

**City of La Porte
Comprehensive Plan Update
Steering Committee**

Minutes of September 29, 1998

Members Present: Roy Baldwin, Peter Griffiths, Barbara Jenks, Martha Love, Pat Muston, Chester Pool, Imogene Pulleine, Steve Valerius, Gary Wigginton, Betty Waters, John Paul Zemanek

Members Absent: David Brady, Deotis Gay, Brian Moore, John Tomerlin

City Staff Present: Robert T. Herrera, John Joerns, Jeff Litchfield, Louis Rigby, Joe Sease, Doug Kneupper, Steve Gillett, Stephen Barr, Carol Buttler, Martha Gillett, Dana Ybarra, Peggy Lee

Note: Mayor Malone was unable to attend the meeting due to medical reasons.

John Joerns introduced Bret Keast and Ann Bagley, with the firm of Wilbur Smith Associates.

All staff members and steering committee members present introduced themselves.

1. Report from City Planners, Wilbur Smith Associates, regarding Comprehensive Plan Update process and the role and responsibilities of the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee.

Bret Keast, Director of Planning for Wilbur Smith Associates (WSA), gave a brief overview of the process that will be followed during the update of the Comprehensive Plan.

Mr. Keast noted there would be a public forum on October 27, 1998, at the Sylvan Beach Pavilion between the hours of 6:00 pm and 8:45 pm. During the meeting, small groups will be formed and will begin identifying issues. Decisions will only be made on issues once there is a consensus of the group. If there are issues that can't be agreed upon, the group will move on to other things and those issues that remain unresolved will be addressed at the level of the Planning and Zoning Commission and City Council.

Mr. Keast encouraged everyone to contact as many people as possible about the meeting on the 27th. A large turn out of citizens is important.

Mr. Keast reviewed sections of the project notebook that was previously distributed. Fourteen tasks will be undertaken as part of the process of updating the Plan.

Robert T. Herrera, City Manager, commented on the importance of the task that has been given to the steering committee and congratulated the members on their appointment.

The Committee identified the perceived strengths and weaknesses of the City. They are as follows:

STRENGTHS	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Galveston Bay 2. Neighborhoods 3. Park systems 4. Industry friendly 5. Police and Fire Protection/EMS 6. Small town atmosphere 7. Location (near Houston) 8. Greenery 9. Heritage 10. Energetic citizens 11. Low crime rate 12. Housing costs 13. Municipal facilities 14. Schools 15. Friendly people 16. Diversity 17. Strong business involvement and support 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 18. City administration 19. Good highways, deep water port (Barbour's Cut), rail yard, airport, Fred Hartman Bridge 20. Effective control 21. Responsiveness to community expectations 22. High average income 23. High education attainments 24. Young families 25. Move toward tourism; N.A.S.A., San Jacinto 26. Three higher education institutions 27. Employment opportunities 28. Plans implemented; goals 29. Fourth largest city in Harris County

WEAKNESSES	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Size of library 2. Retail loss; lack of support 3. Restaurants 4. School reputation 5. No public transportation 6. No central place for social services 7. Total requirements for development; development guide 8. Industrial reputation 9. Lack of public relations 10. Lack of executive housing 11. Resistance to change 12. West end population not directed toward La Porte 13. Lack of entry identification 14. Visual appeal 15. Lack of family oriented recreation and activities (movie theatre) 16. Drainage (reputation for flooding) 17. Reputation of hurricanes 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 18. Negative media emphasis 19. Older areas appearance; established neighborhood 20. Lack of partnership with County 21. Traffic congestion (train @ Fairmont Parkway) 22. Absentee landowners (particularly along bay) 23. Lack of redevelopment between bay and older areas. 24. Low voter turn out 25. Community fragmentation 26. High land prices 27. Impacts of Bayport terminal (communication with port, lights, noise, view, traffic, lack of citizen concern, erosion) 28. Airport utilization; loss of FBO 29. Failure to enforce existing ordinances

2. Election of a Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee.

Imogene Pulleine nominated Steve Valerius for Chairman. Peter Griffiths seconded the nomination. Mr. Valerius accepted the nomination and was named Chairman by acclamation.

Chester Pool nominated Betty Waters for Vice-Chairman. Martha Love seconded the nomination. Mrs. Waters accepted the nomination and was named Vice-Chairman by acclamation.

An oral vote was also taken with all members voting in the affirmative.

Future steering committee meetings were scheduled for November 5th & November 12th at 7:00 pm in the City Hall Council Chambers.

3. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 8:55 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Peggy Lee
Secretary
Comprehensive Plan Update Steering Committee

Approved on this 5th day of November, 1998.

Betty Waters
Vice-Chairperson
Comprehensive Plan Update Steering Committee