

CITIZEN ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

Meeting Minutes for April 14, 2010
Southside Conference Room

MEMBERS PRESENT

Fyrne Bemiller
Susanne Croft
Victor Frazier
Resa Hayes
Ted Horobiowski
Larry Luton
Dean Lynch
Fran Papenleur
Greg Ridgley
Brenda Smits, Chair

STAFF PRESENT

Steve Blaska, Director of Operations
Charlie Phillips, Operations Analyst

GUESTS PRESENT

None

MEMBERS ABSENT

Will Flanigan
Charles Hansen
Margaret Jones

1. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Chairman Smits called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. and conducted roll call.

2. MINUTES OF THE CITIZEN ADVISORY COMMITTEE - Corrections or Approval

a.) Ms. Smits asked the Committee to address the meeting minutes of March 10, 2010.

The Committee reviewed the minutes. Ms. Croft noted on page five of the minutes and also on the correlating, ongoing agenda item, "Parking Lot", to change the word "sustainable" to "sustainability" when referring to establishing a sustainability framework.

The Committee approved the minutes as amended, by consensus.

3. PUBLIC EXPRESSIONS

There were no public expressions at this time.

4. SUSTAINABILITY PROJECT

a.) Project Calendar

A revised sustainability project calendar was provided to the Committee. The primary changes included notation of development of the draft definition and rationale for the STA Sustainability Program at both the April and May meetings, with finalization at the June meeting. The Board has been invited to attend the July CAC meeting for a presentation of the final work product.

Mr. Blaska reported the Board has been invited to attend the July 14th CAC meeting. Staff will keep the Committee apprised as to the response for Board attendance. He said this will be a less formal opportunity to present the Committee's work on the Sustainability Project. If more than four Board members attend, there will be a quorum which will constitute a special Board meeting and would need to be advertised.

Mr. Lynch asked if the Committee could expect more people due to the possibility of a special Board meeting.

Mr. Blaska replied that the regularly scheduled Board meetings do not render many public attendees, so it is likely that the July CAC meeting would be the same.

b.) Definition of Sustainability, Rationale & Framework for Program

Mr. Blaska provided a copy of Connect Spokane: A Draft Comprehensive Plan for Public Transportation (CPT), preliminary draft dated April 1, 2010 for the Committee's discussion and review.

Mr. Blaska stated that Mr. Otterstrom, STA Planning Director, will be at the May CAC meeting to discuss the CPT in detail. He added, the CPT is being provided in advance to allow for the Committee's review prior to the May meeting. He said the Sustainability Project could be integrated into the CPT. Mr. Blaska directed the Committee's attention to page 71, entitled "Energy and Environment". Beneath the title, the statement reads, "*Following the completion of work accomplished by STA's Citizen Advisory Committee, this element will be amended to include a goal, principles and policies about energy and the environment*". Mr. Blaska noted the title can be changed and thought overall it would be beneficial to have the work product of the CAC's Sustainability Project incorporated into this document.

Mr. Blaska called the Committee's attention to page 63, Section 2.2, Performance Standard 2: Equivalent Energy Consumption (Environmental). This is a unique proposed standard on the true environmental benefits of STA's service based on route performance and an energy consumption standard. This is a very measurable standard and will directly influence future decisions on service.

Ms. Croft referred to the January 2010 CAC meeting packet and wondered if some components in the APTA Sustainability Conference presentation is similar to Section 2.2 in the CPT.

Mr. Blaska said the APTA presentation is more of a global approach, whereas the performance standard in Section 2.2 measures the each specific STA route.

Mr. Luton asked if the route by route analysis is an internal measurement.

Mr. Blaska said the metrics noted in section 2.0 of the CPT are dependent on ridership, and the system wide goal is to average twenty-two passengers per revenue hour of service. He added that passenger miles are also a consideration in this equation.

Lastly, Mr. Blaska called the Committee's attention to page 16, Item 4, Sustainability. Beneath the title, the statement reads, "*The HPTN should improve the sustainability of the transportation system*". He noted this is not sustainability in the environmental sense, it is sustainability in the sense of whether a route can be supported.

Mr. Blaska reminded the Committee that Mr. Otterstrom will review the CPT in detail at the May meeting. He noted the CPT is organized such that each of the elements has a set of principles and policies. He thought it would be helpful if the Sustainability Project would be crafted in the same format. He noted the Spokane Mayor's Sustainability Task Force work is very similar to this format as well. Overall, he felt it important for the Committee to have a brief overview of the CPT prior to development of the definition of sustainability, rationale, and framework for STA.

Mr. Horobiowski inquired about the date of the most recent version of the CPT.

Mr. Blaska said STA has had other documents that served as a framework, however, the CPT is the first stand-alone version of an overall transportation plan.

Mr. Luton suggested eliminating the use of the word "sustainability" in the CPT unless it is specific to sustainability as the CAC defines it.

Mr. Blaska said that as the Committee discusses and determines what sustainability means to STA they will determine if sustainability is also defined as economic viability, and if so, this would be one of the elements.

Mr. Lynch said it would be helpful to make sure that the members receive a reminder to review the CPT prior to the May meeting.

Ms. Smits announced to the Committee to begin the discussion on the definition of sustainability, rationale, and framework. She added that Mr. Blaska will record the main ideas expressed in order to capture them for future reference.

Mr. Frazier referred to the CPT, page 16, Item 4, and said the item should also include a social component in addition to the mentioned fiscal and environmental components. He recalled from the February 2010 meeting that Champaign-Urbana Mass Transit District had the same three concepts included in their definition of sustainability and thought it to be a good place to start.

Ms. Croft said she supports Mr. Frazier's comments. She said the best way to develop a definition is to refer back to the standard definition which asks, "can we keep on doing this?" She stated in order to answer that question, it is best to understand each of the contributing dynamics (economic, human, natural environment) and how they are interconnected and tie in to STA's opportunities and barriers.

Mr. Luton suggested that a fiscal component would receive a lot of attention. He expressed his concern over watering down the meaning of environmental sustainability by using it in a way that includes the other aspects. He agreed the components mentioned by Mr. Frazier and Ms. Croft do interconnect, however, he is concerned that when fiscal sustainability is added, it will override the environmental and social components.

Ms. Croft replied that it will be important to analyze and balance the criteria, in addition to determining if the focus will be internal or external.

Mr. Horobiowski added a long-term focus vs. short term is key.

Mr. Frazier said he would like to see a future generational mindset included in the definition.

Mr. Lynch reminded the Committee that the STA Board is comprised of elected officials and they make the decisions as well as the community at large when STA asks for an increase in sales tax. He said there will always be fiscal issues which almost always overrides other issues. Mr. Lynch said he has also experienced the Board equally weighing both fiscal and social accountability when considering the recent fare increase. He believes the CAC needs to develop the best document and message relaying the fiscal, social and environmental elements, and present it to the Board in a clear and complete package for them to address as they see fit.

Ms. Smits said she feels somewhat overwhelmed when discussing long range planning as it is difficult to foresee changes in technology or other factors that may affect the definition of sustainability. She suggested incorporating a set schedule for review and modification to the definition and program, if needed.

Mr. Horobiowski suggested looking at STA in the long term sense as a helpful viewpoint for development a definition.

Ms. Bemiller said the definition should be more of a mission statement or a goal rather than an explanation.

Ms. Hayes thought perhaps the definition could be a goal with an underlying explanation.

Ms. Croft said the framework needs to be selected, which will provide a guideline for making decisions.

Mr. Horobiowski said many examples have been provided to the CAC. He cited the Spokane Mayor's Sustainability Plan and suggested duplicating it as it is a good work product and would help to avoid reinventing the wheel. He added that he likes the term "economic" better than "fiscal".

Ms. Croft reiterated Ms. Smits' earlier thoughts that the program can be changed as needed at a later review date.

Mr. Blaska referred to the last CAC project, which was the Tariff Policy, and said the first presentation made to the Board was a basic philosophy with brief supporting statements. He said this was an important first step as every step thereafter followed the philosophy. Following development of a sustainability framework, this will act as the guideline for all subsequent work to follow.

Ms. Croft cited various examples of sustainability frameworks and said it could be as simple as a single focus on greenhouse gas reduction if the Committee so chose.

Mr. Lynch reminded the public's knowledge base and perception varies from one another.

Mr. Luton said resiliency is a part of sustainability and the ability to survive different scenarios is another component for consideration. For example, STA has only one major source of providing transportation which is via buses. If STA could no longer afford fuel for the buses, they would no longer be sustainable. He further stated diversification of resources is most important.

Ms. Bemiller said that simultaneous efforts from both the community level and the corporate level are necessary for a successful program.

Ms. Croft asked Ms. Bemiller if she feels that STA should limit their sustainability scope to internal focuses or if STA has a responsibility towards the community and needs to be more involved.

Ms. Bemiller said STA has a social responsibility to demonstrate to the city that they are interested in the welfare of the community in addition to providing bus transportation.

Mr. Luton said he would like to see the environmental aspect as the larger of the three driving forces with the economic and social aspects dependent on the environmental system.

Ms. Croft commented that sustainability is about the health and long term viability of the community and STA's role to continue to be able to provide services, and the factors that enable this to take place.

Mr. Luton reiterated that the environmental aspect needs to be primary, with focus on economic and social components. The environment is what allows for human survival.

Mr. Blaska added he is interested in seeing what sustainability means for STA and the development of a definition is important.

Both Ms. Smits and Mr. Luton proposed development of a simple definition with a brief itemized list of what it includes, i.e. social, environmental, and economic.

Mr. Lynch suggested drafting a definition to use as a starting point.

Mr. Frazier said he liked the idea of beginning the definition with the phrase "STA is about".

Mr. Lynch referred to the UTA definition of sustainability which was provided in the February 2010 CAC packet.

The discussion ensued and the Committee developed three draft sustainability definitions as follows:

1. Sustainability at STA is about **meeting the present needs in ways that support or enhance our ability to meet the needs of future generations** through actions that maximize our economic, environmental, and social resiliency.
2. Sustainability at STA is about **ensuring STA's present and future viability in ways that support or enhance our ability to meet the needs of future generations** through actions that maximize our economic, environmental, and social resiliency.
3. Sustainability at STA is about **providing our services in ways that support or enhance our ability to meet the needs of future generations** through actions that maximize our economic, environmental, and social resiliency.

c.) "Parking Lot" of Future Items to Address

The "Parking Lot" is a new, recurring agenda item for the Committee's ongoing reference and discussion. It will house a list of future items and questions to revisit or address.

As mentioned by Ms. Croft earlier in the meeting during the approval of the March 10, 2010 minutes, the word "sustainable" was changed to "sustainability", when referring to establishing a sustainability framework.

5. DRAFT RECOMMENDATION OF NEW CAC MEMBER TO THE BOARD

Following the recent Committee recommendation and Board approval of eight new members to the CAC, an additional application was received from Dr. Philip Rudy. The Committee reviewed Dr. Rudy's application and the draft recommendation for presentation to the Board at their April 21, 2010 meeting. The recommended term is May 1, 2010 through December 31, 2010.

The Committee approved the recommendation to the Board without changes.

6. GENERAL BUSINESS

There was no general business at this time.

7. SET AGENDA FOR NEXT MEETING

Ms. Smits announced that the next meeting will include further discussion on the draft sustainability definitions and Mr. Otterstrom will attend the meeting to present and discuss *Connect Spokane: A Comprehensive Plan for Public Transportation*.

The next meeting will be Wednesday, May 12, 2010 – 5:00 p.m. (Regular Meeting) – Spokane Transit, Southside Conference Room.

8. ADJOURN

With there being no further business to come before the Committee, the meeting was adjourned at 7:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Naomi Zantello
Executive Assistant