

Special Environmental Quality Committee
April 23, 2013
Summary

Stinnett called the meeting to order at 12:02 AM. All committee members, except Farmer were in attendance. Kay also attended.

1. March 19, 2013 Committee Summary

On a motion by Akers, second by Myers the March 19, 2013 Committee summary was approved unanimously.

2. Zero Waste Initiative

Jennifer Cave introduced the zero waste presentation. She stated that the initiative envisions a change in the way Lexington handles waste. She introduced Cheryl Norton.

Norton discussed strategy objectives, marketing & education, needed facilities to accommodate waste, processing & disposal, and rate structure and incentives. She discussed the need for a strategic plan.

Stinnett discussed the Council Waste Management Task Force. He stated that the Task Force is examining the rate structure.

Gorton asked about the budgetary impact of moving toward a zero waste initiative. In response Norton stated that the team was aware of the importance of a budget but that they had not proposed one.

Clarke asked if the private haulers were included. In response Norton stated that one of the principals was that everyone had the right and obligation to have recycling options. She stated that the private sector was well represented its stakeholders meeting.

Scutchfield stated that our children understand the importance of recycling and conservation.

Akers asked about the commercial sector customers. In response Norton stated that the team had identified incentives to encourage the commercial customers to recycle. Norton also discussed the need for a business case.

Henson asked about education, and outreach particularly for renters. In response Norton indicated that it was a dynamic plan and renters were critical to its success.

Clarke asked about next steps. In response Norton stated that once the Council endorsed the need for a strategic plan, that the Administration should be directed to develop the details of the strategic plan and start work on a business case including budget development.

Myers stated that he was supportive of the plan and discussed how the Council could engage in the process.

Stinnett asked if the Administration had any response to the presentation. Commissioner Moloney stated that they were very supportive of the effort. He discussed plans for future landfill management and efficiencies in the system.

Stinnett thanked the team for the presentation and discussed the value of citizen engagement.

3. Distillery District Update

Mike Woolum with Strand Associates presented the Distillery District update. He stated that in Nov 2009 Council authorized \$ 2.2 million in bonds to begin the process of examining the feasibility of the distillery district project. He identified several challenges and opportunities for re development including floodplain, sewerability, utilities, stream conditions and corridor characteristics.

Woolum identified 3 potential alternatives for trail system/streetscape improvements. He stated that they were evaluated in three areas (implementable; quality of life/place; and impact). He stated that the 3rd alternative scored better than the first 2 alternatives on that basis. He stated that alternative had an estimated capital cost of \$ 16.2 million; alternative 1 had an estimated capital cost of \$ 23.9 million; and alternative 2 had an estimated capital cost of \$ 14.9 million.

Clete Benken with MKSK discussed corridor characteristics and potential corridor enhancements. He also discussed the guiding principals for re investment.

Woolum discussed additional work that they have identified that should be completed prior to re investment including a preliminary street/trail plan; FEMA floodplain update; utility service plan; sanitary sewer service plan; and a stream revitalization plan. He stated that they could be completed within 24 months and he provided an estimated cost of \$ 825,000.

Mossotti asked about the additional studies. In response Woolum stated that the estimated cost he provided was based on solid evidence. He also stated that there was a strong cost benefit for the additional work.

Mossotti also asked about firm private sector investment in the project.

Clarke asked about the condition of some of the buildings within the project. In response Benken discussed the potential uses of the properties as well as a preliminary assessment of the buildings.

Kay asked about the status of the feasibility update. In response Woolum stated that the final report should be released within a few weeks.

Kay also asked about the additional studies identified. In response Woolum agreed that the flood plain update was the most important element.

Kay asked if the feasibility study would lead directly to any component being implementable. In response Woolum stated that the purpose of the study was to determine the feasibility of the streetscape & trail improvements, which led to other considerations being identified as challenges.

Akers asked if the FEMA update would likely lead to changes in the floodplain status. In response Woolum stated that the magnitude of the flooding would be better determined. He also stated that flood proofing may alleviate some of the flooding concerns. He stated that the update would allow for better management of the flooding concerns.

Akers asked about environmental clean up. In response Woolum stated that the 3 alternatives all had identified environmental remediation as a cost.

Akers asked about neighborhood input into the planning process. In response Woolum stated that the process included the developer, various neighborhood groups and the real estate and banking community

Akers asked about the impact the Newtown Pike Extension would have on the project. In response Woolum stated that some of the truck traffic would be re routed away from the area on to Newtown Extension.

Akers asked about next steps for the Council. In response Stinnett stated that the Council will need to see the final feasibility report. He stated that then the Council & Mayor can determine what if anything should be put into the FY 14 budget to support the project and how the remaining portion of the bond should be allocated or re allocated to other projects. Paulsen agreed with Stinnett.

Van Meter Petit spoke in favor of the project.

4. Consolidate Greenways Responsibilities

Susan Bush discussed the consolidation of greenway responsibilities. She stated that the Greenway Coordinating team has recommended 3 actions: adopt the 2006 draft Greenway Plan; create a Greenway Coordinator position; and consolidate greenway maintenance responsibilities within the Division of Parks.

Chris Cooperrider discussed greenway maintenance issues and the different levels of greenway maintenance standards. He stated that the FY 14 Mayor's Proposed Budget included \$ 117,000 in Parks for greenway maintenance.

Mossotti asked about maintenance of the floodplain area in Veterans Park. In response Cooperrider stated that maintenance was limited to mowing that field.

Clarke asked about the cooperation between Water Quality and Parks. In response Cooperrider discussed the partnership between various divisions including Planning, Engineering, Water Quality, Streets & Roads & Parks.

Clarke asked about the Greenway Coordinator and asked if the responsibilities could be merged into an existing position rather than crating a new position. In response Bush stated that that is what Commissioner Paulsen recommended.

Henson asked about current greenway acres and man hours assigned to greenway maintenance. She also discussed removal of honey suckle.

Kay asked about mowing near trees. In response Cooperrider discussed mulching around tree wells and utilizing neighborhood groups to assist with mulching efforts.

Akers asked why the Greenway Coordinator should report to Planning/Development and not Parks. In response Cooperrider stated that the duties are most aligned with planning responsibilities.

Stinnett stated that we need to do a better job of addressing maintenance needs and providing maintenance budgets up front rather than reacting to additional greenway needs. In response Cooperrider agreed and stated that was one of the key points in assigning the duties of coordinator to Planning.

5. Monthly Financials

The monthly financials were noted.

6. Public Comment

Katie Stites addressed a drainage maintenance issue at 386 Waller. Stinnett indicated that this item would be part of the May meeting agenda.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:55 PM.