

Minutes of the 2nd Meeting of the Jefferson Parish Comprehensive Plan Steering
Committee
July 12, 2001 - 3:30 P.M.
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Attendees:

Steering Committee Members

Lynn Parker	Ava Guidry	Connie Casey
Cocie Rathborne	Erie Hebert	Norbert White
Joanne Mire	Lee Giorgio	N. 'Buck' Barkley
Ross Liner	Donnie Wolfe	Kerri Becker
Lucien Gunter	Dr. Vinicio Madrigal	

Jefferson Parish Officials

Ed Durabb, Jefferson Parish Planning Director
Dr. Terri Wilkinson, Senior Planner
Shannon Burke, Planner
Kathy Costanza, Jefferson Parish Environmental Affairs

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
Jolie Preau, Research Assistant

Tim Joder of the University of New Orleans along with Lee Giorgio, Co-chair of the Steering Committee, called the meeting of the Jefferson Parish Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee to order. Mr. Giorgio informed the attendees of available refreshments, and then alerted the Steering Committee members to the fact that all meetings of the Steering Committee are audiotaped, and that whenever someone made a comment to please preface the comment with their name. Both Mr. Giorgio and Mr. Joder then suggested that everyone present introduce himself or herself.

Following introductions, Mr. Joder introduced Kathy Costanza of the Jefferson Parish Environmental Affairs office who would discuss the Jefferson Parish Brownfields Program. Ms. Costanza began by announcing that Jefferson Parish has received a \$200,000 grant from the Environmental Protection Agency to start a Pilot Brownfields program. Mr. Joder then asked Ms. Costanza to identify what Brownfields are for those not familiar with the term. Ms. Costanza replied that Brownfields are abandoned commercial or industrial sites that suffer from either real or perceived environmental contamination that prevents redevelopment. Ms. Costanza continued that the purpose of their grant is to return some of these properties to commerce. Ms. Costanza announced that a citizen task force is being convened with individual council members appointing 1 member each and the Jefferson Parish President appointing 2 members, one each from the East Bank and the West Bank. Ms Costanza also said that the task force would include banking and real estate representatives. Ms. Costanza continued that once the

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task force is complete, an inventory of Jefferson Parish Brownfield properties would be compiled, and the top three (3) prioritized sites from that list would receive Phase I and Phase II site assessments. Ms Costanze noted that a Phase I site assessment includes a use history of the property to identify potential contaminants, and that a Phase II assessment includes soil sampling to determine the level of contaminants at the site. Ms. Costanza remarked that the EPA Brownfields program is part of the EPA's Superfund program, but that Brownfields are not contaminated enough to be considered Superfund sites. Ms. Constanza continued that they are looking for people to serve on the Brownfield Task Force. Dr. Terri Wilkinson of the Jefferson Parish Planning Department remarked that Ms. Costanza previously mentioned to her that there is a federal requirement that the Brownfields citizen participation process be incorporated into any ongoing master planning process, and that the linkage between the two processes could be a member of the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee sitting on the Brownfields Task Force. Dr. Wilkinson then asked for any ideas or comments on how to link the two processes.

Steering Committee member Dr. Vinicio Madrigal commented that the Jefferson Economic Development Commission (JEDCO) has been working in Gretna and other places to identify brownfield sites, and would that process be appropriate for some kind of citizen participation rather than getting outside input . Ms. Costanza responded that they were looking for a representative section of the community with people from each council district serving on the Task Force. Dr. Madrigal responded that he was referring to participation from the Steering Committee. Ms. Costanza replied that they didn't have to have someone from the Steering Committee, but it would be nice if the efforts could be coordinated.

Mr. Giorgio asked if any meeting dates had been set or if the mission of the Task Force had been set, because many members of the Steering Committee were involved in numerous other activities and that this information could help determine who from the Steering Committee could participate on the Task Force. Ms. Costanza responded that they hoped to convene the Task Force in early October after finalizing paperwork with the EPA. Mr. Giorgio then asked if a synopsis of the Brownfield Task Force's mission and goals and objectives could be provided to Steering Committee members. Ms. Costanza responded that the goals of the Task Force would be twofold: 1) to identify Brownfield properties; and 2) from that list, prioritize those most likely ready for site assesment and for working with the property owners to put those properties back into commerce. Mr. Giorgio asked when would the process would begin. Ms. Costanza replied that the Task Force would be convened in October. Mr. Giorgio then suggested that once the Brownfield Task Force is better defined, and as the Steering Committee members better understands their role in the comprehensive planning process, they might be in a better position to determine who from the Steering Committee is best suited to participate with the Brownfields Task Force. Dr. Wilkinson commented that there is a natural environment element in the comprehensive plan, and since that element's

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specifications include Brownfields, there needs to be coordination between the two processes, with the timing of the two processes also being an important factor. Steering Committee member Norbert White wanted to know if they were discussing commercial property. Ms. Costanza replied that the Brownfields program only dealt with commercial property.

Steering Committee member N. 'Buck' Barkley asked if any Brownfield properties had been identified. Ms. Costanza responded that they had a list of potential Brownfield sites, and one (1) designated site, which is the Parish owned incinerator on David Drive. Mr. Barkley then asked if EPA would supplement the \$200,000 if a case could be made for a particular Brownfield site. Ms. Costanza responded that the grant could only pay for site assessments to find out the type and level of contaminants at a particular site. Ms. Costanza continued that the Regional Planning Commission has received a \$500,000 grant to start a revolving loan fund for Brownfield redevelopment activities after site assessments have been completed. Ms. Costanza further noted that owners who had site assessments done through Jefferson Parish would be eligible to apply for these funds.

Steering Committee Co-chair Cocie Rathburne asked if they were dealing with properties already designated as Brownfields, or would they be identifying Brownfield sites. Ms. Costanza responded that they are looking for potential Brownfields, but could not designate any property as a Brownfield without the owner's consent. Mr. Rathburne then confirmed that the Parish was trying to identify potential Brownfields and commented that he didn't think this was the Parish's job. Ms. Costanza responded by reiterating that the Parish must have the owner's consent before any property is declared a Brownfield. Mr. Rathburne then commented that he didn't understand how the Parish had the right to do this, and wanted to know what the Parish's authorization was to do this. Dr. Madrigal commented that all that the Parish was doing was to try and help the owners put their abandoned commercial property commerce, such as abandoned gas stations. Dr. Madrigal continued that no blame is being placed and that additionally, the owner's liability would be lessened after cleanup. Ms. Costanza noted for the record that petroleum contaminated sites are not eligible for the Brownfields program, but that there are other EPA programs targeted to those sites. Mr. Barkley noted that he had a site in mind but that \$200,000 is a drop in the bucket. Ms. Costanza reiterated that the \$200,000 was for site assessment only, and that for cleanup assistance the owner would have to apply to the Regional Planning Commission's revolving fund.

Mr. Joder thanked Ms. Costanza and proceeded to notify the Steering Committee that they should leave their binders behind when they leave and that UNO would insert tabs and a table of contents into each and return them by mail early next week. Mr. Barkley suggested that in order to save the postage the tabs should be distributed to Steering Committee members who could insert them themselves. Steering Committee member Kerri Becker commented that this would be a great idea.

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Mr. Joder noted that Steering Committee member Norbert White commented to him that with all of the information presented so far, that this is becoming a daunting task for the members. Mr. Joder agreed, and that even he, as he stated to Mr. Rathburne and Mr. Giorgio, feels overwhelmed by the amount of information being covered. Mr. Joder then encouraged everyone not to be overwhelmed by the amount of material or the complexity of the process, noting that everyone, over time, would become familiar with what was going on.

Mr. Joder then directed everyone's attention to the agenda item titled 'Work Program and Discussion'. Mr. Joder then asked if there were any questions or comments about the work program. Dr. Wilkinson noted that the Steering Committee should understand the process used to develop the plan elements and work program. Dr. Wilkinson noted that the plan element specifications were taken from the American Planning Association, and were used as the basis for developing the work program. Dr. Wilkinson continued that the planning team met with Parish department heads associated with the specified plan elements, as well as with Scott Adams, director of the Jefferson Economic Development Commission and William Smolkin, a private consultant, to go through with each the individual specifications of the element they were associated with. Dr. Wilkinson continued that this was done to get their input on the applicability of the individual element specifications to the Parish, and their comments were used to develop the work program for the individual plan elements.

Mr. Joder noted that each committee member had two documents, Attachment B, which are the tasks that the consultant is to undertake in order to produce the product described in Attachment C, which is the plan element specifications. Mr. Giorgio commented that several people had contacted him about the minutes of the first meeting, and that since some of those comments could be pertinent to the discussion of the work program, it could be beneficial to discuss this now. Mr. Joder said that would be fine and directed everyone to look at the minutes of the first meeting. Mr. Giorgio continued that their role, as presented at the first meeting, would be to act as a steering committee to oversee two sets of committees, one set made up of potentially 14 grass root planning district committees, and the other set of committees would be the 7 or 8 element committees, on which members of the Steering Committee would participate. Mr. Giorgio also noted it is his understanding that some of these committees would have previous studies available, but that others would have to develop that information themselves. Mr. Giorgio stated his understanding that the Steering Committee's role would be to coordinate all of the groups into a finished product, and to ensure that everyone feels comfortable with the product. Mr. Giorgio continued that based on their reading of the minutes, several members of the committee are still trying to become comfortable with their role in the process, especially whether or not the Steering Committee will be a rubber stamp committee, or a working group with some decision-making authority within the process. Mr. Giorgio also noted that he, along with Mr. Rathburne, as Co-chairmen had a discussion with Mr. Joder about the concerns raised regarding the minutes. Mr.

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Giorgio continued that the Co-chairmen wanted to make sure that the entire committee is comfortable with their role and are not here just to go through a political exercise. Mr. Giorgio continued by noting that several Steering Committee members expressed concern about comments from the last meeting identified on page 3 of the minutes of the first Steering Committee meeting where it states the 'role of the Steering Committee is not to steer the content, but to insure that the planning district committees are broad based and representative of the population of the planning districts they are in.' Mr. Rathburne noted that this statement could be found in the bottom half of the last paragraph on page 3 of the meeting 1 minutes. Mr. Giorgio noted that the main concern among several members of the Steering Committee is that the process be geared to making sure that the technical efforts in the beginning of the planning process are focused on identifying where the Parish has been and where we are now, before we identify where we are going, especially as it relates to such items as land use in the Parish.

Mr. Giorgio also stated that there are concerns about whether the process is a top-down or bottom-up process, or some variation in between. Mr. Giorgio continued that input from everyone is needed, but the Steering Committee must come to agreement that there is limited time to go to public forum, and that information gathered from citizens is utilized in a practical way depending on the realities of certain situations. Mr. Giorgio continued that the Steering Committee needs to be comfortable with the professional evaluation of the current conditions in the Parish, and then how that information is disseminated and how comments are gotten back from the citizens. Mr. Giorgio continued that this was an overview of comments made to him from different members of the Steering Committee, and that it wasn't clear from the minutes whether or not this was just going to be a rubber stamp committee or a real authoritative group, and that it was important for the group to come to a consensus on their role in the process. Mr. Giorgio also noted that some of the committee members raised concerns about the process of identifying the Planning Districts. Mr. Giorgio stated that during their discussion on Wednesday, Mr. Joder noted that indeed, considerable thought and analysis went into determining the 14 planning districts, and that this is a suggested organizational structure for this type of planning effort. Steering Committee member Lucien Gunter asked if a job description for Steering Committee members could be produced. Mr. Madgrigal asked Mr. Giorgio if he could state in a single statement what he is most uncomfortable with. Mr. Giorgio responded that at this time he had more questions than answers, but that basically he wanted to be sure that everyone understands the responsibilities that the Steering Committee will have in the process.

Mr. Joder responded that in its role, the Steering Committee must be convinced as a group that the final plan, as produced, is the way to go, otherwise the plan has no chance of being adopted. Mr. Joder noted that in and of itself, that puts a tremendous amount of responsibility and authority on the Steering Committee. Mr. Joder continued that if the Steering Committee doesn't go forward to the Parish Council and say that after working

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with the citizens and the professional, this is the plan that we came up with, then the plan has no chance of being adopted.

Mr. Barkley noted it was his understanding that the Steering Committee would constitute the broad-based citizens advisory committee, and that his current impression is that the Steering Committee actually has a limited role, at least in the view of the planning team. Mr. Joder asked Mr. Barkley what gave him that impression. Mr. Barkley responded that according to the minutes from the first meeting, the Steering Committee is not to steer the content of the plan, and that he doesn't understand that since the Steering Committee members are citizens, why does it state that the Steering Committee should work with the citizens, especially if Steering Committee members are citizens. Mr. Barkley continued that the professionals at UNO along with others, utilizing accepted principals of planning, will come up with a plan that is then merged with the marketing plan to develop a rational land plan for the Parish. Mr. Barkley then asked why is there a need for appointed individual parochial planning committees, because he thought that was what the Steering Committee had been appointed to do. Mr. Barkley concluded by pointing out that in the minutes it states the role of the Steering Committee is to insure a broad base of citizens on the 14 planning districts.

Mr. Joder proceeded to more clearly define the role of the Steering Committee by noting that at the first meeting, a draft document of the role of the Steering Committee was passed out and that Mr. Gunter commented that he couldn't have written it better himself. Mr. Joder suggested that in reality, the issue was one of semantics. Mr. Joder continued that he wanted the Steering Committee to understand that while one of its principal roles is to insure broad-based parish-wide input from numerous groups who have a stake in the outcome of this plan, that doesn't mean that every suggestion from every party will be followed. Mr. Joder noted that when it comes to the issue of content versus participation, in his mind the Steering Committee's role is not only to steer the process, but also to synthesize the information coming in and insure that it fits into consistent, comprehensive elements of the plan.

Mr. Rathborne suggested that the reason Mr. Joder was less concerned about the role of the Steering Committee was because he knew that they could not come up with a report that the Steering Committee couldn't agree with. Mr. Rathborne stated that if #2 of the document identifying the role of the Steering Committee were changed from "advice and comment" to "advice and consent", then the wording would reflect the fact that a plan can not pass without the Steering Committee's approval. Mr. Joder proposed a motion to change "comment" to "consent" on #2 of the Role of the Jefferson Parish Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee document.

Steering Committee member Lynne Parker stated that she has been to several of the educational presentations and can see that there is a tremendous amount of responsibility placed with the Steering Committee. Ms. Parker went on to emphasize that the planning

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process must be “bottom up”, and that if the Steering Committee tries to take an authoritarian role and dictate, the community will not stand for that and consequently not buy into the planning process. Ms. Parker continued to emphasize that this is a community driven process, and that she feels like the Steering Committee is on the right track. Mr. Barkley asked Ms. Parker what she meant by the land plan being driven from the bottom up. Ms. Parker responded that since there will be recommendations that will effect individuals land, the plan must have the community’s consent, and that consensus in the whole community is important to the success of this process. Mr. Barkley then directed a question to the statement made by Dr. Wilkinson during the first meeting in which she described the planning districts as where the citizens would identify the issues facing the Parish. Mr. Barkley commented that if this is so why are they called planning districts, which denote some type of planning being done for that district, including determining what the land use would be in that district, which is a process that Mr. Barkley understood would be done by the professionals and then submitted to the Steering Committee for response and comment.

Ed Durabb, Jefferson Parish Planning Director, explained that the problem of identifying issues relevant to the districts is different from land planning for the districts. Mr. Durabb noted that the Steering Committee can not identify the districts’ issues because it is not a cross-section of the community, and that this participation process is an attempt to go out and involve the citizens in helping to identify what the problems are. Mr. Durabb continued that once the issues are synthesized, they probably won’t be that different than the Steering Committee's issues. Mr. Durabb noted that it is essential that the community feel that it has a voice in the plan before the plan is written, not after. Mr. Durabb continued that after seeking the input of citizens, the real work will be within the Steering Committee and the Element Committees, where the main details of the plan will be hashed out. Mr. Joder commented to Mr. Barkley that if a plan was done without citizen input, it is unlikely that plan would pass the council.

Mr. Barkley asked for a clarification of the role of the planning district committees and whether or not they will undertake land planning for their districts. Dr. Wilkinson, Mr. Joder and Mr. Durabb all said no, they would not undertake land planning in their districts. Mr. Barkley asked that the record reflect that Mr. Durabb said no. Mr. Joder said that the planning districts could be called citizen participation districts.

Mr. Giorgio stated that he thought the discussion was getting caught up in semantics, and that as Mr. Joder stated during the first Steering Committee meeting, much of the concern is a matter of the timing for certain activities. Mr. Giorgio stated that its an educational process, and that we need an evaluation by the professionals about the types of land use mixes in the Parish, and that we have to get to a comfort level by letting the professionals tell us what we have now and what is the formulation that they think works for the future. Mr. Joder noted that that is what the work plan is supposed to do.

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Dr. Wilkinson stated that the Steering Committee needs to see a more detailed work program, which outlines many of the things being discussed at this meeting. Dr. Wilkinson continued that the next step is to identify existing conditions in the parish and where the parish would go if nothing changed. She stated that at the next meeting she will present a proposal for the work program and the timing of activities, which would answer many of the questions being asked. Mr. Joder stated that the timing of these activities is critical, and not so much the work program. Mr. Joder continued that as he informed the Co-chairs on Wednesday, they would not be able to solicit citizen input until we could inform them about the land use, economic trends, demographic trends etc., and that before we go to the citizens, we will all have a clearer understanding about what is going on in Jefferson Parish. Dr. Wilkinson noted that this was discussed in great detail with William Smokin, the consultant undertaking the market analysis.

Mr. White suggested that we might be jumping ahead and should perhaps wait for further meetings to address some of the problems presented today. Mr. Joder agreed and stated that he told the Co-chairs that we would all educate ourselves before we go out to the citizens.

Steering Committee member Donnie Wolfe asked at what point would the public be encouraged to attend the Steering Committee meetings. Mr. Joder stated that the Steering Committee meetings are technically open to the public, but have been only minimally advertised as required by law, and that district planning meetings are where he anticipates citizen input occurring. Mr. Joder continued that once the market analysis and data collection is complete there will be a massive public campaign to get citizens to come out and tell us what the lay of the land is. Mr. Wolfe stated that he directed his comment more to civic associations, such as the East Bank Civic League, to invite them to come to meetings and observe, but not to participate. Mr. Joder explained how UNO and Jefferson Parish have met with nearly all of the civic associations willing to put us on their agenda, shown them the image survey, discussed the comprehensive planning process, and collected their addresses, which will be used to invite them to the planning district committee meetings.

Mr. White asked how many civic associations were included in these meetings. Mr. Joder said about 30, all of which are listed in the materials given to Steering Committee members. Mr. Joder explained in detail the process of selecting civic associations for inclusion in the process. The Parish provided UNO a list of several hundred groups, from which those that might be interested in the comprehensive planning process were selected. Mr. Joder continued that this yielded about 135 groups, who then were contacted and asked if they would invite UNO to their next meeting to talk about the comprehensive planning process. Mr. Joder stated that many of these groups were defunct, but about 30 invited UNO to their meeting. Mr. Joder admitted that this process did a good job of educating a very limited number of people and that it will be difficult to get the level of participation needed for the planning district meetings. Mr. Joder

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continued that this process is not over and there are still some groups out there who are being identified and asked if UNO can come out to their next meeting to discuss the process. Mr. Joder noted that a consultant's report on how to get participation is included in the materials given to the Steering Committee members. Mr. Joder stated that one of the main tasks is for the planning team and the Steering Committee to come up with ways of engendering citizen participation.

Mr. Joder then repeated the motion to change "comment" to "consent" in #2 of the document identifying the suggested role of the Steering Committee, and stated that he had no objections as long as it didn't compromise anyone's professional planning principals. Mr. Joder asked if any further discussion is needed. Mr. Giorgio requested a vote on the motion. The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.

Mr. Rathborne made a motion to accept the minutes from the first meeting. A Steering Committee member seconded the motion and Mr. Giorgio asked for discussion, and since there being no discussion, called for vote on the motion to accept the minutes of the first meeting. The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.

Dr. Wilkinson then passed out a table of contents for the Steering Committee manuals.

Mr. Joder stated the importance of looking at what the Steering Committee is trying to achieve before they look at how we're going to get there. Mr. Joder suggested the Steering Committee look at Attachment C, the specifications for plan elements, and opened the floor for comments. Steering Committee member Erie Hebert asked if the Steering Committee would discuss and identify the vision element of the comprehensive plan. Dr. Wilkinson responded that the particulars of the contents of the vision element would come from the planning process over the next 2 years. Mr. Hebert then asked about the inclusion of optional elements as stated in their materials. Dr. Wilkinson noted that as the process proceeds, there could be a consensus on the need for other elements, such as urban design, and they would be included as resources allowed. Mr. Giorgio noted that some discussion on the work program could be useful and lead to better questions, and as he understands it, this is relating back to the element committees. Mr. Giorgio continued that as these tasks get better defined and as a pert chart becomes available, the timing of many of these tasks will be clear, and this whole process will start to make more sense. Mr. Joder agreed, and stated that soon there will be a detailed pert chart of what is going to happen and when. Mr. Joder continued that right now its important to focus on the concept that we are going to put together a plan to help us achieve our vision of the future, and that the scope of work is tied directly to the product description, which is Attachment C. Mr. Joder noted that the entire process involves a citizen participation effort that is a bottom up approach, and gives everyone an opportunity to participate in the effort.

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Dr. Wilkinson alerted everyone that the specifications of each element include goals, objectives and policy statements, which will be a primary responsibility of the element committees. Dr. Wilkinson continued that many of the specifications are technical and it's the planners responsibility to amass that information, make sense of it, present it to the committees and then make sure the goals, objectives and policy statements are realistic. Dr. Wilkinson stated that your primary responsibility is given all of this information, what are our goals, objectives and policy statements over the next 20 years. Dr. Wilkinson concluded that all of this will be clearer once the detailed work program is complete.

Mr. Giorgio commented that we have to evaluate where the Parish is for each of these elements before we can go forward, and from the Steering Committee's standpoint, we have to understand better what is happening before we can inform citizens. Mr. Giorgio stated that while the document looks really good now, the Committee may want to change some of the elements as understanding of them grows.

Dr. Wilkinson stated that in meetings with the department heads, the planning team specifically asked if these specifications make sense for what the Parish does or where we are at this particular point in time. Dr. Wilkinson continued that many of these specifications we already do, it's just a matter of compiling the data.

Steering Committee member Ava Guidry asked if the incorporated areas of the parish would be included in the planning process. Mr. Joder discussed how the mayors of the incorporated areas were presented information on the comprehensive planning effort in Jefferson and how they were invited to participate. Mr. Joder continued that some of these areas are not comfortable being included with the larger area of Jefferson, but that Kenner, for example, is working on their own land use and zoning plan with a transportation and urban design element, but that the Kenner plan is not comprehensive. Mr. Joder stated that currently, only the unincorporated areas of Jefferson Parish are involved in the comprehensive planning process, but that the Parish planning effort would not discount municipal boundaries as the planning process moves forward.

Steering Committee member Joanne Mire asked if one element would be addressed at a time. Mr. Joder responded that the element committees would be working simultaneously. Dr. Wilkinson stated that no one will sit on all of the committees, but on just one element committee as well as the Steering Committee. Ms. Mire asked if in the beginning when they are being educated would each element be discussed at one meeting. Mr. Joder noted that they would have as many meetings as necessary to educate all of them about the individual elements. Ms. Mire further inquired whether they had to sit on all seven (7) element committees from their district. Mr. Joder responded that you only have to sit on one element committee, unless you wanted to sit on all 7, in which case we would be glad to have you.

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Mr. Gunter asked if the seven element committees get repeated 14 times. Mr. Joder explained that the 14 planning districts identified are relatively homogenous areas of the Parish, and the people from those districts will be educated about their district and will then offer their input. Mr. Joder continued that each district will elect 2 representatives to serve on the element committees for a total of 28 members for each element committee. Dr. Wilkinson noted that the planning districts are just a way of organizing citizen participation and the plan is not going to be in terms of the planning districts. Mr. Joder stated that despite Mr. Barkley's desire to change the name from planning district to something else, that the name will stay the same because planning district is a generally accepted term within the planning field. Mr. Rathburne stated that now that everyone knows what planning district means there really isn't a problem.

Mr. Joder stated that this is a good time to discuss the planning districts, and that could the members look in their binders at the maps of the Jefferson Parish Planning District Boundaries and also at the document dealing with the criteria for establishing planning districts. Mr. Joder explained the process of creating the boundaries for the districts and reviewed what those boundaries are. Mr. Joder stated that 14 districts seemed like a workable number of districts for data disaggregation. Mr. Joder noted that 14 districts will mean at least 42 meetings, and that any more would be unworkable. Mr. Joder continued that where possible major roads were used as boundaries and attempts were made to use boundaries consistent with census tracts in order to take advantage of available statistical data. Mr. Joder further stated that names were kept as generic as possible in order to avoid the suggestion of an association with any particular group. Mr. Joder continued that the divisions were considered useful, but are open to criticism and suggestions from the Steering Committee.

Ms. Parker asked if the districts were divided based on census population data. Mr. Joder responded that the divisions were based on land use and other criteria, and that some areas are much more populated than others, which could lead to disparate turnout at the planning district meetings. Mr. Gunter asked what would be the repercussions to having two districts, such as an East Bank and West Bank district. Mr. Joder suggested that the biggest disadvantage would be conflicting interests, such as business interests conflicting with residents interests, and that the areas would not be homogenous enough to reach any consensus or to create a useful plan. Mr. Joder continued that the current divisions were felt to be the minimum divisions possible to avoid arbitrarily throwing conflicting interests together.

Mr. White asked if the Parish's intentions are to move away from an East Bank/West Bank mentality, and to consider Jefferson Parish as a whole. Mr. Joder stated that is correct and the Parish is moving forward on several fronts, such as consolidating certain taxing districts. Mr. Joder noted that as a practical matter, the Parish is maintaining two governments, an East Bank government and a West Bank government. Mr. Giorgio felt that the divisions are fine for data collection but may not work for meeting and discussing

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interests. Mr. Giorgio continued that this is a good starting point, as long as we can do further evaluation as the process moves forward. Mr. Joder responded that UNO and Jefferson Parish are proceeding with data collection based on the current divisions, and that it would be impractical to change the data collection method as it gets further along. Mr. Joder asked that members review the divisions as quickly as possible so that if change is needed, it can be made promptly. Mr. Joder pointed out that for data collection and citizen participation purposes, the planning district boundaries need to be consistent so that all of the relevant data collected for a planning district can be discussed with the citizens of that district. Mr. Joder stated that there has to be consistency with the boundaries. Dr. Wilkinson noted that Mr. Smolkin's market analysis is predicated on the planning district boundaries. Mr. Joder stated that it is important to identify and maintain the planning district boundaries.

Mr. Rathburne commented that if anyone here grossly disagrees with the boundaries, then these problems should be brought up and addressed immediately. Ms. Becker stated that she thought the planning district boundaries were great, because at the meetings, people will want to talk about their individual area. Mr. Joder commented that the goal was to achieve a manageable number of districts while at the same time having them small enough so that many civic associations would be on the same page.

Ms. Mire stated that Mr. Giorgio's concern seems to be what if there is little participation in certain districts, and in that instance, who would make up the plan for that area. Mr. Joder responded that all that can be done to get participation will be done – including knocking on doors, going to church groups, etc. Mr. Joder continued that it is important for the citizens to feel that every opportunity was provided for their participation, whether or not they take advantage of that opportunity.

Ms. Becker asked if the Steering Committee will be assigned to planning districts. Ms. Becker suggested that people would be familiar with the planning districts in which they live and would know how to increase participation in those areas. Mr. Joder agreed that it is one of the roles of the Steering Committee to increase participation in the areas that they know. Ms. Becker asked who among the Steering Committee members were from the East Bank or the West Bank. Mr. Joder asked for a show of hands of East Bankers and West Bankers.

Mr. Gunter asked Mr. Durabb if he is satisfied with the district boundaries. Mr. Durabb responded that he is, and said he that he feels they lump together people with similar interests, which will help to give all interests in the Parish a voice. Mr. Durabb noted that there may be districts where participation is small, but they can't complain that they were not given a chance.

Mr. Rathburne again stated that any problems with the planning district boundaries should be brought up quickly. Mr. Joder requested that Steering Committee members

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review the boundaries for any problems before the next meeting. Dr. Wilkinson stated that the Regional Planning Commission will provide their input on the divisions by the next meeting.

Dr. Wilkinson pointed out that a decision is needed on the project name. Mr. Joder stated that he skipped several items and asked if there were any more questions on the work program. Ms. Becker suggested that more information is needed on where the parish is now. Mr. Joder said that the next package of materials the Steering Committee receives will include an organizational structure and flow chart so that members can begin to see what's taking place and when its taking place, which will help them become more comfortable with the process. Mr. Barkley asked how long that would take. Mr. Joder stated that he is required under the terms of UNO's contract with the Parish to produce within 30 days of the execution of the contract a detailed pert chart identifying which activities will be taking place and when. Mr. Joder stated that since the contract has not been executed, he would produce a small pert chart to help them begin to see the activities that would take place.

Mr. White suggested that future agendas be more concise to allow for all items to be covered.

Mr. Joder then showed the Website to the Steering Committee via a live Internet link. Mr. Joder explained that it is a work-in-progress and asked that the Committee look at it on their own and offer any constructive comments. Ms. Becker said that she did not like the black banner across the top, but that the committee structure chart and the comment form were very good. Mr. Joder stated that the 'look and feel' of the Website is still being developed. Mr. Joder asked the Steering Committee members to look at the site and provide suggestions. Mr. Joder noted that the site was designed to be interactive so that citizens and Steering Committee members could find out about the planning process, future meetings and other project related information.

Mr. Joder then reiterated that the Steering Committee needs to decide on the project name and that 'Envision Jefferson 20/20' and 'Envision 20/20' had been suggested. Mr. Joder said that he had forgot to bring the mockups of the name logos, but that he would send out the graphics mockup for the logo in the next Steering Committee package.

Mr. Joder mentioned the Public Outreach Campaign and asked that members read the consultant's report for the next meeting and be prepared to discuss ways to proceed with the public outreach campaign. Mr. Joder said that he would skip the Geographic Information System (GIS) demonstration since members saw the G.I.S. in the planning district presentation. Mr. Barkley mentioned that Jefferson Parish's G.I.S. is quite extensive. Mr. Joder explained that UNO is producing layers of information that are being integrated into Jefferson Parish's existing G.I.S.

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Mr. Giorgio asked when the next meeting should be. Mr. Joder noted that there was a lot of discussion at today's meeting, but despite the fact that the meeting was long, the discussion was important. Mr. Joder inquired when the next meeting should be. Dr. Wilkinson commented that at least 4 weeks would be needed to produce the work program documentation, which would answer a lot of the questions presented at today's meeting. Mr. Joder suggested there could be a brief meeting in 2 weeks just to discuss the name of the project, the boundaries of the districts, and the logo. Several Steering Committee members felt that two weeks would be better than four in order to continue the process and maintain the momentum of becoming familiar with and defining their role in the process. Mr. Giorgio suggested a vote on when to hold the next meeting.

Ms. Becker asked how to tackle assigning members to particular planning district meetings. Mr. Joder stated that no one has to participate at the district level, though it would be educational to do so. Mr. Joder suggested that it be discussed at the next meeting along with what happens at the district planning meetings.

Mr. Giorgio checked the calendar for this facility and said that Wednesday, July 25 is open for a meeting. It was agreed that the next meeting would be Wednesday, July 25, at 3:30 p.m. The meeting was then adjourned.