

ORR COMPREHENSIVE LAND USE PLAN FOCUS GROUP MEETING NOTES

March 15, 2002

A working meeting of the Focus Group was held in the City Services Complex at 10:00 a.m. until 2:30 p.m. on March 15, 2002.

Attendees

The following members of the Focus Group were in attendance: Ray Evans, Parker Hardy, Robert Kennedy, Lorene Sigal, Dev Joslin, Bill Pardue, Lloyd Stokes, Joe Valentino, Marshall Whisnant, Beth Phillips, Lawrence Young, Eric Rauch, Pete Craven, and David Mosby. Marty Marina, Steve Alexander, Paul Boyer, Ralph Lillard and Scott Davis were unable to attend. Jim Evans substituted for Dave McKinney and Wendy Waterson-Murray attended for Scott Davis.

Members of the Facilitation Team in attendance were Barry Lawson, Pat Parr, Marianne Heiskell, Wayne Tolbert and Mike Deacon. Ed Cumesty also attended. Approximately four members of the public attended all or part of the meeting.

New Action Items

- May 23 Public Meeting
- Revise February 6 Meeting Notes
- Provide revised scenarios to Focus Group

Welcome/Introductions/Agenda/Meeting Notes

The proposed meeting agenda was briefly discussed, agreed upon, and followed. Two clarifications to the February 6 meeting notes were agreed upon.

As part of the discussion on the agenda there was a discussion about the status of land in Oak Ridge which is available for commercial or industrial development. Ray Evans indicated that the Flour study took this land into account but there was a tentative action item for SAIC to map IND-1 and IND-2 land. However, this was somewhat overtaken by events later in the day when Ray Evans produced a list of vacant industrial properties and they were identified on a large map.

Announcements

Ed Cumesty (DOE) discussed recent management changes occurring within the Oak Ridge Operations. Leah Dever will be leaving Oak Ridge for an assignment to the Office of Science at Headquarters. Michael Holland will be replacing Leah as the interim Manager. DOE intends for the land use planning to go forward as planned to its conclusion.

There is also an Environmental Management top-to-bottom program review ongoing with one possible scenario being accelerated cleanup. Mr. Cumesty indicated that DOE must coordinate with the regulators and did not have much detail to share at this time.

He also discussed the review of the Parcel ED-1 FONSI and Mitigation Action Plan (MAP). He indicated that DOE is considering a fee simple title transfer for this land that ensures the MAP provisions will be satisfied. The MAP had an independent scientific review and some changes to the MAP are possibly warranted; future re-examination is possible, as new data becomes available. This summer is the target date for the transfer of the parcel. In response to a question Mr. Cumesty indicated that it would be easy to handle the exclusion zones in the title transfers. He noted what would be harder is to insure that areas not so included which may later be found important to ecosystem viability are properly cared for.

Pat Parr mentioned the three field trips taken by most members of the Focus Group and Facilitation team this month. The study area was seen from roads traversing the area. These trips were reported to be very valuable. At the meeting both Eric Rauch and Lloyd Stokes expressed their appreciation for the trips being planned and carried out. Lorene Sigal wondered if DOE does a good enough job of allowing citizens to see the facilities with the reservation.

Pat also indicated that the project now has a web site:

<http://landuseplanning.ornl.gov/>

Public Comments

JoAnn Thompson discussed the value of the public in the planning process. She mentioned that many members of the public are unaware of the positive attributes of the ORR as a regional and ecological treasure. They were more knowledgeable about cleanup efforts. She noted that stakeholders can bring variety and balance to the planning process and they can contribute unique knowledge and perspectives. She was critical of perceived failures to apply the collective knowledge of the public in decision making citing the Pine Ridge development as a case in point. Both Ray Evans and Marshall Whisnant stated there was significant public involvement in that process.

Scenarios

Mike Deacon presented four draft land use scenarios to the Focus Group. The process for developing the four scenarios began with the original base map developed for the land located at the western end of the ORR (i.e., proposed land use planning area). This map included the pink "options analysis" land, ETTP, land currently leased to CROET (Parcels ED-1 and ED-2), and the land that was determined to be needed for DOE's current and future mission. Additional maps were created for the area showing various environmental features and economic designations based on Oak Ridge Planning Commission recommendations. Comments were received from both the Focus Group and the public and a preliminary feedback map was created showing areas of general agreement and disagreement within the pink "options analysis" area. The remaining pink area was looked at in detail and the four draft scenarios were developed.

1. **Scenario 1 (Greenspace Emphasis)** - This scenario includes the greatest amount of acreage for greenspace, conservation, and research. The assumptions for this land use include (1) active conservation-based management (e.g., wildlife, habitat restoration/rehabilitation, forest health; (2) minimal creation of additional corridors (i.e., roads); (3) compatible public uses (hiking, biking, hunting, historic sites); and (4) all activities must be compatible with research. This land use would include large blocks of Black Oak Ridge, McKinney Ridge, and Pine Ridge within the study area. This scenario also includes a small portion of light industrial/commercial development within Self Sufficiency Parcel 8 along Bear Creek Road.
2. **Scenario 2 (Development Emphasis)** - This scenario includes the greatest amount of development including light industrial/commercial, office, and residential. This scenario also includes the greenspace, conservation, and research land use. The light industrial/commercial development is concentrated along Highway 58 (Oak Ridge Turnpike) and Blair Road in the vicinity of ETTP, and along Bear Creek Road within a portion of Self-Sufficiency Parcel 8. The office and residential land is located at the east end of the ORR adjacent to the Oak Ridge Turnpike and Wisconsin Avenue (portion of Self Sufficiency Parcel D). Areas designated as greenspace, conservation, and research are located along Black Oak Ridge, McKinney Ridge, and the top of Pine Ridge.
3. **Scenario 3 (Modified Parcel ED-3)** - This scenario is based on the City of Oak Ridge's proposal that was presented to the Focus Group at the February 6 meeting. Light industrial/commercial development is concentrated around the Blair Road and Oak Ridge Turnpike interchange and within a portion of Parcel 8 along Bear Creek Road (identical to Scenario 2). This scenario also includes a portion of an area immediately adjacent to ETTP that was considered in the ETTP EA for light industrial/commercial development. Residential development is located in the same area as Scenario 2 west of Wisconsin Avenue. Areas designated as greenspace, conservation, and research are located along Black Oak Ridge, McKinney Ridge, and the top of Pine Ridge. This scenario would only be acceptable to the City if other ORR land outside of the Focus Group planning area becomes available (i.e., Parcel 13, "maximized Parcel G, and a portion of Solway Bend).
4. **Scenario 4 (Less Development)** - This scenario is based on input from Lorene Sigal and others recommending that no development occur south of Highway 58. Light industrial/commercial development is concentrated north of Highway 58 around the Blair Road interchange. A small portion of Parcel 8 is also designated for light industrial/commercial development similar to Scenario 1. Residential development within Parcel D along Wisconsin Avenue is also reduced to one-lot deep on either side of Wisconsin Avenue. Large areas designated as greenspace, conservation, and research are located along Black Oak Ridge, McKinney Ridge, and Pine Ridge.

During and after the presentation, the Focus Group members had an opportunity to discuss each one of the scenarios and recommendations for changes were presented. These are summarized below.

Summary of Suggested Changes

Barry Lawson summarized the various changes suggested during the discussion of scenarios. They included:

- The area west of the pond on the south side of Highway 58 (directly across from the main ETTP entrance) changed from industrial/commercial to greenspace for all scenarios.
- The area south of Highway 58 and along the Clinch River south to Bear Creek Road changed from greenspace for Scenarios 1 and 4 to industrial/commercial in order to provide for a future rail spur south to the former Breeder Reactor site.
- The former Parcel ED-3 area along Blair Road from Poplar Creek south to the road leading up to the tanks on top of McKinney Ridge changed to greenspace for all scenarios.
- Generalize the industrial/commercial and residential land uses instead of using zoning designations. General land use designations will be used for the scenario maps but zoning assumptions will need to be made for the analysis.
- Acknowledge the City Planning Commission's work in our report. It was suggested that possibly an overlay could be used to show the similarities/differences between the Planning Commission's land use recommendations and the various scenarios.
- A brief discussion was held on the possibility of a 5th scenario. However, DOE cannot commit to any changes in their identified mission areas at this time.
- The scenario maps will include a new land use designation for two areas within the ETTP Zone 1 area (i.e., a portion of the Powerhouse Area and the Duct Island area). These areas will be designated as Open Space. These are previously disturbed areas that because of various constraints (e.g., utility corridors, roads, wetlands, floodplains, topography, etc.) are not ideal for development. These areas also are not considered to be a high priority for greenspace/conservation. However, they do provide some areas of limited ecological habitat. Land uses could include limited development (temporary storage or staging areas), research, habitat restoration and/or rehabilitation, and wildlife management.

Oak Ridge Vacant Industrial Properties

Ray Evans provided a discussion of known vacant property in the City that is zoned for industrial use. He showed a list of these parcels using the overhead projector. Others helped hold up a large zoning map to help locate the properties and he discussed the status of each property exceeding a few acres. Almost all properties were fairly small (most less than an acre and many less than 10 acres).

Future Planning Activities

A Public Meeting is being planned for May 23. It will run from 6:00 to 8:30 PM and would be held in the Mall. It is envisioned as an interactive type meeting.

The next Focus Group meeting will be May 3. A newsletter is being envisioned for distribution in April in lieu of a Focus Group meeting.

Comments from the Public

There were no additional public comments.