

Minutes Neighborhood Advisory Commission August 9, 2014

Minutes of the Neighborhood Advisory Commission (NAC) held on August 9, 2014 8:30 – 11:30 a.m., at Tempe History Museum, Community Room, 809 E. Southern, Tempe, Arizona.

(MEMBERS) Present: Karen Adams, Nancy Buell, Arlene Chin, Cole Hickman, Kiyomi Kurooka, Nancy Lesko, Robert Miller, Jon Mulford, Joaquin Rios, Scott Smas, Christopher Ware.

(MEMBERS) Excused Absences: Josephine McNamara, Bill Munch, Russ Plieseis, Julie Ramsey, Bill Wagner.

City Staff Present: Elizabeth Thomas, Neighborhood Services Specialist, Shauna Warner, Neighborhood Services Manager, Ryan Levesque, Deputy Community Development Director – Planning, 480-858-2393, ryan_levesque@tempe.gov, Mayor Mark Mitchell, 480-350-8793, mark_mitchell@tempe.gov

Guests Present: None.

Agenda Item 1 – Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 8:30 a.m.

Agenda Item 2 – Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Agenda Item 3 – Consideration of Minutes: May 7, 2014

Commissioner Smas made a motion to approve the May 7, 2014 minutes and Commissioner Lesko seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Agenda Item 4 – Overview of Neighborhood Priorities- Mayor Mark Mitchell

Mayor Mark Mitchell thanked commission members for their commitment and volunteerism and expressed great appreciation for his experiences growing up in Tempe. Going back to his first run for Council office, he has prioritized providing his children the same experiences, only better. Some of the priorities he is working on with his Council colleagues: maintain and improve all assets and infrastructure including parks, streets and facilities, be a city that continuously invests in itself, continue bike and pedestrian pathway improvements, expand defined downtown area and enhance shade and walkability throughout, continue to cultivate partnerships with Arizona State University, celebrate and increase economic development opportunities, encourage

innovative adaptive reuse and renovation, seek out more resident input and engagement through a variety of means including planning processes such as character areas and transportation master planning and strive to balance resident expectations with realities. Mayor Mitchell encouraged members to participate in Neighborhood Day at the State Legislature and to get to know and be involved with their State Lawmakers.

NAC members asked how to best communicate with Mayor and Council. Mayor Mitchell encouraged members to continue being active and engaged and to share what they are hearing with and from their neighbors. He emphasized that ideas and recommendations are always welcome. Chair Miller added that NAC members have been working with staff to allow for NAC's earlier involvement in various planning processes and service plans, prior to decisions being made, whenever possible.

Agenda Item 5 – Discussion of Long Range Planning Impacts on Neighborhoods

Ryan called attention to the upcoming August Character Areas workshops focused on strategies and priorities. The meeting packet contained copies of the door hangers for the Corona/South Tempe and Kiwanis/The Lakes Character Areas. Members wanted to know what type of feedback was received. Input has varied but common themes include: the need for walls/wall improvements, concern regarding density and the number of apartments, types of businesses and eating establishments desired. The final products will highlight needs and opportunities in each Character Area and be used as a tool to help inform the Capital Improvements Project (CIP) budget and Economic Development outreach. The next cycle of Character Areas has not been identified yet.

Discussion took place with some commissioners expressing concern about rental units and the potential for lack of investment in properties as well as the community. Others noted that the rental units are market driven in that they are the projects receiving funding from banks and are in response to the premise that younger residents are not driven to home ownership. A suggestion was made that the question be reframed, when I decide to own, what community do I feel welcome in and want to live in? The comment was made that the more pride and engagement in community that is cultivated, the less likely residents will be to trash it – whether renter or owner.

The General Plan 2040 was adopted in May 2014. The requirement is that the plan be updated every 10 years. Staff is considering an approach of looking at the plan more frequently and making adjustments as needed perhaps every 2 years or 5 years, rather than waiting years to make a major overhaul.

Neighborhood Services staff shared a brief powerpoint presentation noting the purpose of the Transportation Master Plan (TMP) as a guiding document to further development of a citywide, multi-modal transportation system integrated with the city's land use plans. The TMP will emphasize the ability to move people instead of focusing solely on improving the ability to move vehicles. Comments regarding the Transportation Master Plan will be taken through August 21 online at www.tempe.gov/transportationplan. Members were asked if they wanted to provide input as a group and/or individually. They indicated individually and were encouraged to go online and complete the survey.

The question came up if the \$25 Million in street improvements highlighted by the Mayor were in addition to the transit, bike and pedestrian improvements planned. Ryan confirmed yes, these are in addition and due to funding from the transit tax. He also confirmed that all bike crossings are designed for bikes and pedestrians.

Agenda Item 6 – Discussion of Possible Zoning and Development Code Amendments

Changes to building and zoning codes are being examined to allow for the adoption of an Adaptive Re-Use program allowing for new businesses to have the opportunity to adaptively reuse buildings that may have been built or designed years ago for different uses. Building improvements can be cost prohibitive so the city will look at easing restrictions on a case by case basis as well as prior case examples. Changes could include modifications to requirements for landscape, alternate lighting, equipment screening, parking requirements and occupancy standards. The process is moving quickly at the request of Council. Members were asked if they wanted to offer input now as a commission and/or wait for the draft report with more specific language information. They opted to wait.

Land use changes (i.e. from residential to a pub or retail) would still require a public hearing process. It is hoped that these modifications will also help to fine tune and clarify the administrative process ensuring development ideas come forward with designs and to tie in the Development Review process with the PAD process and allow greater ability to flex processes if design plans change significantly.

Members expressed concerns regarding areas with high percentages of rental properties and the accompanying challenges getting property owner agreement for things like historic designation. The suggestion was made that historic eligible properties should be somehow flagged so that staff is aware of potential concerns if and when a demolition permit is submitted. Ryan offered that staff is looking at methods and best practices in neighboring cities for when public notices can potentially be tied into the PAD process. He offered to provide a memo update with the specific language when available.

Agenda Item 7 – Group Activity

No group activity conducted due to time constraints and lack of facilitator.

Agenda Item 8 – Recap of Past Year’s Commission Meetings

Staff advised that the Ordinance reducing the Neighborhood Advisory Commission membership from 21 to 15 passed. The current quorum is nine based on 16 seated members. The quorum will be reduced to eight when the membership becomes 15 through terming off and/or attrition.

There was some discussion regarding the composition of NAC being by zip code and reflective of census numbers for each zip code by ordinance. Members agreed there really isn’t another equitable alternative. Members pointed out that the first paragraph of the NAC Ordinance Item 1 still references the organization and appointment of members of the Commission to serve on standing committees. Since standing committees are no longer permitted, the language needs to reflect that.

Accomplishments of the past year included:

- Integrating the first State of the Neighborhoods by the Mayor with the Neighborhood Workshop and Awards
- Making substantial changes to the content, organization and wording of the Tempe Involving the Public (TIP) Manual
- Providing budget related feedback
- Working to expand the notification area for projects from 300' to 600' for neighborhood residents and businesses and from 600' to quarter mile for neighborhood contacts and to ensure consistency amongst various documents
- Requesting Open Meeting Law training and clarification (A general staff and commission training class was held on Monday, June 16, 2014.)
- Weighed in individually and collectively on Code Compliance and Solid Waste related concerns
- Variety of and caliber of city staff and guest speakers

Agenda Item 9 – Discussion and Prioritization of Neighborhood Advisory Commission Goals for the coming year

- Solid Waste Code – ask for any changes to come before NAC prior to moving forward or adopting them
- Neighborhood Workshop and Awards planning. Continue to encourage new faces and additional outreach to neighborhoods that haven't previously attended or participated in submitting neighborhood awards.
- General Plan 2040 – education was identified as a priority, request for annual updates and feedback on what commission can do to assist
- Continued emphasis on shade, walkability and safe walking and biking options
- Planning and Development Code implementation of any changes
- Continue to prioritize education and awareness through communication, dialogue, lessons learned and involvement earlier in processes
- Additional clarification and direction regarding what members can and cannot do. Maybe the focus can be on don't do's.
- Connection and communication with Tempe and Kyrene Elementary School Districts regarding the use of schools in neighborhoods. Staff agreed to invite their respective superintendent's to a future meeting.
- Information and education regarding the various awards that are given out to see if there is any overlap and/or potential to combine efforts. Staff agreed to work towards compiling a list.

Agenda Item 10 – Proposed Agenda Items for September 3, 2014 Meeting or Future Meeting Update

A request to include background information regarding the Historic Preservation Commission, scope of work and charge in the September packet was noted.

- Future meeting - explore potential joint meeting with Historic Preservation Commission
- Planning and Development Code Update regarding status of implementation of changes

- Solid Waste Code – NAC opportunity to provide input on outreach/communication for the 6 mixed bulk trash pick-ups and the 3 green waste
- Safe and Sober Campaign Changes Update
- Open Meeting Law clarifications specific to NAC member roles

Meeting was adjourned at 11:30 a.m.

Prepared by: Elizabeth Thomas, Neighborhood Services Specialist

Reviewed by: Shauna Warner, Neighborhood Services Manager