

Goleta Vision Committee
February 22, 2006 6:30 – 9:15 pm
Location: Goleta Community Center
5679 Hollister Avenue

Final Meeting Notes

Committee Members Attending:	Susan Grgich	County Staff Support:
Ted Adams	Lauren Hanson	John McInnes
Michael Brown	Hal Hill	Derek Johnson
Oscar Carmona	Eva Inbar	George Amoon
Gary Earle	Valerie Olson	Terri Maus
Brian Fahnestock	James Richard	
Tish Gainey	Tim Schmidt	Facilitator: John Jostes

1. Welcome, Participant Introductions and Review of Agenda Topics:

Facilitator John Jostes called the meeting to order at approximately 6:35 pm and led the introductions of committee members present. He noted that, based on the committee's discussion at the previous meeting, it had three basic tasks to accomplish: finalizing a statement to be forwarded to the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors regarding the issue of housing site identification, review of a new approach for the committee to follow assuming a refocusing of its efforts on visioning, and discussions of preparations for the March 11 Public Workshop.

2. Administrative Matters:

John Jostes noted that three letters had been received and distributed to committee members since the last meeting – two from members of the public and one from the attorney representing the Coalition for Sensible Planning. The committee then turned its attention to the draft meeting notes that had been previously circulated. John noted that he had received revised language from Valerie Olson re-characterizing the discussion of sending a statement to the Planning Commission/Board of Supervisors to better reflect concerns voiced by individuals about the suggested approach. Jostes also noted that his draft language for a preliminary statement from the committee was conditional upon adoption by the committee and would not reflect the intentions of the group as a whole without a consensus on the content and approach. With these two clarifications, the group adopted the meeting notes by consensus.

3. Public Comment Period:

The public comment period was opened with a cautionary note from the facilitator that he had received complaints from members of the committee about clapping, applause and note-passing from members of the audience. He reiterated to those in attendance that applause or other disrespectful behavior would not be tolerated, and that he intended to abide by a ground-rule that would balance commentary at the committee wherein everyone would get the opportunity to speak once before someone spoke twice. Thirteen (13) members of the public addressed the committee raising issues that ranged from decisions made earlier in the day by the County Planning Commission, preferences for sending a statement to the Board of Supervisors, zoning ordinances as contracts, and traffic reduction efforts.

4. Ratification of Committee Statement on Housing Element Sequencing Issues:

This discussion topic began with an overview by the facilitator of revised draft language to be included within a statement to be directed to the Planning Commission with a copy being sent to the Board of Supervisors. John Jostes outlined committee member concerns over the statement referencing 20 units per acre as well as suggested additional language articulating a preference that the Planning Commission delay its consideration of housing sites until completion of the vision process. Each member of the committee offered a perspective on the revised draft statement; several members also commented on the manner in which it should be conveyed and to whom.

The substance of the statement received a variety of comments from members of the Vision Committee. Those in support of sending a statement forward expressed a need to move past the housing sites issue to conduct a vision process that would develop a vision of what should be reflected in the Community Plan Update. A number of members suggested that no progress was being made and that continued discussion of housing issues would further preclude work on a set of recommendations regarding the vision. In this regard, most of the members expressed an interest to move forward with the vision process and not provide the Planning Commission with sites to be evaluated within the EIR on the Updated Housing Element, for the reasons reflected within the revised language of the draft statement. However, this perspective was not supported by the entire group. Several members expressed continuing concern that if the committee did not recommend sites for inclusion in the Housing Element EIR, the Planning Commission may identify such sites and the committee would not be able to influence their decision. Several members suggested articulating site selection criteria as a possible approach while focusing primary attention on the broader vision process as well.

Regarding the issue of to whom the statement should be sent, one line of reasoning expressed that the decision ultimately rests with the Board and therefore, the statement should be directed to them so that they could provide direction to the Planning Commission. The other line of reasoning held that it would be insulting to the Planning Commission to leave them out of the communication linkage and go “over their head” to the Board.

Regarding the statement itself, after considerable discussion, no consensus (i.e., unanimity) was reached on specific language. The Facilitator suggested one possible option as designating a small subcommittee to address the siting criteria while the group as whole focused on the visioning aspects of the process as a way to incorporate the minority perspective into the issue at hand. This subcommittee could deliberate on the issue and return to the full committee with recommendations for integrating siting criteria into its feedback to the Planning Commission. However, upon polling the group as a whole, this option did not find any significant support within the committee.

Additional attempts were made to modify the draft language within the statement to garner support of the full committee. However, there were strong feelings regarding the issue of whether to include or delete language regarding both housing density references and the need to forward siting criteria. In the end, no consensus was reached on either the language of the statement or the method of transmitting the statement. Given the impasse, the issue was set aside in favor of pursuing the preference of the large majority of the committee to refocus their efforts on initiating the broader vision process. This approach did not preclude the future possibility of finding a way to formally or informally communicate the committee’s perspectives on housing sites prior to the April deadline for input to the Planning Commission if the outstanding issues between majority and minority perspectives can be narrowed or resolved.

5. Updated Vision Process Framework, Meeting Topics, Milestones and Expected Outcomes::

John Jostes distributed two handouts to committee members, one providing a table of meeting dates, topics, focus questions and information needs associated with a revised process of articulating a set of vision recommendations and the other intended to serve as a “framework” or table of contents for the committee’s actual package of recommendations. In reviewing the draft “framework” he indicated that each of the four sections were tied to the vision concepts outlined at the February 4th workshop

and that the draft was intended to serve as a “stalking horse” for the committee to refine over the coming months. He also noted that the outline was intended to give committee members a sense of what a comprehensive recommendation might contain.

He also explained the four-page table of meeting specifics as a revised “flight plan” that conveyed a process of developing a draft set of recommendations that reflected public input, committee issues and focus questions designed to stimulate dialogue on important issues. Finally, he asked committee members to review the two documents and provide comments and/or questions by the close of business the following Tuesday. The committee offered the following comments on the two documents:

- Add quantitative factors to the discussion of conditions and trends, i.e., identify the deficits in services or infrastructure that the community faces today
- Need to identify measures of success and be prescriptive regarding outcomes
- Need to address social trends
- Look to articulate performance-oriented goals
- Like the idea of living within our resources
- Want to get detailed technical information on the full range of issues as soon as possible; concerned about making decisions without adequate information
- Need to address reductions in federal grants and funding in the vision; the State of California is taking away funds from local agencies, resulting in less money for infrastructure improvements and maintenance
- Need to address a scenario maintains funding for infrastructure in the coming years
- Need to use quantifiable measurements and agree on what we can fix and what we can't
- Pay some attention to the housing situation.

The committee generally appreciated the framework approach and new “flight plan” presented.

6. Discussion and Preparations for the March 11, 2006 Saturday Workshop:

The facilitator provided a very brief overview of the agenda topics and focus questions for the upcoming March 11 Workshop indicating that the meeting would be comprised of smaller focus groups rather than the more traditional “one speaker at a time” hearing format. He suggested that Committee members provide feedback over the coming 3-5 days in the form of e-mails to express their perspectives on the following topics:

- What does the committee want to take away from the workshop?
- Who needs to attend?
- What five people would contribute to a productive meeting?
- Is something missing?

7. Next Steps and Adjourn: The meeting was adjourned at 9:20 pm.