

Regional Policy Advisory Committee
Meeting Summary
June 10, 1992

RPAC was convened by Chairman Gardner at 5:05 p.m., Wednesday, June 10, 1992.

Members in attendance included: Committee Chairman Jim Gardner, Pauline Anderson, Jerry Arnold, Dick Benner, Sharon Cohen, Larry Cole, Chris Foster, Gretchen Kafoury, Richard Kidd, Robert Liddell, Ed Lindquist, Peggie Lynch, Susan McLain, Gussie McRobert, Linda Peters, Alice Schlenker, Bruce Thompson and Jim Zehren.

Others in attendance: Ed Washington, Jeff Condit, Andy Cotugno, Brent Curtis, Pat Lee, David Auscherman, Ethan Seltzer, Alf Siddall, Robert Stacey, Norm Scott, Larry Shaw and Mark Turpel.

I. Chairman Gardner asked if there were any changes to the minutes of the May 13 meeting. Hearing none, the minutes were unanimously approved as submitted.

II. Chairman Gardner asked for communications from the public. There were none.

III. Ethan Seltzer gave an update of Metro land use planning projects. He indicated that for the Region 2040 project, the first round of public involvement was nearing completion. A report detailing the results of the telephone survey about people's attitudes about growth in the region had been completed. Stakeholder interviews of 52 people representing various perspectives throughout the region were completed. A series of four public meetings were to begin on Saturday morning, June 13 and were to be followed by three more evening meetings the next week. Workshops with elected and appointed officials of almost every city and county in the region had been scheduled and many were already completed.

Jerry Arnold asked whether the process involved a set meeting procedure and many contacts, or whether the meeting procedures varied by audience.

Ethan Seltzer responded there were some differences but that there were a consistent set of questions that were asked of all groups so that a consistent set of responses could be compared and analyzed.

Ethan Seltzer indicated that a revised scope of work had been completed which provided more details as to how the project objectives would be achieved. He indicated that in the July and August meetings, a discussion of possible regional growth alternatives would occur and that in the July meeting the specifics of how this would occur would be considered.

Ethan Seltzer distributed a description of the urban reserves project.

RPAC Minutes
June 10, 1992
page 2

Jim Zehren asked about potential urban reserves as they relate to urban form and whether the implications of urban form would be taken into consideration. He asked what groups will look at the urban reserves. He indicated that conservation of an area's sense of place, transportation corridors and development nodes, ecological factors and existing land use should be "drivers" for those things which are the major determinants of where urban reserves ought to be located.

Ethan Seltzer stated that with regard to "sense of place" several communities in the region had done some work like this, but that it was very expensive. He indicated that a visual amenity inventory of regionally significant features might be able to be done in the future.

Mayor Cole stated that in Beaverton, the City can acquire view easements. It also regulates tree cutting. It might be useful to the region to investigate these approaches.

Ethan Seltzer, in completing his update, indicated that with regard to management of the urban growth boundary, several cases were pending or of interest. He mentioned that a land trade (bringing some land into the boundary and taking other land out, for no net gain or loss) was proceeding, and that there was a proposed amendment for the PCC Rock Creek campus. In addition, he indicated that there was a proposal pending in North Plains for an addition of 300 acres of land for unspecified commercial uses. He noted that North Plains was outside the boundaries of Metro and its urban growth boundary was administered by the city of North Plains. He indicated that the proposal would be monitored, as the issues that could be raised in this case would likely be similar to urban growth boundary expansions in other cities outside, but in close proximity, to the metropolitan area.

Mayor Cole indicated that there was an issue that was currently brewing with regard to land disposal of sewage sludge generated by the Unified Sewerage Agency. He indicated that there was a concern that this use could be considered an urban use and as such would need to be considered. He indicated that the issue was bound to come up in the near future.

IV. Chairman Gardner asked that the Greenspaces Master Plan presentation be made and introduced Andy Cotugno, Planning Director.

Andy Cotugno referred to the Greenspaces inventory and stated that of the total inventory of land in the region with the capability to provide a natural habitat, only 10 percent was publicly owned, 90 percent was in private ownership. He further stated that in the approximately two years since the data was collected, for those sites checked, about 10 percent of the land was either developed, graded, staked for development or in some other way lost as a potential natural area. These factors, plus the realization on the part of Metro and the cities and counties of the region that the greenspaces covered much more than any

RPAC Minutes

June 10, 1992

page 3

one jurisdiction, were the driving forces for the initiation of the Greenspaces Master Plan. He indicated that the Master Plan identified potential sites throughout the region which could be preserved through public acquisition. He indicated that more specifics about sites and greenspaces need to be worked out with local government representatives. One such detail is the "passthrough" or percent of a regional bond measure to be made available to cities and counties for their open space projects. He then introduced Pat Lee for a further description of the Master Plan.

Pat Lee described the Metropolitan Greenspaces Master Plan map, distributing smaller color maps to each RPAC member. He indicated that the basic concept of the plan was to establish a regional trail/corridor system, anchored throughout with hubs (larger parcels of land).

Jerry Arnold asked whether there was any coordination with Clark County.

Pat Lee stated that Greenspaces members were coordinating with Clark County staff on a parallel process. He noted that the state laws were quite different and that newly adopted laws in growth management had added impetus to the Clark County greenspaces work.

Andy Cotugno added that the initial inventory of natural areas was done on a 4 county basis, so that the information base in Clark County was consistent with the data for the Oregon side of the metropolitan area.

Mayor McRobert asked what the proposed bond measure would fund.

Andy Cotugno stated that if approved, it would fund a combination of projects, including land acquisition of land, trails, etc., but that it could also fund some capital projects, if the larger dollar levy were approved.

Mayor McRobert stated that the market research done for the City of Gresham found that people were not just interested in saving natural areas. She indicated that people seemed to prefer trails over developed parks. In addition, she noted that trails were needed for fire protection and that trails, according to biologists, are a key component for wildlife conservation. She indicated that park lands were totally different from natural areas.

Andy Cotugno responded that the regional effort was focused on natural areas, but that the local passthrough could be used by cities and counties for parks.

Chairman Gardner stated that according to representatives of the East Bay Regional Park District, the local passthrough substantially added to the attractiveness of their bond issue to the voters in 1988.

It was noted that several of the sites shown for acquisition were presently being acquired by local governments.

Mayor Liddell stated that in the West Linn area, there are a substantial number of creeks and canyons. He indicated that they wanted to conserve this land and that much of it would probably not be bought - it will be designated as wetlands or steep slopes. He stated that these kinds of lands were very dispersed. He indicated that there are regulatory ways that can be used to preserve some areas, especially when there are many small pieces which are not necessarily significant on a regional basis. He stated that the best strategy would be to buy the large, regionally significant pieces.

Pat Lee noted that the Master Plan recognizes local regulatory efforts, but that perhaps the language should be bolstered.

Commissioner Peters stated that Washington County was in the process of identifying ways to buffer areas along wetlands and riparian areas as part of their water quality efforts. She noted that there are many concerns including ownership, liability, access and whether the buffer is part of the setback.

Andy Cotugno indicated that the Master Plan has a definite emphasis on natural area corridors with trails located within the corridors.

Mayor Cole stated that trails along creeks were great, but that if they are to be established, they are much more easily accomplished if done with a development rather than after development occurs. He also noted that there were issues concerning how to provide ongoing protection for wetlands after they are protected from initial adjacent development. He stated that this was more properly a local responsibility.

Andy Cotugno stated that there were some corridor/trail links, such as that which could connect Hagg Lake with the Sandy River Greenway. He indicated that these region spanning links were important to the region because of the connection. He stated that there were others that were not of regional significance, but might be locally significant.

Mayor Cole responded that Metro should be involved in the major regional trails, but the others should be those which the locals feel they can handle. He further stated that trails were needed to protect natural areas, as access gives visual security. He also strongly suggested that there should not be any further efforts to more specifically identify sites because the likely result would be either a lawsuit or rising prices. He stated that there needed to be further work done with regard to the passthrough. He indicated that the City of Beaverton was not identified as a park provider in the draft Master Plan, but that they would need to be part of the passthrough.

Andy Cotugno stated that further work did need to be done. He indicated that an agreement needed to be worked out between the City of Beaverton, Tualatin Hills Park and Recreation District and perhaps others and that the passthrough could be done on the basis of population. He stated that many solutions may be possible, but that they just couldn't count the same population twice.

Mayor Schlenker referred to the Master Plan map and the Willamette River Corridor, in particular asking what was shown in the vicinity of Lake Oswego on the west side of the River.

Pat Lee indicated that the yellow lines indicated publicly-owned land along recommended trail corridors.

Mayor Schlenker stated that the City of Lake Oswego recently passed a bond measure for park land acquisition, but that land prices were going up very high because of the urban growth boundary and that park purchases were becoming much more expensive than projected. However, she said that people were still expecting the conservation of greenspaces to occur, that people were adamant about this although the City felt that it was becoming very difficult to achieve.

Andy Cotugno noted that the map showed the Jefferson Street rail line as a yellow line and that staff would have to check on the meaning of the red line on the map.

Mayor Schlenker stated that the regional connections were needed, but that she did not see the regional connections on the map. She stated that the City's planning was contingent on the regional planning and that the west side of the Willamette was very significant.

Andy Cotugno stated that staff would follow-up and provide the additional information she needed.

Chairman Gardner stated that the yellow line represents the Willamette Greenway which has a "stop and go" public ownership pattern. He stated that the Master Plan may be optimistic in showing all of this area in public ownership.

Jim Zehren stated that he was interested in the presentation of the Greenspaces Master Plan, but that he was unsure about several items including: how many of the natural areas designated have substantial ecological value; how many of the sites are regionally significant; how the bond measure funding is proposed to be split into acquisition and maintenance efforts; is Metro to be the owner or local governments; and what provisions are to be made concerning equity as it relates to those localities that have already taken actions and spent funds.

Pat Lee responded that in the designation of places on the Master Plan that criteria were developed and applied to define what "regionally significant" meant and that these were noted in the Master Plan. He also noted that the current consensus was that management of lands could be done by cities and counties at their option, even if Metro bought the land. Further, he indicated that the latest conversation about the passthrough was a recommendation for 15 percent of the total funding level to be made available to cities and counties for them to spend on either natural areas or parks.

Chairman Gardner indicated that the operations of any lands acquired was an issue still to be resolved.

Dick Benner asked if there had been discussions during the preparation of the Master Plan about a role for Oregon State Parks.

Pat Lee responded that discussions with representatives of State Parks had been ongoing through the whole process. He noted that as approximately 50 percent of the State's population lives in the metropolitan area, the State ought to consider the region as a target area for future acquisitions.

Dick Benner asked whether there were any plans to expand existing State facilities.

Pat Lee responded that he was not aware of any expansion plans at this time, although the State has indicated its trail/corridor priorities.

Jim Zehren asked if there was going to be any attempt to nail down some of the details prior to a bond issue vote in November.

Chairman Gardner stated that on some issues, like the passthrough percentage, resolution was critical and would occur. Other details, like exact site locations, would, for reasons discussed earlier, would not be resolved prior to the vote.

Councilor McLain stated that the Greenspaces project was a cooperative project involving nearly all of the cities and counties of the region as well as Federal and State agencies and the public. She stated that even after the bond measure has passed, work will continue.

Jerry Arnold asked if there were criteria for determining whether \$200 million or \$300 million would be pursued.

Chairman Gardner stated that the Greenspaces PAC was wrestling with this issue right then in another meeting in the building. He indicated that the final decision by the Metro Council will be based as much on political considerations as technical.

RPAC Minutes

June 10, 1992

page 7

Mayor McRobert asked whether market research was being done. She indicated that for their successful bond measure in the City of Gresham, their market research found more support for a larger bond measure than a smaller dollar amount.

Chairman Gardner stated that market research was being done. Further, he indicated that a first reading of the ordinance was scheduled for June 25, but that this was a technical requirement. He stated that at the first reading the issue would be referred to a committee for public hearing. He indicated that at this public hearing any issue of concern could and would be addressed.

Councilman Kidd asked whether the total bond measure amount had been converted to a dollars per thousand figure so that people could gauge their cost.

Chairman Gardner stated that such a figure had been calculated, but that it depended on the total amount and this had not been decided. He agreed that such a figure had to be made available to help people understand the program.

Mayor Cole stated that he had heard some concerns and comments from some city managers in the region that they feel "trodden on" by the Greenspaces program. He stated that there could be some loss of support if their concerns were not addressed.

V. Ethan Seltzer asked if all RPAC members had received the LCDC urban growth project document. He indicated that a subcommittee of RTAC members had been formed and would be bringing recommendations to RPAC.

Mayor Cole stated that he saw merit in centralization of urban growth management as suggested in the draft document. He noted, however, that the public investment language in the document just did not fit the situation in the Beaverton area, although it may be fine in other areas. He indicated that there was a need for coordination, but that it was especially difficult when it involved multiply special districts, each of which may feel that they should take the lead.

Mayor McRobert stated that there was a concern with the second ballot concerning annexation.

Ethan Seltzer stated that this was an annexation option in addition to currently available annexation options and could be exercised at a city's discretion.

Mayor McRobert noted that annexations were still a very sensitive issue in many annexed areas.

Mayor Cole indicated that because this was an option, it was satisfactory to him. He noted,

RPAC Minutes
June 10, 1992
page 8

however, that in a Legislative session it could be amended so that it was the only means of annexation and in which case, a real problem could be created.

Jim Zehren stated that the RPAC should look at urban form in regard to these recommendations. There was a need to figure out the ultimate objectives and that attention should be paid as to how land uses are coordinated, not just to the density of residential development.

Dick Benner stated that the document before RPAC was preliminary and did not have the Land Conservation and Development Commission imprimatur. He stated that he did not want to see these recommendations interfere with or replace community visioning projects.

Mayor Cole stated that he would like to compliment LCDC on the document, as both the amount of material as well as the quality of the material were substantial. He noted that this was particularly remarkable given the limited staff available to work on the project. He also stated that Burton Weast, representing special districts, also helped make the project work smoothly.

Dick Benner stated that he also appreciated the time and effort put in by task force members and that Mayor Cole's help was very much appreciated.

Chairman Gardner noting that the Blazer game had already begun, adjourned the meeting at 6:45 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Mark Turpel.