

**VISION DIXIE
STEERING COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES MARCH 22, 2007**

Chairman James J. Eardley, Washington County Commissioner, opened the meeting at 1:06 p.m.

[Note: Copies of all brochures and handouts referred to in these minutes are available for review in the Washington County Commission Office.]

Members in attendance:

James Eardley, Washington County Commission
Alan Gardner, Washington County Commission
Denny Drake, Washington County Commission
Kenneth Sizemore, Five County Association of Governments
Amanda Smith, The Nature Conservancy
Gary Esplin, City of St. George
Barbara Hjelle, Washington County Water Conservancy District
Karl Wilson, Mayor, LaVerkin
Carol Sapp, SUHBA
Jane Whalen, Hurricane
Mike Empey, Congressman Matheson's Office
Lee Bracken, Enterprise Mayor
Rick Rosenberg, Santa Clara Mayor
Ron Thompson, Washington County Water Conservancy District
Donald Stratton, Interstate Rock Products

Others in Attendance

Dean Cox, Washington County
Jerry Rasmussen, Washington County
David L. Patterson, Deputy County Attorney
Jeff Winston, Winston Associates
Ted Knowlton, Envision Utah
Ralph Becker, Strategic Planning Group
Bryan Thiriote, Senator Bennett's Office

Agenda

The agenda for this meeting was as follows:

Welcome
Chairman Jim Eardley
Review Minutes from 2/22/07 Meeting
Committee
Overview of Draft Scenarios and Discussion
Jeff Winston
 Land use assumptions
 Recreation/Open Space/Environmental Assumptions
 Transportation networks
 Indicators: how they tested
 Modifications currently contemplated
Discuss Civic Dialogue Details
Ted Knowlton
 Town hall locations
 Invitations
 Media
 Survey options
Budget Update
Jerry Rasmussen
Schedule for next three months
Eardley, Knowlton, Winston
Schedule next meeting; adjourn
Jim Eardley

Chairman Eardley welcomed everyone to the meeting, noting that attendance is down markedly from previous meetings.

Review Minutes from 2/22/07 Meeting

MOTION: Motion by Mike Empey to approve the minutes from the 2/22/07 Steering Committee Meeting, as presented. Motion seconded by Rick Rosenberg and carried by unanimous vote, with all present voting aye.

Overview of Draft Scenarios and Discussion

Jeff Winston presented to the Committee the final four scenarios (A, B, C, and D) via a PowerPoint demonstration entitled “Scenario Update Vision Dixie Steering Committee, 25 January 2007.” He said that a copy of the entire PowerPoint will be emailed to all Committee members within a week and also brought several atlases for people to review.

Chip games were conducted at approximately 130 tables during the workshop sessions. Winston’s task was to synthesize all of this data into 4 scenarios that represent the range of alternatives or

choices that people recommended in the chip games. To do that, the County was divided into approximately 65,000 twenty-acre cells.

As development patterns are allocated, a “probability model” emerges. The probability says that development is more likely to occur near transportation corridors, near existing development, and into areas where services are available. So the chip games are balanced to develop alternatives which give people clear choices, and to use the probability model as a guide so that “it passes the straight-face test,” i.e., it is logical and supportable.

The scenarios are as follows:

Scenario A: This is a sprawl scenario, in which indicates that the County will be spreading out. As one focuses on this scenario, development outside the core area is marked, including some of the back-country areas such as Pine Valley, Central, or Kolob. In some areas there are conflicts with current initiatives involving land preservation and/or land exchange. The Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) recently looked at some of these alternatives and provided some good feedback.

Scenario B: This is the baseline, or business-as-usual scenario. The patterns reflect to a large degree where existing development is and where some of the comprehensive plans will be. This is the starting point from which other development branches out.

Scenario C: In this scenario, growth is clustered around centers. There are three centers in Hurricane and others in south Washington Fields, along the Southern Corridor, in Apple Valley, in Washington, close to SR-9 near Virgin, along interchanges, etc. There is greater in-fill development in this scenario.

Scenario D: In this scenario, growth is highly concentrated in the central part of the County, in the heart of existing communities, with growth limited in outlying areas. This scenario might be characterized as being responsive to the interest in light rail and mass transit. This type of concentrated development could support a light rail system in the metro area. There is a much higher incidence of in-fill and redevelopment, so existing towns would have a greater level of density within the core areas.

In any given scenario, there are elements that are more feasible than others. The main intent of all the scenarios is to capture the main ideas of the chip games and also represent clear choices that are dramatic enough that people can really see the difference. Ultimately, the decisions will all be implemented by individual communities, adapted to their own particular circumstances.

The target population number of 400,000 remains constant throughout the 4 scenarios. The same indicators are used throughout, and each scenario develops different answers for those indicators. Any particular indicator can be adjusted slightly to lead to What-If scenarios, i.e., if this or that variable changes, how does it affect all of the scenarios?

Some of the variables in the scenarios include: residential mix, land use, use of regional centers, multi-family development, industrial sites, water usage, linear feet of roadway, employment concentration, mixed-use jobs, in-fill development, and land consumption. They vary significantly from one scenario to another and are easily compared by looking at the PowerPoint graphs and charts.

Winston is also looking at affordability indicators. SPG presented some information in a recent meeting about the fact that single-family home prices are rising faster than multi-family home prices and cost more, in general, than multi-family homes. Winston will attempt to reflect those statistics in an index that shows that the number of homes in a more affordable range increase with density. The TAC will be looking at this data and at environmental indicators, as well, to determine if there are areas that require adjustment depending on various initiatives that may be in progress.

Northern Corridor:

Jeff pointed out that on the scenarios no Northern Corridor is drawn. However, it is shown on all of the transportation models. No definitive alignment has been specified for the Northern Corridor yet, and the TAC suggests that we reference that roadway as a text description, wherein the line is not actually shown on the map but the text description clarifies that there are plans, by the MPO and others, that show potential alternatives for the Northern Corridor, with specific alignment to be determined later. Further, maps will indicate that the Southern Corridor and the Western Corridor have been shown but that the Northern Corridor will be indicated only as a general alignment that has been established but not yet officially adopted. There was a broad range of choices among those who participated in the chip games: some showed development going across the northern part of the County, some were inside the habitat, some were on the southern end, and about half didn't show any roadway at all.

Winston's approach is to consider the Northern Corridor as a part of each of the scenarios but in different contexts: in Scenario A it would be treated as a 4-lane arterial, in B the same thing, in C as a 4-lane collector, and in D (much higher transit emphasis), the Northern Corridor would be reduced to a two-lane roadway because much more of the traffic is being handled via public infrastructure and other mass transit approaches.

Gary Esplin disagreed with the idea to refer to the Northern Corridor only as a "text description" when the other corridors are shown as actual lines on the maps. He asked whether that decision were political, or because the chip games did not support the notion of a Northern Corridor. He also asked for clarification as to exactly where the text would appear. Jeff said that since the actual alignment has not yet been determined, and the mappers do not have clear direction where to place the line, it was suggested to make it a text description. Further, since it is a charged issue, TAC was afraid it would become a focus of debate; and the intent of the Vision Dixie process is clearly not to settle a debate about the Northern Corridor. A connection has been included in all scenarios, next to which will be placed an asterisk or arrow to call people's attention to that route. In the

traffic analysis a roadway in the northern area will be included, with language showing that it would have a significant level of use. The feeling of the TAC was that the presence of an actual line on the map representing the Northern Corridor would distract people from the real intent of the process and also polarize people who are on opposite sides of that particular debate. TAC would make it clear that there is support for a Northern Corridor.

Gary said that the presence or absence of the Northern Corridor will directly affect development and density statistics, which would tend to skew the scenarios. Without the Northern Corridor, there can't be significant development in that northern area of the County.

Ted clarified that the TAC recommendation was that the text description will appear prominently on the map, and when people look at the transportation network that appears on the scenario it is immediately visible.

Chairman Eardley said that this is a sensitive issue, and Vision Dixie doesn't want this specific matter to become the focal point of the process. However, it is important to provide appropriate access points in the east and the west, and those specific access points should be identified on the maps from the beginning. Jeff said that certainly we could show points of access on either side, which may help people visualize it better without actually specifying an actual route.

Jane Whalen said that some people support the concept of no road at all through the Red Cliffs Desert Reserve and asked if the engineers could search for alternatives such as an alignment that could skirt the Reserve on the south side. Additionally, the public should be educated in the realities and history of the Reserve: that it really is protected as critical habitat for the tortoise. She hoped for at least one scenario where the Northern Corridor did not appear, to give the public a clearer choice.

Ron Thompson asked Gary if it really matters to the City of St. George where the Northern Corridor is placed as long as there is one. Gary said that there is already a corridor on the bottom (four lanes) and were told by the HCP that the Northern Corridor couldn't go higher because it would intersect the most critical part of the entire Reserve. His concern is that the Committee is not doing a proper job if the scenarios do not include all transportation corridors, including the Northern Corridor. He predicts gridlock, frustration, and out-of-control development. Everything can't go through St. George. Gary said that the City will not support this plan at all unless that issue is dealt with up front, because the quality of life for citizens of St. George City is zero at that point.

Chairman Eardley reiterated that the critical issue is access points to whatever corridors are decided upon. Further, if the Northern Corridor is not shown clearly on the scenario maps, the very nature of the process will be misunderstood and misinterpreted down the line. Everyone knows that a route through that section of the County is critical to future growth and that there will be serious transportation problems down the road without one. Gary said the route needs to be somewhere near Winchester Hills or the Ledges, south of the big hill, and there has to be access south of the Snow Canyon turnoff somewhere between Exits 10 and 16 on the Interstate.

Jeff asked whether it would suffice to put a statement on the map acknowledging the existence of a Northern Corridor and stating that its exact location is yet to be determined. He said that it could be a text box, containing words that refer to a line. Gary said that it makes more sense to place the line on the map for the Northern Corridor just the way the other lines are for the other corridors.

Amanda Smith said that she agreed with Barbara Hjelle that the committee should be consistent and unafraid of political controversy. During the Civic Dialogue meetings, the facilitators should be trained to explain all issues, including corridors, to the participants. An important issue to Amanda is mitigation, wherever the line is drawn.

Chairman Eardley said that if the consensus of the group is that an actual line should be drawn on the map for the Northern Corridor, whether that line is ultimately moved or changed slightly, then it should be on the map. Denny Drake agreed, saying that the consensus from previous Steering Committee meetings has been that there will be a Northern Corridor included in the vision, and therefore it should be on the map. The line can be adjusted when and if the time comes. Studies by the population reflect a desire on the part of most citizens to include a Northern Corridor. Rick Rosenberg said that the Great Northern Corridor is in the long-range funding plan of the MPO, and that there will be a public comment period in the next two weeks. Alan Gardner suggested placing a line on the map with a qualifying comment that it may be altered slightly.

Chairman Eardley asked for a motion to put this matter to rest.

MOTION: Motion by John Andrews to place a line representing the Northern Corridor on all scenario maps, consistent with other lines representing other corridors, rather than reference the Northern Corridor by text description or other means. Motion seconded by Barbara Hjelle and carried by majority vote, with one dissenting nay vote.

Karl Wilson said that he has been reading an HCP document which refers to corridors and transportation matters which may shed some light on this discussion. He will review this document and report to the committee at the next meeting.

Jeff Winston said that at the TAC meeting yesterday, there was an informative discussion with Jim Crisp of the BLM. Jim reported on a number of joint initiatives being explored by the BLM, in conjunction with several different agencies and entities, with respect to open space, land exchanges, etc., to achieve substantial connective corridors throughout the County. Those efforts are of a significant scale, and are under BLM purview. Jim acknowledged that he doesn't have a forum for the release of this information, and perhaps Vision Dixie might be the appropriate forum. Citizens of the County may be interested to see the scale of the ideas that are being pursued, including working with the Water Conservancy District on the land south of Sand Hollow, river corridor preservation efforts, and others. The TAC would like to incorporate this data into the agenda for the next Steering Committee meeting.

Chairman Eardley asked when the Steering Committee would have an opportunity to meet with the TAC prior to the next Steering Committee meeting to review these items. Jeff said that there is still work to be done on fine-tuning the scenarios, and it is important to have one more meeting with the Steering Committee before going into the Civic Dialogue phase. At that meeting, the Committee will have a chance to comment on what will be introduced to the public and how it will be presented.

Barbara said that her concern in that regard is that the BLM is a public process, and we should have some specific understanding of what is going to emerge from that discussion so that people who participated in the workshops and made their choices aren't blind-sided by totally new concepts that were never presented at the tables.

Discuss Civic Dialogue Details

Barbara Hjelle asked when the Steering Committee will have the opportunity to examine the technical data that is available to the TAC. Ted Knowlton clarified that the TAC does have data but doesn't make decisions, only recommendations. There is detail discussed in those meetings about how to undertake the execution of various indicators, although it tends to be the case that the direction to take is pretty obvious, with the possible exception of water usage. A primary purpose of the TAC is to keep the Steering Committee meetings fairly short and infrequent. Barbara said that water usage and electrical power should be discussed in tandem, as they are corollary issues.

Ted said that at the next Steering Committee meeting the actual presentation that will be delivered at the Civic Dialogue Meetings will be shown. There is an ad in the *Dixie Weekly* and the *Hurricane Valley Journal* for the Civic Dialogue Meetings, but those dates will be pushed back and potential participants will be notified of the new set of dates. Invitations for committee members to use in the various cities, municipalities, or organizations will be emailed in about ten days.

One key item for discussion and decision by the Committee today is how to handle the questionnaire/survey. There are two major goals relative to a survey of this kind: (1) Get the highest possible number of people expressing their opinions about the scenarios and scoring their preferences. A figure of five to ten thousand responses would be ideal. (2) Have a measure of confidence that those surveyed represent a true sample of the population. For example, one would strive for a 95% confidence level that the results coming in represent the population at large.

In a recent meeting with Dan Jones Associates, it was asked if it were possible to scientifically validate a broadly disseminated survey of approximately five thousand (5,000) answers that come from a variety of sources, such as the internet, public meetings, or FAXes. They said the answer is no, it cannot be determined if one person submits a response from more than one source, so it is not possible to validate it scientifically.

Ted asked whether Committee would be satisfied with a survey group of four hundred people. If

Dan Jones does a controlled, random sample of 400 people, which is enough to get a 95% confidence level for the County as a whole, it would cost the Vision Dixie process about ten thousand dollars (\$10,000). For one thousand (1,000) responses, the price increases to twenty-five thousand dollars (\$25,000). Ten thousand dollars (\$10,000) is the amount that has been budgeted for a professional polling firm. This set of responses will be compared with the five thousand (5,000) responses that are able to be scientifically validated, and the two figures should be quite close. When Envision Utah conducted this type of survey in the Wasatch Front several years ago and polled eighteen thousand (18,000) people, the result was nearly identical to the scientific sample. In terms of money in hand, the Vision Dixie budget at this point can handle the ten thousand dollar (\$10,000) expenditure, but more money would have to be raised to do the twenty-five thousand dollar (\$25,000) survey.

MOTION: Motion by Barbara Hjelle to authorize up to ten thousand dollars (\$10,000) for a professional polling firm to conduct a controlled survey of four hundred (400) people across the entire County for use in the Civic Dialogue Meetings. Motion seconded by Don Stratton and carried by unanimous vote.

Concerning the locations of the Civic Dialogue Meetings, it was decided to add LaVerkin to the previously agreed-upon sites of New Harmony, Enterprise, Hurricane, Ivins, St. George, and Washington City. The dates previously set are now obsolete and will now occur in late May to early June.

Budget Update

Washington County Deputy Administrator Jerry Rasmussen said that from the inception of Vision Dixie, two hundred and eighty thousand (\$280,000) has been collected out of an estimated budget of four hundred and fifty-eight thousand (\$458,000). Of that amount, there is fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000) that will probably not be collected. Approximately two hundred twenty thousand dollars (\$220,000) in expenses has been paid. Gary Esplin said that the City of St. George is going through a budget crisis and won't be able to tender its pledged amount just yet. Three (3) cities have contributed two thousand dollars (\$2,000) each: Ivins, Santa Clara, and LaVerkin. UDOT and the Governor's Office of Planning & Budget have both pledged forty thousand dollars (\$40,000), but neither contribution has been received.

Schedule Next Meeting; Adjourn

There will be a Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) meeting, as follows:

**Wednesday, April 25
12:30 p.m.
County Commission Chambers**

The next Steering Committee will be a very important one, to discuss the introduction of the BLM issues to the Vision Dixie process and discuss in detail the final scenarios and the upcoming Civic Dialogue meetings. The next meeting will be:

Thursday, April 26

1:00 p.m.

Dixie Center, Entrada Room

Chairman Eardley adjourned the meeting at 3:14 p.m.