

SBI meeting with Technical Advisory Committee
7.11.2006

Task Force and SBI staff: Dave Funk, Khatar Khalsa, Rusty Rexius, Scott Pope, Deborah Noble; Josh Bruce; Mayor Kitty Piercy, Bob Doppelt, UO; Ray Neff, UO; Sarah Mazze, UO

TAC: Deb Brewer, EWEB; Stefan Ostrach, Lane County Labor Council; Lou Christian, Lane/Coos/Curry/Douglas Building Trades; Jennifer Hayward, LCC; Laurie McClain, Responsible Investing; Steve Musser, Energy Services Company; Karen Kaplyn, UO Environmental Resource and Recycling Manager; Sue Gorham, CVALCO; Jane Halloway, Lane County Fair; Rudy Berg, Eco-Building Guild; Dave Hauser, Eugene Chamber of Commerce; ?, Bethel School District; Jan Spencer, CPA; Alan Williams, EWEB; Bob Cassidy; Kevin Matthews, Friends of Eugene; Kathy Ging,

Other: Jim Carlson, City of Eugene; Connie Go, visitor from South Korea

Agenda:

1. Welcome and Introductions
2. Overview of Final Report and Appendices

General Comments from TAC – are we hitting the right issues, do the recommendations make sense, and is the right info in the background?

Question from Kevin Mathews: To what degree is the report frozen?

David Funk: We, the TF reviewed a draft last month. This is a chance for more input. We established the TAC for more input at this time. It is still wide open.

The look/framework of the report:

Jan Spencer: Include petroleum as a focus alongside climate, which suggests consideration of transportation and land use. Land use could be a stimulus to all types of financial services, trade skills, and air quality. How much has the price of gasoline gone up since this project started? Include land use and peak oil, by name, with equal stature as climate change.

Steve Musser: I would like to see a hook for people unfamiliar with sustainability or sustainable business that will draw them into the 57 pages. More “sizzle.”

Stefan Ostrach: Disappointed in the third bottom line: social equity/family sustainability indicators – no hard recommendations for quality job development and some of what there is destructive. The social equity indicators in the appendix are very low and could be used against collective bargaining. There is no recognition in the indicators of collective bargaining as something that helps improve social equity measures.

Laurie McClain: Could be interesting to find a group of advisors that knows little about the subject and might have reactions against it. Work with them to see what is obvious to us but not to the average worker, etc.

Karyn Kaplan: Doesn't see specific recommendations that came out of the roundtable that she was involved in. How are we going to get people to comply with "the meat" of the report. Include more specifics. Example: Tax breaks were discussed in recycling roundtable but did not appear in the final report.

Kevin Matthews: Fabulous start, but it's very conceptual. 1) The report redresses the environmental impact of businesses in terms of consumption, but doesn't do much in terms of natural resources such as threatened and endangered species that we have here. That's complicated by the decision not to deal with land use issues. It's one thing to not address the issues, but it's another to not address the issues and use language that implies that the issues were addressed. Make the language more precise. 2) Pick up land use again in the recommendations in the question of where do we go from here. Everything else is watered down if we don't consider land use in there. Use the appendix for some overall scoping – total energy use of community; overview of what hasn't been talked about yet. Our "Next Steps" has to include land use. It's contradictory to talk about systems thinking without talking about land use.

Steve Musser: We don't have the qualified, licensed people to install all of the solar called for in the report. We have people getting educated at LCC, but they leave. The City should do something to attract qualified people and retain those educated here.

Lou Christian: Appreciates time put into this. Labor was left out. We do a tremendous amount of training. If you want to keep those people here, you need to pay them living wages, benefits, and retirement. Include training in the technical assistance.

Kathy Ging: Would like to see test run on licensed hitchhiking. Note that there wasn't an evaluation component of the SBI. Each of the roundtables should have had an evaluation. Women were under-represented in the SBI roundtables.

Jan Spencer: To assume that we can maintain the level of life we're used to with a green economy is not one we can base a successful transition upon. We need to think of localizing and downsizing.

Bob Cassidy (not part of TAC): Latched onto the comment about a hook. Thinks people will want to know what's in it for them or what will happen to them. Include a listing of possible incentives, enforcements. All the groups got around to incentives or enforcement, but it never got dealt with. The TF could brainstorm possible incentives to include.

Laurie McClain: Likes all the examples. Pg 16 examples are very product oriented. Include more examples of sustainable practices for those who offer services (aside from recycling paper). Examples of Scott Pope's practices

Deb Brewer: Call it "smart business or smart communities" rather than "sustainable." It's difficult to tell if carbon neutral goals are directed at City or community. Carbon neutral goals are very ambitious. Wonders how the business community is reacting – do they see how the recommendations to the City relate to them.

Dave Hauser: Some parts he likes, others he doesn't understand, some he likes less than others. Wants minimization of bureaucracy, and this does a good job of incentivizing and not growing bureaucracy. He had hoped to see an incorporation of practical and achievable steps. In that regard, he likes the emphasis on the City leading by example. Our economy is a small business economy. He was trying to reconcile that fact with the report. He appreciates the effort.

Steve Musser: Some examples used are buried. They could be part of the hook.

Jane Halloway: How much will this cost? There already is a great group in the City – maybe we need to use existing staff, since they're doing a lot of this already. She applauds LCC's efforts and the Green Schools. Move that up in the report, that you could use existing staff.

Deb Brewer and Laurie McClain second and thirded that.

Bob Doppelt: The City is costing out an Office.

Kevin Matthews: Make it clear throughout the document when we're referring to the City government vs. the community. There's no way to have a plan for becoming the most sustainable mid-sized city by 2020 without considering transportation and land use planning. The next steps need to include a time-line, categorizing sustainability targets. We need to set this report up so that nobody reads it and says, "Now we've got sustainability under control." The report could say that sustainability is a constantly evolving process that we need to work on all the time. We need to have a culture of sustainability and the next step is to address the social and environmental legs; who and when will goals for the community be determined.

Bob Doppelt: the TF did work on indicators, but realized that they require an entire process. We wondered if we should include it in the appendix.

Kevin M: Putting indicators in the appendix makes it convincing that you've done work on it.

Kitty Piercy: Social equity came up at every meeting. We didn't get as far as we'd like. The TF was constantly bringing it back up and wrestling with it.

Steve Musser: It's important to include the fact that this is a continual process. Must show the commitment to the sustainable process so that people will pay the price for it.

Stefan Ostrach: Social indicators should not be included as they are. The wage levels are arbitrarily pegged to industry standards; the family medical care option doesn't come into play until level 3; no mention of organized labor.

Kevin Matthews: No mention of the concept of public involvement. Ironic, because of the involvement required for SBI. No mention of the word democracy. Power and political parts of social equity are essential.

Jan Spencer: Acknowledge that there is no real script for what will happen to the planet. Include that we are all in an adventure together – climate change, militarization, etc. We have to be flexible and we may all need to make changes that we can't all anticipate right now.

Specifics:

Dave Hauser: 1) City leading by example – City purchasing – what kind of economic scope/impact in real numbers? Is it symbolic or is it a real economic force? 2) Incubator concept: recalls that the UO did some work scoping incubators – can't recall the results. 3) In the recommendations as it relates to the City in terms of removing barriers – the last sentence talks about removing subsidies to unsustainable development. What does that refer to? Land use?

Bob Doppelt: That (3) came up in a lot of different roundtables, so the TF wanted to make a statement.

Randy: Wanted to know how feasible a City Purchasing Policy is. Ramifications of doing a life cycle costing of everything. Same feeling about carbon neutrality. It brought him to places he's never thought about before. It sounds like the report is saying to do this for all purchasing.

Bob Doppelt: SF is doing this and they're finding it to be cost effective. The recommendation is to start with a specific set of issues.

Steve Ostrach: None of the recommendations deal with social equity. There's nothing on pg. 9 mentioning the existing community standards for enterprise zone. Those took a lot of work to develop. There was similar consensus around Build Oregon Responsibly parameters. Section 1F has an assumption that we'll bar mandates. You can side step them or you have to deal with them head on. There are communities that have living wage standards. Maybe it's too much to recommend unionization, but at least recommend neutrality and not spend public money on fighting it. 2) The Glory Bee on p.21 sets a low bar. Can their wages support a family? 3) p. 22 – use median wage, not average wage. 4)42% of jobs created by the sectors listed are part time. Those don't sustain families. 5) Break out results for benefits percentages, since it doesn't tell us anything.

Deb Brewer: I got nervous reading the vision. I can't conceive of a way that we could be off the grid or carbon neutral by 2020. It might turn some people off. Agrees that transportation needs to be addressed. Electricity is not the carbon problem in the town.

Karyn Kaplan: Overwhelmed by the skeptical comments. Sees many examples of sustainability successes all the time. Applauds Kitty for pulling together all the existing efforts. We need a paradigm shift. UO environmental policy validates existing practices. UO does environmental purchasing. You can change the language – using terms like value added, value stewardship to appeal to businesses. This isn't a new thing, but looking at it in terms of business just makes it more of a tit for tat. This report is more of a general sense, lacks specifics. Asks that people view this as a positive thing and look to positive examples coming from traditional business models.

Bob Cassidy: Jim Carlson made a speech recently about all that the City has done. Presenting this to the community (more of what the City is doing) would be useful.

Karyn Kaplan: The UO looks at everything with life cost accounting and it's saving them money. They're working with companies to change their products.

Sue Gorham: The word sustainable can be a fearful concept and it has a negative connotation, because some people don't know how they fit into it. Change the title to avoid setting the reader up to feel like it's us against them from the first page.

Rudy Berg: Thanks everyone for all the work. Also supports the comments about planning as a missing piece. Its significance deserves more attention. We're trying to "pack our parachute" and we need to package it like it's going to be a fun ride. He'd like to see a sharper edge showing that the present course is not an option and we need to pick another course. Specifically, in the vision of Eugene as the most sustainable mid-sized city, that masks the opportunity to acknowledge a lot of the work already being done and makes it sound as though we're cutting edge. We're not cutting edge, and there's a lot that we can borrow from others.

Kevin Mathews: 1) p.24, "In 2020, the W. River is the renaissance.." change to, "In 2020, the green hills and the W. River are the symbol of..." 2) Surprised not to see anything about opportunities of the internet and www and how they fit into sustainability opportunities. Ex: His company has an online magazine, saving many trees per year, transportation costs. Telecommuting only appears once, but it's a whole way of doing things. Include this in next steps: example – people wouldn't have to print documents for meetings if there were wireless in the meeting spots.

Kathy Ging: In the RG and EW get testimonials about personal sustainable actions, 2) include housing issues – first time homebuyers not buying in our community, 3) survey on how to increase sustainability in our lives.

Deb Brewer: Loved education and partnership pieces.

Steve Musser: This is a sales tool – selling a concept for our community. The more people we can bring on board, the more smoothly things can operate in our community.

Bob Doppelt: The TF had a number of conversations about the audience. The first audience is the City Council, but it's also for the broader community.

Dave Hauser: There are elements that his org will work hard on. If there are enough like his, then we'll have success.

Rudy Berg: The report and the whole SBI effort is providing connective tissue in the community to yoke many efforts together.

Kitty Piercy: Our hope is that we created conversations that might not have happened otherwise and created interactions within the community that may not have happened. We appreciate your (positive and negative) comments. My experience listening to people in this community is that

people want to talk about sustainability. My belief is that we have all of this wealth in this community and if we don't push ourselves, we're not doing what we're capable of.

Bob Doppelt: Next steps – we'll boil down this info, present it to the task force at the end of July. They'll decide what to incorporate. There will be a final draft in mid to late August. The plan is to present it to the City Council in September. The plan is to present this to as many groups as possible within the community before September. In doing that, we may find additional changes to make. These are the recommendations of the TF, not ordinances or regulations. We hope they are enacted, but if this stimulates a broad based conversation that stimulates better ways of doing things, that's even better.

David Funk: We appreciate these comments. We knew we were getting more and more insular as we got further into it. All along we have recognized sustainability as a journey, not an end. This applies to businesses and to this process. We've just gotten the ball rolling.

Rusty Rexius: Is there an opportunity for further input from TAC.

Bob Doppelt: best method is to email us at susteug@uoregon.edu

Rusty Rexius: We've set the table and honestly, avoided a lot of the hard work. We need to set a table so that further conversations come - ex: labor.

Kitty Piercy: What I'm hearing is that the main concern is that we don't misaddress it, or don't pretend it doesn't exist. We need to put more things on the table.

Rusty Rexius: It's disappointing to hear that the social equity indicators were disappointing, because a lot of work went into those.

Bob Doppelt: Is LCC still working on the sustainability in education services?

Jennifer Hayward: LCC is still interested in providing sustainability in education services.

