

RROSN Steering Committee Meeting March 4, 2009

Minutes

Present: Sue Abbott, Lorna Deckert, Adam Fyall, Sharon Grant, Bill King, Mike Lilga, Megan Neer, F. Oneza, Len Pavelka, Tom Page, Roger Stephens, Scott Woodward, Debbie Berkowitz

1. Roger Stephens is here to represent I-MAC today; I-MAC may have a different representative in the future.
2. Benton City will have a walk and a run on their new hiking trail and a bike rodeo at the middle school on April 18 at 9 AM. The idea is to get everybody in Benton City using the new trail. It's 2.5 miles from the Corps of Engineers land at the bottom of 14th St., follows Kiona irrigation canal right-of-way, to Hope Lane (from one end of city limits to the other); it's paved the whole way and is ADA accessible.
3. We are the feature piece in the Benton-Franklin Council of Governments newsletter; Len is the author. Scott will send out the article to the steering committee electronically. The newsletter is widely read.
4. We spent time entering data from the February workshops into Excel spreadsheets.
5. We will close the survey/questionnaire as of March 5 or 6.
6. Logo. Should we invite the high schools to have a contest to produce a logo? We'd need somebody to take the lead and do it now. Lorna will take it on with guidelines. It was suggested that ridges to rivers is restraining, it should include all open space; we've already discussed this. We don't have enough time to take it to the schools now. If we do take it to the schools, make it clear that an artist will do the final. There were concerns about the symbolism of the hand coming out of the river. The logo is a branding and isn't something to do in a short time period. We will revisit this item.
7. Sue is wondering how we are going to do business. How are we seen by other people. We can't overestimate public involvement. We won't be as successful without getting the public behind us. Sue did a recap. Who we are as a group. We do have a name, it's long, but we're comfortable with it. There have been some really good articles in the newspaper – they get the message. We've had really good press. The handouts and the questionnaire is how people see us. We talk about this network as a partnership. Our mission, vision, goals, and the network are on a one-page handout and it's a good handout. REI, TRIDEC, the Community Roundtable are not on our list. How we do business is the thing Sue has the most difficulty with. It's challenging in an ad hoc group like this. Who comes to the meetings changes every month. Who can be a member? We need to be clear about how we operate. A lot of people come and go. Now's a good time to add members. Who else would we like to have around the table? We have a larger circle through our memberships. We need support and buy-in – by having the right people around the table. We need to understand the roles of the cities and counties as we start writing. What is the decision-making process? Is it consensus? Is it by vote? What are we creating and producing? The plan. How will we make it happen? We have an action plan in place. It needs to be moved into a work plan. This Fall is our target end-date. Most groups Sue has worked with are ad hoc, they don't have rules about membership. What do we want the plan to look like? Who has a say? We did strategic planning. We made a project proposal into an action plan by putting dates on items. Sue handed out a spreadsheet – she took the action plan and pulled out the info into an Excel spreadsheet as one liners. We could start to see what our priorities are. How are we going to do this? Will it be by committee? Will people volunteer for items? Spreadsheet: Administration and Organization has been mainly done. Public Outreach and Involvement – we've done a lot of these. Develop a Communication Plan – our 3rd priority in time. If somebody outside the group helps with one of these tasks – this spreadsheet will allow individuals or groups to take part of the plan and run with it. Planning and Mapping section – the meat of our plan. The Cities and Counties will bring their laws/Comp Plans, etc. to the table. We have our questionnaire and workshop information. We have inventories. Now we need to make recommendations. One way to do this is to make big umbrella recommendations about the region; specific recommendations

for the cities/counties. . We were interested in Boise's plans. Now might be the time to look at the info that Sue brought. We are allowed to revise our action plan. Some actions are very broad brush, others are very specific. Mapping and Planning list. The first section is mapping. The second section is more philosophical. The third section is implementation. Implementation Strategies – this is the third priority in time, though maybe we'd find a supporter who will run with one of these. How do we move on in distributing the work? When will the work get done and who will do it? Is it too much? We need to come up with a work plan for 2009. Sue suggested doing a table of contents first.

8. Discussion of #7. We need to identify and describe open space benefits (e.g., health and wellness benefits). We need to describe our future desired state and what are the priorities to get there. We need to describe required interfaces – e.g., what interfaces with agencies/stakeholders are needed to make our plan work. We need to describe an implementation plan. How do we take the items listed and make them into a plan? The first two are in chapter one of the plan. The interface item is a paragraph in the plan. Implementation is the last chapter. There's a lot else to include in the middle of the plan. We need to understand what the agencies need so we can write a plan that will work. We should do an analysis of other Cities – Mike has done this and compared with Richland. We need to figure out what's lacking in our structure – how other plans could fit in. We need to look into the other jurisdictions and see how their structures work and what needs to be added to make our plan work. We know part of it already, because we have all the jurisdictions around the table. There are two levels, one is formal, the other is how it really works. What are the roles/responsibilities of the jurisdictions around the table? The counties and cities have certain things in place already. As we start putting the plan in place, the roles and responsibilities of the jurisdictions/agencies become more clear. We'll have to go through iterations. We'll need support from the planning departments. Do we need a formal acknowledgment for members of the steering committee? Sue read an example from the water trails: membership: meeting agendas and summaries are currently distributed to a mailing list of ~170 individuals and organizations. Core committee members will be defined as anyone who is willing to sign a statement supporting the actions and goals. Anyone is welcome to attend.... The water trail committee operates by consensus.... What happens if a member is not at the meeting? From the jurisdictions, we want to know what would work for them, what format? What do we want to make sure we get into this writeup to make sure it's valuable to them? Is there a level of agreement that we can expect from the cities/counties. There are steps missing. The reps at our meetings are here to hear what we're saying, but aren't representing the higher decision makers of the communities. We don't know the level of support from the communities. If everybody's bought into the mission, vision, and goals – want to get buy-in that everybody who's signed on will keep working on the plan. An example – we draft the plan that talks about Kennewick Hills. Oneza takes this to the city manager, council, planning commission – is this of value to you, are you willing to support these general goals in relation to these specific ideas? We don't want all this work to go into a plan that sits on a shelf. A Comp Plan may have lots of good policies. But if a developer shows up, property rights issues come into the picture. We need to have strong buy-in from the Councils/Commissioners to support the plan. The jurisdictional representatives would be the ones to help us talk to the jurisdictions, in a way that sells the plan to the jurisdictions. Isn't it important that we have a plan on paper? We went to the public, this is what's important to them, these are our challenges. We come up with a project list and a strategy for implementation. That has to be shopped around to the farmers, the developers, realtors, etc. If a Council member calls a realtor, the realtor should be able to say that yes we've heard about it. The committee structure – some people need to write the plan, maybe others should be strategizing about how to approach decision-making bodies. We write the plan, then bounce it off the Planning Commissions. We need to iterate back and forth until we get a document that the Planning Commissions and Parks and Rec Commissions can live with. Is there still a concern about Franklin County? Do we need to have a membership and have people sign it? Realtors and developers aren't represented around this table – we need to have this. Shopping it at the end, we might not get the buy-in. Maybe we should have a testing group – identify some people in the community as well as the commissions. It would be a good idea to get the realtors/developers involved now. They'll react in either of one or two ways - you're stepping on their property rights or you're adding something beneficial to the community that will help them sell property. Lorna brings a report to the Benton City Council

meetings, which also gets televised so the public can see it. The president of the Homeowner's Association would be a good person to get involved. Scott has tried to contact him. **Megan** will try to call him. Do we have to decide the level of buy-in from the jurisdictions at this time? We support the vision, the goals, we support the process of writing the product, though not necessarily the product itself. Should this group write a letter to every entity – we've done this and this, will you support the process? Bill thinks this would be valuable. Scott's doing a good job of making the rounds. The governing bodies don't know the details. Update our one page information sheet, add to this our list of accomplishments (presentations done, how many questionnaires answered, etc.) – take this to the jurisdictions. Create an executive committee that includes elected officials/commission representatives representing each of the jurisdictions – have at least one person on board from each jurisdiction who can share the message. They would get the minutes. They'd be involved in the process issues and the public review aspects. They could answer - are we on the right track? This wouldn't really be an executive committee, but an advisory body. It would take a couple of meetings to bring these people up to speed. It would be helpful to be clear about the role of the group – not a huge time commitment. We want their thoughts and advice. This is timely – we have some important decisions, it would be good to have input from the jurisdictions. Summary - Document with visions/goals/accomplishments, with a signoff requesting elected officials. How do we add people to the steering committee? We need to evolve into an organization that accommodates as many people as want to join. Do we have jurisdictions/memberships/steering committee? Jurisdictions need to be treated differently. Members are groups that support the plan, they're not the steering committee. A member isn't part of the steering committee, they can come to the steering committee meetings (these are open meetings), they can give input, but they aren't part of the consensus/vote. It would be reasonable for somebody from the development community to be a steering committee member. They could get input from the rest of the development community. Anybody could give input to the document, but the steering committee would have editorial control of the document. Elected officials could be on the steering committee. But a technical committee could be responsible for drafting the plan. The steering committee could be more of the policy committee. Sue passed around different methods that different groups have used to accomplish their goals. After writing the plan, this group could turn into anything from an advisory committee to a land trust or something in between – wide range of possibilities. Should we have a smaller group put together a strawman? We need to have the deeper discussion of what we want to become. We haven't come to grips with writing the plan. We have things hanging – organizational development issue; how do we put together everything we've accumulated to write the plan; what does the plan look like. Things will change. We need to get started. Are there things we want to take off the list (Excel spreadsheet)? Work on the organizational structure, logo – 3 or 4 different options as to what would be required (**Mike, Tom, Sharon**). Plan framework - table of contents – look at other cities' plans, suggestions as to the form it will need for the jurisdictions (**Len, Bill**). Public information synthesis (city, county input) – list to prioritize to make into recommendations (one page that pulls together info from the questionnaire, workshops (**Scott, Debbie, George**?) Cities and counties need to give recommendations. Timeline is still missing. Do we operate once a month for 3 hours? Or do we meet in small groups? Sue asked everyone to take a look at the work plan to have a better discussion next time.

9. Sue typed up the flipcharts from the meeting – see pages below.

Ridges to Rivers Open Space Network Planning
Steering Committee Flipchart Record
March 4, 2009

1. Organizational Development

Who are you? Ridges to Rivers Open Space Network Steering Committee/Partnership

How do you do business? What needs to be in place to do business?

- database/info distribution
- structure of group
- roles and responsibilities
- "membership"
- agreed-upon decision-making process
- support/buy-in by stakeholders/elected officials

What is your job? (your mission)

What are you creating/producing/accomplishing? (your vision and goals)

(What have you accomplished to date? Use this to recruit more interest/solicit more buy-in))

What is the process for reaching your goals?

2. Input to Planning Process

- city/county plans, policies, laws, guidelines, recommendations
- public questionnaire results
- public workshop feedback
- steering committee knowledge and expertise
- good ideas and examples used by other cities/regions

3. Planning Process

- Inventory (existing conditions)
- Recommendations (new connections and opportunities)
- Priorities/Alternatives (what should be accomplished first?)
- Draft Plan
- Final Plan

What's Next?

Ideas for Plan Framework (table of contents)

- Needs and Benefits of Open Space
- Future Desired State (priorities)
- Describe Interfaces among Planning Participants
 - planning agencies
 - stakeholders
 - steering committee (and members)
- Describe Implementation Plan
(Recommendations from steering Committee, Counties, Cities, Public)

Other Tasks

- Analysis of other cities
- Formal Buy-In
 - from city and county managers/leaders (ie: signed letters of support: city councils, planning commissions, etc.)
 - by steering committee members? (ie: membership agreement)
 - need more buy-in with elected officials and staff as recommendations are developed
 - shop plan to realtors, developers, other community interests
 - get other interests on board now, before developing recommendations: Homebuilders Association; School Districts; Economic Development, etc.
 - create an Executive, or Advisory, Committee of city and county representatives for oversight, process issues, public involvement mandates, etc.
- Decide what the Steering Committee will become "after the plan."

Action Committees (tasks for all: tackle immediate questions; review draft work plan; begin to draft plan and open space network recommendations)

1. Organization Committee: Mike, Tom, Sharon
2. Plan Framework/Table of Contents: Len, Bill
3. Public Info Synthesis (workshop, questionnaire, press?): Debbie, Scott,