

Greenspaces Policy Advisory Committee

Mike Ragsdale, Chair

MEETING NOTES

Thursday, January 26, 2006
5:30 – 7:30 PM
Metro Regional Center, Rm. 501
600 NE Grand Ave, Portland, OR

Committee members present: Chair Mike Ragsdale, Ernie Drapela, Kim Gilmer, Faun Hosey, Mike Houck, Zari Santner, Dick Schouten, Scott Burgess, Mike Sykes, Dan Zinzer, Linda Robinson.

Committee members absent: Esther Lev, John Griffiths, and Sue Marshall

Elected officials, staff and guests present: Jim Desmond, Chris Carlson, Pat Sullivan, Jennifer Budhabhatti and Carol Devine

General Update

Mike Ragsdale called the meeting to order at 5:35 pm. With the inclusion of three new Committee members, Linda Robinson, Mike Sykes and Dan Zinzer and one new staff member, Jennifer Budhabhatti, introductions and brief bios were shared. There had been discussion in past meetings about the addition of a support staffer with more technical background to assist the Committee in moving forward with its Task Force goals. Carolyn Devine, a guest who identified herself as a citizen interested in big picture planning, was also introduced and welcomed to the Committee meeting.

The Chair and Chris Carlson summarized for the new members and reminded the others of the work completed by the Committee, including the vision and the work of the four Task Forces.

GPAC's Role

Chair Ragsdale asked the group whether they were a working committee or an advisory group to the Metro Council. He added that the committee was not "advisory committee", but it has self-selected to be more of a working committee, which it has evolved into, geared to deliver a product. The committee agreed that they were a working committee.

Zari Satner added that GPAC was also a policy advisory committee whose function was similar to that of other policy advisory committees such as JPAC (Joint Policy Advisory committee for transportation). She also recommended that GPAC should assist in setting

future direction for all parks throughout the region such that park distribution is brought to parity with other infrastructure in the region, such as transportation.

Vision

Mike Houck wondered if the vision caused concern among internal staff because of its overarching mission. He also asked if GPAC had visibility with the Metro Council.

Jim Desmond responded that staff has no issues with the vision, it actually complements the “new look” a planning process that Metro planning staff are working on to update the 2040 plan. The issue is operative funding and setting a direction for the vision. The proposed bond measure for \$220 million is the first step towards setting priorities for implementation.

Chris said that GPAC is still visible to the Metro Council. Chair Ragsdale also agreed with Chris and suggested that it was important to accomplish some priorities and tasks that are related to the vision.

Ernie Drapela emphasized the vision and its control of our future and that we can decide what sense of place should be accomplished in our region. Ernie also suggested that we need to set priorities to get it implemented and that David Bragdon’s letter to GPAC may help set work priorities.

Work Plan

Chair Ragsdale informed the group that Ernie and Chris helped him set this work plan up based on David Bragdon’s letter to GPAC. He solicited the group for their input regarding work priorities and dates.

Issue	Who	Status Report	Deliverable –Nov, 2006
Financial	Metro	Current sources Short falls Obstacles New sources	Regional strategy
Institution	???	Steps 1-5 of workplan	Workshop in 2007
System plan	Metro + district	Data aggregated Data needs Healthy system criteria	draft map + narrative

Implementation of the work plan

Financial research

Chair Ragsdale said that a summary of the financial status report will be presented to Metro Council in June 2006. He said that it was important to finalize a regional strategy by November 2006, because during that time the fate of the bond measure would be revealed and it would be in time for a congressional appropriation committee to be formed to develop a regional financial strategy.

Chris informed the committee that Metro staff Jennifer and Jeff Tucker will be working on the financial paper and that the product will be dynamic and based on an iterative process.

Mike H. reminded the committee that Multnomah County undertook a similar research project years ago to fund library, schools and parks and worked with a citizen/ technical group to identify financial gaps in the system. He identified the forum to be held in 2007 as an important place to seek input on financial strategies. He reminded the committee that as a group they could seek funding to complete these tasks. He added that it was important to establish a funding strategy because of one important question that may be raised through the bond measure process, which is –where is the source of funding for operation and maintenance of parks?

Mike Sykes and Zari. agreed that parks were not considered as important as fire and schools by local jurisdictions. Mike went on to add that Forest Grove did not have finances to operate their natural areas. Zari. suggested that financial incentives be offered as a way to provide local park jurisdictions with funds for their operating costs and acquiring more parks, such that the standard for parks are raised in the region.

Institution research

Chair Ragsdale informed Zari that she will be in charge of the workshop/forum idea in 2007. Dan Zinzer asked for clarification of this work task. Chris read the goals and tasks from the work products of the institution task force and stressed the importance of the workshop/forum in 2007.

System Planning

Definition of the system: Kim Gilmer said that it was important to define the system. She liked the idea of attaining a “healthy system” and wondered if it was a factor in determining the elements/components of a system. Kim wants to involve a committee of park directors in defining components of the system. Zari agreed with the concept of defining the system and perhaps this could be used as a student project for the University of Oregon’s landscape architecture program. Ernie agreed and suggested that Portland State University students could also be used. Mike H. suggested that outside experts could also help in bringing attention to this effort. For example, policy makers are more receptive to ideas that are generated outside the region than from within the region. He

recommended that David Hulse from University of Oregon with the Willamette Futures Project, could also assist on this project.

Types of data for the system plan: Kim recollected that Metro gathered comprehensive plan from all jurisdictions to update the parks layer. Scott Burgess asked the committee if urban plazas were part of the system, such as pioneer place; he recommended collecting that type of data for those who are interested in using urban plazas for recreation. Jennifer distributed a copy of the parks GIS database that was updated in 2003. Metro collected data for both private and public parks, including natural areas, recreational centers, active parks, cemeteries and golf courses.

Other Topics Discussed

1. Jim Desmond suggested that the group pay attention to the report titled "Equity Atlas" by the Coalition for Livable Future. The report looked at the distribution of parks and its relation to cities and income groups. The report will be published by June 2006.
2. Dick Schouten mentioned that the chair of Washington County, Tom Brian, spoke about the importance of greenspaces and its economic implication, the upcoming bond measure and the west side trail projects. All agreed that these statements showed that policy makers at Washington County supported GPAC's vision.
3. Chris mentioned that GPAC may be interested in inviting ZEBA to give a presentation of their work with the "southwest neighborhood" ? . They specialize in marketing and messaging including using appropriate vocabulary to describe the sense of place.

Assistance Needed

Chair Ragsdale, Jim Desmond and Chris Carlson all requested assistance on this project. They identified needing help on interjurisdiction coordination. Scott asked them to be specific about their needs and informed them that the summer is a busy season for staff. Zari asked Jim Desmond to request assistance on regional planning from Portland City Council.

Next Steps

Chair Ragsdale asked for assistance in planning for the next GPAC meeting. Chris informed the committee that she invited Robin McArthur, Metro's Regional Planning Director to address the committee on the "new look".

The meeting adjourned at 7:30 pm.