

COMMITTEE FOR THE FUTURE OF DAMASCUS

Date: February 24, 2003

Location: Damascus Assembly of God Church
19070 SE Sunnyside Rd.

Meeting #: 40

Attendees: 23 (see roster for names)

Meeting minutes will be taken to abide by public policy. Any changes to the minutes should be given to the Secretary.

1. Call Meeting to Order:

Dee Wescott, Chair, called the meeting to order.

2. Introductions:

There were two new local residents present. They were Greg DeGrazia and Dennis Hughes. Welcome!

3. Action on Minutes for the Meeting of February 10, 2003:

Copies of the minutes were previously sent via regular mail or email. Chuck Kisselburg made two corrections. The first was section 7, Subcommittee Reports. It should more accurately read:

Though subcommittees did not meet last week, Chuck Kisselburg reported that the FAQ (Frequently Asked Questions) section of the Damascus Observer has been posted to the website. He also stated that an additional FAQ concerning the impact of the UGB (Urban Growth Boundary) expansion on common areas within residential developments was submitted to the Board for approval. The newly submitted FAQ was drafted with Ernie Platt, Board member.

The second correction was in section 9d, Notice of Intent and should more accurately read:

Chuck Kisselburg added that the Oregonian will not allow the Committee to post and article from the Oregonian on the Committee's website. The Committee can provide a link to the newspaper's website about the story, but the newspaper's website does not carry stories for more than 30 days, does not post all their stories and may not run stories for even as long as 30 days. However, it would be legal to mention it in a letter on the Committee's own website.

Motion to approve minutes of February 10, 2003 as corrected made by Jim Wright, seconded by Randy Shannon and unanimously approved.

4. **Public Comment:** None
5. **Communications:** None
6. **Treasurer's Report:**

The Treasurer's Report will be presented at the next meeting.

7. **Sub-Committee Reports:**

- a. **Planning**

Greg Dardis, Planning Chair, regretfully reported that he will be stepping down as Chair for personal reasons (the Committee's loss, Greg!), though he will remain active in the Committee and the Planning Subcommittee. He also reported that the last meeting was lively and full of discussion on the goals of the subcommittee and on topics that will garner similar interest and concern in the community. He suggested that these topics, such as personal vs. community land rights, might be better discussed within the subcommittee first, then perhaps with the whole Committee and eventually with the community. This would allow the Committee to work through options and determine some feedback to facilitate a productive discussion with the community.

John Hartsock added that the core values project in collaboration with Oregon Solutions may help to flesh out these topics, should that project proceed. The goals of the subcommittee may become clearer after the County discusses the concept planning phase workplan at the next meeting (March 3rd).

Dee Wescott added that all County, Metro and State land-use and density regulations must be followed during the concept planning phase and though there is some wiggle room, there should not be false hope of altering the parameters significantly.

Jim Wright asked Greg Dardis if there was any further word of whether Damascus could be used as a real-life example to test a new planning model being developed in part by OMSI that would show how a simulated city, and changes to that simulated city, would affect the environment (run-off, erosion, etc.). Greg answered that there was interest in using Damascus as a guinea pig but that there would be nothing ready to test before next year.

- b. **Finance**

Dee Wescott reported that Finance did not meet formally last week so there was nothing to report. However, the new Board will meet this evening following the general meeting for a brief discussion.

Dee did report that Dan O'Dell, Finance Chair, completed a budget for the Committee for 2003. Copies were handed out and comments should be sent to Dan. Dan also left a list of grant sources, some of which require tax-exempt status and some that do not. Since the 501c3 designation may be some months away, it was decided that the Committee ought to apply for the ones that do not require it.

c. Public Safety/Services

Dave Zopf, Services Chair, reported that the Services subcommittee revisited the Strategic Plan subjects and attempted to reconcile the tasks in the Strategic Plan with the needs of the concept planning phase. Some progress was made but more details of the workplan for the next phase will be needed to complete the reconciliation.

Randy Shannon added that the subcommittee did make headway on a draft answering the questions in the Strategic Plan and wondered if that was what was required. John Hartsock responded affirmatively but that the bigger task will be to determine how to package those answers for the new city, should there be one.

8. Damascus CPO Report:

Barb Ledbury, Damascus CPO Chair, reported that their meetings will be held the 3rd Wednesday of the month at the Damascus Fire Station. Discussion at this past meeting included changing the bylaws to adhere to current County regulations. The previous bylaws were based on an old handbook.

Barb asked if anyone knew what the road project was at the corner of 242nd and Sunshine Valley Rd. Dave Rouse, Public Works Chair, said he would check into it and let Barb know. Barb also asked if the MOU must be voted on this evening. John Hartsock answered no, it is still in the draft stage.

Marty Beaudet asked whether the Damascus CPO will take in the remainder of the jurisdiction of the defunct Rock Creek CPO. Various comments included that the Rock Creek CPO is again functioning and will continue to do so until the area within its boundaries becomes part of a city. Rock Creek boundaries run from the UGB on the west, north to Happy Valley city limits, east to 180th and south of Hwy. 212.

9. Old Business:

a. "What do we want Damascus to be?"

The vision question is left on the agenda to remind all members to continue to think about it.

b. 501c3 Update

John Fromwiller reported that he responded to the IRS representatives inquiry for further information by pointing her to the website and indicating there was more information to come. The representative wrote that upon first look, it seemed the

Committee was an “action organization” whose “goals can be achieved only through legislation” which would make it ineligible for 501c3 status. The Committee needs to show that it is showing the community all options and evenly demonstrating the benefits and burdens of becoming a city, as well as annexing into Gresham and Happy Valley. If the Committee openly favors one over the other it would not be eligible.

Discussion followed about how best to accomplish this task. Suggestions included:

- ❖ Sending a ratified copy of the Memo of Understanding (MOU) between County, Metro, Damascus CPO, Boring CPO and the Committee. This document shows that the Committee is entrusted with educating the public and being one of the liaisons between the public and government agencies.
- ❖ Sending documentation and the videotape of the forum from October in which the options were laid out for the public to make its own decision.
- ❖ Asking the two new attendees to describe their impression of the Committee’s work. Greg DeGrazia answered that his impression of the work and written articles of the Committee indicated it wanted to inform the community and discuss the issues.

Though individual members may favor incorporation, publicly the Committee acts as a conduit of information educating the public so that they may be able to draw their own conclusions. The final comment by Tim Giorgi wrapped up the discussion when he said that the only impression that counts is that of the IRS representative’s and it is up to the Committee and John Fromwiller to convince her that her first impression was incorrect.

c. Concept Planning

John Hartsock reported that a second draft of the MOU was completed and handed out. He tried to incorporate all thoughts sent to him by various people. The County is reviewing it and should be finished soon. Rock Creek CPO will be added to the list of entities by whom the memo will be ratified.

Les Otto, Boring CPO Chair, stated that he would like to see some wording in the MOU that clearly indicates that, although regulations must be followed, the community must be satisfied with the end product, not just be expected to accept it. Citizen involvement needs to mean more than just a rubber stamp of County ideas. It must mean that citizen input is actually put into the plan. The reality is that the money being spent is federal money, which means it is the citizens’ tax dollars, and the community that is being transformed is our community. Since the citizens have to live with the changes and the citizens are paying for it, then they ought to be a major contributor.

John Hartsock responded that, while Les has a good point, the bottom line is the County has jurisdiction over the area and also has the responsibility to develop it according to regulations. They have the final say, legally. All entities need to find the middle ground.

Dee Wescott added that the MOU is a revolutionary document. There has never been an agreement brokered between a government agency and a group of citizens. This needs to be done gently. It can not be forced or it will fall apart.

Tim Giorgi commented that the Committee's responsibility is to speak for the community, once the community has indicated what they want. To do this, the Committee needs a seat at the table and the road to that seat is the MOU. If the Committee balks at the beginning of the process than we have lost the chance to do something constructive.

Les Otto finished by saying there will be one more joint meeting of the Boring CPO and the Committee next month. At that time there can be input from all and a final copy can be completed. It can then be sent to the County for review.

Randy Shannon wanted some change to indicate that a "response" from the County/Metro would be meaningful. He said that a simple "no" is an example of a response that would not be meaningful. (#10 under the "Now Therefore" section)

John Hartsock stated that he attended the most recent meeting of the Pleasant Valley concept planning project and was surprised to see a shift in the concerns of the residents. Previously, the response had been "don't develop here". After going through the process somewhat and having something on paper to study, the response was more likely a pro-development stance of "don't put that greenspace in my backyard".

Barb Ledbury had also attended that meeting and heard concerns from older folks who were concerned that individual property owners were going to be responsible for maintaining greenspace land zoned on their property. That included stream restoration and blackberry control. There is currently no compensation set up for this. Les Otto responded that greenspace without compensation is a big problem, one that perhaps can be worked out as opposed to being avoided by limiting greenspace.

d. Oregon Solutions--Sustainability

John Hartsock reported that there had been a follow-up meeting with Oregon Solutions. Though Oregon Solutions' previous projects have been smaller, resolving issues like attracting businesses to communities while preserving the social, economic and environmental sustainability of the community, they are part of the Urban Studies Dept. of Portland State University and would have access to those resources. Therefore, the County would like to go ahead and have them draw a draft workplan that would determine the core values of the citizens organizations in the Damascus area as well as those of the planning groups and integrate the values into one set that would become the road map of the planning process.

The process would probably entail holding many smaller meetings across the community to promote a deeper discussion of what's important to the citizens. Drawing a grid over the entire area and asking for a representative from each area to serve on a Steering Committee could accomplish this. The responses from the Damascus Day in the Park survey indicated respondents from all over. Perhaps these people would be a good

place to start to gather representatives. The break down of the project would include two other committees: the Executive Committee, which would oversee policy direction, and the Interested Parties Committee, which would be made up of affected city governments, service providers, CPOs, etc. A forum in April or May would be a possibility. The County would be paying for the services of Oregon Solutions. A final decision on the utilization of Oregon Solutions should be made in the near future.

e. Firehouse Study Group

John Hartsock reported that there was a spirited discussion at the last meeting, one of which was initiated by Mayor Grant of Happy Valley. Since then, John had a productive meeting with Mayor Grant in which potential boundaries were discussed. Mayor Grant indicated that Happy Valley may be content with an annexation of land reaching no further than 172nd. The idea of an open house was discussed that could be arranged for the people living in the area west of 180th to the current UGB line to allow a discussion of the governance options and a poll on which would be preferred. John suggested Cogan Owens Cogan (COC) as facilitators and Mayor Grant agreed. Elaine Cogan of COC suggested a format of focus groups and then a larger public forum. She will talk with a survey firm and update John on March 5th.

John continued by explaining that Mayor Grant understands the significance of the commercial area north of Hwy. 212 at 172nd, that it would help the tax base of a new city. This would make the idea of a new city more acceptable to the citizens and give a new city a better chance at financial viability. John said Mayor Grant was concerned about how far south Gresham is considering annexing. Gresham has stated that it is not necessarily interested in governing areas to their south but does not want to offer services to an unincorporated area. Gresham would be willing to contract its services to another city for an area large enough to be serviced efficiently.

John was heartened by this progress.

f. Homebuilder's Association Meeting

Dee Wescott reported that there was a meeting with representatives of the Homebuilder's Association, the Committee, Metro and Clackamas County to discuss the difficulties and cost of developing Damascus. The difficulties centered mainly on topography and the vast amount of streams, buttes, wetlands and the myriad of regulations concerning these, as well as the undulating surface of the area.

The cost of development, which included transportation (roads), sanitary sewer, water, parks, stormwater drainage and Sunrise Corridor, amounted to a guestimate of \$50,000 per home, if all costs of infrastructure were borne by home developers. In fifteen or twenty years, this could translate into a median home price of \$600,000. Michael Jordan, County Commissioner, then asked the County staff to determine how much money would be needed to develop this infrastructure, when it would be needed and methods for financing it. In looking for a variety of ways to bear the financial burden of infrastructure, the cost to each individual house would be offset thereby lowering the median price.

Dee Wescott added that System Development Charges (SDCs), pay for new infrastructure improvements and can only legally be levied for that portion of the infrastructure that serves the new development. Generally, that is half of the actual cost of developing the infrastructure. Increasing the SDCs, as West Linn is attempting to do, raises the cost of a new home. Higher home costs limit construction. SDCs can not currently be charged to pay for schools, police, fire or libraries. However, John Hartsock pointed out that California has charged \$1.50/sq.ft. on residential development and \$.25/sq.ft. on commercial and industrial development for schools, so the idea is not without precedent. Both of these amounts are indexed.

Ernie Platt, Board Member, added that he believes those who use pay. Since commercial and industrial development uses roads, sewers, possibly some greenspace, they should be charged to develop infrastructure for those developments. However, they do not use schools so should not be charged to develop that. Others disagreed saying that if a job draws new residents, at least some of those residents will have kids who will need schools. John Hartsock added that, for the developer, depending on when it gets paid it's either a tax or a fee, which affects how long the expense must be carried.

Ernie Platt stated that charges for landowners ought to be fixed, so that a future buyer already knows what the costs to develop that piece of land will be and can make an offer accordingly. The higher the SDC, the less a developer will offer for the land to offset the additional cost of building on that land. He ended by saying the SDCs are a legislative decision.

10. New Business (*Action Item):

a. Election of Officers

Dee Wescott stated that the slate of nominees was self-nominated and asked if there were any further nominees from the floor. Marty Beaudet stated that he would like to nominate Diana Lobo for an At-Large Board Member position, due to her consistent attendance and energetic participation. Diana accepted and her name was added to the ballot sheet. Ballots were passed to all and Jim Wright and Gary Fosberg tallied the votes.

The winners were:

- Dee Wescott, Chair
- John Hartsock, Vice Chair
- John Fromwiller, Treasurer
- Joyce Schwer, Secretary
- Ernie Platt, At-Large Board Member
- Diana Lobo, At-Large Board Member
- Carl Tuma, At-Large Board Member

Congratulations to all!

11. Open Agenda: None

12. Subcommittee Breakout “A” Group:

Time ran out before subcommittees had a chance to convene.

13. Executive Session: None

14. Adjournment

Actions Decided:

1. Committee will apply for all grants not requiring 501c3 status.
2. Officers and Board members were elected.

Actions Pending:

1. Final draft of MOU.
2. Agreement with Oregon Solutions.
3. Concept planning phase workplan.
4. 501c3 status, response to IRS representative.