

Meeting Summary
Sustainable Communities Planning Grant
Meeting of the Coordinating Committee of the Consortium
Monday, December 20, 2010 10:00 AM to Noon
H-GAC Conference Room A, Second Floor

ATTENDEES:

Mayra Bontemps, Harris County; Jared Briggs, Harris County; Sarah Cherone, Chambers County; David Crossley, Houston Tomorrow; Meredith Dang, H-GAC; Ronald Drachenberg, Fort Bend County; DC Dunham, Bay City CDC; Clint Harbert, METRO; Victoria Herrin, Houston Wilderness; David Hitchcock, HARC; Mike Huddle, Montgomery County; Michael Kramer, City of Houston; Christy Lambright, Harris County; Stephanie Lopez, United Way of Greater Houston; Sherry McKibben, City of Huntsville; Gina Mitteco, H-GAC; Amar Mohite, City of Houston; Martha Murphee, Center for Houston's Future/Blueprint Houston; Kelly Opot, Harris County; Diana PonceDeLeon, City of Houston; Allen Richey, H-GAC; Andrea Roberts, City of Houston; Donna Rybiski, Center for Houston's Future/Blueprint Houston; Lori Schwarz, City of Galveston; Jeff Taebel, H-GAC; Joe Webb, Blueprint Houston; Chuck Wemple, Gulf Coast Economic Development District; Paul L. Wright, LISC; Maggie Yancy, Greater Houston Builders Association; and Vince Yokom, Waller County.

1. Welcome and Introductions

Meredith Dang, H-GAC staff, called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m.

2. Certify Quorum

At least 51% of the member entities were represented, constituting a quorum.

3. Approval of November 20, 2010 Meeting Minutes

Prior to the meeting, H-GAC staff sent meeting minutes to the November 3, 2010, meeting instead of the November 30, 2010, meeting. To give the membership an adequate amount of time to review the minutes, the correct minutes will be sent out this week and will be included for approval on the January 19, 2011, agenda.

4. Election of Officers

Prior to the meeting, Coordinating Committee members had the opportunity to submit recommendations for officers to the nominating committee. The nominating committee distributed ballots by e-mail to the membership to select a Chair, First Vice Chair and Second Vice Chair to serve one-year terms.

Coordinating Committee Officer Election Results for consideration were Chair, Chuck Wemple, Gulf Coast Economic Development District; First Vice Chair, Amanda Timm, Local Initiative Support Corporation; and Second Vice Chair, Victoria Herrin, Houston Wilderness.

Action: Motion made by Mike Kramer, seconded by David Crossley to accept the slate of officers as presented. The Coordinating Committee unanimously accepted the slate of officers.

5. Approval of Bylaws

Allen Richey, H-GAC staff, distributed the proposed bylaws for the Coordinating Committee of the Consortium.

Points of Discussion:

- The bylaws subcommittee met twice since the November 30, 2010, meeting to review and consider comments from the Coordinating Committee
- Notable changes to the draft bylaws as presented on November 30, 2010, include adding a one-entity, one vote policy and deleting the voting by proxy policy.

- The Coordinating Committee will have the authority to empanel members of the Technical Advisory Groups and Regional Transects Groups.

Action: Motion made by Victoria Herrin, seconded by David Crossley, to accept the bylaws as presented.

Amendments:

- Modify the document to remove “member” and replace with “representative” in the appropriate areas when referring to attendance of a representative
- Clarify in quorum that the member entity’s designate or alternate must be in attendance for the member to be counted as present
- Bylaws of the Consortium shall expire upon a vote of the Coordinating Committee

Action: Herrin and Crossley accepted the amendments to the original motion. The Coordinating Committee unanimously accepted the bylaws with the changes.

6. Public Engagement Subcommittee Update

The Request for Proposals (RFP) subcommittee is now the Public Engagement Subcommittee, tasked with coordinating public engagement efforts throughout the duration of the project, including developing the RFP for the public engagement consultant. Meredith Dang gave the Subcommittee report.

Points of Discussion:

All Subcommittee meetings are open to the Coordinating Committee membership and more representation is needed from suburban and rural member-representatives to facilitate more robust discussions.

HUD requires documentation of the roles of the Coordinating Committee membership versus the consultant team the Coordinating Committee contracts with for public engagement. The consultant team will support the work of the Coordinating Committee by designing the process for getting the word out, as well as a media and web strategy. The consultant team will add their expertise to the expertise of the Coordinating Committee. The RFP for a public engagement consultant will be written to allow for flexibility throughout the project for the Coordinating Committee.

A working group of the Public Engagement Subcommittee will develop a draft Citizen Participation Plan to serve as the guiding principles in terms of public engagement for the course of the project and become part of the RFP package to be released to the potential proposers. A draft is tentatively scheduled to be presented during the January 19, 2011, meeting. Meetings of this subcommittee are open to all Coordinating Committee membership.

The Public Engagement Subcommittee plans to release a draft alert about the public engagement RFP in January due to the review time needed to approve the contract and to give potential proposers advance notice in an effort to get the best proposals possible. The draft alert will be like a news release to let the potential proposers know that the RFP will be announced and to point them to the background information about the project so they can start feeling out potential teams and preparing to propose for the RFP.

7. MOA Update

Allen Richey distributed a draft MOA. MOA’s must be signed by the chief representative of the member with signing authority no more than 120 days after the grant contract is signed between HUD and H-GAC.

Points of Discussion:

Initial MOA's may be amended provided specific match values are included as required by HUD. Specific match includes salaries, meeting spaces, etc.

The MOA's must also include reference to member's designate and alternate for meeting attendance. The designate and alternate should be named by letter and not in the MOA.

HUD has requested that members honor the match commitments from the grant application to ensure all the elements of the project can be completed. However, HUD is open to negotiate reduced match amounts.

Members with questions about how to document their match or questions about negotiating with HUD to change their match commitment should contact Meredith Dang.

8. Impact of Budget on Case Studies

The application budget included \$1 million for case studies; however, HUD recommended eliminating the case studies entirely. After negotiations, HUD agreed \$600,000 could be allocated for case studies. Meredith Dang offered a report on how this decrease could impact the case studies.

Points of Discussion:

The original idea was to conduct case studies in each transect area at a cost of \$250,000 per study.

Coordinating Committee members should start considering ways to complete the case studies within the new budget constraints, such as local match or cooperative efforts with local organizations.

The Coordinating Committee can take an inventory of existing and upcoming planning efforts to leverage resources.

The budget can be flexible regarding how funds, including matching funds, are spent on the case studies.

The case studies will go beyond planning to exhibit how some specific planning measures could be applied to different areas across the transect. The transect is a mechanism to show geographic diversity in the region. Each participating entity can determine where it fits along the transect as an urban, suburban, rural or coastal community. Entities may also fit in multiple areas along the transect. Delineation of the transect is less about political boundaries and more about the idea that different areas will need different planning strategies.

Specific concerns about case studies should be forwarded to Meredith Dang.

9. Technical Advisory Group and Regional Transect Group Composition

Meredith Dang led a discussion about how the Coordinating Committee would like to proceed with populating the Technical Advisory Groups and Regional Transect Groups. She also distributed a brainstorming list, developed by H-GAC staff, of how the Technical Advisory Group might be populated.

Points of Discussion:

The Bylaw indicate the Coordinating Committee will develop a process for populating the Technical Advisory Group and Regional Transect Group. From the grant application, the Technical Advisory Group would be the subject-matter experts. The Coordinating Committee could set up an application process to solicit expert volunteers.

Membership can be agency representatives, private businesses or other professionals to provide a broad range of private and public sector expertise.

Although Coordinating Committee members are welcome to sit on Technical Advisory and Regional Transect groups and help facilitate them, the groups are intended to be populated by more than just the Coordinating Committee because they will report back to the Coordinating Committee.

The size of the groups may not be limited as to not preclude any stakeholders from participating. All meetings will be open to the public, but a core constituency is needed for the groups to move forward and communicate with the Coordinating Committee.

Historical preservation experts can be added to the housing section of the distributed brainstorming list.

As the list was not meant to be comprehensive, but as a starting point for discussion, all gaps, duplications, questions and concerns about the distributed brainstorming list should be directed to Meredith Dang.

H-GAC staff will bring the workplan to the January meeting to show how the Technical Advisory Groups and Regional Transect Groups fit into the plan and what the groups will be doing. Staff will also bring the timeline to illustrate when the groups might be meeting to get an estimate of what sort of time commitment may be needed from group members.

Action: Motion made by Sherry McKibben, seconded by David Crossley that a member of the Coordinating Consortium chair each of the Technical Advisory and Regional Transect groups. The chair would act as a facilitator and report back to the Coordinating Committee.

Additional Discussion:

Coordinating Committee members have already committed time to the Consortium and may not have additional time to commit to chairing and facilitating group meetings.

H-GAC staff will attend group meetings and can report back to the Coordinating Committee.

As the process for populating the groups and the specific functions of the groups has yet to be determined by the Coordinating Committee, determining chairs for the groups should be deferred to a later meeting.

Action: McKibben and Crossley deferred the motion to a later meeting.

10. Other Business

Meredith Dang reported that after a conference call with HUD regarding the budget, some minor adjustments needed to be made. However, no final word had been given regarding the timeline for final approval and contract initiation.

David Crossley requested that the Coordinating Committee consider purchasing upgraded transportation modeling software.

Donna Rybiski requested that the Coordinating Committee consider allowing Center for Houston's Future and Blueprint Houston to participate as two separate entities. Center for Houston's Future/Blueprint Houston served as a single entity for the grant application. This request will appear as an action item on a future agenda.

11. Next Meeting Date

Wednesday, January 19, 2011, 9:30 AM
H-GAC Conference Room A, Second Floor
3555 Timmons Lane, Houston, TX 77027

12. Adjourn

Action: Following a motion by David Hitchcock with multiple seconds, the Coordinating Committee unanimously voted to adjourn at 11:35 a.m.

QUESTIONS/COMMENTS:

Please contact Meredith Dang, H-GAC
713-993-2443

Meredith.dang@h-gac.com