

MINUTES OF THE METRO COUNCIL WORK SESSION MEETING

Tuesday, February 26, 2008
Portland Art Museum

Councilors Present: David Bragdon (Council President), Carlotta Collette, Carl Hosticka, Robert Liberty

Councilors Absent: Rod Park (excused), Rex Burkholder (excused), Kathryn Harrington (excused)

Council President Bragdon convened the Metro Council Work Session Meeting at 2:04 p.m.

1. **DISCUSSION OF AGENDA FOR COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING, FEBRUARY 28, 2008/ADMINISTRATIVE/CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER COMMUNICATIONS**

Council President Bragdon reviewed the February 28, 2008 Metro Council agenda.

2. **PROPOSED TOD LOAN POLICY**

Councilor Liberty introduced the Transit Oriented Development (TOD) Loan Policy, and TOD Work Program. He explained timelines and processes involved in using TOD loans.

Phil Whitmore and Megan Gibb, Planning & Transit Oriented Development, introduced the TOD program and related projects. Mr. Whitmore explained the loan policy (see meeting packet). He explained processes involved in using TOD loan money, and explained financial specifics of various loans. He explained different projects including land acquisition and transportation issues, and explained different loan categories.

Councilor Liberty asked if the current process was considered a strategy to 'stretch' money. He asked if it could essentially be considered a grant. Mr. Whitmore said yes, because there is a lender of some sort. Bill Stringer, Metro CFO, mentioned that they are loans, and should not be called grants or anything else. He explained the loan process again, and stated that loans should not be covered up with a different title. Mr. Stringer explained the principal balance pay-off process.

President Bragdon, for Councilor Harrington, asked if there were certain policy outcomes associated with the loan. Councilor Hosticka asked about developer connections to the loan. Councilor Liberty asked about loan allocation specifics.

Mr. Whitmore said most affordable housing projects would prefer a loan. He said the budget was developed as if the money were spent. Mr. Stringer said it was identified as an outstanding loan, and explained how it was included in the budget.

3. **INTEGRATING HABITAT DESIGN COMMENTS FROM JURY**

Stacey Triplett, Regional Parks & Greenspaces, introduced the design competition and the events of February 26, 2008. Jurists were introduced and the competition and processes involved in selecting finalists were discussed. Susan Szenasy, Metropolis editor-in-chief and jurist, talked about different themes involved in the design competition. Stefan Behnisch, principal Behnisch

Architects and jurist, talked about themes, including the interdisciplinary collaboration involved in selecting design finalists and the winners. He said the most important theme to him was sustainability across interdisciplinary fields. Ms. Szenasy supported Mr. Behnisch's comments. Tom Schueler, founder Center for Watershed Protection and jurist, talked about Portland's innovative storm-water and environmental approaches. He said the entries were very good, but most fell a little short of full environmental accountability. Joan Nassauer, professor of landscape architecture at the University of Michigan and jurist, said Metro's sustainability mission was great and a model for the country. She said the importance of science in sustainability should not be undermined, and that ecological science was very applicable to what local governments must start to confront.

Jim Winkler, president Winkler Development Corporation, said America was starting to see connections between people and environment. He said it was important to understand unique environments, and to understand why people want to live in Portland. Mr. Winkler talked about his experience 'making' a stream and explained the educational and difficult components involved in such a process. He said it was important to understand that development was not the enemy, and that cities must sustain what they have. He found the design entries deep and passionate. He said it was very important that the youth of America 'get it right' in regards to sustainability. Ms. Szenasy said it was interesting because most finalists were students.

David Yocca, director Conservation Design Forum and jurist, said he agreed with fellow jurists. He said the idea of sustainability must happen, and that a design competition was a measurement of how well sustainability was communicated and understood. He said there was a yearning for something new and exciting because current landscapes and environments were uninspiring and required something new. He said the design competition was difficult for him because he did not know any of the sites. He said the principles of the designs were universal, but also local.

Mr. Behnisch said in similar competitions, it was interesting because professional experienced architects were not directly involved in the process. Instead it was young students with little experience bringing new ideas to the table. Mr. Winkler talked about the 'green industry' in Portland, and that Portland could become a true leader in green pro-activity. He said it was important to provide incentives to keep youth and the next green generation in Portland.

Mr. Schueler said aligning incentives, the public sector, and the private sector was a very important aspect of applying green design principles. Ms. Szenasy asked the jury what the Council could borrow from the designs. Ms. Nassauer talked about relating profits to ecosystem restoration. She said there were many smart design ideas in incorporating the economy, the environment, and different social issues. Mr. Behnisch talked about the importance of codes, but noted that they are very restrictive in such a progressive and fast-paced world. He said codes were not flexible enough. Ms. Nassauer talked about incentive-based flexible codes. Mr. Winkler talked about choices involved in how we live and models involved in design principles. Ms. Szenasy talked about structure preservation and the need to retrofit and sustain.

Ms. Nassauer said to achieve integrating habitats, the process and end goal were equally important. She said one of the most interesting aspects of the competition designs was that many of them planned strategies that not only included structures within the surrounding environment, but also provided plans for the future when structures would be gone, and plans for how to utilize the surrounding environment and habitat. Mr. Schueler said the Council should help students in understanding the application of their designs.

Mr. Yocca said sustainability relied on providing services locally. He said it was also important to maintain landscapes as more than just aesthetic components, but also productive local environments for agriculture, as well as other economic factors. Ms. Szenasy talked about the connection between people and the environment and the importance of education and connecting the two. She asked about the most effective strategies for citizen education.

Mr. Winkler talked about developing a sense of ownership for the land and environment. He said the education system should also include a broad sustainability and environmental component to the curriculum. He said tools such as the web should also be utilized. He said 'Integrating Habitats' was a modest way of managing the land and development. Ms. Nassauer said 'Integrating Habitats' was not about putting everything – people, places, structures – within high level habitat. It was more about enjoying habitat from a distance and preserving it and its other values.

President Bragdon asked how to integrate environmental and ecological science into planning and developing legal code. Mr. Schueler said there were scientific and sociological components. He said the sociological components were very important, beyond, for example, understanding how a green roof works. Mr. Winkler said people must be trained and enabled to be much more willing to go beyond code. He said it was important to further integrate sustainable practices into the marketplace. He talked about paying for green practices.

President Bragdon talked about green building and its connection with affordable housing. Mr. Winkler said it relied on alternative funding sources. Ms. Nassauer said oftentimes designers do not have access to ecological information, and there could be tools associated with codes providing sustainable information. Mr. Behnisch said there was still work to do with sustainable building. He said the best leading example for sustainable structures would be schools. He said when people start thinking green, energy costs are usually the first topic. He said habitat came far down the line.

Councilor Liberty talked about different strategies for integrating habitat into urban form. He asked if Portland could have a green conference where people from around the country gathered and a national discussion could form around different sustainable practices. Mr. Behnisch talked about different sustainable practices around the country. He said Portland could become a knowledge base.

Councilor Hosticka talked about the connection between big ideals and realistic budgets. He talked about enabling a public consciousness. He said he would like to see environmental discussions closely follow a 'money line' where monetary specifics were addressed individually. He said he was very engaged and stimulated and was encouraged by such a discussion. Ms. Nassauer said Portland's experiments are so powerful because of monitoring and measurement efforts. Councilor Liberty talked about different projects that had no specific goals or plans for maintenance and investment. Mr. Winkler said it was important to note that one failure was not necessarily a bad thing, but repeated failures are not desirable.

Ms. Szenasy said it was important to continue a dialogue on the future of sustainability. Mr. Winkler talked about investments in environmental initiatives. President Bragdon thanked staff for their help in the competition.

4. COUNCIL BRIEFINGS/COMMUNICATION

There were none.

There being no further business to come before the Metro Council, Council President Bragdon adjourned the meeting at 3:46 p.m.

Prepared by,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tony Andersen', written in a cursive style.

Tony Andersen
Council Operations Assistant

**ATTACHMENTS TO THE PUBLIC RECORD FOR THE MEETING OF
FEBRUARY 26, 2008**

Item	Topic	Doc. Date	Document Description	Doc. Number
1	Agenda	2/28/08	Agenda: Metro Council regular meeting, February 28, 2008	022608cw-1
1	Agenda	2/27/08	Agenda: Metro Council budget work session, February 27, 2008	022608cw-2
2	Revision	2/26/08	Revision: Transit Oriented Development Program Loan Policy, February 26, 2008	022608cw-3