

Utah Quality Growth Commission Meeting

Wednesday, March 26, 2008, 10:00 AM,
City Council Chambers, Centerville City Hall
250 North Main Street
Centerville, UT 84014

Meeting Minutes

Commission Members Attending

Jaren Davis, Chairman
Ken Mitchell
Flint Richards, Vice Chairman
Brent Tanner
Sally Elliott
Reed Erickson
Laraine Swenson
Larry Ellertson
Mike Kohler
Justin Allen
Mayor Darrell Smith (by phone)

Staff Attending

John Bennett, Executive Director
Evan Curtis
Karen Hardy

Visitors

Gabe Epperson, Envision Utah
Val John Halford, WFRC
Laura Alt, FFSL
Nicol Gagstetter, TNC

1—Meet at Woods Cross Front Runner Station for ride on Front Runner. Following train ride, return to Woods Cross Station and Drive to Centerville for Meeting.

Commissioners and guests rode the new front runner train from Woods Cross to Roy and Back. Participants were quite impressed. Following the ride, Commissioners traveled to Centerville City Hall for the remainder of the meeting.

2—Welcome and introductions, Chairman Jaren Davis, 5 minutes

Chairman Davis introduced all of the Commissioners and Guests.

3—Public Comments—5 minutes

Nicol Gagstetter of the Nature Conservancy congratulated the Commission on its funding and indicated that it had been a good year for funding as several funding other programs received money this year.

Laura Alt indicated she was happy to be with the Commissioners in her new position. Ms. Alt formerly worked as part of the Commission staff. She is now the coordinator of the Forest Legacy Program in the Utah Department of Natural Resources' Division of Forestry, Fire and State Lands.

Val John Halford indicated that he has replaced George Ramjoue and will now be attending Commission meetings in behalf of the Wasatch Front Regional Council.

4—Approval of Minutes from January 23, 2008, and February 27, 2008 meetings

ACTION ITEM: Approve January & February meeting minutes—5 minutes

Sally Elliott moved to approve both sets of minutes. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously with eight members present and Mayor Smith voting by telephone.

5—Presentation: Schedule and Documents for LeRay McAllister Fund 20 minutes

John Bennett presented the application documents and schedule to the commission. He began by introducing the appraisal policy, and the eligible costs policy. He explained that the costs that are eligible are up to 50% of the cost of acquisition or restoration, and other costs of the transaction such as legal fees, the environmental assessment and the appraisal fees if those fees are agreed to in advance by the Commission. He further explained that those fees have not been paid on any grants in recent years, but they are still eligible, if commissioners wanted to approve them. Mr. Bennett also reminded the Commission about the defining principles document which was adopted in 2001. That document remains in effect and has not been changed.

Commissioner Richards asked if there were changes to any of those documents. Mr. Bennett explained that they had not changed, but they are available to the applicants to read, so he wanted Commissioners to be aware of them.

Commissioner Richards asked if a vote was needed on those documents. Mr. Bennett responded that he wanted to go through the whole package, and then vote on that package all together.

He turned next to the pre-application document. He indicated that there have been some minor typographical changes, but the information collected is the same.

Commissioner Richards asked about matches. He was particularly interested in projects that are completed in phases. He wondered if we could differentiate between the match for the particular phase we were considering and the match for the whole project. Mr. Bennett indicated that we could ask a question about phases. He also indicated that sometimes we don't know that until we see what funds are actually available for that project. Sometimes if we don't put enough money into a project, then it needs to be phased but that was not the intention at the beginning. He indicated that the match on the whole project is often better than the match on an individual phase, but we could collect the data both ways.

Commissioner Richards indicated that maybe we should show it both ways. That way we could compare apples to apples, but still understand the larger picture. Mr. Bennett indicated that he would work on putting together a document intended specifically for phased projects so that the Commissioners could understand the leverage on the whole project and the leverage on the individual phase.

Mr. Bennett indicated that the two documents that he really needed the Commissions approval for were the announcement and the schedule as these were necessary to begin this round of funding.

Mr. Bennett explained that the schedule is fairly aggressive as written. We would distribute the announcement beginning immediately after this meeting and have the pre-applications do on Monday, May 12, 2008. So applicants would have about six weeks to complete the pre-application.

Commissioner Elliott asked where the application is distributed? Mr. Bennett explained that we send it to non-profits, and local governments through our contacts and lists we receive or obtain from UAC and ULCT. He indicated that he would contact mayors and commissioners. Several commissioners indicated that planning staff, public works directors and community development directors should be included in that notice.

Chairman Davis asked if we rely on the non-profits and local governments to solicit the property owners. Mr. Bennett indicated that that was how we got projects. Chairman Davis wondered if there was a way for us to solicit property owners directly, possibly not for this particular round but in the future.

Mr. Bennett indicated that he works with groups such as the Conservation Districts to spread the word, he would be willing to work with the Farm Bureau or the Cattlemen's Association as well. He indicated that the act limits eligible applicants to local governments, state agencies, and non-profits, so a landowner can't apply on their own, they need to be working with one of the eligible applicants when they apply.

He indicated that he has to refer a landowner to an eligible applicant when they call directly anyway. Chairman Davis indicated that he felt we need to be as broad as possible in our distribution. Mr. Bennett agreed. Commissioner Richards indicated that if a landowner received notice this year, he likely would not be ready to apply before the deadline. He indicated that we really need to talk with landowners throughout the year to let them know what the cycle is and how they can access it. He indicated that he does this at farm bureau conventions and meetings.

Commissioner Tanner and Commissioner Richards indicated that it would be useful if the Commission had a booth at the industry association meetings. Mr. Bennett indicated he was willing to do a booth and asked the Commissioners to give him contact information.

Mr. Bennett asked the Commission to return to the schedule. He indicated that the Critical Lands Subcommittee will meet May 19, 2008 to do an eligibility review. They simply want to ensure that the projects meet the requirements of the act, or could if they are restructured. The subcommittee will prepare a recommendation on which pre-applicants meet the eligibility requirements and should therefore be invited to submit a full application. The Commission would review that recommendation at its May meeting and approve or modify the recommendation. The staff would then send letters requesting that those who meet the requirements submit a full application. Those full applications

are due Monday, July 14, 2008. Site visits would follow, and we would hope to make a final decision at the September Commission meeting. Mr. Bennett asked Nicol Gagstetter of the Nature Conservancy to respond to the schedule. She indicated she thought the schedule was doable. She also asked when funds become available after the Commission's approval. Mr. Bennett explained that funds are available immediately, but, the fund receives money from the treasury in quarterly installments, so we would not be able to pay every grant immediately, some need to wait so that we can get monies into the fund.

Mr. Bennett then reviewed the announcement document with the Commission. He explained that this is what will be mailed, or e-mailed to applicants. Chairman Davis wondered if the phrase "this is a competitive program with limited funds," might discourage some people. He wondered if the actual amount of the appropriation couldn't be included in the announcement. Mr. Bennett agreed to include the actual amount of the appropriation in the announcement following the phrase above.

ACTION ITEM: Approve LeRay McAllister Fund Documents and Schedule

At this point, Commissioner Richards moved to approve the schedule and documents with the agreed amendments. Commissioner Kohler seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously with Mayor Smith voting by telephone.

6—Green Infrastructure Workshop, May 5 through 9, 2008

Val John Halford, Wasatch Front Regional Council, 5 Minutes

Mr. Bennett reminded the Commissioners that they had heard a presentation on this Green Infrastructure Workshop at their February meeting. The Wasatch Front Regional Council had requested \$1000 to help defray the costs of the conference. We did not have a quorum at the February meeting, so we could not take a vote. So the item is back on the agenda for a vote.

As some of the members in attendance were not present in February, Val Halford of the WFRC will make a short presentation before you take a vote.

Mr. Halford explained that Green Infrastructure is natural areas that provide important services to our communities. He indicated that the workshop would develop strategies to promote green infrastructure in Utah. Mr. Halford indicated that several specific projects would be considered including the Jordan River Parkway, the Corner Canyon, and the Legacy Parkway North. He said that the workshop would develop specific strategies to promote these areas.

ACTION ITEM: Vote on Request for Sponsorship

Sally Elliott moved to approve the request for \$1000 to support the Green Infrastructure workshop. Mike Kohler seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously with Mayor Smith voting by telephone.

7—Presentation: Planner Training Videos, Evan Curtis, 10 Minutes

Mr. Bennett explained that the Commission and the Governors Office did not receive any planning grant funds this year, but both are still committed to providing assistance to local governments where possible. Evan Curtis has been developing some short videos to provide important planning related information on the web, he has completed a demonstration video, and wanted to share it with the Commission today. Mr. Bennett indicated that this video is on floodplains, but we could do something on a number of other issues. One reason for showing this to the Commission is to get their help in identifying other issues that we could do these on.

Evan Curtis then showed the floodplain video to the Commission.

Commissioner Ellertson indicated that he felt a good topic would be additional geologic hazards such as landslides.

Commissioner Richards indicated that if these were kept short, some planning commissions might use them for training at the beginning of their meetings. Mr. Bennett and Mr. Curtis indicated that this is part of what they hoped they would be used for.

Laura Alt complemented Mr. Curtis on his work. She indicated that he ought to include some contacts for additional information in the presentation.

Chairman Davis recommended that positive topics be included such as clustering, transfer of development rights, etc. Commissioner Allen indicated that it might be helpful to include more day to day stuff like how to run a meeting, or approving subdivisions—stuff they do everyday. Mr. Bennett indicated that staff could do both so that it was available for those who wished the information.

Reed Erickson, who is a professional planner, indicated that water and agricultural conversion would be important topics, especially in rural areas. He also indicated that we should do something on the General Plan and its importance. He indicated that often planning commissions look at the ordinance but do not refer to the general plan to get the big picture.

Laura Alt indicated that other state agencies such as the Division of water rights would likely be willing to right these short presentations for us. Mr. Curtis indicated that he wants to do that. He would contact them for assistance with their areas of expertise.

Chairman Davis suggested a presentation on the costs of providing services to different development types. Commissioner Ellertson then suggested the ins and outs of impact fees as another one that could be useful.

Commissioner Allen indicated that we wanted to be careful not to duplicate what is already being done by the League of Cities and Towns and others. Mr. Bennett indicated that the intention is not to duplicate but rather to stimulate thought on an issue and then refer those who are interested to other areas. He indicated that the Commission could

focus first on some of these other areas, like natural hazards first, and coordinate what they do on the other issues with some of these other groups.

He indicated that the Governors office has already updated the materials for the training being done by the Local Governments Trust. He indicated that they would condense that and make it available in a video format.

Commissioner Erickson indicated that another issue that could be covered is the perception that some types of development negatively impact land values. Some effort to show the real positive impacts of certain types of developments on land values would help.

8—Road show update: Meeting with Salt Lake County COG, April 3, 2008 John Bennett, 10 Minutes

Commission is on the agenda for April 3, 2008 for the Salt Lake County Council of Governments. Mr. Bennett would like to solicit information about planning needs which can be put into a report to the legislature in preparation for promoting an appropriation for planning assistance. He indicated that the Commission can ask the local officials two things, first, what are your needs and second, how can we work together to get planning assistance dollars from the legislature.

Commissioner Justin Allen indicated that he would be able to attend the meeting with Mr. Bennett, Mayor Smith will also be there as a member of the COG.

Mr. Bennett announced a workshop on Conservation Easements in Cache Valley on that same day for any Commissioners who are interested in attending.

Commissioner Richards asked why Cache County is so far along in the process. Mr. Bennett indicated that he believed it comes from the Grassroots. He feels that the farmers there are convinced that this is the way to solve the problem of agricultural land losses. They have set up an agricultural advisory board, and adopted a LESA process, so everything is in place for them there.

Mike Kohler indicated that Wasatch and Summit Counties have also made a lot of progress in this area and they are also doing good things.

Nicol Gagstetter addressed this issue. She indicated that the County is considering putting a bond on the ballot for Agricultural preservation. TPL and TNC have been working with the County for several years, and it looks like this may be the year when the voters get to have their say. The county is also engaging in a corridor preservation initiative and an envisioning process with Envision Utah. Right now seems to be a very good time for doing this work in Cache County.

Commissioner Ellertsen asked if additional road show visits were scheduled. Mr. Bennett indicated that they were not, he felt that the local, Wasatch Front visits could be

done soon, while we may need to work with rural AOGs to schedule meetings in other areas. We could do some while we were doing site visits.

Mr. Bennett indicated that we will use whatever venues we can to contact local officials for these meetings.

Commissioner Ellertson indicated that he would set up a visit to Utah County COG. Commissioner Allen indicated that he would help set up visits to Davis and Weber County COGs.

9—Administrative Matters

Next Meeting, April 23, 2008, Room 140 State Capitol