

Meeting Summary
Sustainable Communities Planning Grant
Meeting of the Coordinating Committee of the Consortium
Wednesday, January 19, 2011 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.
H-GAC Conference Room A, Second Floor

ATTENDEES:

Mayra Bontemps, Harris County; Amy Boyers, H-GAC; Jared Briggs, Harris County; Toni Candis, Harris County; Allison Carr, H-GAC; Sarah Cerrone, Chambers County; Jay Blazek Crossley, Houston Tomorrow; Dr. Joanne Ducharme, Montgomery County; DC Dunham, Bay City CDC; Whitney Fleming, United Way of Greater Houston; Clint Harbert, METRO; Emiliano Herrera, Neighborhood Centers, Inc.; Victoria Herrin, Houston Wilderness; Dr. Aston Hinds, Port of Houston; David Hitchcock, HARC; Mike Kramer, City of Houston; Christy Lambright, Harris County; Sherry McKibben, City of Huntsville; Cheryl Mergo, H-GAC; Gina Mitteco, H-GAC; Amar Mohite, City of Houston; Martha Murphee, Blueprint Houston; Kelly Opot, Harris County; Diana Ponce De Leon, City of Houston; Donna Rybiski, Center for Houston's Future; Lori Schwarz, City of Galveston; Lalita Sen, Texas Southern University; Jeff Taebel, H-GAC; Andrea Tantillo, H-GAC; Amanda Thorin, H-GAC; Amanda Timm, LISC; Claudia Vasquez, Neighborhood Centers, Inc.; Jason Vaughn, Fort Bend County; Monique Ward, METRO; Joe Webb, Blueprint Houston; Chuck Wemple, GCEDD; Shelly Whitworth, H-GAC; Nicholas Williams, H-GAC; Maggie Yancey, Greater Houston Builders Association; and Chelsea Young, H-GAC.

1. Welcome and Introductions

Chuck Wemple, Coordinating Committee Chairman, called the meeting to order at 9:37 a.m.

2. Certify Quorum

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

3. Approval of November 30, 2010, and December 20, 2010 Meeting Minutes

Action: Motion made by Mike Kramer, seconded by Joe Webb to approve the meeting minutes as presented. The Coordinating Committee unanimously approved the minutes.

4. Sustainable Communities Boot Camp Update

Gina Mitteco, H-GAC staff, announced that Amanda Timm (LISC), Mike Kramer (City of Houston), DC Dunham (Bay City CDC), and Cheryl Mergo and Allen Richey (H-GAC) attended a Living Cities Sustainable Communities Boot Camp in collaboration with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and the Ash Center for Democratic Governance and Innovation at Harvard University.

Notes and resources distributed at the boot camp will be shared electronically with Coordinating Committee members through H-GAC's ftp site at ftp://ftp.h-gac.com/Pub/CE/Sustainable_Communities. Meeting materials are also available at <http://www.livingcities.org/bootcamp/sustainablecommunities/>

Points of Discussion:

- Those attending boot camp may give a more formal presentation to Coordinating Committee members at a later meeting date.

- The boot camp, held January 10 through 12 in Boston, featured national speakers, experts on sustainability and federal officials.
- The Coordinating Committee represents an emerging group, collaborating and building a plan and has a lot of work to do since most members have not previously worked together.
- The Coordinating Committee will need to begin collecting new datasets not currently collected.
- The Regional Plan for Sustainability should include equitable outcomes for all people in the region.
- The collaboration between HUD, EPA and DOT was highlighted.
- Members of the region's consortium will have "extra points" when applying for future federal grants as a result of receiving the Sustainable Communities grant.
- The Coordinating Committee may need to expand the group to include more diversity.
- The Regional Plan for Sustainable Development should be a plan to lead to implementation with immediate success. Case studies will help facilitate this goal.

5. MOA Update

Nicholas Williams, H-GAC staff, distributed the final draft of the Memorandum of Agreement for the Coordinating Committee members to execute with H-GAC.

Points of Discussion:

- The MOA's should not be executed until after H-GAC executes the contract with HUD for the grant funding.
- The Coordinating Committee will have 120 days to execute the MOAs after the contract with HUD is executed.

All questions and changes should be forwarded to Gina Mitteco.

6. Public Engagement Subcommittee Update

The Public Engagement Subcommittee met on December 15, 2010, to develop a Citizen Participation Plan to guide the development of a scope of work for the Request for Proposals (RFP) for a consultant to design and implement a Public Participation Plan. The subcommittee developed a Public Participation Declaration, based on principles of public participation, to be used to guide the creation of the Citizen Participation Plan. The document was distributed to the Coordinating Committee for review and comment.

Points of Discussion:

- The Public Engagement Declaration is not a final draft, but a work in progress.
- The subcommittee will continue to meet to work on the plan. The committee may meet as two separate groups – one to work on the Public Participation Declaration and one to work on the Public Participation Plan RFP. The two groups may have overlapping members.
- The next meeting of both groups of the subcommittee will be January 27 from 1:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. at H-GAC Conference Room B, Second Floor.
- Coordinating Committee members need to participate in a workshop to help ensure all members understand what the goals of the grant program are and to ensure all members are working together toward those goals.

Coordinating Committee members were asked provide their comments for the Public Participation Declaration to H-GAC by January 26. Comments will be reviewed and incorporated as appropriate by the subcommittee at its meeting on January 27.

Following the subcommittee meeting on December 15, 2010, H-GAC staff produced a draft RFP alert to make consulting firms aware of the upcoming project opportunity. Coordinating Committee members were asked to make comments on the draft RFP alert and return them to H-GAC January 26. Subcommittee will review the draft alert and comments at its meeting on January 27.

All questions and comments should be forwarded to Gina Mitteco.

7. Technical Advisory Groups and Regional Transect Groups

Gina Mitteco distributed a draft outline of a workplan and timeline for the Coordinating Committee, the Technical Advisory Group, the Regional Transect Group and the Governmental Advisory Committee. She also distributed draft applications for TAG and RTG membership. Coordinating Committee members were asked to review the document and provide comments, with an action item to approve the workplan scheduled for the February 21 Coordinating Committee meeting.

Points of Discussion:

- The Governmental Advisory Committee's first meeting on the timeline is October 2011. That group may need to convene prior to then.
- Work plan tasks should be available online so interested people can be aware of plans the Coordinating Committee is making.
- The TAG and RTG draft applications should be more engaging and invite participation.
- The Coordinating Committee should consider soliciting an article from the Houston Chronicle overviews the grant program. The Coordinating Committee needs to develop a communication plan.
- Most people don't know what "sustainability" means. Public engagement needs to occur before the Coordinating Committee defines "sustainability."
- The Coordinating Committee may need to come to a consensus of what the goals of the grant program are before developing a plan to reach those goals. A facilitated workshop would assist in this capacity building for the Coordinating Committee.

All questions and comments should be forwarded to Gina Mitteco.

8. Technical Advisory Group and Regional Transect Group Composition

During the December 20 Coordinating Committee meeting, Sherry McKibben made a motion that a member of the Coordinating Committee chair each of the Technical Advisory and Regional Transect groups. The chair would act as a facilitator and report back to the Coordinating Committee. Following a discussion, McKibben agreed to defer that motion to the January meeting.

Action: Motion made by Sherry McKibben, seconded by David Hitchcock, that members of the Coordinating Committee chair Regional Transect groups, act as facilitators and report back to the Coordinating Committee.

Additional Discussion:

The Technical Advisory Group is more like a focus group than the Regional Transect Group and H-GAC staff is capable of facilitating those meetings.

Notice of all meetings should be posted, and the Coordinating Committee should receive reports from the meetings. All of the Coordinating Committee members should be involved in all advisory group meetings.

Without a discussion of what the goals of the grant program are and what steps need to be taken to meet those goals, Coordinating Committee members do not know whether or not these groups need chairs. The additional structure could defeat the purpose of the groups.

Action: Motion made by Sarah Cerron, seconded by Jeff Taebel to table this motion until a facilitated, capacity-building workshop is held with the Coordinating Committee. Coordinating Committee members unanimously agreed to table the motion.

9. Other Business

Several members indicated that they have meeting space available for Coordinating Committee meetings or subcommittee meetings. If meeting space is available, please email Gina Mitteco with information on room capacity and how much lead time is typically needed to schedule.

The Coordinating Committee may want to consider how to develop a flexible model to continue to apply for a receive federal funds.

H-GAC will engage a facilitator to present a workshop for the Coordinating Committee to agree on the goals of the grant program and the steps need to be taken to meet those goals. The workshop will be part of the February Coordinating Committee meeting. The meeting, scheduled for February 21 at H-GAC, Conference Room A, Second Floor, will be from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

10. Next Meeting Date

Wednesday, February 21, 2011, 10:00 AM
H-GAC Conference Room A, Second Floor
3555 Timmons Lane, Houston, TX 77027

11. Adjourn

Action: Following a motion by Sarah Cerrone with multiple seconds, the Coordinating Committee unanimously voted to adjourn.

QUESTIONS/COMMENTS:

Please contact Gina Mitteco, H-GAC
713-993-4583

Gina.Mitteco@h-gac.com