

COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING AND TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE  
MEETING MINUTES  
October 8, 2012

Subcommittee Members: Council Member Sheryl Cole, Chair  
Council Member Laura Morrison  
Council Member Chris Riley

Call Meeting to Order

- 1. Citizen Communication**
- 2. Approval of October 8, 2012 minutes**

Approved by a vote of 3-0

- 3. Waller Creek Design Presentation Overview**

Stephanie McDonald, Executive Director, Waller Creek Conservancy, The Conservancy are very excited and grateful to the Council, City of Austin and the community for their efforts and for joining in on this adventure. So far, the effort is on track regarding the \$145 million tunnel which is currently under construction. The new tunnel is slated for completion in 2014, but now is the time to focus on how the above ground will look for the future. We are currently in the final stage 3 which were started November, 2011 with 31 entries from around the world of lead architects. Stage 2 was narrowed down to 9 by a professional jury gather. Then after interviews they narrowed it down to 4 finalists in April, 2012. Those 4 finalists have been working all summer to lay out a vision that they not only see for Waller Creek but to create and establish a team to help meet the challenges of this unique area for the duration of this project.

The Conservancy as the Sponsor has no financial stake in this redevelopment along the creek. They believe in the value of this investment and in Waller Creek and the City of Austin. The Governance group includes several of the Conservancy Board. There is also, a very active technical advisory group which consists of a lot of city staff and other stakeholders. We will be presenting this presentation to a variety of Boards and Commission, Environmental Board, Downtown Commission and on October 18, 2012, we

will be bringing the selection by the jury to the City Council for you to affirm their decision.

What is most important is to have the Public to review the displays and the four final concepts from the teams. What we wanted was for people to weigh in on what they liked and didn't like. Also, this was a chance for them to weigh in on the teams. There was a permanent display at Laguna Gloria, Farmers Market and City Hall. It was moved around the city and it was really exciting receiving the citizens input. This information was posted online and on the website which allowed people to enter their comments as well. At this point as a team we are eager to move forward.

Council Member Cole, thanked Stephanie and staff and the many contributors who have gotten us to this point. Council Member Cole was quite moved to be reviewing the designs. She also asked about the public process, if the Conservancy team made any inquiries to the Carver Museum and MACC?

Stephanie stated the Carver Museum was not available and the MACC didn't have the available space. It is very difficult trying to get the size of these displays into places. We did try to take to as many places as we could.

Council Member Morrison, thanked Stephanie and her staff and was very impressed with the presentation. Due to the vast responses and the diverse reaction, do you one within the diversity one voice that is stronger?

Stephanie stated, at first people thought we were building another River walk. Once they found out we weren't it was a real eye opener for a lot of people and they were excited to the layout and the respect for nature.

#### **4. Briefing on Land Use Code Revision**

Garner Stoll and George Adams, Planning and Development Review Department, gave an overview of the Process to Revise Austin's Land Development Code. The presentation was based on why it needs to be done, who should lead it, how we might approach it and when it will take place.

We researched what other big cities are doing regarding their Comprehensive Plans as far as a Community Engagement, Regulations, Capital Investment, Organizational Alignment and Partnerships.

George Adams, Assistant Director, Planning and Development Review discussed the strengths and weaknesses of the Land Development Code. The last comprehensive revision was in 1984, 181 proposed code amendments

since 2005, multiple overlay districts on a single property, too many lot-by-lot “custom” zoning cases, multiple duplicative and conflicting requirements and over 60 zoning districts. Also, only a handful of people know the answers to a question about the code, complexity convolutes the permitting and approval process, the Board of Adjustment variances used planning tools and it’s not user-friendly. The good news is we believe we have a plan. The Imagine Austin offers clear direction for code revisions, vision statement, 30+ policies 40+ actions and priority program #8. Priority Program #8 is Revise Austin’s development regulations and processes to promote a compact and connected city. To complete neighborhoods and expanded housing choices, neighborhood protection, household affordability, environmental protection, efficient service delivery and clear guidance and user-friendly.

On the table reconsideration are regulations relating to procedures for review & approval, zoning, subdivisions, site plans, drainage, transportation, environment and signs.

As we move through this process we will begin to understand what code makes sense for the community. What type of code is best suited for the community.

The General Steps of who will be leading the process is City Council, Planning Commission, Steering Committee, Consultant and Staff.

Thanks to the City Manager and Council’s approval we currently have three new staff positions in PDRD in the FY 2012/2013 budget, support from multiple PDRD divisions and other departments as needed and up to \$2M for consultant services and other expenses.

What we are looking for within the consultant is a team that can bring deep knowledge and experience in revising big city land development codes, ability to listen to the public and explain highly technical and complex subjects, highly responsive to community issues and needs while retaining professional neutrality, expertise in different types of codes and courageous and straightforward in discussing likely outcomes and unintended consequences.

Garner Stoll, Assistant Director, Planning and Development Review Department, discussed how we should approach this project that is very complicated. What would give us the best chance for a positive outcome? Briefings to the different Commissions and City Council, a preliminary outreach to key stakeholders, neighborhoods, Steering Committee, and Headliners.

The general steps for revising the Code are: Step 1 – listening, issue identification and education, Step 2 – diagnosis and outline, Step 3 – preliminary draft and Step 4 – Code adoption. The Potential Benefits of the

new Code are future development will reflect the community's vision, permit process will be fair, clear, predictable, and timely, property owners will know what they can and cannot do with their property, more people will be able to more easily meet their daily needs with shorter trips, expanded housing choices to meet the needs of an ever changing city and make it easier to do right thing and hard to do the wrong thing.

The next steps are meetings with the Steering Committee, Consultant on Board, Listening sessions, diagnosis approved by City Council, Annotated Outline approved by Council, Preliminary draft code approved and adoption draft code completion.

Council Member Cole, stated at the beginning of the presentation Garner outlined the (4) types of Codes. What do we have now?

Garner stated, we components of all and others as well.

Council Member Morrison, stated so far it seems we have about a 2 year process and what how much funds do we have allocated towards this?

George stated, we have \$2M allocated towards this project. We are not sure if we will all of this but, hopefully we will have a little left after the project.

Council Member Cole stated, a concern of the Steering Committee not have enough input regarding this project. Could this delay the process as well?

Council Member Morrison, stated coming up with adding within Steps 2 or 3 a discussion or solutions for various questions or rewrites.

Greg Guernsey, Director, PDRD, stated this will be about 7-8 month process of the different drafts and the outlines. Greg foresees no problem with staff checking in with the Steering Committee along the way regarding these questions to come up with solutions before the final is approved.

## **5. Update on Valets**

Jason Redfern, Manager, Right of Way Transportation Division, provided an update on the Valet Amendment Process. Per Council directive, staff was asked to assess the ordinance (No. 20110818-074). During this review several stakeholders meetings were conducted. Through this evaluation process we came up with some good news that 180 downtown spaces, valet is a service that benefits the people of Austin. It is a friendly amenity for visitors and provides alternative for mobility impaired. The bad news is during the

stakeholder meeting the following areas of improvement were identified: consistent enforcement, clarity, space efficiency, rules and guidelines and updated fee structure.

In terms of clarity, there are terms being added or modified to better convey City expectations. Definitions – Designated Area and District Service Area, restrictions and requirements, authority of the city, duration of the time for temporary permits and requests for modification to permit.

In regards to space efficiency staff found that parking spaces were being used inefficiently and contrary to the intent of the ordinance. Recommended changes include: removing the 1/3 rule and establish specific, maximum standing times, requiring supplemental devices in certain locations, and seeking vehicle service data through our permitting process, to better understand the public benefit. Also, the rules and guidelines terminology needs to change and a specific set of guidelines are needed, outlining areas of responsibility. We proposed a new fee schedule which hasn't been revised since 1999, and needs to be updated. Right now is \$250 per space per year. We decided to go a unit measurement or a unit cost. The following represents a phased implementation schedule: First Year (2013) \$0.20 per hour of operation per year, no charge from midnight to 8:00 a.m. Second year (2014) \$0.40 per hour of operation per year, no charge from midnight to 8:00 a.m. and 20% discount offered for district service area. Third year (2015) \$0.60 per hour of operation per year, no charge from midnight to 8:00 a.m. and 20% discount offered for district service area.

We decided on a Cost Recovery which are estimates on the costs to administrate a comprehensive valet program to include the addition of 1 fulltime enforcement employee. Permitting processing – 1 full time employee - \$70K, enforcement – 2 full time positions at \$120K (1 full time employee accounts for time spent by 8 evening enforcement officers identifying issues and relaying to citation staff member) and miscellaneous ½ full time employee \$40K (part-time work by 5 to 7 additional management team members). The yearly revenue estimates for the phased implementation plan are: 2013-\$137,163; 2014-\$274,325 and 2015-\$411,487. Once we began to give spaces back to the city, revenue could actually go down from these projections.

Council Member Cole, concern was that we will be losing money on a project that we will be implementing the first year? What can we do about it?

Jason Redfern stated, the revenue for 2013 looks like \$137,000 and when we are spending \$230-250,000 we are not recovering our full cost to review valet zones.

Council Member Cole, wanted an explanation of the rationale behind not charging from midnight to 8:00 a.m. isn't this one of the busiest times?

Jason Redfern stated, the rationale is the metered hours stop at midnight and does not resume until 8:00 a.m.

Council Member Morrison, questioned about the revenue and what would be a good estimate?

Jason Redfern stated, during the about we are running about 50-60% occupancy and at night we are still running close to 100% occupancy. Throughout the whole week it is somewhere between those numbers.

Council Member Morrison, asked since we have a Valet Parking Program now what is the revenue?

Jason Redfern, stated it is currently \$64,000. We have about 43 accounts that have valet services.

**Meeting adjourned at 4:24 p.m.**