

Minutes of the 9<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Envision Jefferson 2020 Steering Committee  
February 7<sup>th</sup>, 2002 - 3:30 P.M.  
Select Properties Building  
2121 Airline Drive, Suite 600

Attendees:

*Steering Committee Members*

Lee Giorgio, Co-chair	Connie Casey	Kerri Becker
Cocie Rathborne, Co-chair	Ava Guidry	Lucien Gunter
Bruce O'Neil	Sharon Cross	Shirley Edwards
Ross Liner	Allen Hero	Erie Hebert
Vinicio Madrigal, M.D.	Donnie Wolfe	Joanne Mire
N. "Buck" Barkley		

*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 Associate

Mr. Joder called the meeting to order and asked if there were any changes to be made to the January minutes. No changes were made.

Mr. Joder commenced by informing the committee about the outcome of the two District meetings held in Elmwood and Harvey Canal. Mr. Joder stated that many steering committee members attended and that Steering Committee member Cocie Rathborne acted as a citizen and participated in the program. Mr. Joder stated that turnout for the meeting was poor but that a number of prominent citizens attended. Mr. Joder noted that **Hank** Lauricella and realtor Max Derbes attended the Elmwood meeting, and a representative from Boomtown Casino along with other noted Steering Committee members with active interest in the area attended the Harvey Canal meeting.

Mr. Joder pointed the Steering Committee to a summary of the comment forms filled out by participants at the workshops. The comment forms showed that the presentations were well received and that the message of the presentation was clear. Mr. Joder also stated that adjustments to the program have been noted. Mr. Joder informed those Steering Committee members who have been unable to attend the workshops that it consists of a ten minute introduction of where the process stands at this time, a ten minute Community Image Survey, a one hour transportation presentation by Burk- Kleinpeter, Inc. a one hour land use presentation, and a Community Image Survey results discussion.

Steering Committee member Bruce O'Neil stated that the participants did not understand the Community Image Survey until they had seen more slides; therefore some of the responses to the early slides were not as valuable. Mr. O'Neil asked if the time between

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the slides could be increased by a few seconds to allow participants to have a better grasp of what they had to do.

Mr. Joder replied that the Community Image Survey process is set up in this manner to elicit a first reaction response. Mr. Joder continued that 10 seconds had been given to participants so that they could manage the slides that were presented. Mr. Joder stated that the new image survey had 40 slides of which 36 were generic to Jefferson Parish and 4 were Planning District specific. Mr. Joder also stated that a meeting would be held on Wednesday, February 13, 2002 to go over the Community Image Survey to shorten it and to review some of the slides which don't seem to be working.

Steering Committee member Erie Hebert asked if there was a wide variance of results.

Mr. Joder stated that there were three segments of the program. The Community Image Survey results are being analyzed by the Planning Department and they are in the process of writing a report that can be sent back to the participants. The land use segment hand out was a raw list of issues that were identified at the meetings. In addition, Burke-Kleinpeter is analyzing data received from the transportation element of the program.

Steering Committee member Donnie Wolfe asked how many slides were district specific and were all the slides from Jefferson parish.

Mr. Joder replied that there were 4 slides specific to each district and that not all of the images were taken from Jefferson parish.

Dr. Terri Wilkinson of the Jefferson Parish Planning Department stated that there were only a couple of photos that were not taken in Jefferson parish. Dr. Wilkinson stated that issues such as light-rail transportation, which is not available in Jefferson Parish, were used as images in the survey to elicit citizen reaction.

Mr. Joder stated that the planning teams were in the process of writing summary reports to send back to participants. A comment form for people who have any issues to readdress will be included.

Mr. Joder informed the Steering Committee that Cox public access would air a one-hour segment on the district workshops. The program will include highlights of each of the segments, including citizen interviews from the Harvey Canal meeting. The tentative airing schedule is Monday thru Friday from 4-5 p.m. and Wednesday from 9-10 p.m. commencing February 13<sup>th</sup> through March 30<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Joder also stated that on Thursday, February 14, 2002 at 1p.m., Parish President Tim Coulon, Steering Committee member Lee Giorgio and Mr. Joder will be interviewed for Brad Geffin's Sunday morning program airing at 11:30 a.m., Sunday, February 17, 2002, on WGNO TV, channel 26.

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Mr. Joder then discussed the topics raised in the land use segment. Mr. Joder asked Steering Committee member Cocie Rathborne, who participated in the program, if it was a good reflection of topics that were discussed at the meetings.

Steering Committee member Cocie Rathborne stated that there were issues discussed that did not relate to that specific area. Mr. Rathborne also stated that both tables at the meeting came up with the same issues that related to the Harvey Canal area. Those included air pollution, midnight dumpers, and what the Parish could do about abandoned buildings.

Mr. Joder then turned the discussion to the Element Committee. At the time of the meeting 50 liaisons had been delegated to serve on the Element Committee. This list includes Steering Committee members Joanne Mire, N. Buckner "Buck" Barkley and Lee Giorgio.

Steering Committee member N. "Buck" Barkley asked what was the role of the Element Committee.

Mr. Joder replied that the Element Committee would be responsible for defining goals and objectives based on the issues or problems identified during the District workshops. Mr. Joder stated that at the District workshops, citizens will just be reporting issues or problems and that the Element Committee is designed to give solutions to these issues and problems.

Steering Committee member Lucien Gunter asked what kind of number would be sufficient for an Element Committee.

Mr. Joder replied that 120 participants would suffice. Mr. Joder also stated that not all participants would attend every meeting and that the meetings would be divided into groups so that the meetings would be more manageable.

Mr. Hebert inquired about the commencement of the Element Committee.

Dr. Wilkinson suggested that late April was probable.

Mr. Gunter asked that after all the input is gathered from the District Workshops, will it be difficult for members of the Element Committee who have had little experience with the plan to massage the information gathered.

Mr. Joder replied that the task was daunting but that one could not exclude those that have already been asked to participate.

Steering Committee member Lee Giorgio stated that the consulting firm Gregory C. Rigamer and Associates, Inc. will be added to the planning team. Mr. Giorgio noted that

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this came about after concerns raised by several Steering Committee members at the November meeting concerning the scope of the plan and how many District Workshops were to be held led to several meetings among Parish President Tim Coulon, the Jefferson Parish planning department, and the College of Urban and Public Affairs to discuss where the plan was and how it was developing. A decision was made to supplement the planning team with an additional consultant. Mr. Giorgio continued that GCR has already met with CUPA and the Jefferson Parish Planning Department. GCR will aid the plan in the scope and timing of the project. Mr. Giorgio stated that with the added expertise of GCR, it would help to better define the scope of the Element Committee and the overall direction of the planning process.

Mr. O' Neil asked what type of firm is GCR.

Mr. Joder replied that GCR is primarily an Information Technology firm but that they have expertise in project management. Mr. Joder has talked at length with GCR representative Mr. Larry Ringel about the scope of work and the need to meet the proposed deadline for plan completion before the current council leaves office.

Mr. Giorgio stated that he has also spoken with Mr. Ringel and stated that Mr. Ringel has ideas and concerns on how to mix the ideas of the citizens with a plan that is good for the parish.

Mr. Rathborne asked why new people will be asked to serve on the Element committee.

Mr. Joder stated that it was not a new group. People who have been asked to join the Element committee will have attended a District Workshop

Mr. Wolfe asked what was the cost of hiring GCR.

Mr. Giorgio stated that it was a maximum of five thousand dollars. Mr. Giorgio also stated that the Element Committee allows for people to identify the issues in depth. This will then be passed on to the professionals to translate it into a plan that the Steering Committee can support.

Mr. Joder added that the Element Committee would address issues in the context of fiscal and physical reality, adding that various Jefferson Parish departments will also be consulted on what can and cannot be achieved. Mr. Joder acknowledged that the specifics of how this will be achieved in the Element Committee have not been fully developed, however, a laundry list of issues is needed to see what issues need to be addressed so that the Element committee can gather information from different professional sectors and then present their findings to be incorporated into the plan.

Mr. Barkley asked why the Steering Committee, which has been exposed to the process and to citizen input, cannot accomplish the task as an Element Committee itself.

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Mr. Joder replied that citizens have already been invited to be liaisons.

Mr. Gunter added that it compounds the problem when people are chosen to fill a quota. Mr. Gunter stated once input is taken from the District meeting, the Steering Committee has a better chance of culling the information than a 120 member Element Committee where a large majority of the participants have had little experience in this area. Mr. Gunter then stated that once he had heard Mr. Giorgio's comment that GCR would be hired in case any difficulties arise, it added reassurance to the process.

Mr. Rathborne stated that there were two different versions of who was being invited to participate on the Element Committee. Mr. Rathborne wanted to know exactly who was being asked to participate on the Element Committee.

Mr. Joder replied that a packet was sent to 111 business and civic organizations inviting them to name 2 liaisons to the Element Committee. Mr. Joder continued that some of the organizations have responded and delegated two liaisons to participate on the Element Committee, and that these liaisons will hopefully attend at least one District Workshop before the Element Committee commences. Mr. Joder further stated that if they have not attended a District workshop, they will be provided with a summary of all the issues identified within the Parish. Mr. Joder concluded that in addition to designated liaisons, citizens who attend District Workshops and are interested in the outcome and want to participate further in the process have also been invited to sit on the Element Committee.

Steering Committee member Connie Casey stated that the council members have appointed Steering Committee members. Ms. Casey added that the purpose of the plan was to gain citizen input, as it was the first time the parish had participated in this type of process. Ms. Casey concluded that the Steering Committee was not considered "citizens", but that it was the task of the Steering Committee to facilitate citizen's input and allow the public to voice their issues.

Steering Committee member Lynn Parker stated that citizen input to the plan was vital and that regardless of what interesting ideas might be voiced, receiving as much input from the citizens shows that there was a vested interest in their opinions. Ms. Parker continued that once all the information is gathered professional planners can then filter those ideas to draw up the plan. Ms. Parker added that it is critical to invite all citizens to participate.

Steering Committee member Kerri Becker said she had talked to citizens who did not trust Jefferson Parish officials. Ms. Becker stated that having citizen input shows that the parish wants to know what is going on in people's neighborhoods.

Mr. Barkley stated that a 120-member committee was unmanageable. Mr. Barkley asked why the Element committee was not set up first and the District Workshops bypassed.

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Mr. Barkley stated that it was unlikely that 120 people would come to the next 6 District workshops. Mr. Barkley concluded that it was putting workshop on top of another workshop.

Mr. Joder replied that the District workshops are issue identification oriented and that the Element committee is responsible for developing effective solutions to those issues. Mr. Joder noted that the Element Committee will also look at financial, political and physical realities of development.

Steering Committee member Ava Guidry asked if the Element Committee groups would be geography specific or issue specific.

Mr. Joder replied that the Element Committee will be issue oriented.

Ms. Guidry asked if 120 was a fantasy number for the Element committee or was there an actual quota to fulfill.

Mr. Joder replied that there was no quota, and that the Element Committee would be subdivided and work in groups on various issues. Mr. Joder stated that there would also be a representative from the parish to work in these groups and to help them out.

Mr. Giorgio stated that having confidence in the process would allow the plan to develop, and that even though there has been a small turnout at the District meetings so far, the topics that have been addressed by groups have been consistent and have identified similar issues. Mr. Giorgio added that the laundry list produced could be culled to a couple of issues. Mr. Giorgio added that issues identified so far have been parochial to a specific area or have parish wide appreciation. Mr. Giorgio added that by allowing the process to continue, evaluating the public's comments and getting professional input in the Element Committee and putting them together is very subjective. Mr. Giorgio asked the Steering Committee to let the process evolve, and from that, adjust and make changes if necessary.

Steering Committee member Norbert White asked if Element Committee participants could be invited after the District workshops.

Mr. Joder replied that 111 invitations have already been sent out, but that if the construct of the Element Committee has to be changed to deal with the issues that can be done. Mr. Joder continued that organizations and certain individuals from the first workshops have already been invited to attend.

Steering Committee member Vinicio Madrigal, M.D., stated that this kind of discussion was needed to make sure that all issues and questions were answered in order to reach a comfort level.

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Mr. Hebert stated that there was a need to get people to meetings, but the challenge was to have the workshop shortened to get better feedback from citizens.

Mr. Joder replied that certain segments of the program were being shortened to make them flow better, however the time schedule of three hours had already been set and cannot be changed.

Ms. Parker stated that it was the Steering Committee who decided on the times for the meetings. Ms. Parker added that the out come for the Elmwood and Harvey Canal workshops were not substantial as they were not heavily populated residential areas.

Steering Committee member Kerri Becker stated that the Elmwood meeting was very good, and that once interaction and discussion began, the length of the meeting was not noticed.

Mr. Giorgio stated that while the turnout at the meetings was not high, if it had been, the same issues would probably have emerged.

Mr. Wolfe asked if the Steering Committee could be supplied with a list of organizations that had been invited to participate on the Element Committee.

Mr. Joder replied that a list could be mailed to the Steering Committee.

Ms. Kerri Becker asked what advertising strategies were being used to get citizens to the meetings and was a billboard going to be used to advertise the process.

Mr. Joder replied that billboards were not being used, but that a chronic voter list mail out to 12,695 homes was sent before the meetings began. Mr. Joder noted that this list represents voters who have voted in the last five elections. Mr. Joder added that the Times-Picayune has written articles on the Elmwood and Harvey Canal meetings, Cox public access will air a one hour video replay of the Harvey Canal District Workshop, and flyers have been sent to entire civic associations whose Presidents have requested them.

Mr. Hebert asked would the times and places for the District meetings be shown on the cable access segment.

Mr. Joder replied that it would be shown as well as information as to what occurs at a meeting.

Ms. Parker stated that since the chronic voter list has gone out in advance of the meetings, Steering Committee members should call their associations to remind them of the upcoming meeting in their area.

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Ms. Kerri Becker asked if signs could be made to advertise the meetings and place them at locations near the meeting.

Mr. Joder replied that this could not be done due to certain issues raised by Mr. Buddy Massa about signs at UNO. Mr. Joder asked if there was any other business to discuss. The Steering Committee agreed that the next meeting would be Thursday, March 7<sup>th</sup>, 2002.

The meeting was then adjourned.