



A Regional Partnership of
East Tennessee Communities
ANDERSON • BLOUNT • KNOX • LOUDON • UNION

**PlanET Working Group Meeting #5
Environment**

March 19, 2013

Cansler YMCA, 9:30 am – 11:30 am

Meeting Summary

Meeting attendees: Berny Ilger (ARCADIS), Ben Epperson (Knox County Health Department), Betsy Ford (Knoxville Utilities Board), Roy Arthur (Knox County Stormwater/Univ. of TN), Chris Thompson (TN Dept of Environment and Conservation), Kim Raia (Little River Watershed Association), Renee Hoyos (Clean Water Network), John Lamb (Blount County), Ellen Smith (ORNL and Oak Ridge City Council), Tiffany Lynn Foster (TVA), John Harris (Knox County CAC), and Athanasia Senecal-Lewis (City of Oak Ridge Community Development Department).

PlanET Staff -Amy Brooks (TPO), Mark Donaldson (MPC), Sherith Colverson (City of Knoxville), Jeff Welch (TPO), Tim Kuhn (MPC), Alex Zendel (MPC), Liz Albertson (MPC), Kevin Tilbury (Gresham, Smith and Partners), Gail Myers (Univ. of TN-Social Work Office of Research and Public Service)

WELCOME & Check-In

Ice breaker and welcome by Berny Ilger.

WHERE ARE WE

Brief recap of where we are in the PlanET process by Berny Ilger.

CONCEPT EVOLUTION

Review by Tim Kuhn of how we got from the chip maps to conceptual maps seen today.

PlanET INTERACTIVE EXERCISE

Sherith Colverson facilitated a modified Meeting in a Box Metroquest activity and asked for feedback from the WG members.

Feedback Notes:

Sherith asked meeting attendees what are their top priorities for region, the following is a summary of the responses given regarding their top choices.

- Why is water quality important for future growth?
 - Because more and more of our surface water is becoming part of our drinking water supply.
 - There are lots of water quality people in this room.
 - Our receiving waters are in the lower areas of our watersheds and the impact of the activities in the headwaters has ramifications downstream.
 - Finding areas to swim in fresh water is difficult in this area-although water is abundant, you can't get in it.
 - It's a good proxy for the health of our environment and the people, if water is good; a lot of other things are good too.
 - Clean water is important aesthetically and water is something people have focused on as one of the assets of this region.
- Why is redeveloping land important?
 - Reuse of land makes sense.
 - Process of redeveloping eliminates some other environmental concerns, such as contamination remediation (e.g. Brownfields).
 - Using land that is already redeveloped also helps reduce travel times.
 - Walmarts and other big box stores have an average use life of 30 years, when the big box moves, the strip mall deteriorates and these are prime sights for redevelopment, we have many vacant strip malls.
 - Redevelopment can happen in areas that are already developed (e.g. brownfields redevelopment of Costco) revitalizing neglected residential neighborhoods too.
 - Redevelopment helps protect and increase property values.
 - When a commercial site deteriorates, you have a problem with blight and flight, so trying to reutilize these helps with health, equity, blight, and is good for the environment.
- Why was cost of infrastructure chosen as a top priority for evaluating growth in the region?
 - It's a big part of living in the region, if we spend a lot of money on infrastructure, we cannot do other things.
 - It's a good metric for economics as well as some of the other things we're working on.
- Comments on the Growth Concept Maps
Sherith asked meeting attendees to comment on the growth concept maps that were developed at the last working group

meeting – Trend or “Business-as-Usual,” Spread-Out, Corridors, Centers, and Cities and Towns.

- Trend or “Business-as-Usual”
 - Growth is out, it's a flight scenario, not where the people are currently.
 - Transportation is limited to where it is currently located, and new roads/transportation opportunities won't be available, the money won't be there for it.
- Spread-Out
 - It's more spread out, it's business as usual, but worse.
 - Our transportation network requires more roads, because our population is more disperse.
 - Improving the roads would add a lot more jobs.
- Corridors
 - It decentralizes things more than in the trend or spread out scenarios.
 - There is more opportunity for people to live closer to where they work.
 - There's a park and ride service, there's more opportunity for public transportation options.
- Centers
 - There's people and jobs in the city center.
 - There are more park and rides, more public transportation options throughout the region.
 - There's more growth in the existing cities and towns, as well as some of the new communities.
 - There's some farmland that hasn't been paved, there's some open space that hasn't been used for new people and new jobs.
- Cities and Towns
 - More open space
 - More clustered, more growth specifically in the urban areas
 - Not as many road improvements are needed.
 - More transit
- Priority/Ranking Comments

Sherith asked meeting attendees to comment on the priority options.

 - Water quality metric is wrong, should be re-evaluated... it's counter intuitive
 - It is heavily weighted toward currently impaired streams becoming worse as a greater issue than previously unimpaired streams becoming impaired.
 - Should look at federal compliance measures as part of measure particularly that the smaller communities are

currently implementing. This should be factored into the model.

- Sherith asked meeting attendees to comment on why they didn't like the Trend or "Business as usual" Growth Concept?
 - It makes the quality of life go down.
 - Spreading people out, creates more inequity, greater differences between communities, creates the ability to ignore problems in some parts of town.

PRIORITIES & CONCEPTS ANALYSIS

Kevin Tilbury, GS&P, led the WG members through a more detailed discussion of the concepts and priorities.

Additional Feedback Notes:

- What soils were used for "primeland?"
- Were developed soils in rural areas noted?
- Critical habitat needs to be defined
- Farms needs to be shown as developed land.
- This issue with water quality being disturbed highly even in the cities and town and new centers...
 - Existing and impaired streams shouldn't be the focus, we are concerned about all streams.
 - There are a number of streams that haven't been assessed.
 - A more realistic parameter is the impervious surfaces next to streams/in watersheds...rather than slanting it to the currently impaired.
 - We need to balance the art with science of this.

NEXT STEPS & CLOSING

Berny Ilger discussed what is next in the PlanET process and what we need from each WG in terms of participation and input over the next 3-4 months. We'll be asking the working groups to meet again soon.

CLOSING

Thank you and closing by Berny Ilger.