

River Road Community Organization Meeting

Countryside Pizza Meeting Room, 645 River Road

November 29, 2010

RRCO Executive Board: Lyle Jensen, Marilyn Mohr, Carleen Reilly, Bev Barr, Beth Parsons, Ray Neff, Becky Riley, Kate Kelly, Jan Spencer

RRCO Members: Irene Ferguson, Pat Reilly, Marguerite Crew, Steve Norris

Guests: Rene Kane (Neighborhood Services), Jon Belcher, County Commissioner Rob Handy

**Announcements:**

Holiday Dessert Potluck with SCCO December 13<sup>th</sup>; Bev Barr has sent out an assignment sheet.

Jan Spencer reported on a trip to Portland with other neighborhood leaders for a one-day conference about public outreach and approaches to engage neighbors in community affairs. He felt that the conference was worthwhile.

**E-vote ratifications:**

E-vote regarding the SNAP application:

Via email, Carleen moved to give the River Road/Santa Clara Joint Strategy Team permission to submit a SNAP application to Neighborhood Services to request technical assistance in developing an outreach plan for our neighborhoods.

Motion passed with Carleen, Beth, Jan, Ray, Bev and Marilyn in favor; Becky and Lyle opposed; Kate was out of the country and did not respond to the motion.

Another e-vote was to purchase pie at Countryside Pizza for the Nov. 29<sup>th</sup> meeting. The vote passed with Bev, Lyle, Ray, Marilyn, Carleen and Jan in favor; Beth ambivalent; no response from Kate or Becky. Though approved, the purchase did not occur as whole pies were not available for purchase.

A third e-vote was taken to purchase three copies of the River Road/Santa Clara Urban Facilities Plan from Neighborhood Services. Bev, Lyle, Ray, Marilyn, Carleen, Jan and Beth in favor; no response from Kate or Becky.

**Approval of Minutes:**

Minutes for October and November will be approved by e-vote or at the January RRCO meeting.

**Strategic Neighborhood Assessment and Planning (SNAP) grant discussion:**

River Road/Santa Clara Joint Strategy Team (JuST) members present at the meeting include Carleen Reilly, Bev Barr, Beth Parsons, Steve Norris, Marguerite Crew.

Carleen presented a poster, and her view of parallel projects currently underway in the City and County that may effect River Road:

- Lane County is considering revisions to the MetroPlan

- Envision Eugene process is underway in the City of Eugene. An updated Refinement Plan for River Road and Santa Clara may be proposed out of the EE process. Carleen, Jerry Finigan, Lisa Gardner, Terri Harding and Carolyn Weiss will meet in December to discuss steps leading up to a Refinement Plan and what kind of role RRCO and SCCO would have in designing a plan.

- JuST: The team has recommended that RRCO and SCCO apply for a SNAP grant. Rene Kane, City of Eugene Neighborhood Services planner, provided an update. Neighborhood Services has received SNAP applications from 4 neighborhood associations/community organizations. The City's 'limited recognition policy' regarding RRCO and SCCO prohibits City staff from providing outreach, or community organization assistance. Mike Kinnison, Neighborhood Services planner, will present an action item at the December 13th meeting of the Eugene City Council, asking for an exemption to this policy if RRCO or SCCO are awarded a SNAP grant. The SNAP grants will be announced on December 17th.

The 12/13 Council date conflicts with the next RRCO meeting/potluck social. Rob Handy suggested that the RRCO board submit a letter in support of the SNAP grant to City Council.

The Council must grant a waiver for RRCO and SCCO to be eligible for a SNAP grant.

Rene Kane added that the availability of RRCO and SCCO's Transition Funds would mean that those funds would be used instead of the \$5000 implementation grant available to neighborhoods which complete a SNAP grant process.

Carleen Reilly outlined her vision of the next steps in the neighborhood outreach process proposed by the JuST.

- Accept or reject the SNAP grant if offered. She recommends going forward with outreach with or without the assistance of a SNAP grant.

- Accept or reject JuST recommendations: after outreach, goal is a statistically valid survey.

- Form team to work on SNAP grant with Santa Clara or to work on outreach.

Lyle suggested we discuss the recommendations of the JuST at this meeting; he wondered if additional recommendations would be coming from JuST.

Steve Norris anticipates that the JuST will recommend dealing with the 4 primary issues: Governance, Parks and Recreation, Transportation and Land Use, by providing outreach and education on these topics to the communities. A SNAP grant will help with space, maps, displays and other resources, and formulation of the concepts presented in outreach sessions.

Marguerite Crew: There is still a lot of confusion. JuST was formed so the two communities could discover what common goals they could work towards. The idea to apply for a SNAP grant to help with outreach came from the team. Now that JuST has disbanded, will these same individuals continue to work on the SNAP grant?

Lyle Jensen: The whole board should work on this, not just a committee.

Carleen Reilly: JuST recommends doing a statistically valid survey. Conducting a survey was a key recommendation in the 2006 RR/SC Transition Report. The four issues came out of outreach sessions in 2002 and 2006, these are issues that came out of discussions with community members. A survey can't happen without prior outreach.

Rene Kane: If a SNAP is granted, first steps will be scoping, scheduling and clarifying expectations between neighborhood and NS staff. There is flexibility. Staff will assist neighborhood in designing a process for outreach.

Steve Norris: Emphasized the importance of trust. He enjoyed the JuST, the intent of the work was in the neighborhoods' best interests. He is concerned with the distrust of some RRCO members towards the JuST.

Becky Riley: The JuST recommendations have not been presented yet, and the original charge from RRCO's board to the team seems to differ from the work the team did. Re: the poster Carleen reviewed with three columns: Lane County/MetroPlan, JuST/SNAP, and Envision Eugene/Refinement Plan. Carleen explained that each column represents separate processes and outcomes, and that the just/SNAP work of column two is not being undertaken to achieve metro plan or refinement plan amendments—those would be separate processes.

If the outcome of the JuST/SNAP work is not metro plan amendments or refinement plan amendments, then what is the proposed outcome---an annexation plan? That was David Reed's (Transition Report) recommendation (and the reason for the statistical survey he proposed that the JuST team seems to be embracing). Or, since Lane County Commissioners have proposed to revoke the 190 and 195 intergovernmental agreements and consider letting our area exist as a permanent county enclave, are we really now going to ask residents if they want to choose that option instead of annexing to the City? What is the JuST's goal for the outreach and the survey?

Steve Norris: The outcome is not annexation plan, but building the RRCO and getting more people out to meetings.

Becky: But the SNAP grant application form asked applicants to choose “organization building” or a more specific project as the proposed outcome, and the JuST committee did not choose the organization building category, but instead the specific project category. I can’t understand the intended end goal for the specific project and “outreach” that is proposed.

Lyle Jensen would like RRCO to decide as a board what our desired outcomes are, before moving forward. We need to focus on one item instead of four.

Beth Parsons: Can we decide what our outreach will consist of? We should show scenarios that show what could happen with additional planning, and would could happen if we do nothing.

Ray Neff responded that NS staff would help flesh out these scenarios if a SNAP is granted.

Marguerite Crew questions how neighbors will view a survey for which less than 400 individuals are surveyed

Lyle Jensen asked if a ballot-type questionnaire is an option?

Steve Norris responded that a statistically valid survey is useful when presenting info to the City and County.

Jan Spencer: The assumption is that the future will be like the past. He is in favor of the SNAP grant, but outreach and a survey should observe that the future may be different and ask whether neighbors are confident in their current situations.

Commissioner Rob Handy: Over the years neighbors have emphasized that it is important to preserve neighborhood character. Will neighbors agree to annexation if there is a commitment to preserving neighborhood qualities and protecting our older community members from increased taxes? He recommends pursuing a Special Overlay Zone that changes development code to protect and preserve the neighborhood. RR and SC have leverage right now: The Envision Eugene process will propose UGB expansion in SC, and County approval will be required.

Jon Belcher: Recommends we define our goal. RRCO needs to learn what the community wants. Refinement plans take a very long time; Overlay Zones supply rules specific to a neighborhood on top of existing code. Rules within code may be relaxed for specific areas.

Becky Riley: Annexation to the City is required for any new development. State laws on annexation have been changed and need to be researched. RRCO needs to better understand the current laws before being able to say what is an appropriate role for our organization. We also need to understand what a negotiated annexation might consist of, and who the parties are that can legally negotiate on behalf of residents of our area.

Several attendees mentioned Jefferson Westside's successful implementation of a Special Overlay Zone into City Code. Rene Kane was chair of JWN during the process. Neighbors were surveyed on line and in print, two 4-hour workshops were held (neighborhood character; drafting code). RR/SC Transition Report needs more context, it should to be grounded in what the current population wants.

Steve Norris noted a lot of energy for land use at one end of the table, he has energy to work on governance issues.

Carleen sees the four areas as a unified whole, not separate silos.

Bev Barr, Beth Parsons: RR is a heritage community, there is a lot of agreement on neighborhood character.

Jan Spencer: Values neighborhood character and lives across the street from what the City would have RR look like. RR is also a state of mind, there is stuff to preserve all over the place. We need to build neighborhood cohesion.

Lyle Jensen: We need to emphasize that doing nothing is a decision.

Jon Belcher: Focus the SNAP on developing a common vision for what the community, not RRCO, wants. Then, go forward. What if RRCO's vision is not what the community wants? Are you here to serve the community or push your own agenda. It is a challenge for all neighborhood associations to get people involved.

Jan Spencer: If we don't articulate our vision, other's vision is imposed on us. In 10 years on the RRCO board the issue of bringing in more community participation continues to be significant. How many of us have met our neighbors? As Marguerite said, we should be walking our own neighborhoods.

Lyle Jensen: Social media, websites, and Facebook are good avenues for outreach.

Rene Kane: NS assumes that RRCO and SCCO submitted the SNAP application because they want it. She now senses that there is opposition and expressed concern because we do not have a consensus. Significant resources go in to evaluation of the applications, please let them know if we are not fully behind the application. She will go forward assuming we do support the application.

Marguerite expressed concern that RRCO and SCCO board members are comfortable stating their personal opinions as the board's official positions, and when she challenged this notion, she was told that neighbors with different opinions should have elected other board members who agree with them.

Lyle Jensen: The board has already voted to authorize the SNAP application. He asked whether the board would vote tonight on what the specific SNAP goals would be.

Carleen said there was nothing to vote on.

Meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

Minutes by Marilyn Mohr, incorporating amendments from Carleen Reilly, Becky Riley, and Lyle Jensen.