

Minutes of the 7th Meeting of the Envision Jefferson 2020 Steering Committee
December 6th, 2001 - 3:30 P.M.
Select Properties Building
2121 Airline Drive, Suite 600

Attendees:

Steering Committee Members

Lee Giorgio, Co-chair	Connie Casey	Kerri Becker
Bruce O'Neil	N. Buckner Barkley	Lynne Parker
Donnie Wolfe	Joanne Mire	Ross Liner
Wayne Sandoz	Norbert White	Allen Hero
Erie Hebert		

Jefferson Parish Officials

Ed Durabb, Jefferson Parish Planning Director
Dr. Terri Wilkinson, Senior Planner
Shannon Burke, Planner

University of New Orleans College of Urban and Public Affairs

Timothy E. Joder, Director of Sponsored Research and Business Affairs
Wendel P. Dufour Jr., Principal Planner
Roxanne Brock, Research Assistant

Steering Committee Co-chair Lee Giorgio introduced Ed Elam of Burke Kleinpeter to present an overview of the Metairie CBD project.

Mr. Elam presented the Committee with a flow chart to show the final preliminary land use and transportation plan. Mr. Elam discussed the steps that were taken to achieve the plan. They included public meetings where major issues were culled from the public and then used to implement ideas in the land use plan. A market study by Smolkin and Associates was also used to provide further information on the economic aspect of the land use study. Mr. Elam explained that the land use and transportation plan incorporated issues such as mixed use in areas such as Fat City, regulatory issues, retail service districts and different ideas to improve transportation and transit systems in the area.

Mr. Elam stated that the plan is not a zoning ordinance and that many of the participants in the meeting did not understand that at first. If the plan is to be implemented, a variety of other aspects must be investigated. Mr. Elam emphasized that funding for the plan was a major issue. Mr. Elam concluded his presentation by stating that the life of a plan is roughly 20 years with updates every 3-5 years.

The floor was then opened for questions and comments from the Steering Committee.

Steering Committee Member Connie Casey asked about the method of advertising for the meetings. Mr. Elam replied that a variety of methods were used to advertise the meetings. These included sending out postcards, newspaper ads, handing out fax flyers to the Parish with a frequently asked questions list so that anyone calling in could get information, a news article in the Times Picayune, placing a television ad, and mailing

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postcards to those people who had attended previous meetings. This last method was used to advertise this month's meeting for the Metairie CBD project.

Ms. Casey then asked were the citizens attending the meeting residents or business owners. Mr. Elam replied that residents were the most prominent as they came to complain about businesses.

Mr. Giorgio asked what the structure of the steering committee was. Mr. Elam stated that the committee was appointed by the Parish and addressed different interests. The steering committee will also be used to act as the task force to implement the plan so that it will not be shelved.

Ms. Casey inquired if the meetings were successful. Mr. Elam replied that the turnout for the meeting was low but added that the practical knowledge that was shared in the meeting was very valuable. He also stated that the timing and number of meetings could have affected the attendance of the meeting.

Steering Committee member Bruce O'Neil asked if the Metairie CBD plan included an overhead crossing on Causeway and Veterans and if there were plans to gain funding for a North/South Fly over on Severn to provide better access to the CBD. Mr. O'Neil stated that Federal funding from Urban Systems Fund could provide dollars for the fly over. Mr. Elam stated that while he supported the idea of overhead crossings, there were some legal concerns that had been addressed and so that idea was not implemented. On the issue of federal funding, Mr. Elam stated that comments made in the meeting would be passed to the transportation element of the plan so that it can be studied in more detail.

Steering Committee Member Lynne Parker asked what the solutions for parking were in the CBD. Mr. Elam stated that there were several aspects. One was to let the market decide or use parish revenue to site centrally located parking garages. Mr. Elam added that it is an issue that was not a part of this project but does need greater investigation

Steering Committee Member Kerri Becker asked Mr. Elam how he would have changed the meetings to be more successful. Mr. Elam stated that he would have made the meetings more sensational as the topic of the meeting was very abstract. If it had just been a meeting on zoning it probably would have drawn more attention.

A Steering Committee member asked when the next meeting for the CBD would be held. Mr. Elam stated that the next meeting would be held on the 19th of December 2001 at the East Bank Regional Library.

Mr. Joder added that the Regional Planning Commission had selected Burke Kleinpeter to act as the consultant for the transportation element of the plan. Mr. Joder then turned the floor to Steering Committee member Lee Giorgio who discussed the recent updates to Envision Jefferson 2020.

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Mr. Giorgio stated that there had been concern over the planning districts meeting being scheduled between Thanksgiving and Christmas. Therefore, the scope of the work was looked at and some areas were deemed to be more important than others. Meetings have been pushed back to the start of next year. The meetings have been scaled down to 8 and some areas have been consolidated. The main focus is to have input from the community. This would help the plan to be on schedule by the time the element committee meets in April or May.

The floor was then given to Mr. Joder.

Mr. Joder presented a summary of major changes that have taken place. They include the land use and transportation element given more priority. Mr. Joder suggested that the title of the plan be changed to Comprehensive Land Use Plan to avoid the misconception that all the elements are included. Changes will be made on the website to address this issue.

Mr. Joder then continued with the issue of citizen participation. He stated that the public would be better served if there were a less ambitious schedule of meetings. Therefore, the workshops that have been advertised will be three one-hour workshops that maybe held on a Saturday morning. The workshops are scheduled to commence February 1st through the end of March.

Mr. Joder discussed the potential attendees of the meetings. Mr. Joder stated that McCrossen and Taylor are trying to guarantee a population by implementing a delegate process and will be submitting a report next week that will be sent to the Steering Committee Members.

Mr. Joder then explained the change in the element committees. Due to some elements not being pursued, the planning team envisioned one large element committee that could be broken up into working groups with the aim of actually conducting business. The single element committee would be a combination of delegates who are named by specific organizations, citizens selected for their participation in the meeting process, and the steering committee. This could yield a group of approximately 100-120 people.

Mr. Joder concluded with the land use survey. In order for the plan to be effective the land use survey must be finished. The land use survey was scheduled to be completed by December 21st. However, due to unforeseen circumstances, the land use study will be completed by February. Extra staff have been hired by CUPA to input data into the survey.

Ms. Parker asked if a three-hour meeting would allow the citizens to have an opportunity to discuss all the issues. Mr. Joder replied that this was very important as there was no

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way to measure how the potential outcome of the planning process would be available to all participants.

Steering Committee member Wayne Sandoz asked Mr. Elam what percent of the plan was a direct result of citizen input. Mr. Sandoz also queried as to what percentage of the plan would not have been there anyway. Mr. Elam replied that 40 percent of the plan was taken from citizen concern and that the other 60 percent was based on professional judgment.

Ms. Parker stated that the time and effort has to be made to encourage citizen participation so that there is not a bias slant in the issue that will go into the land use survey. Ms. Parker suggested writing a letter from each individual steering committee member to gain support for the plan and to populate the meetings. This makes the plan more personalized and connects at the grass roots level.

Ms. Casey suggested obtaining the chronic voters list and send a post card to those citizens inviting them to attend the meetings. She stated that these citizens are very likely to participate. Mr. Joder suggested meeting with the PR consultants to add additional input to the public relations campaign. Steering Committee members Connie Casey, Kerri Cooke, Bruce O'Neil and Lee Giorgio decided to meet with the PR consultants on Tuesday 11th December 2001.

Mr. Joder then discussed the issue of how many delegates should be invited to the initial district meetings. Mr. Joder stated that just inviting delegates would not populate the meetings as needed.

Ms. Parker added that people might think that only delegates could participate. Ms. Parker also pointed out that delegates representing a civic organization might not voice their opinions in the meetings.

Steering Committee Member Shirley Edwards also suggested changing the title of delegate to liaison. Mr. Joder agreed with this and will discuss the change with McCrossen and Taylor.

Ms. Parker suggested that the Plan be advertised at the Jefferson Parish President Civic Association meeting on Tuesday 11th 2001. Mr. Joder stated that a text would be sent to Jefferson Parish Public Relations Director Jackie Bauer.

The next Steering Committee meeting was set for January 10th, 2002. The meeting was then adjourned.