

GREENSPACES TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

MEETING NOTES

1 to 3 p.m. Wednesday, March 12
Metro Regional Center, Room 370

Minneapolis trip

Jim Desmond reminded GTAC members of the trip being planned to visit the Minneapolis/St. Paul Regional Parks system on May 8 and 9. Everyone is invited and people who are interested in attending should contact Jim by April 11. (Some participants will travel by train – leaving Portland on May 6 and returning on May 11.)

This is an excerpt from the March 7 letter from Jim and Metro Council President David Bragdon:

As we begin to consider the next steps in creating a regional parks and trails system here in the Metro region, we believe it would be informative to visit an area in many ways similar to our own that has a more advanced system. In the Twin Cities, many individual local park providers own and operate various parks and trails within the regional system. The regional government there provides an overall planning and coordination function but does not own and operate any land or facilities. It is a distinct model of regional local cooperation. See www.metrocouncil.org/parks/parks.htm.

We hope that this trip will help us collectively consider the possibilities for taking the next steps necessary to have a truly integrated regional system of parks, trails and natural areas and an improved relationship between Metro and local governments and non-profit groups.

Regional Trails Publication

The spring Metro GreenScene has a special section highlighting the regional trails and greenways system. A more permanent version of this publication is being developed right now. Please review the GreenScene insert and let Lia Waiwaiole know about any changes before March 25 (<http://www.metro-region.org/article.cfm?ArticleID=3419>). You can also contact Lia for extra copies of the GreenScene. (503) 797-1728 or waiwaiolel@metro.dst.or.us.

Trails funding updates

Bill Barber from Metro Planning presented the latest information about the transportation priorities being developed for MTIP funding in 2004-2007 and the State of Oregon transportation enhancement projects. Detailed information is

available on the Metro web site (start with <http://www.metro-region.org/article.cfm?articleid=139>). Bill encouraged trail project advocates to show up at upcoming public meetings, work closely with their transportation planners and engineers now and with their elected officials down the road. Bill can be reached at (503) 797-1758.

Land conservation tools

Nancy Chase from Metro Parks circulated a questionnaire exploring GTAC members' interest in workshops or presentations from metro open space staff specific to land acquisition, donations and other land conservation tools. We are soon likely to lose this expertise as the bond measure is being wrapped up. Contact Nancy at (503) 797-1845 if you would like more information.

The future of GTAC

The Metro Council action that authorized GTAC in November 1998 stated that "GTAC shall be dissolved four years from the adoption of this resolution unless otherwise extended by Council." Jim Desmond opened a conversation with GTAC members about the future of the committee by sharing some of the input he has received so far and inviting people to talk about what they would like to GTAC's role to be.

Comments and discussion:

- Jim Desmond said that Metro staff would like to work more collaboratively with GTAC on policy issues – involving GTAC more at the draft level rather than doing a lot of technical work behind the scenes and then rolling it out to the committee for their reaction or input.
- Jim Desmond also suggested that GTAC consider whether it might serve as a forum for information sharing and non-policy problem solving. A list of topics for seminar-style gatherings found on land conservation tools was circulated by Nancy Chase.
- Response to the information sharing model was positive, but no one wanted to see GTAC abandon its other roles. One suggestion was that whenever appropriate, there could be a "brown bag" presentation or discussion from noon to 1 p.m. prior to the regular meetings.
- Some people have suggested that GTAC consider meeting quarterly instead of monthly. Subcommittees focused on particular topics might meet more frequently and report back to (and get direction from) the full group at these quarterly meetings.
- Many GTAC members felt that quarterly meetings would not be sufficient, and that GTAC cannot afford to get out of the loop (or behind the curve) by meeting too infrequently.
- Others felt that if the subcommittee structure was strong enough, a quarterly meeting schedule could be successful.
- Some regular participants at GTAC were not officially made members by the last resolution (e.g. 40-mile Loop and some other non-profit groups). Jim Desmond

said that this would be addressed and to let him know of any other organizations that should be included.

- One member commented that since GTAC is supposed to be advising the Metro Council, the council should be asked what they want from the committee.
- Another member commented that the connection between GTAC and the policy makers in the region is not as strong as it should be. This started a conversation about the need to elevate parks in the minds of elected officials.
- Jim Desmond reminded the committee that important work related to parks and greenspaces have originated with elected officials in the last few years, including the MPAC parks subcommittee report and the Green Ribbon Committee.
- The question of whether the trails group should continue to meet as part of GTAC was raised and discussed. It was generally agreed that GTAC and trails should not be separated and that trails are increasingly a part of what everyone in parks and greenspaces is doing. Trails representatives also felt that keeping the discussion regional was very valuable.
- At the end of the discussion it was informally moved and unanimously agreed that Metro staff forward a resolution to the Council asking that GTAC continue more or less as it has been with some additional membership. The committee would continue to meet monthly, continue to have regular meetings focused on trail issues and add some new information sharing opportunities.
- It was also suggested and agreed that there should be a subcommittee to define a work plan for GTAC for the next 12 months that would include critical issues and benchmarks. Volunteers for this subcommittee included: Steve Bosak, Mike Houck, Tim Raphael, Jim Sjulín (or someone else from Portland), Jayne Cronlund, and Scott Talbott. Other interested persons should contact Heather Nelson Kent at (503) 797-1739 or kenth@metro.dst.or.us.
- Ideas for "brown bag" topics should be forwarded to Nancy Chase at (503) 797-1845 or chasen@metro.dst.or.us.

Title 12

Dick Benner from Metro's Office of General Counsel and Heather Nelson Kent presented an overview of Title 12 to implement Policy 1.16 of the Regional Framework Plan. (A copy is attached.)

During the recent update to the UGB, it was highlighted that there is not a good way to estimate the amount of land that is going to be used for parks inside the UGB. Title 12 addresses this and is also part of the implementation of Measure 26-29. Its purpose is to protect the livability of existing residential neighborhoods – which includes providing an adequate level of parks and greenspaces. Title 12 says that cities and counties shall establish a level of service standard for parks and greenspaces, and provide access to parks and greenspaces by walking, biking and transit.

This is one of the issues GTAC will be asked to work on in the coming months. Jim Desmond asked that members review the Level of Service Standards report that GTAC developed in 2000 and the MPAC parks report from 2001. Both documents are attached.