

Approved 4/14/93

JOINT BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS/FAIRBOARD MEETING  
Tuesday, March 16, 1993

Attending: Lane County Commissioners Cornacchia, Rust, Roberts, Dumdi, Frazier; Fairboard Members Hansen, DiTorrice, Vorhees, Wood. Absent Mattson.

Bill VanVactor, Acting County Administrator, Teresa Wilson, Legal Counsel, Vernon Thompson, Acting Fairgrounds Director, John Amundson, Consultant, Rich Maris, Jane Burgess, Recording Secretary.

The meeting convened at 12:09 p.m.

Rich Maris gave a status report of the progress of the ADA requirements and corrections needed at the fairgrounds. Identification of architectural barriers and prioritization of those items are underway. He further stated that direction from the Board of Commissioners was being sought regarding the Master Plan, specifically, property acquisition, the relocation of the Amazon Canal, and the appropriate involvement between the Fairboard and the City of Eugene in the area of community recreation.

John Amundson presented a status report of the Master Plan. The Fairboard has been meeting regularly with the Consortium since June, 1992, and have reached consensus on the key assumptions of the Plan. Key components of the Master Plan include an addition of a second Lane County Ice facility, expansion and needed improvements to the Agricultural Center and the Convention Center. Two additional elements of the Plan include the expansion of the Historical Museum and the development of a community center focused around the Wheeler Pavilion.

Mr. Amundson discussed the benefits of the relocation of the Amazon Canal which would bring land back in to the Fairgrounds, satisfy the concepts of the Natural Resource Plan in the redevelopment of the channel as a natural waterway, and provide an amenity and a barrier between the Fairgrounds and the southern neighborhood.

The acquisition of property was discussed. He stated that another issue being considered by the Fairboard was the determination of the convention marketeer they wish to pursue, state, regional, and/or national, which would determine the scale of development of the Convention Center.

Commissioner Cornacchia questioned the parking issue stating it appeared that there seemed to be fewer spaces under this Plan. Mr. Amundson explained that it is his estimate that there are currently 2,400 parking spaces including the unpaved section of the Fairgrounds. The Master Plan provides for 2,600 spaces. During the Lane County Fair the on-site number of parking spaces would be 1,500.

Rich Maris commented that there was broad acceptance by members of the Consortium to move the Plan in the direction of increased dependency on an urban transit system and independence from individual vehicles.

Commissioner Cornacchia remarked that because of the fact that there is not a motel/hotel located within the Fairgrounds, the Convention Center was not in the position of attracting national-sized conventions. He further stated that currently the Convention Center is not revenue producing and questioned what had changed in the analysis projecting the Convention Center to become revenue producing. Sid Vorhees answered that with the additional conference room the Fairboard would be in the position of attracting a higher market level which would create additional events. He further stated that 500 parking spaces would be lost with this addition which is a concern of the neighborhood organizations. He discussed the addition of adding break-out rooms within the Convention Center to attract more events as well.

Commissioner Cornacchia stated his interest in making new facilities convertible on non-use days for youth recreation if appropriate.

Commissioner Cornacchia relayed to the Fairboard information regarding the large number of requests for funding from video lottery and room tax monies, which is why he is very interested in profit at the Fairgrounds, and whether the opportunity exists to qualify for loans as opposed to grants.

Commissioner Cornacchia asked the Fairboard for information on timelines. Pat Hansen said that early spring would be their goal on making those decisions. Sid Vorhees stated his concerns regarding the cost involved with moving the Amazon Canal which is estimated at approximately \$300-500,000 and how that funding would be obtained.

Guy DiTorrice addressed the ADA needs of existing buildings at the Fairgrounds and stated that Phase 1 costs would be approximately \$30,000.

Sid Vorhees asked for direction regarding the request from the City of Eugene to include a swimming pool in the Master Plan. Commissioner Cornacchia will send a letter to Mayor Bascom stating the position of the Commissioners which is not to fund for construction or operation a neighborhood/community pool. The Board has no objection to incorporate a City of Eugene funded pool on City property in the Master Plan.

The Board of Commissioners asked that a plan for any needed property acquisition be prepared by the Fairboard and presented to the Board.

Commissioner Rust requested information regarding available funding, what commitments have been made to Florence and then would like to review the final Master Plan.

Commissioner Cornacchia stated there was consensus that eminent domain, movement of the Amazon Canal, and property acquisition are available as options to the Fairboard in finalizing the Plan.

Pat Hansen summarized by stating that early April was the target date for finalizing the draft Master Plan. John Amundson added that after adoption by the Board of Commissioners, adoption by the City of Eugene would be needed as a part of the neighborhood plan, metropolitan plan, and the transportation plan which would take approximately 120 days.

Star Wood added that a draft of the final Plan would be given to other participants outside of the Consortium which include agriculture and ICE. Pat Hansen requested an additional joint meeting with the Board of Commissioners prior to the public hearing.

Pat Hansen gave an update on the Fairground Director recruitment. The Fairboard is continuing to talk with one of the finalists. He will be visiting the area. The Fairboard expects to make a decision early next week.

The meeting adjourned at 1:40 p.m.

  
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Jane Burgess, Recording Secretary