

Minutes of the Meeting of the Jefferson Parish Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee
June 28, 2001 - 3:30 P.M.
Jefferson Parish President's Conference Room
10th Floor of the Joe Yenni Building

Attendees:

Steering Committee Members

Lynn Parker	Ava Guidry	Al Montgomery
Wayne Sandoz	Connie Casey	Cocie Rathborne
Erie Hebert	Norbert White	Joanne Mire
Lee Giorgio	N. 'Buck' Barkley	Ross Liner
Shirley Edwards	Donnie Wolfe	Kerri Becker
Lucien Gunter		

Jefferson Parish Officials

Tim P. Coulon, Jefferson Parish President
Louis Savoye, Deputy Chief Administration Assistant, Development and Director of the
Department of Inspection and Code Enforcement
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
Brian Bowman, Research Assistant

Tim Joder of the University of New Orleans called the meeting of the Jefferson Parish Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee to order and asked everyone present to introduce themselves. Mr. Joder then introduced the honorable Tim Coulon, Jefferson Parish President. Mr. Coulon offered opening remarks to members of the Steering Committee. After Mr. Coulon concluded his remarks, Mr. Joder introduced Ed Durabb, Jefferson Parish Planning Director, who also made opening remarks to the Committee. Both focused on the need for comprehensive planning in Jefferson Parish.

Following Mr. Durabb's introductory remarks, Mr. Joder gave a brief prefatory statement about the comprehensive planning activities undertaken up to the point of this initial meeting of the Steering Committee. Mr. Joder introduced the educational presentation by noting that the University of New Orleans has already delivered the community image survey and educational presentation to over 30 neighborhood, business and civic groups as part of the first year planning activities.

Following his introduction, Mr. Joder administered a 20 slide Community Image Survey (CIS) to the Steering Committee. Mr. Joder instructed the Steering Committee to grade each slide on a continuum from -10 (bad) to +10 (good). Mr. Joder noted that the average score for each slide would be computed during his educational presentation and

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reported following the presentation. During the educational presentation, Steering Committee member Lucien Gunter inquired about the relationship between the comprehensive planning project and a previous Westbank land use plan. Mr. Joder explained that the comprehensive plan would revisit all areas of the Parish because these areas represent areas within Planning Districts that will be revisited through the comprehensive planning process. After the educational presentation, Mr. Joder reviewed the scores from each slide of the community image survey with the Steering Committee.

Following the CIS and educational presentation, Mr. Joder directed the members of the Steering Committee to their binders that contained several documents pertaining to the project status and future work program of the comprehensive plan. Steering Committee member Lee Giorgio raised a question concerning the feasibility of moving the market survey into year 1 of the plan development as well as getting a better definition of what is included in a market study. Mr. Joder responded that there were certain contractual obligations for year 1 of the contract that needed to be completed. Mr. Joder continued that the market analysis was always going to be included in the development of the plan, and would be a driving force in the development of the plan.

Mr. Giorgio continued to raise questions concerning the definition and timing of a market study, and whether it would be done in a timely manner to help in the development of the plan. Mr. Joder noted that there would be no Planning District meetings before a market study is completed, and that the issue is really a timing issue. Mr. Joder continued by noting that there were certain contractual obligations under the Year 1 contract, and that in advance of any planning activities in Year 2, the market study would be completed. Steering Committee member Lucien Gunter commented that the timing of the market study is important because it will provide citizens information which can inform their decision-making, and that having the information from the market study reduces the likelihood that the planning process would have to be undone. Mr. Joder responded that all of the preliminary work would be done in advance of the citizen participation. A member of the Steering Committee asked if the market study would be done even before the visioning sessions. Mr. Joder responded the current plan is to complete the market study and any other work left over from the Year 1 work scope before engaging in the citizen visioning process.

Mr. Joder asked if anybody had any questions or comments about the specifications for plan elements. He noted that Attachment C is the product description for the plan elements, including what each element is supposed to contain. Mr. Joder then noted that Attachment B is the scope of work to be performed in support of the product described in Attachment C. Mr. Joder urged the Steering Committee members to read these two attachments and provide comment to any member of the planning team. Steering Committee member Erie Hebert asked if they could get a list of the planning department members and their phone numbers in case they wanted to provide comment.

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Mr. Joder then proceeded to point out the specific language referring to the market study in Attachment B, including detail about the methodology and data sources to be used. Steering Committee member N. 'Buck' Barkley asked which consultant would be hired to perform the market study. Mr. Joder responded that William Smolkin is the consultant the planning team would like to hire. Steering Committee member Cocie Rathborne commented that he hoped Mr. Smolkin could be hired. Mr. Joder responded that Smolkin is the person principally responsible for writing the market study scope of work in Attachment B and has agreed to work with the planning team on the market study.

Mr. Joder then pointed the Steering Committee to a draft report on the citizen participation effort. Mr. Joder advised the Steering Committee that the planning team needed their advice and counsel on how to engender widespread citizen support and participation during the planning process, particularly in light of the limited resources available to undertake such activities. A member of the Project Steering Committee inquired about how many different committees needed to be filled with citizens. Mr. Joder noted that there were 14 Planning District committees needed, but that the boundaries are still being completed. Mr. Joder noted that a host of factors went into delineating the Planning District boundaries, and that they would be discussed at the next Steering Committee meeting.

Mr. Joder then pointed out that the last section of their binders contained information about the rules and regulations governing appointed boards, commissions and authorities appointed for various purposes. Mr. Joder noted that Tom Wilkinson, the Jefferson Parish Attorney, prepared the report.

Mr. Joder advised the Steering Committee that they should go through the information provided in the project status and future work program so that they have a full understanding of the status and future of the project. Mr. Joder then informed the Steering Committee the Year 2 contract would hopefully be initiated at the August 8, 2001 council meeting, and that any changes resulting from comments from the Steering Committee would be made via an amendment to that contract.

Mr. Joder then began discussing the role of the Steering Committee in the comprehensive planning process. Mr. Joder informed the Steering Committee that the planning team had put together a list of suggestions about the overall role that the Steering Committee could play. Mr. Joder passed out the list of suggestions and asked them to take a few minutes to look them over. Mr. Gunter commented that they looked good. Mr. Barkely asked if the Steering Committee is supposed to steer the work to be done by the 14 Planning District Committees. Mr. Joder responded that the Steering Committee's role 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. Joder went on to say that in addition, the role of the Steering Committee is to make sure that there is consistency among the planning districts, and that the goals and objectives developed in the element committees are consistent across the Parish.

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Mr. Gunter asked if the Planning Districts were 8 sections of the East Bank and 6 sections of the West Bank. Mr. Joder responded that that was about right. Mr. Gunter then asked if each Planning District was going to develop the 7 elements of the comprehensive plan. Dr. Terri Wilkinson, Planner with Jefferson Parish, responded that the Element Committees would be where the Steering Committee members had the most direct input. Dr. Wilkinson continued that Steering Committee members would sit on the Element Committees, where goals and objectives will be formed. Dr. Wilkinson noted that Planning District meetings were where citizens would identify the issues facing the Parish over the next 20 years. Steering Committee member Kerri Becker asked how many citizens would be involved and would the process be open. Dr. Wilkinson responded that at the Planning District level, as many citizens as would like to participate will be welcomed. Dr. Wilkinson then explained that Planning District Committees would elect members to sit on Element Committees, where Steering Committee members would also sit.

Steering Committee member Lynn Parker asked if the optional elements of the plan were out of the question, and if not would it be open to discussion to include any optional elements. Mr. Joder responded that the decision on which elements are included is financially driven, and that every time another element is added with a specific product it drives up the costs. Ms. Parker then asked if the decision to add elements would be driven by a bottom up approach. Dr. Wilkinson noted, for example, that urban design is something that is being talked about during the educational meetings and depending on available resources could be included as an element. Mr. Joder noted that in the list of elements, the vision element is not listed, but is included.

Mr. Giorgio commented that a Pert chart could be useful to help Steering Committee members keep track of all of the tasks being performed. Mr. Joder responded that the current scope of work for Year 2 calls for a Pert chart to be completed. Dr. Wilkinson noted that the Pert chart should be completed within thirty days of the signing of the Year 2 contract.

Mr. Gunter commented about the daunting task of taking on the development of this comprehensive plan. Mr. Joder responded that the objective is to get input and discuss that input so that a reasonable consensus can be reached about the future of Jefferson Parish.

Mr. Joder then turned discussion to the name for the comprehensive plan. Mr. Joder noted that the planning team asked the public relations consultant to look at what they thought was appropriate for this process. Mr. Hebert said that looking at the eye graphic on the cover reminded him of his eye checkup, and since having good vision is 20/20, and since it also refers to the time period covered by the plan placing the term 20/20 somewhere in the title could help make it stick in the minds of the public. Mr. Joder noted that this was important because much of the public awareness of the plan will

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revolve around the name because it will be on the newsletter, correspondence, project Website, etc. Mr. Joder continued that the Steering Committee should review the consultant's report to further refine their ideas on the name, and that the name should be easy to recognize so that the public will become familiar with it.

Mr. Barkley asked whether the Jefferson Edge process would be integrated into the comprehensive planning process. Mr. Joder responded that the Jefferson Edge process is considered the basic goals and objectives that will drive the economic development element, but it will have to be fleshed out in conjunction with the market study. Dr. Wilkinson noted that Jefferson Edge is a controlling document for development of the economic development element. Mr. Barkley noted that land planning was one of the overriding goals of Jefferson Edge. Mr. Giorgio also noted that a land use inventory was identified as a priority through the Jefferson Edge process.

Mr. Joder continued the discussion about the name of the comprehensive plan by pointing out that in the consultants report it said the name should be easy to recognize. Mr. Rathborne suggested talking to the consultants about how adding the term 20/20 to Envision Jefferson would work. Mr. Barkley suggested not taking Jefferson out of the title.

Mr. Joder then moved the discussion to the election of a Chair and Co-Chair of the Steering Committee. Mr. Joder said that the Chair and Co-Chair of the committee could assist in setting the agenda, running the meetings and helping to build consensus on the timing of future meetings. Mr. Gunter asked if it was time to elect a Chair and Co-Chair, and proceeded to nominate Lee Giorgio as Chairman, and his motion was seconded. Mr. Hebert nominated Cocie Rathborne as Chairman. Mr. Giorgio and Mr. Rathborne were named Co-Chair of the Comprehensive Planning Project Steering Committee by acclamation.

Mr. Joder told the committee that they would be making public presentations from time to time, and asked that they do their homework and become very familiar with the work product. Mr. Joder also noted that the Co-Chairs are closely identified with the business community, and the important need for citizens not aligned with the business community to recognize that this process is not a strictly business driven plan on the part of Jefferson Parish government. Mr. Gunter responded that they will not let that happen, and will recognize that they represent all of the citizens.

Mr. Joder then moved on the scheduling the next meeting. Mr. Joder noted that Dr. Joseph Stagni resigned from the Steering Committee citing an unnamed conflict of interest. Mr. Giorgio asked what is the meeting scheduling need right now. Mr. Joder noted that early on, much input is needed, and a second meeting should be scheduled soon. Mr. Joder continued that as the process moves forward, there could be more time between meetings, or meetings set at a regular schedule. Mr. Barkley asked if a regular meeting schedule is even needed. Mr. Rathborne suggested that if Mr. Joder thinks a

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meeting is needed in two weeks, then we have one and then set the next meeting at that time. Mr. Barkley asked if there is a need for monthly meetings over a two or three year time frame. Mr. Joder responded that the answer is no, but there is a need for an immediate second meeting, and then further meetings can be scheduled in consultation with the Co-Chairs. Mr. Giorgio suggested that future meeting could be held at his building on Airline Dr. Mr. Joder concluded that notice would be given as to the location and time of the next meeting, but that it would probably be at 3:30 on July 12, 2001 at either the Parish President's meeting room or at Pelican Homestead on Airline Dr.

The meeting was then adjourned.