

**TRANSPORTATION AND ENVIRONMENT
COMMITTEE MEETING RECORD**

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Meeting Date: October 26, 2009

Start Time: 2:04 p.m.

Adjournment: 4:06 p.m.

Committee Members Present:

Linda L. Koop (Chair), Sheffie Kadane (Vice Chair), Jerry Allen, Tennell Atkins, Carolyn R. Davis, Angela Hunt, Delia Jasso, Pauline Medrano, Ron Natinsky and Vonciel Jones Hill

Committee Members Absent:

Ron Natinsky, Absent on City business for a portion of the briefing

Other Council Members Present:

None

City Executive Staff Present:

Jill A. Jordan, Assistant City Manager

TRANSPORTATION AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE AGENDA

1. Approval of Minutes for October 12, 2009

Action Taken/Committee Recommendation:

Motion was made to approve the minutes for the October 12, 2009 meeting subject to corrections. No corrections were suggested and the minutes were approved as submitted.

Made by: Hill

Seconded by: Kadane

Passed unanimously

2. Drainage Design Practices

Part 1: Overview of Current Drainage and Erosion Control Practices

Part 2: Alternative Technique – Integrated Storm Water Management (iSWM)

Presenter: Jill A. Jordan, P.E., Assistant City Manager

Ms. Jordan presented a two part briefing on the City's drainage design practices. The first part provided an overview of current drainage design criteria, reviewed the City's erosion control program, and discussed how erosion control projects are identified and implemented. The second part of the briefing defined "integrated storm water management" and outlined a three phase approach to adopt an iSWM manual.

Action Taken/Committee Recommendation:

Ms. Koop commented that the EPA is moving towards developing guidelines for iSWM, which may become mandatory, and that the North Central Texas Council of Governments in Arlington has a library with materials on iSWM.

Mr. Atkins asked is there is a timeline for addressing the three types of erosion threats. Ms. Jordan stated that staff will revisit the latest ranking before deciding which projects to recommend for funding in the next bond program.

Mr. Atkins asked how porous paver surfaces would be maintained over a 5 to 10-year period. Ms. Jordan said that there are several different types of porous pavements. The example shown in the presentation appeared to be on private property. When a private property owner elects to install this type of pavement, they are responsible for its maintenance. Pavement in the street right-of-way would be the City's responsibility to maintain.

Mr. Atkins also asked how the City addresses development that was done in the past before the iSWM standards. Ms. Jordan stated that once development has occurred there is not much to be done on private property, which is why the City has a Storm Water Management Program and flood control management plans for all major creeks.

Mr. Atkins said that he had concerns with the water runoff in the UNT, Loop 12, and Kleberg-Rylie areas. Ms. Koop commented that this was one of the reasons for the proposed NCTCOG Master Plan around the inland part – they are not equipped to handle large amounts of storm water runoff.

Mr. Kadane asked if there are no concerns with erosion unless it was occurring near a residential structure. Ms. Jordan confirmed that this was correct, and that garages, pools, and fences would be a lower priority than a home. Mr. Kadane stated that he agreed with the recommendations to form technical and policy committees to guide development of the iSWM Manual.

Ms. Jasso thanked Ms. Jordan and Mr. Elias Sassoon for their efforts on the iSWM project and asked about the timeline for each phase. Ms. Jordan indicated that staff would like to bring the manual forward for Council consideration in November or December 2009, and immediately form the technical and policy committees. It is anticipated that ZOAC and City Plan Commission review of any Code amendments would take approximately one year with the encouragement of Council.

Ms. Jasso asked if each committee would include professionals, architects and developers; and if the developers had seen the presentation. Ms. Jordan stated that the developers who have participated had seen the criteria.

Ms. Davis asked if the committees would only exist until their task was completed or would they be ongoing. Ms. Jordan stated that the committees would exist for about six months to develop recommendations for ZOAC review.

Ms. Davis asked how community gardens would play a role on this issue. Ms. Jordan stated that some of the open areas that result from the reconfiguration of subdivisions could provide opportunities for community gardens which will be complimentary to this effort.

Ms. Davis asked if the committees would be looking into existing flooding issues. Ms. Jordan indicated that the committees would be looking at policy issues and not get into specific problem areas.

Ms. Davis asked if this effort would result in a water utilities fee increase. Ms. Jordan stated that currently it would not cause a fee increase.

A motion was made to approve the three phase approach to the implementation of iSWM and to recommend voluntary use of the iSWM criteria manual for consideration by the full Council in December 2009.

Made by: Jasso

Seconded by: Atkins

Passed unanimously

3. Urban Forestry Inventory using Concurrent Airborne LiDAR and Hyperspectral Remote Sensing

Presenters: Dr. Fang Qiu, Associate Professor, Geographic Information Systems, University of Texas at Dallas, and Steve Houser, Chair of the Dallas Urban Forest Advisory Committee

The briefing provided an overview of the technical process developed to conduct an urban forestry inventory using concurrent airborne LiDAR and hyperspectral images.

Action Taken/Committee Recommendation:

Ms. Koop asked if this process could help determine how much carbon the urban forest absorbs. Dr. Qui indicated that some research had been done on carbon absorption, and that different tree species have different rates of absorption. Ms. Koop suggested that if you could determine the species of all the trees in a specific area and knew how much carbon each species absorbed by the average height, then it would be possible to estimate how much carbon the geographic area was absorbing from the atmosphere. Mr. Houser stated that most of the available carbon absorption data was developed for trees the northern part of the United States.

Ms. Koop suggested looking to the NCTCOG and EPA for grants to help fund this effort.

Ms. Davis asked if this process could identify power lines near trees. Mr. Houser stated that it was very important to know where to plant trees near power lines, and that this research could be used by the Streets Department and Storm Water Management.

Ms. Jasso asked if this research had been shared with developers or other City staff who are working with developers. Mr. Houser stated that he been working with developers for over three years to develop recommendations for the tree ordinance.

Mr. Natinsky asked Ms. Koop if determining the carbon amount of absorption from the urban forest would help with the region's air quality efforts. Mr. Natinsky suggested that Dr. Qui may be able to assist. Dr. Qui stated that it would be possible to determine the level of carbon absorption, but that the equipment to measure it would be very expensive. He indicated that UTD does not have the equipment, but that it may be possible to collaborate with other universities. Mr. Natinsky suggested that if it helped the City meet air quality standards, it could be worth millions.

Ms. Medrano asked if there was research on what other cities have done; the length of time it has taken; and the cost. Mr. Houser indicated that prior to the development of this new process, a tree inventory required manual surveyors. This often took many years and was very unreliable. He indicated he would research the cost.

Ms. Koop stated that in December a decision will be made in Copenhagen deciding what to do about carbon, carbon capture and carbon credits. Depending on whether or not the United States supports the decision, we will know what type of federal legislation to expect.

Ms. Koop asked if trees absorb other elements that are monitored from the EPA, such as lead and mercury. She gave an example of a battery plant in Frisco that will have to mitigate for the lead that it has put into the air and the soil. Dr. Qui indicated that he did not know whether an analysis could be done regarding tree absorption of other chemicals.

Ms. Koop suggested that once new federal regulations are adopted, funding should be sought from the NCTCOG.

No action was taken on this item.

4. Museum of Nature and Science Landscape Plan

Presenter: Coy Talley, ASLA, Principal, Talley Associates

Mr. Talley briefed the Committee on the innovative landscape plan for the new Museum of Nature and Science.

Action Taken/Committee Recommendation:

Ms. Koop asked if visitors would be allowed on the roof-top garden. Mr. Talley stated that visitors would not be allowed on the roof, but would be able to see it from several vantage points.

Mr. Natinsky asked when the project would be completed and open to visitors. Mr. Talley indicated that project would be complete in 2012.

No action was taken on this item.

5. Crime Prevention Signs

Presenters: Elizabeth Ramirez, P.E., Assistant Director, Public Works and Transportation, and David Brown, 1st Assistant Chief, Dallas Police Department

The briefing provided background on the crime prevention signs program, including the types of signs, cost and installation, and message content. A recommendation was requested to add an approved sign for video surveillance.

Action Taken/Committee Recommendation:

Ms. Koop agreed that adding the additional video surveillance sign to the Code was a good idea.

Mr. Natinsky indicated that neighborhoods had installed signs and video surveillance only to later find out that the signs did not meet City Code. Mr. Natinsky stated that we should use the same process as we do with Crime Watch and VIP to make sure there is a surveillance system installed before installing the new signs.

Mr. Kadane asked if the proposed sign standard had been approved. Ms. Ramirez stated that it would need Council approval. He also asked who would decide where the signs would be installed. Mr. Ramirez said that Public Works and Transportation staff would determine where to install the signs after consulting with the Police Department so that they would not conflict with other regulatory or warning signs.

Ms. Jasso asked if the new video signs could be installed without actually having surveillance cameras. Chief Brown stated that DPD did not recommend installing signs where there was no video surveillance. Ms. Jasso asked about the cost of a surveillance camera. Chief Brown stated that he could provide some cost information for Ms. Jasso after the meeting.

Ms. Davis asked who monitors the cameras and stated that she would have a problem with a citizen monitoring the surveillance camera. Chief Brown stated that citizens do monitor the cameras, but that the cameras only view activity in the public right-of-way not on private property. Ms. Davis asked if Jubilee Park was a test site and if only one person was viewing the surveillance images. Chief Brown indicated that the surveillance was being viewed by several citizens.

Ms. Davis indicated that she wanted to start with six or seven cameras in high crime areas. Chief Brown stated that one option would be to have mobile cameras that could be moved around.

A motion was made to approve the staff recommendation as presented and develop an agenda item for consideration by the full Council.

Made by: Natinsky Seconded by: Jasso Passed unanimously

6. TxDOT Transportation Enhancement Call for Projects

This item will be briefed to the Committee at their November meeting.

No action was taken on this item.

7. Upcoming Agenda Item

Motion was made to recommend approval of Council Agenda Item #60 scheduled for full Council consideration on November 9, 2009.

Made by: Natinsky Seconded by: Kadane Passed unanimously

Linda L. Koop

Linda L. Koop, Chair

Transportation and Environment Committee

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