

TRUCKEE RIVER FLOOD PROJECT WORKING GROUP

FINAL MINUTES

Wednesday – July 29, 2009 – 3:00 p.m.

Truckee River Flood Project Office
Suite 230 - Conference Room
9390 Gateway, Reno, Nevada

1. INTRODUCTIONS

Naomi Duerr – Flood Project Director, opened the meeting at 3:07 p. m. and explained that as the attendance increases at the Working Group meetings that the meetings may be scheduled in the larger Community Room at Washoe County Department of Water Resources in the future.

PRESENT: Geoff Brownell – Michael Baker; Connie Butts – Canyon General Improvement District; John Dyer – AMEC E & E; Kathleen Erwin – U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service; Michael Faeth – AMEC E & E; Todd Gilmore – U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service; Mark Gookin – Wood Rodgers; Tom Greco – Regional Transportation Commission; Kristin Kirick – citizen; Noel Laughlin – HDR, Inc.; Debra Lemke – Michael Baker; Dick Mills – Pick and Pull; Burnham Moffat – Community Coalition; Austin Osborn – Storey County Planning; Kevin Piper – University of Nevada, Reno; Lystra Pitts – F and P Construction; Randy Pitts – F and P Construction; Bob Ramsey – Rosewood Homeowners Association; and Shawn Smith – CFA. Todd Welty – Reno Tahoe Airport Authority, joined the meeting at 3:09 p.m. Garth Oksol - Regional Transportation Commission joined the meeting at 3:29 p.m.

STAFF PRESENT: Jay Aldean, Naomi Duerr, Danielle Henderson and Greg Salter.

Ms. Duerr welcomed those present.

Todd Welty – Reno Tahoe Airport Authority, joined the meeting at 3:09 p.m.

Ms. Duerr then provided an overview and background of the informal Working Group that provide input to staff and TAC (Technical Advisory Committee) on “hot topic” items that Flood Project staff is currently involved with. Ms. Duerr pointed out that Connie Butts, Burnham Moffat, Bob Ramsey and others had been involved in the process since its inception in the late 1990’s. Ms. Duerr explained that input on TRAction Project issues such as the Hidden Valley Home Elevation/flood wall, RSIC (Reno Sparks Indian Colony flood wall/levee and other issues had been brought to the Working Group. Currently, Flood Project staff is working on the JPA (Joint Powers Agreement) that enables the region to collect necessary revenues to cover local cost share. Ms. Duerr then drew attention to the BIN list of items appended to each meeting agenda explaining that some items had been discussed more often than noted in the table. The intent is to provide a reminder of topics and issues already addressed or waiting to be addressed by the Working Group. The informal setting of the non-public meetings allows the free flow of discussion that can move from subject to subject as issues are identified during the meeting discussions. Ms. Duerr noted that Natural Resources Manager Danielle Henderson will provide an update on TRAction Projects later in the agenda with Deputy Director Jay Aldean covering the Corps (U. S. Army Corps of Engineers) schedule. Ms. Duerr then noted that Flood Project staff

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(Mimi Fujii-Strickler and Susie Kapahee) are researching various software packages that can be used on the Flood Project website that allows the public and others an opportunity to comment on various issues that can be compiled and ultimately shared with the FPCC (Flood Project Coordinating Committee). Ms. Duerr then focused on her recent (July 27, 2009) meeting and presentation to the Association of Builders and Contractors where it was suggested that information be added that would allow contractors and others to determine what construction projects are being planned, along with required qualifications and bid criteria. Ms. Duerr noted that such information would be added to the Flood Project website noting that the construction and bidding will most likely be done by the individual jurisdictions. Ms. Duerr noted that the regulations covering such public projects required a specific bid and award process that is applicable to all jurisdictions.

Danielle Henderson – Natural Resources Manager, stated that The Nature Conservancy is also subject to those regulations and processes due to the use of federal, state and local funds for restoration projects being constructed as part of the Flood Project.

2. APPROVE WORKING GROUP MINUTES OF JUNE 3, 2009

Connie Butts asked for clarification of the last paragraph of page 5 which references deeper and more frequent flooding.

Naomi Duerr – Flood Project Director, stated that the intent of that paragraph was to convey the need to complete the Corps (U. S. Army Corps of Engineers) Takings Analysis that is required when flooding that has not previously occurred or is more intense after construction of a flood management project. Ms. Duerr explained that the scope of the 50-mile long Truckee River Flood Management Project is of such magnitude that it is expected there will be from eight to ten “Takings Analyses” required, whereas the smaller, six miles in length, Napa (California) Flood Project required only one “Takings Analysis”.

Deputy Director Jay Aldean commented that this was a new process for the Corps as most projects are built to eliminate flooding potential rather than cause increased flooding in other areas.

It was moved by Bob Ramsey, seconded by Candice Siwarga, to approve the June 3, 2009, minutes, as submitted. MOTION CARRIED.

3. DISCUSSION REGARDING FORMING A JOINT POWERS AUTHORITY/TOWN HALL MEETING

Naomi Duerr – Flood Project Director, drew attention to the PowerPoint presentation attachment to today’s (July 28, 2009) meeting agenda (copy on file) that was used in the Flood Project staff’s presentation to the Reno City Council. Ms. Duerr noted that Flood Project staff as well as local elected officials and others had worked with the Nevada Legislature to ensure passage of SB-175 that provides the region with the enabling legislation to form a JPA (Joint Powers Agreement) similar to that used for the RTC (Regional Transportation Commission) and TMWA (Truckee Meadows Water Authority).

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Garth Oksol – Regional Transportation Commission joined the meeting at 3:29 p.m.

Ms. Duerr then noted that this particular legislation would allow the region to add other members such as Storey County in the JPA and use the County Bond Bank to issue bonds for the region's local cost share match. A Town Hall style meeting is scheduled at 6:00 p.m., Monday, August 10, 2009 in the Washoe County Commission Chambers at 1101 East Ninth Street, Reno (Nevada). The meeting is intended to address all stakeholders, interested parties as well as labor, contractors and others with an interest in the Truckee River Flood Management Project including local elected officials. The meeting will be fully agendized and publicly noticed as it appears a quorum of FPCC (Flood Project Coordinating Committee) members may be in attendance. Ms. Duerr then noted that Flood Project staff continue to work with UNR (University of Nevada, Reno) to finalize an MOU (Memorandum of Understanding) that once completed will release UNR from its membership on the FPCC. Ms. Duerr then summarized the regulatory requirement required by the Corps before funding can be approved.

Responding to an inquiry about whether other models had been researched, Ms. Duerr explained that the FPCC had been clear in their direction not to use the GID (General Improvement District) or the Flood Control District approach. At recent visit with the Napa County Flood Board, Ms. Duerr indicated the use of a system that allows certain members to have two votes would not be accepted in the Truckee Meadows.

Ms. Duerr then focused on the limited funding currently available for existing and planned TRAction projects that has delayed additional land acquisition temporarily. Typically, flood projects acquire land before beginning the planning/design phase which would typically cause some further delay in construction. Once additional funding streams are in place other TRAction Projects including the North Truckee Drain (City of Sparks) that has completed feasibility and is currently in the design phase as well as the Virginia Street Bridge, which will require \pm \$25 million for replacement could go forward. Currently, there is about \$100 million available for the Flood Project from the 1/8th-cent sales tax. Funds have been set aside for the Rainbow Bend Walkway and Virginia Street Bridge design. Ms. Duerr acknowledged Jay Aldean's comments that the region has been "good" in leveraging available funds for restoration and other projects such as the RSIC (Reno Sparks Indian Colony)/Walmart floodwall/levee project as well as the 102 Ranch and Lockwood and Mustang Ranch Restoration Projects that received less than a tenth of their costs from the 1/8-cents sales tax.

4. RECREATION PLAN UPDATE

Danielle Henderson – Natural Resources Manager, noted that she had coordinated with the various stakeholders to develop a Recreational Plan that is within the footprint of the overall Truckee River Flood Management Project that is designed to reduce flood damage and restoration of the ecosystem. Currently, Flood Project staff is working with the Corps to ascertain what recreational features desired by the community would be eligible for federal cost share. Ms. Henderson noted that she has plans to provide an update to a variety of

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boards and commissions, including but not limited to the Reno Recreation and Parks Commission; Redevelopment Advisory Board; RSCVA (Reno Sparks Convention and Visitors Authority); Nevada Department of Wildlife Board of Wildlife Commissioners and the City of Sparks Recreation and Parks Commission. The presentation to the FPCC (Flood Project Coordinating Committee) has been delayed until the September 2009 meeting in order to have an opportunity to incorporate and respond to comments and recommendations received during the presentations.

During the discussion it was suggested that a link be added to the Flood Project website that would allow individuals to view upcoming presentations times, dates and venues. As the discussion continued, it was noted that concerns have been expressed that recreational amenities typically conflict with wildlife causing certain negative impacts to wildlife and their habitat. Other discussion focused on whether the Flood Project has sought TMWA (Truckee Meadows Water Authority) funding. It was explained that the funding requirements of the Flood Project were of such a magnitude that Flood Project staff had not pursued the limited funding that might be available from TMWA. It was suggested that Flood Project staff approached TMWA about the use of a portion of their funds.

Ms. Henderson stated that a variety of funding sources are being used and leveraged for restoration projects and that it may be appropriate to expand the potential revenue sources. Ms. Henderson noted that she would bring the proposed Recreation Plan to the FPCC in September for inclusion in the LPP (Locally Preferred Plan).

5. TRAction PROJECTS

Rainbow Bend

Connie Butts – Canyon GID (General Improvement District), noted that the RFP (Request for Proposal) deadline had been extended to August 27, 2009. Once that process is ended and recommendations developed it will be brought to the FPCC (Flood Project Coordinating Committee) and others for final approval. Ms. Butts suggested that the use of the RFP rather than an RFQ (Request for Qualification) be verified with Senior Licensed Engineer Paul Urban, who had recommended the RFP process.

Reno-Sparks Indian Colony

Jay Aldean – Deputy Director, noted that the project is currently being closed out with Campbell Constriction as the project is essentially complete.

Naomi Duerr – Flood Project Director, noted that this is the first flood damage reduction project to be completed and had come in on time and within budget.

Mr. Aldean commended Eric Scheetz – Licensed Engineer, for his work in coordinating and overseeing the project's construction. Mr. Aldean noted that Mr. Scheetz is reviewing the potential to secure passage under the U. S. 395 bridge to connect with the trail that is part of the RSIC (Reno Sparks Indian Colony) site.

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Connie Butts commented that Mr. Scheetz is “great at looking outside the box.”

Ms. Duerr commented that Flood Project management had made a conscious decision to hire an engineer with construction experience noting the active roles Flood Project staff has had with Washoe County Public Works and RSIC in the construction of this particular TRAction Project.

Mustang Ranch Groundbreaking

Danielle Henderson – Natural Resources Manager, noted that no specific date or ceremony had been established for the Mustang Ranch Groundbreaking. However, a mid-September 2009 date might be appropriate as the weather begins to cool and construction is underway. Construction is currently set to commence the first week of August 2009.

6. CORPS (U. S. Army Corps of Engineers) PROJECT SCHEDULE

Jay Aldean - Deputy Director, noted that the Corps (U. S. Army Corps of Engineers) is undergoing a series of ITR (Internal Technical Review) and ETR (External Technical Review) processes, which has had some effect on the current Corps’ schedule. Mr. Aldean noted that the Corps has identified some questions that have “spawned” the additional reviews.

Naomi Duerr – Flood Project Director, commented that the Corps has been under intense scrutiny in the wake of Hurricane Katrina thereby causing the Corps to reexamine in greater detail each aspect of a proposed project to assure that all considerations have been met. Ms. Duerr noted that the Truckee River Flood Management Project encompasses some 50-miles of river and is one of the largest projects ever undertaken by the Corps. Additionally, there is some discussion about a change in the cost/benefit ration that is current at a 1:1 ratio. Ms. Duerr recalled the 1988 authorizations and subsequent change in the cost/benefit ratio that caused the project to not meet the revised cost/benefit analysis.

Responding to an inquiry about whether a consistent contact had been established with the Corps, Mr. Aldean explained that the Corps’ Project Director Roger Henderson is available to Flood Project staff as needed and has been instrumental in moving the project forward. Mr. Aldean pointed out that Mr. Henderson had taken a demotion in both pay and rank to manage the Truckee River Flood Management Project and that Mr. Henderson is always available to Flood Project staff, which was not always the case.

Ms. Duerr then noted that the Corps had been allocated an additional \$5 million to begin design on the project and that Flood Project staff had suggested and received a commitment by the Corps to add an assistant project manager to assist Mr. Henderson.

Mr. Aldean noted that Flood Project staff has been “forceful” in pursuing what-if scenarios and that an update on the schedule is expected in mid to late August.

Ms. Duerr noted that total Flood Project costs were still not fully identified.

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7. OTHER TOPICS?

Naomi Duerr – Flood Project Director, commented that Deputy Director Jay Aldean and Flood Project Manager Paul Urban had recently completed a “white paper” for the City of Reno on the flood mitigation resolution as to why the area south of Huffaker Narrows should be included.

Mr. Aldean noted that the “white paper” did not address flooding issues with Pembroke Drive and Mira Loma but rather focused on the need to keep the floodplain open. Mr. Aldean pointed out that maps and other exhibits were included to assist in the enforcement mechanisms. The technical memorandum is designed in a manner that will allow for periodic amendments and updates as needed to address issues and concerns in the future.

Mark Gookin – Wood-Rodgers, commented that the Western Region Floodplain Managers conference would be held September 8 through 11, 2009 in San Jose, California. Mr. Gookin encouraged those seeking additional information to contact him at Wood Rodgers.

Naomi Duerr – Flood Project Director, noted that she would be among the speakers during the conference and noted that the Flood Project has not been detrimentally affected by either the State of Nevada or Washoe County budget issues. Ms. Duerr explained that the Flood Project had not pursued an additional \$5 million appropriation from the legislature due to the current budget issues affecting the State of Nevada. Ms. Duerr then noted that the passage of AB-54 allowed the region to use a portion of the 1/8-cent sales tax to fund home elevations in the Hidden Valley and Eastside Subdivision area as part of the Flood Project. Staff continues to seek additional grant and other monies from FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency) and other sources.

The meeting ended at 4:23 p.m.