

Greenspaces Policy Advisory Committee
Mike Ragsdale, Chair

MEETING NOTES

Thursday, April 27, 2006,
5:30 – 7:30 PM
Metro Regional Center, Rm. 501
600 NE Grand Ave, Portland, OR

Committee members present: Chair Mike Ragsdale, John Griffiths, Faun Hosey, Mike Houck, Sue Marshall, Tim Raphael, Linda Robinson, Zari Santner, Dick Schouten, and Mike Sykes,

Committee members absent: Scot Burgess, Ernie Drapela, Kim Gilmer, Mike Livingston, and Dan Zinzer

Elected officials, staff and guests present: Jennifer Budhabhatti, Chris Carlson, Joel Shoening, Pat Sullivan, Jeff Tucker and Christy Owen

Chair Mike Ragsdale called the meeting to order at 5:35 pm. He welcomed back to GPAC Tim Raphael, who was recently re-appointed. Tim was a member of the original Greenspaces Policy Advisory Committee which was created in January 2004.

Chair Ragsdale reported he will be updating Metro Council at a work session in June on the progress of the work being done by GPAC. The remainder of the meeting focused on program reports on the system funding and regional coordination models.

System

- Jennifer Budhabhatti gave an update on the work being done on the system by describing the data compiled thus far on the following layers. The layers will eventually be overlain to illustrate the system in its entirety and to help identify 'gaps':

Regional Landscape (Layer 1) includes Goal 5 inventory, wetlands and Title 3 areas, the Greenspaces Concept map and unbuilt land. Mike Houck added that a great deal of work has already been done on this layer to distill it down to what the most significant pieces are through a variety of processes.

Natural Areas of Significance (Layer 2) includes publicly protected natural areas, irrespective of ownership.

Neighborhood/Community Parks and Trails (Layer 3) includes existing parks and trails based on 2003 data. CIPs and current trail information is being obtained.

Active Recreational Sites (Layer 4) depicts publicly owned ball fields, tennis courts and schoolyards.

The committee was asked if privately owned recreation sites should they be included, and if so, on what layer(s)? The committee was also asked if existing community gardens/CSAs, tree corridors and key pedestrian/bike routes should be included as suggested in the system task force report (June 2005). Chair Ragsdale asked the committee if they should spend the effort now to identify community gardens, for example. Members observed that some things are mappable, such as the natural landscape, and some things are not. It was also suggested that it might be even more important to get data layers so that questions can be answered about levels of service.

Chris asked if the current layers are still a viable way for the committee to build the system. One suggestion was the more layers the better for the best picture of the system. Urban forest canopy was suggested as a better category than tree corridors (heritage), but the group made no decision on mapping. A correlation between bike/pedestrian corridors and tree corridors (linear parks) was also suggested. A layer entitled "Open Space" was thought useful as many areas are designated as open space, but are not protected. A cultural resource overlay may also need to be added.

Mike Houck, who has been asked to head up a committee to help identify the system wants to tie this project as closely as possible to the New Look. He said he would be looking primarily at the landscape element of the system, including the natural resources. He said it's important to refer to David Hulce's work on the Willamette Basin and that Mr. Hulce has offered to help GPAC, to a limited extent, including providing access to his GIS database.

Funding

Jeff Tucker, Finance Manager for Metro Parks, presented the draft of the *GPAC Finance Report, Part I- Existing Financial Environment* to the committee. (***Committee members were provided with a copy of the report; please contact Patricia Sullivan (sullivanp@metro.dst.or.us) if additional copies are needed.***). The report is being prepared in two parts. Jeff summarized Part I, which describes existing park/open space funding sources and asked for questions and feedback so that it can be finalized for the May meeting. Part II will discuss potential funding sources.

Mike Houck observed that in considering priorities, the major function of the finance component is to figure out how to put together a stable, long-term funding base for public park and natural area providers for acquisition, restoration and long-term management. Some members emphasized all public agencies (including state and federal) rather than specific public park and natural area providers.

Sue Marshall said it is important to see what the non-profit world is doing in their funding efforts, including leveraging. She thought it would be revealing to look at perhaps a dozen relevant non-profits to learn how they are faring in their funding efforts. This could be beneficial not just for acquisition but for restoration as well. Chairman Ragsdale asked Sue if she could provide a list of a dozen or so such non-profits which could be contacted.

Jeff said that most park providers receive general fund support which is predominately property tax based. Measure 5 (passed in 1990) and Measure 50 (a replacement for Measure 47, which was originally adopted by voters in 1997) significantly reduce the capability of local jurisdictions

to increase funding for parks from existing sources. Jeff also mentioned system development charges (SDCs) which almost all local jurisdictions impose except Metro.

Institutional Relationships

Joel Schoening, GPAC intern observed that decisions about institutional models will rely on decisions that are made about funding and systems. Joel is researching regional coordination models to identify areas that may apply here. He briefly described Chicago Wilderness, Mid America Regional Council, Greater Vancouver Regional District, Met Council (Minneapolis) and East Bay Regional Park District. *(See attached matrix.)*

A committee member suggested studying JPACT. Its ability to obtain transportation dollars and leverage funds is impressive and its decision-making across the region is effective. With elected officials as members, it creates a strong lobbying effort at the state and federal level. It was noted that Tom Kloster discussed JPACT at a GPAC meeting in 2005.

A suggestion was also made to look at what's happening with metropolitan parks district concepts in Washington State.

Members asked about the meeting with park providers that Zari and Kim Gilmer held in April. Zari said they described GPAC work on the system and asked them to help determine its accuracy. Park providers said they would each appoint a point person who would respond to GPAC requests. The park providers were pleased that the intent was not just to determine what the system is and how the jurisdictions could work together, but to identify fundamental financial needs.

The next GPAC meeting, scheduled for Thursday, May 25th, will include a discussion of what information to take to the work session before the Metro Council on June 27.

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