

RESERVES STEERING COMMITTEE

MEETING SUMMARY

September 23, 2009; 9:00 am – 4:00 pm

Double Tree Hotel, 1000 NE Multnomah Street, Portland, OR

Core 4 Members Present: Washington County Commissioner Tom Brian, Multnomah County Commissioner Jeff Cogen, Metro Councilor Kathryn Harrington, Clackamas County Commissioner Charlotte Lehan.

Reserves Steering Committee Members Present: Chris Barhyte, Jeff Boechler, Katy Coba, Dennis Doyle, Kathy Figley, Bill Ferber, Jack Hoffman, Kirk Jarvie, Keith Johnson, Tim Knapp, Jim Kight, Sue Marshall, Mary Kyle McCurdy, David Mormon, Lainie Smith, Greg Specht, Dick Strathern, Jeff Stone, Richard Whitman.

Alternates Present: Drake Butsch, Aron Carleson, Bob Clay, David Fuller, Jim Johnson, Jim Nicita, John Pinkstaff, Kendra Smith.

Facilitation Team: Debra Nudelman, Melissa Egan, and Peter Harkema.

I. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Deb Nudelman called the meeting to order at 9:15 a.m., welcomed everyone, made brief introductory remarks, and asked attendees to introduce themselves. She provided an overview of the agenda and meeting materials. There were no changes or modifications to the September 9, 2009 Draft Meeting Summary and it was adopted as final.

Deb asked the Reserves Steering Committee members for updates. David Mormon announced that the Department of Forestry has recently published a new report that may be of interest to Reserves Steering Committee members. He encouraged everyone to review it on their website.

II. PUBLIC COMMENT

Elizabeth Graser-Lindsey spoke to the RSC about local food production, saying that if we consider the global and regional trends that will impact us over the next 40-50 years, such as climate change and peak oil, she sees a public desire for more locally grown food. In her opinion, she does not see this process as taking into account the food needs of the region. She broadly recommends designating rural reserves.

Cherrie Amabisca from Save Helvetia showed the RSC maps with the locations where elk have been sighted in Helvetia. She noted that elk are not endangered or threatened, so they are not protected under the Endangered Species Act, but she feels that this area where wildlife exist ought not to be urbanized. She supports Metro's COO Recommendations that area north of Highway 26 be protected and designated as rural reserves.

Alan Amabisca did an analysis of several reports, including some from Washington County, concerning the shortfall in funds for transportation infrastructure. Infrastructure funding is an issue the entire region is struggling with. He said we can spend the money paving over our farms, or we can spend money improving what we have, upgrading and enhancing transportation options for our citizens.

Jim Emerson from the Forest Park Neighborhood Association distributed information to the RSC about the area north of Sunset Highway. He said the four adjoining neighborhood boards have all submitted letters to support a rural designation. In addition, he cited traffic studies which have been done on the area, which in his opinion, fail to take into account the reality of the landscape and weather. Finally, he said the Multnomah CAC was made up of many diverse voices, and they recommended rural reserves for the area north of Sunset Highway. Jim asked the RSC to please recommend rural reserves.

Greg Mecklem lives and farms in Helvetia. He would like to commend Michael Jordan's recommendations, he believes they reflect the right vision for the region in the future. He has been doing soil analysis and he came to the conclusion that 75% of the total land in Helvetia are class 1 or class 2 soils, making irrigation largely unnecessary. He discussed other areas that he feels deserve special protection due to the high quality of soils, and reiterated his support for rural reserves.

III. STRATEGIES FOR A SUSTAINABLE AND PROSPEROUS REGION

Michael Jordan, Metro Chief Operating Officer, spoke to the RSC and Core 4 to give an overview of the Strategies for a Sustainable and Prosperous Region, generally referred to as the COO Recommendations. He thanked everyone for being here, and especially thanked the staffs of the three counties who have put in so much work on this important endeavor. The Recommendations represent a transition in the Reserves process; policy makers now have to take all the information and recommendations, and start to make the difficult decisions. Over the next three to four months, there will be some major milestones. He referred the group to pages 14 and 15 of the Executive Summary, where one can find the major tenants of the recommendations. They are: 1) Make the most of what we have: Invest to maintain and improve our existing communities; 2) Protect our urban growth boundary: To the maximum extent possible, ensure that growth is accommodated within the existing boundary; and 3) Walk our talk: Be accountable for our actions and responsible with the public's money. He continued, saying that in the deliberative phase, policy makers need to see the whole, not just the sum of the parts. This recommendation attempts to link all the pieces. It is a form of hydraulics - when you change one variable, it will impact other areas.

With these recommendations, Metro does not take a radically different approach to their comprehensive growth management policy. That being said, there have been some changes. This somewhat different approach is aimed at achieving the region's desired outcomes on page nine: vibrant communities; economic prosperity; safe and reliable transportation; leadership on climate change; clean air and water; and equity. Michael stressed that an important facet of the chapter ahead is attempting to move the region from being the greatest planned place to being the greatest place, emphasizing moving from planning to action. He said that what policies, regulations and effort we put forth, along with how well we direct the public's money, will have more to do with our success than anything else.

The major substantive themes in the recommendations concern: 1) the investments we make to maintain current infrastructure and optimize capacity to greatest degree possible and 2) protecting the Urban Growth Boundary by limiting the expansion of the UGB over the policy horizon, all the while keeping in mind that this region needs to make choices which will support a robust economy. He noted that the major difference in this forecast is that it is a range forecast, not a point forecast. They looked at high and low potential, and considered both 20 and 50 year timeframes. A 50 year forecast is a first for Metro. They tried to take into account areas where the market is not responding to zoned capacity. They want to know how you realize zoned capacity, and if you cannot, what are the impacts.

Another significant aspect of the COO Recommendations is the Regional Transportation Plan. The Joint Policy Advisory Committee on Transportation and the Metro Council have been going through the RTP for years, and are prepared to adopt it this fall. JPACT has looked at how the region invests money in transportation and how to repair and maintain the system we have built. Michael said we need to adopt a use pricing strategy and invest in technology to get more capacity, noting that when we do make choices, we need to opt for dense, multi-modal options which link investments to the transportation plan, with the goal of maintaining a compact urban form.

Turning to Metro's recommendations for urban and rural reserves, Michael explained how they approached the issue. They went back and studied maps, reports, and relevant criteria which make great urban places. That study led to statutory and rule changes, mostly around the areas of suitability. The trick has been balancing all these criteria. Metro will recommend a much higher threshold before the UGB is moved. We need to examine the relationships between governments, transportation infrastructure, and infrastructure funding before the UGB is moved. Title 11 compliance may not be necessary, but we need to determine what level is necessary. This is a policy question that still needs to be discussed. Also, they continue to struggle with how to handle an urban services requirement. Municipal governance ought to be considered an essential urban service. Michael thinks policy makers should consider all these factors before the UGB is moved.

Michael made brief comments about the third major tenant of the COO Recommendations, which is performance measurement. We have to establish agreed-upon metrics in order to be able to provide the future policy makers with trend data, so this process is not so arduous next time.

Michael next turned to the composite map of the three counties, which showed suitability areas, not recommendations. In the COO Recommendations, there are narrative descriptions of each area, containing criteria, natural landscape features, the nature of the issues, but no acreage. He went around the map, discussing several areas. As the RSC has learned, there are some areas that have the kind of landscape that could have multiple outcomes. We need to have continued conversation around these types of areas to consider the impacts of the multiple possible outcomes. In the COO Recommendations, they intentionally did not give acreage and they intentionally tried to indicate hard boundaries with natural resources. They chose the middle of the demand range and capacity range for the forecast, being cognizant of the process in 1998, which resulted in three years of litigation. He wants the ultimate decision to be sustainable.

Chris Barhyte asked how did local aspirations come into Metro's decision making process? Michael responded that they have heard from most communities in the region around land, centers, employment, growth, and preserving neighborhoods; they tried to balance all of the feedback. Local aspirations fit within a regional context. He knows the Reserves Steering Committee is focused on lands, but encourages folks to remember the linkages and balance for 25 cities and three counties. Dick Strathern commented that as elected official, he wants to compliment Michael on all the work that has been done. He thoroughly read the Executive Summary and is concerned that we do not have the measurements we need. He is concerned about the employment aspect. The Portland metro region does not have an agreed upon economic strategy. He finds this to be shocking, and he lays the responsibility at the feet of the region, not Metro. He feels very strongly that we need to take the long view in terms of our market strategy. Michael agrees, and added an explanatory comment about the economic development piece. Metro does not have the responsibility under Goal 9, the economic development goal. Metro's responsibility is coordination on land use, and to the degree there is an economic element, of course they have to consider it. Metro is a player, but not the convener.

Jeff Stone had two topics for Michael to address: the long term water supply availability and the definition of undesignated land, noting that the RSC heard Chair Brian share some apprehensions about undesignated lands, and he shares those apprehensions. Michael responded that they do not address water specifically, but he certainly encourages the Water Coalition that currently exists, or another group, to consider water. As for rural or undesignated, he thanked Jeff for reminding him to speak to those aspects of the process. For rural designated areas, he believes keeping a separation from the UGB is an important issue, and that rural reserves could be a tool to help that happen. Metro's position on undesignated lands is that they should be considered a risk management tool. He has recommended a relatively small urban reserve because there is risk in locking down a 40-50 year land pattern. Undesignated helps manage that risk. Policy makers 25 years from now will need flexibility, and they will have it if undesignated lands are used in this manner.

Jim Nicita asked Michael to expand a bit on accommodating more growth within existing UGB, the effect on land values, and architectural options, and design codes. Michael responded that the success of the Recommendations hinges on how we invest the public's money. It is also about changing the relationship between public and private investment. We have to get more involved in developing methods to take public money and link it to private investment. This is going to have to become the norm, not the exception, both inside and outside the UGB. On the topic of design codes, Michael feels the current review process is sorely lacking. He is not seeking only regulation, but sees the need to make better use of codes as a tool for growth management.

Greg Specht wondered about large lot availability, saying the region needs shovel-ready large lots. He noted Michael's reference to the higher threshold for moving the UGB in the future and that Appendix 3 recommends a fast-track process. Greg wonders if such a fast-track is even possible and if prospective employers will wait. Michael responded that the choice lies in preservation for certain kinds lands for future employment needs. The ability to overcome what has been a cumbersome, litigious process, and the ability to preserve the land once it is in the boundary for a specific kind of use. It is a choice for the policy makers – leave it out of the boundary, or bring it in and regulate it. Greg followed up, inquiring about the waiting we ask of the prospective employer if we rely on a fast-track process. From Michael's experience, he believes you have to be ready in a winter. Companies come to you in the fall, and will want to break ground in the spring. He does not have the process in his mind, but he knows it has to be expeditious and reliable.

David Fuller inquired about Troutdale. They wanted to add less than 1000 acres of very developable land. He sees nothing on the map. Michael responded that that was a tough one for him, and they erred on the side of the preservation of foundation farmland. It was a bit of peninsula that was proposed, and the access seemed difficult. David followed up, asking for clarification if it can still be added. Michael responded that the policy makers can add whatever they want. Jeff Cogen said that the map of the county considers only the suitability factors, and that the County Board has not made their recommendations yet.

IV. UPDATE ON COUNTY RECOMMENDATIONS

Brent Curtis from Washington County provided a brief update, saying not much has changed since the last Core 4, when he explained the whole process. There have refined some numbers due to re-calculation of GIS information. The RSC received a CD today with a vast amount of information, reports and Washington County's urban and rural reserves recommendations.

Chuck Beasley from Multnomah County also provided a brief update. The Board met, conducted extended public hearing, and adopted a resolution forwarding the CAC and staff suitability assessments to Core 4 and

the Steering Committee. Chuck referred folks to the packet of materials and went over the suitability maps and acreages on urban and rural suitability. He noted that the City of Troutdale is interested in urban reserve at their southeast edge. This area ranks low for urban suitability, but that does not mean that no urbanization could occur. It will be an on-going conversation. Chuck said that on the regional map, the Metro staff has done a great job in translating the information from the three counties. For Multnomah County, areas in green have a greater than low suitability for rural reserve, white areas equate to low suitability for rural reserve, and the cross-hatched areas are greater than low suitability for urban reserve.

Doug McClain from Clackamas County said that the Board of County Commissioners took action shortly after the last RSC meeting. He said that the comments in COO Recommendations are similar to the sentiments of the Board of County Commissioners. He encouraged the RSC to refer to the packet material for the most up-to-date maps and information. Doug referred to Mayor Fuller's comment and Michael Jordan's response, reaffirming that this is very much a conversation in progress.

V. RISKS AND OPPORTUNITIES

Richard Whitman from the Department of Land Use and Conservation spoke to the RSC about the risk of under- or over-designating. He presented a PowerPoint called "Urban and Rural Reserves: How Much Land? Risks and Consequences." Richard wanted to share his thoughts, noting that this conversation requires a transition from considering lots technical information to getting into the policy questions. There are two categories: how much and where, for both urban and rural. He will focus his comments on the how much question, including risk. He added that these are his own thoughts, not of LCDC and not necessarily those of the state agencies.

In getting to a reasonable answer to this question, Richard said there are main levers: 1) over what period of time; 2) where in forecasting range do you land; and 3) the capacity within existing UGB. Concerning rural lands, not all are under threat of urbanization and the designation is supposed to be used for lands under real threat of urbanization. An issue with urban reserves is that they can include resource lands. If too much land is designated as urban reserves, it has the effect of undermining the state's policy of conserving farm and forest lands and urbanizing rural residential (exception) lands first, before resource lands. Once urban reserves are designated, it becomes difficult to add other non-reserve lands to the UGB, except in cases where lands are needed for a specific purpose. Top priority land for additions is urban reserves. Richard clarified the status of undesignated lands, saying that urban reserves must be exhausted before development can move on to undesignated lands. This is important for counties, for both future need and balance. Once the urban and rural are designated, the undesignated lands are going to be more difficult to bring into UGB.

To summarize:

- Risks of Too Much Urban Reserve Land: undermines policies to protect resource lands; encourages land speculation, and may lead to early loss of resource uses.
- Risks of Too Little Urban Reserve Land: may require a second round of reserve designations, but could provide more flexibility to respond to unexpected future conditions.
- Risks of Too Much Rural Reserve Land: locks up land for 40 to 50 years; could block addition of lands needed for efficient urbanization or for specific purposes.
- Risks of Too Little Rural Reserve Land: leaves lands that are important for resource uses at risk of conversion to urban uses; fails to provide certainty and stability to resource industries.

VI. SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION

The Reserves Steering Committee were divided into two small groups to engage in discussion with two Core 4 members joining each group, along with technical staff.

VII. REPORTS ON SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION

Green Group:

I. What were the highlights and major themes of your discussion?

Scale:

- Need balance in scale to support both jobs and community livability while being able to pay for it; also need balance of representation - east/west side business representation
- Need to look at going less than 50 years
- There is a tipping point to being too conservative; pushes growth outside

Risks and consequences - jobs housing balance

- Not focusing investment dollars; diluting limited funds
- Jeopardizing quality of life that makes region economically attractive
- Pressure to develop urban reserves once designated
- Rural – impacts on agricultural land and agricultural economy

II. Please summarize any areas of alignment or concurrence

- General but not unanimous support for COO recommendations
- Concurrence about employment for different cities

III. What was challenging about the conversation, any major conflict areas?

1. Differing views on:
 - The progression of development infrastructure
 - Employment and ranges used in forecasting
2. Amount of urban reserves land designated in Washington County versus other counties

IV. Were there any surprises, outstanding questions/issues or areas for further discussion?

- No breakthrough on characteristics of undesignated areas
- Regional scale/balance needs further discussion
- Mechanism to revisit a means to manage future uncertainty
- Focus on areas of alignment and frame the discussion so it is not a win/lose
- State staff have only limited ability to comment – only facts not positions – which are still being developed at the State

Blue Group:

I. What were the highlights and major themes of your discussion?

Trade offs – between city aspirations, county desires for future growth, and the boundary of agriculture and natural resource lands

II. Please summarize any areas of alignment or concurrence

- Natural features, major highways as a way to buffer. Riparian areas likely to be protected regardless of designation
- Under rural residential, some agriculture lands would be at risk
- Concurrence that we have a hard time agreeing

III. What was challenging about the conversation, any major conflict areas?

- Rural reserves being used as an environmental overlay and natural areas being designated (Tualatin Wildlife Refuge)
- Conflict between growth and agriculture. Future use versus agriculture as an industry. Both employers. How to choose?
- Voter approved annexations, many looking at now, not 40-50 years
- New employment land equity to development on the edges

IV. Were there any surprises, outstanding questions/issues or areas for further discussion?

- Reconciliation between the regional versus county numbers
- With limited dollars likely, should that drive the UGB or Reserves process?
- Common threshold reserves – rural reserve areas show protection and/or threat of development

Greg Specht commented that it was surprising to him that state agency representatives could not participate today. He thinks the RSC should have been made aware of that. He is concerned that someone directed the state representatives to not participate in this discussion and thinks that is not good at all. Richard Whitman added that, having just received the COO Recommendations a week ago, the agencies are working to understand them and formulate consolidated state agency comments. He stresses that there has been no muzzling and feels that they were able to participate today.

Denny Doyle commented that, regarding Troutdale's request, there seems to be a disparity in the jobs and housing balance. He does not want to see a job center in Multnomah County and housing concentrated in Washington County. He will keep beating this drum so people do not have to travel long distances in their daily commute. Drake Butsch said he has a lack of understanding of what went into Michael Jordan's report, especially in terms of Metro's numbers and Washington County's numbers. He wonders what the underlying assumptions were. Denny said that perhaps Washington County's numbers were so big because it is a reflection of the fact that people were honestly asked what they wanted. He was not surprised, noting that different groups have different aspirations. He feels it is a healthy thing that will contribute to the on-going dialogue.

Mary Kyle wondered if there would be modifications to Clackamas or Multnomah County information before the next meeting? The response was no, there will be no changes, but discussions are continuing. Tom Brian added that Washington County will take information from this meeting and the October 14 RSC meeting, get further input from cities, then will hash it out with Core 4. Kathryn Harrington agreed, saying they want advice then will go from there.

Tim Knapp was interested in hearing about what went into Washington County's numbers that lead to such different conclusions about need. Deb responded that, from a process perspective, she thinks we can put these requests for information down as action items, but what she needs everyone to be cognizant of is sharing perspectives from constituent groups at the October 14 meeting. She does not want conversations to be put on hold until you get the information. Sue Marshall added that she is not clear on the term "local aspirations," and wondered if it is a land use planning term or a part of a periodic review process that some jurisdictions underwent? Chris Barhyte said that from Washington County cities' perspectives, they arrived at a notion of local aspirations by doing community visioning, which went into Washington County's process. In the big report, each city considered numerous factors which allowed them to arrive at numbers which they proposed or requested. Additionally, he encourages RSC members to talk to their constituents. In his city, people largely do not want additional infill in neighborhoods. He does not think 34,000 acres is too much for urban reserves, a lot of work went into arriving at that number.

Keith Johnson asked if Michael Jordan's report essentially represents Kathryn Harrington. Kathryn said that Michael made this set of recommendations, and as a full council, they are now in listening mode. They do not yet have a position; it will be developed over the next weeks and months ahead. She really wants input from this advisory body; she does not want the RSC to be influenced by the opinions of Metro councilors.

Jack Hoffman commented on local and regional aspiration and how to balance those. People are conflicted, they do not like infill, they do not like sprawl. Folks will say do not tell me I cannot cut my tree down, but do not let my neighbor cut their tree down. The Metro staff has come up with a philosophy which involves a compact urban form, trying to minimize the auto dominated subdivision. Jack said we have demand, we have capacity, and we have a gap. We need to consider where the regional dollars will go, while balancing employment and housing.

Charlotte Lehan wants feedback on Washington County and Clackamas County rural reserve designations. She wants to know what is subject to urbanization and what role does it play. Washington County declares everything outside the urban designation as rural. In Clackamas, they utilized a more conservative approach, stopping at somewhere around the 3-mile line, thinking that beyond that it is not likely subject to urbanization. We could make rural reserves designations clear out to the Cascades, but she does not think that is what they were supposed to do.

VIII. NEXT STEPS AND WRAP-UP

Deb thanked everyone for their participation today, especially the robust small group discussions. She asked everyone to talk with each other and the PMT members between now and the next RSC meeting on October 14. During that meeting, we will go around the table and hear from each RSC as a representative of your constituents. We will ask you to provide information and opinions to help the Core 4 focus on the decisions they have to make.

Greg Specht asked for clarification on how the recommendation process will work. Deb said it is fine to provide written materials on behalf of your constituents, that the RSC will not be voting, nor are we seeking consensus. No one is required to speak, but they hope for maximum participation by all RSC members. Members can join together if they have similar constituent interests and select one speaker to deliver their message. Charlotte added that she can see that some people may want to join together with a unified message, but each represents a stakeholder group, and the Core 4 wants the full flavor of all on the RSC. It is ok to have visuals, please bring them on a USB drive.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:17 p.m.

Meeting summary respectfully submitted by Kearns & West, Inc.



ATTACHMENTS TO THE PUBLIC RECORD FOR September 23, 2009

The following have been included as part of the official public record:

AGENDA ITEM	DOC TYPE	DOC DATE	DOCUMENT DESCRIPTION	DOCUMENT NO.
2.	Document and map		From: Elizabeth Graser-Lindsey	092309rsc-01
2.	Document	9-23-09	From: Cherry Amabisca	092309rsc -02
2.	Document	9-23-09	From: Jim Emerson	092309rsc -03
2.	Document		From: Greg Mecklem	092309rsc -04
4.	Document and Map	9-23-09	From: Washington County Staff	092309rsc -05