

Bay Area Alliance for Sustainable Development
March 31, 1997
Minutes

1. **Introductory remarks** were made by each participant in the leadership panel -
 - Carl Anthony, President, Earth Island Institute
 - Richard Clarke, CEO Retired, PG&E
 - Sunne McPeak, President, Bay Area Council
 - Michele Perrault, International VP, Sierra Club
 - Charlotte Powers, President, Association of Bay Area Governments

2. **Marty Spitzer, Executive Director of the President's Council on Sustainable Development (PCSD)** provided a history of the PCSD and briefly discussed the report presented to the President by the PCSD in March 1996. He described the report as similar to "apple pie" - many of the ingredients for sustainable development are identified but "no one has quite been able to bake it yet."

3. **The leadership panel shared their thoughts** on framework and issues that should be addressed by the Bay Area Alliance for Sustainable Development (Alliance):
 - Based on the experience of the President's Council on Sustainable Development, collaboration among the stakeholders in the Alliance will be critical.
 - The Alliance could be a trial ground for sustainable development recommendations identified by the PCSD.
 - The Alliance should have two-way communication with the PCSD, i.e., what works and what doesn't, we need support from the federal government in this area, etc.
 - The Alliance needs to be a grassroots effort. Elected officials need to talk to one another about issues such as transportation, jobs, housing. They must work together regionally to solve these problems.
 - NIMBY (Not in My BackYard) should not define quality of life in the Bay Area.
 - Fiscalization of land use - the way cities are funded today leads to competition among cities, not collaboration.
 - Progress has been made in recent times regarding social equity but that progress is tempered by many continuing social equity challenges. Ten years ago, people of color and the poor were seldom concerned about the environment because they were concerned about jobs. This is changing now. However, there continues to be a disproportionate number of hazardous waste facilities in poor neighborhoods. A significant homelessness problem exists. As a region, our transportation and land use discussions focus primarily on process, i.e., how to reduce congestion on the freeways, rather than the desired outcome of the efficient transportation of people and goods. Additionally, these discussions generally exclude dialogue on how low income people can get where they need to go.
 - Yet we are presented with opportunities - redevelopment of brownfields; and educational opportunities where the concept of sustainable development, and specifically the "three e's," can be introduced into the K-12 and community college curricula.

- The Alliance should find a few short-term successes which will encourage people and therefore lead to more effort.
- Traffic congestion is the #1 problem in the Bay Area; there is a strong link between traffic congestion and housing.
- From an employer/business perspective, we must be able to move employees, products and services while providing a high quality of life
- The conversion of military bases in the Bay Area provides a great opportunity to demonstrate sustainable development.
- The timing for this Alliance is better than it has ever been, now that the Bay Area has gone through a recession.
- “Think globally, act locally and plan regionally.”
- The Alliance needs a business plan and a commitment to implement.

4. General comments/observations from all participants:

- The business plan should include how it’s done, steering committee, funding task force, etc.
- We should identify the good models in the Bay Area that might be elevated to the national level.
- There is much expertise in the region on land use and transportation.
- There is insufficient “sense of region” in the area.
- We have no elected, accountable structure of regional governance. This may be necessary to succeed.
- Maryland has asked the federal government not to fund infrastructure except in designated growth areas.
- The Alliance has insufficient representation of the development community, local business, economic development community.
- There is much extraordinary sustainable development work ongoing in the Bay Area. We need to take advantage of the work already done rather than reinvent it. (ABAG agreed to be the repository of information on efforts already underway)
- We need to have desired outcomes before we can commit to devote the time. How much time/resources are we committing?
- We must be inclusive;
- Need to define the problem. Is this cooperation for the sake of cooperation; collaboration for the sake of collaboration?
- Bay Vision 2020 didn’t go anywhere because regionalization scared people. People in the north of the Bay Area don’t care about the activities in the South Bay and vice versa.
- We’re not short on vision; we’re short on actions to achieve vision. Can the consensus process “deliver the goods” in the absence of a political power to make a decision?

5. Next Steps:

- A working group established to develop a business plan for consideration by all participants.
- The business plan will be circulated to all participants prior to the next meeting with the intent of securing participant commitment at the next meeting, through a partnership agreement, to work on the items identified in the plan. The next meeting will be scheduled around June 1.

- The working group consists of the five members of the leadership panel, John Wise, Gary Binger, Maria Moyer-Angus, Joe Bodivitz, Deborah Berman Santana, Shelly Poticha and Peter Melhus.
- Peter Melhus will schedule meetings of the working group to develop the business plan.