

Southern Maine Partnership for Sustainable Development

**Executive Committee Meeting
Thursday, September 29, 2011
10:00 – 11:30 a.m.
GPCOG Conference Room**

Agenda

1. Welcome

Minutes: Executive Committee Meeting of August 29, 2011

2. Proposed Implementation Concept

Background

Initial meetings of the Partnership and its Executive Committee have been dominated with lengthy discussion around the fundamental question of how to begin the actual work of the sustainability grant and how to reasonably budget for the various tasks in the project. In response to these issues and questions, staff introduced a rough, first draft Implementation Concept Paper for review and discussion at the September 15, 2011 meeting of the SMPSD Grants Management Team. The Concept Paper was favorably received with a consensus to move forward in its development. The attached materials offer more detail and explanation to the implementation concept.

Action

Review, discussion and modification as deemed appropriate with a recommendation for presentation to the Partnership at its meeting in October.

3. Updates

- Data Availability Reports
- RFP Development
- HUD News

**Southern Maine Partnership for Sustainable Development
Executive Committee Meeting
GPCOG Conference Room
Thursday, September 29, 2011**

Present: Gerry Mylroie, Co-Chair (Kittery), Gordon Billington, Co-Chair (Standish), Tex Haeuser (South Portland), *Neal Allen (GPCOG)*, Alex Jaegerman (City of Portland), Paul Schumacher (SMRPC)

Staff/guests: *Steph Carver (GPCOG)*, *Rebecca Schaffner-Tousignant (GPCOG)*, *Retta Choate (GPCOG)*, *Jack Kartez (Muskie School)*

1. Welcome

There being a quorum Co-Chair Gerry Mylroie called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m. as Gordy Billington had a conflicting appointment and would be late.

Minutes: Executive Committee Meeting of August 29, 2011

Neal Allen moved to approve the minutes of the August 29 meeting and to amend the minutes as follows: On the last page, last paragraph, second line, the date should be changed from August 19 to September 19; Gordy Billington should be listed as Co-Chair instead of Chair and Gerry Mylroie is from Kittery, not Brunswick. Tex Haeuser seconded the amended motion and it passed unanimously.

2. Proposed Implementation Concept

Neal Allen provided a brief background on the project. In previous meetings of the full partnership and the Executive Committee there was lengthy discussion about how to begin the work of the sustainability grant project and figure out how much money is available to budget for various tasks. The budget issues have still gone unanswered and that will continue to some extent due to the nature of project. The Executive Committee will determine how to begin the process of moving forward with the project.

Staff presented a draft of an Implementation Concept Paper to the grants management team on September 15th and it was well received. The consensus was to move forward and develop the implementation concept in more detail. The revised documents were attached with the agenda packet.

Neal reviewed the flow chart that begins with a summary of the fundamental principles to build the project around. In developing this concept one goal is to develop “products” that all of the communities in the region can benefit from in an ongoing manner regardless of whether they are direct recipients from the grant.

The box labeled HUD and Partnership “Prerequisites” refers to Table 1 which Neal reviewed. It includes HUD and Partnership administrative tasks most of which have been completed.

The box labeled Subregional Planning Process establishes a realistic planning approach and should not be viewed as a traditional comprehensive plan, but rather a strategic document.

Neal questioned how we can move it forward in a challenging political environment and suggested that it would make more sense to begin the process by building on existing efforts that communities already participate in. We could use this as a starting point for building a regional sustainability process. The process will be guided by the Regional Planning Committee and input from others.

Cumberland Region with GPCOG as Lead and York Region with SMRPC as Lead: These two subregions were identified as starting points. We can start (Phase I) with Gorham EW. It was suggested at the grants management team meeting that that we identify communities of opportunity (CO-OPS) within a subregion. The budget includes \$80,000 in municipal grants with a \$20,000 local match for grants to municipalities so this may be a logical way to target municipal grants into specific CO-OPS.

It is the same in the central York region. We can begin to think about other subregions in which we would want to replicate the process. We would be learning from the experience in Phase I and helping to identify and shape other subregions.

Neal said he prepared very simple tables including the budget summary in Table II in an effort to lay out a concept that others could understand. He said that it was great to have Rebeccah back and with Steph and Donna we have good strength internally and a good balance of skills and background between the three of them.

Jack Kartez said we need to add USM under Best Practices to reflect knowledge sharing between partners.

Table III – RFP Consultant Scope and Selection Process: Neal noted that Paul Schumacher made a good point at the previous meeting regarding the three major areas for consulting support with the suggestion that the RFP allow for the option of all consultant services to be provided by a single consultant team. That had triggered a discussion to go through the work plan and tag other tasks to include in the consultant RFP. That has subsequently been taking place with Jack and Steph leading the effort.

There is a rough schedule for the RFP and that scope will be finalized in the next month. It will need to be submitted to HUD for review before going out to bid. A list of finalists will then need to be sent to HUD for review. Once we meet HUD requirements, the final award will be made in January or February. The RFP is a high priority and it is very important that we reach agreement on the general direction on how to move forward. At this point, Neal offered to answer questions about the proposal.

Gerry distributed copies of a Work Program Implementation Plan which he prepared for the committee. The goal is to have a plan adopted by local elected and appointed officials in collaboration with all citizens and groups throughout the region. The plan would be consistent with the goals and principles of HUD, the State of Maine, GPCOG and Southern Maine Regional Planning Commission. The geographic area would include Cumberland, York and Oxford counties and other municipalities within the Greater Portland and SMRPC area.

Gerry said that the purpose of today's meeting is to reach agreement on the content of these tables and gain consensus of the Executive Committee's recommendation to go out to bid on this project. The recommendation will go before the full partnership at the next meeting for their comments and support. He noted that Anna Breinich, Elizabeth Trice and Guy Gagnon are absent from today's meeting. This group needs to create a plan which meets HUD guidelines and is adopted by decision makers and put into effect instead of just sitting on a shelf. Gerry asked for comments on the Proposed Implementation Concept.

Comments:

Neal: The plan should reflect the Trend vs. Choice that was featured in the grant proposal.

Alex: The six principles should be added to the flow chart.

Paul: The flowchart is concrete and helpful. It includes solid information and data available regionwide. On the subregional planning process it is not clear on the environmental side where it fits in and needs clarification. Staff will realign it and make it consistent. Neal said the regionwide outcomes and products box is an ongoing effort and should not be viewed as completed prior to subregional planning as the other efforts occur in parallel. In the flow chart date category, the third row down, 10/1 should be changed to 10/11.

Gerry: We need to figure out what we as a region want then work down to the subregions. It doesn't show the sequence of tasks. Jack said this is more detailed in the work plan. Effort needs to be made to decide on a brand name or a program name.

Neal: The flowchart was intended to be a simple, straightforward diagram of how to move ahead.

Steph: Although the chart is simple, it shows direct products and could be used on the website. Our information packet needs to be updated to give to new partners. There is a more detailed plan available.

Tex: He is okay with the outline and realizes this is not a large regionwide comprehensive plan, but the start of something which will lead to a more cooperative effort within the region. The outline is a little unclear but the big work plan is more detailed. Neighborhood associations might be the place to talk about regional ideas.

Neal: Should we provide examples of what CO-OPS are? It could be a neighborhood association or a specific transit route for example.

Rebecca: We can create some models to explain CO-OPS, identify them and hear examples. This is noted in the work plan. We left a blank slate for the consultants to bring something to the table.

Jack: The tasks need to be defined. Design the process to what you get done.

Alex: Has talked to a consultant working on grants elsewhere in the nation. Consultants assemble and complete the tasks and own the outcomes.

Jack: Recommends we have only one team. We need to hone the tasks for the consultants.

Paul: How do we frame the project without giving it away to the consultant? We do that by having a management team.

Rebecca: There needs to be one person here on a permanent basis with whom the consultant can confer. Neal indicated that Rebecca would be that person.

Steph: Should we give preference to a local consulting group?

Jack: Most consulting groups have a presence in Maine.

Gerry: If the Executive Committee approves the implementation concept it would be reviewed by the larger partnership. There was consensus that the Executive Committee should finalize and then share the implementation approach with the Partnership.

Paul: Suggested clarifying or breaking up the regionwide outcomes to show they are well defined but that there are larger concerns to address. The compact idea is a central tenant to this. He wanted to add “voluntary compact” to #5 under Regionwide Outcomes. There was consensus to do that.

Alex: Suggested we continuously use the vocabulary listed in the legend. He felt that “choice” is a good word to use. We need to continue to highlight those key vocabulary words. Use phraseology and the words will stick and become a brand.

Gerry: Suggested we come up with a branding name. Rebecca suggested letting the larger partnership figure out the name. After further discussion there was consensus to use at least for now the phrase “Trend vs. Choice for the 21st Century”.

Under Guiding Principles, add “Livability Principles” in small box to left.

Under Regionwide Outcomes, add “Benefits”. There was agreement to include a housing reference.

Gerry: Will the public understand what “data commons” means? Rebecca said we can have a link to better understand the terms.

Use the word “trend” instead of “needs assessment”. We are educating and involving people, not forcing decision making. Engage elected officials so they can make decisions regionally.

Paul: Get people outside of elected officials to have more support. Divide trend analysis and sustainable future policy and investment alignment into two separate bullets.

Rebecca: We will modify the bullets to reflect what is in the work plan.

Table II: Rebecca will prepare a budget with actual dollar figures.

It was suggested and agreed that we define communities of opportunity or “CO-OPS.”

Table II – Add CO-OPS and municipal funding.

Table III: It was suggested that we send a draft RFP to potential consultants for comments. However, Under HUD regulations that may exclude those consultants from bidding. Therefore it needs to be reviewed with HUD. Neal will rewrite footnote #1.

Gordy Billington suggested getting assistance with branding early in the process. There was general agreement to explore that possibility.

The meeting adjourned at 12:10 p.m. The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, October 12 at 12:00 p.m. and will include the full partnership.