the Imagine Austin Comprehensive Plan,

Greg Claxton, Planning and Development Review, said the working groups have been meeting since mid-March. The goal is to bring Austin's expertise and passion in achieving the plan frame work and growth concept map. To date, 458 people have signed up to participate in the 7 working groups which are tied to different building blocks. Staff will be working with these groups throughout July into early August. The next steps includes assessment by city departments, an on-line survey of the working groups, and refining and prioritizing in August.

Garner Stoll, stated that the consultants will provide a draft plan of how the plan should look once it is completed. The purpose of the draft is to provide additional public input and evaluation. In early Fall, the Task Force meeting is scheduled in September or early October to work through the draft with the goal of an adoption plan in early 2012. Once adopted in 2012, there will be an annual review as required by the Charter.

Francis McIntyre, Citizens Advisory Task Force, conveyed how very pleased she was with the work of the staff. . She said she wanted assurance that the Comprehensive Plan will have the force of law, and that future Councils will actually pay attention to this plan and what it proposes once adopted. She

expressed the need for affordable housing and a transportation system that can support the proposed density.

Council Member Cole expressed concern about coordination with other governmental entities. She said she was aware of Travis County's involvement, but there are other governmental entities within the region that want to participate but can't due to scheduling challenges.

Garner Stoll noted that an attempt has been made to solicit participation from other jurisdictions.

Council Member Morrison expressed the need to communicate and integrate actions with the school district. She thanked the task force for their hard work and said she hoped they would have well founded suggestions that are going to be effective.

Frank Herren commented on the issue of the case studies. He asked staff to ensure that what is on paper is realistic and can be accomplished. The public clearly stated they want a compact dense city, yet the population is being pushed further and further out. He cited population predictions by Ryan Robinson, Demographer, that state the metro area will grow by 2.2 million and less than 20% of new residents will reside within the city limits.

Council Member Morrison agreed with Mr. Herren and asked that Mr. Robinson speak to Council in more detail about the population predictions.

Council Member Cole stated that the cause of people being pushed to the suburbs is the quality of schools and affordability, and she urged coordination with the school district.

4. Staff Update on Elisabet Ney Museum

Laura Esparaza, Division Manager, Cultural Affairs Division of Parks and Recreation Department, stated that in December, 2010, the Council approved a resolution directing staff to work with the Historic Landmark Commission and other community stakeholders on potential amendments to the restoration of the Elisabet Ney Museum. She described recommendations for the museum which include preservation of the historic stone wall; and respect for the historic fabric of the landscape planted during its multiple periods of significance.

John Paul Moore, Hyde Park neighborhood, questioned why certain articles and historic documents were not cited. He added that he supports preservation of the wall.

Dorothy Richter, Hyde Park neighborhood, expressed support for restoration of the wall.

Mary Carolyn George, Architect Historian – Lived across the street from the Ney Building for 30 years. She questioned why the focus is on the landscaping and not the building. The Ney building is a people place where church services, weddings and Easter egg hunts are always offered.

Council Member Riley questioned the condition of the building. Laura Esparaza responded that funding was approved in 2005 for the stabilization of the foundation, to add ADA ramps and to replace the roof. At this time there is no other funding for restoration of this building.

5. Staff Update on Bruning Avenue Street Closure

Bob Breeze, Hyde Park Neighborhood Association, Representative, expressed concern about the intersection of 51st, Airport and Clarkson. He noted that eastbound traffic is no longer stopping on the railroad tracks but the side effect is the eastbound traffic can't turn right on red, which has caused traffic to back up significantly behind the Clarkson light.

Robert Spiller, Director, Transportation and Gary Shotz, Assistant Director, provided an update on the temporary closure of 51st Street and Duval. The next steps include a new advance traffic signal but this is still in test mode and could remain in test mode for another 6 months.

Lisa Harris, President of Hyde Park Association, stated that the association appreciates the signs that have been added in the neighborhood. Their only concern is that the association was not brought in as stakeholders as early as others and as a result they have a lot of mistrust.

Mike Wong, Northwood Planning Team, expressed safety concerns at the intersection of 51st and Duval. The area closest to Ridge top Elementary School neighborhood has safety issues. The neighborhood supports the closing of Bruning due to no sidewalks, dim lighting and lack of school zone signs on Bruning.

6. Staff Update on Open Space Requirement

George Zapalac, Planning and Development Review, provided an update on the open space recommendations. The recommendations include combining the standards of commercial and multi-family; applying open space to commercial sites 2 acres or larger instead of 5 acres, and increasing commercial open space from 2-3% to 5%,

Charlie Betts, representing Downtown Austin Alliance, requested that the city consider exempting the CBD. Open space is very important to the downtown area and the city as a whole but they do not feel these requirements are necessary in the CBD because they will add an added expense to development and homeowner's fees.

No action taken; postponed to August 1, 2011.

Meeting adjourned at 4:00 p.m.