

Greenspaces Policy Advisory Committee

James A. Zehren, Chair



METRO

MEETING NOTES

Thursday, Nov. 18, 2004
5:30 to 8:00 p.m.
Metro Regional Center, Rm. 501
600 NE Grand Ave., Portland

Committee members present: Chair Jim Zehren, Ernie Drapela, Kim Gilmer, John Griffiths, Faun Hosey, Mike Houck, Esther Lev, Doug Neeley, Mike Ragsdale, Zari Santner, Dick Schouten, Don Trotter

Committee members absent: Steve Greagor, Jill Zanger

Metro staff present: Nancy Chase, Tom Kloster, Lia Waiwaiole

Guests: Bob Sallinger, Audubon Society of Portland

Convene

The meeting was called to order by Jim Zehren at 5:35 p.m.

Presentation about the history of Metro's Regional Transportation Plan process

Jim Zehren introduced Tom Kloster from Metro's transportation program. Tom presented an overview of the history of the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) and its development. The intention of the presentation and discussion was that GPAC might be able to learn from a process with several potential parallels to their own. Highlights of the presentation and important points for GPAC to consider were:

- "No one ever says 'here's 5 million dollars, now go make a plan'." Tom really emphasized that you can't and shouldn't limit yourself to working within the existing funding or known future funding. Sometimes you have to have the plan before you will attract the necessary funding to implement the plan. And sometimes the process to develop the plan works the same way. You might start out with a fairly humble amount of staff, time and money dedicated to the effort, but it can grow as the expectations and excitement grow around it. As the public gets more involved, or as other jurisdictions

and partners get more invested in the outcome, Metro (and other sources) may dedicate more support to the development of a functional plan or policy document.

- Tom emphasized the importance of not underestimating the amount of staff, time or money involved in pulling off an effort like the RTP. (In their case, two million dollars and between 6 and 8 staff people, including planners, a public affairs person and administrative support.)
- He also said that you should assume that at least half (and perhaps considerably more) of your money, time and effort will be spent on public outreach – communicating the plan, involving the public, going to dozens of meetings, producing a lot of materials, etc.
- He also emphasized the importance of involving “everyone you can conceive of” in the process of developing the plan so that there will be buy in when it comes time to adopt and live by the plan.
- Before work began on the functional plan portion of the RTP, a 21-member citizen advisory group wrote a regional transportation policy document based on the 2040 design concept (which had just been developed at the time). Metro Council adopted the policy document and the functional plan grew from there.
- They spent considerable time talking to the public, local jurisdictions and other stakeholders about projects they felt were needed (and some that were in the plan already that they did not think were necessary) in their areas. Cities who had their own plans already, brought them to the table and they were incorporated and considered.
- Metro also wanted to provide tools to local governments. They produced three books about new design guidelines for streets: Creating Livable Streets, Green Streets and Trees for Green Streets. A new book about wildlife crossings is being produced now. These tools are incorporated into the RTP in a number of ways. First, local jurisdictions were required to make sure there was nothing in their existing plans or policies that did not allow them to use the new methodologies. There is also a provision in the RTP that requires transportation providers to officially consider using the guidelines in new projects.
- Tom pointed out that the 30 million dollars that Metro allocates through MTIP encouraged active participation in both the planning and implementation of the RTP. It acts as a carrot. GPAC and Metro will have to think about how a similar plan for parks and greenspaces would work if it did not have that kind of incentive. Would the plan need to be more regulatory in nature?

Mike Houck reminded people that the Regional Framework Plan actually states that a functional plan would be developed.

Parks Forum

Kim Gilmer reported that the Parks Forum meeting earlier in the day was well attended. They had a presentation about the Chicago Wilderness model and also reviewed and discussed the GPAC vision statement. Kim and Mike Houck presented the history of GPAC and the work that has been done so far. The group is in the process of thinking about their next steps and formalizing their process and structure. The group is excited about the Chicago Wilderness model and think that it might work well in this region. The majority of people in attendance wanted to continue to discuss and consider that model. There was also a conversation about the role of Metro and/or GPAC in this effort and how GPAC and the Parks Forum group should work together. A question was raised, but not concluded, about whether Metro should take a leadership role in a Chicago Wilderness type model.

Mike Houck said that he had felt a need to clarify to the Parks Forum that there was a distinction between GPAC and Metro, and remind them that it was many of them, including

himself, who asked the Metro Council to form GPAC in order to elevate parks issues in the region.

Both Mike and Kim thought that the vision statement was well received by the group and that it was a good time to invite their participation and collaboration again in GPAC's work. Kim suggested that they make an explicit overture to the group that says that they should coordinate their efforts.

Esther Lev pointed out that if the group were eventually hoping to attract federal funding in a similar way to the Chicago Wilderness group, they were going to have to think about how only certain kinds of entities can receive that kind of money. Should it go through Metro or the USFWS? It cannot be given directly to a non-profit organization.

Mike Ragsdale made a motion to designate a GPAC member to be the official liaison to the Parks Forum group and nominated Kim Gilmer, since she has been involved in both groups from the beginning. Members unanimously agreed and reinforced that it was better for it to be a GPAC member than Metro staff.

Discussion of draft goals, principles and strategies for implementing the GPAC vision prepared by Metro staff

The committee began a discussion of two documents prepared by Metro staff at GPAC's request: a list of goals and principles and a strategy matrix for implementing the GPAC vision.

Jim Zehren said that he wondered why the principles did not more closely match up with the elements of the vision statement, particularly the bulleted list. Some agreed and others felt that the goals and principles document was meant to be more specific or detailed.

There was consensus that the documents seemed to focus on and emphasize the natural resources aspects of the vision and did not include enough about the other things that GPAC included in their vision.

A concern was raised about how private and public ownership are discussed in the document. In places it seemed to incorporate private and public ownership of elements of the system, but in other places it seemed to favor public ownership. Specifically, it was suggested that the reference to "increasing the number of acres under public management" should be changed to "protected management."

There was consensus that the strategy document was premature and should be set aside while the group focused on the goals and principles (the "what" versus the "how"). The group also thought that when they came back to looking at strategies, they might not want to use the structure suggested by the matrix. Rather than looking at the strategies as just "local, state, regional and federal," they might want to categorize the strategies according to type (e.g. funding strategies, regulatory strategies, etc.).

There was some discussion of the goal of "protecting biodiversity." Esther Lev pointed out that this region does not have a biodiversity plan like the Chicago Wilderness group does. She suggested that if we wanted to take that approach (an approach that laid out strategies and goals around particular species as opposed to one that only looks at habitat types), GPAC should consider proposing that a biodiversity plan be developed. Esther also explained

how such a plan can help ensure that restoration and conservation work are actually effective and coordinated.

Don Trotter and other members brought up the level of service model that Portland Parks staff had presented at the October meeting, which sets goals based on experiences rather than specific facilities or miles of trails, etc. Don asked whether or not the group might want their goals and principles statements to read more like that.

Esther Lev added that approaching the goals and principles from this new perspective (of experience-based analysis rather than more traditional level of service analysis) might engage more and different people in the conversation than have typically or historically been involved in these efforts.

Mike Houck said that people should remember that some of this work has already been done in the Greenspaces Master Plan and the Regional Trails and Greenways Plan. Don Trotter and other members added that GPAC's role might be to figure out and develop the parts of "the system" that are not covered by those two plans and then figure out a way to mesh them all together.

Nancy Chase, from Metro's open spaces acquisition program, shared some of the strategies used during the bond measure.

The group also discussed the possibility that the Metro Council might decide to pursue a bond measure in 2006. Several questions were raised: Would GPAC support it? Is it the right timing, considering other problems facing the region that will likely be in focus at that time, such as Portland Public Schools and the end of the Multnomah County temporary tax? How might GPAC weigh in on what the bond measure should include? Would the bond measure be primarily targeting acquisition of Goal 5 resources? Could/should the bond measure also be used for local park or recreation facility projects and other types of things that GPAC has included in its vision? Are we ready, or is it too soon in the planning process to attempt to bring money into the picture?

Mike Ragsdale made a motion and the group unanimously agreed that they would like to formally request that the Metro Council send a representative to all GPAC meetings.

Some time was spent wordsmithing the first section of the goals and principles document, but questions were also raised about whether the group wanted to work with that draft or go back to the drawing board. As the time was running out, Jim Zehren suggested (and members agreed) that they should each take a stab at writing three or four of the goals and principles statements, based on the vision statement and/or the draft presented by staff. Members should feel free to use the experience-based approach to formulating the goals and principles if they would like to. Members agreed to send those goals and principles to Lia (at waiwaiol@metro.dst.or.us) by Dec. 9 so that Metro staff can compile them before the next meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:05 p.m.