
Minutes Neighborhood Advisory Commission August 7, 2013

Minutes of the Neighborhood Advisory Commission (NAC) held on August 7, 2013 5:30 p.m. – 7:00 p.m., at City Hall, 31 E. 5th Street, 3rd Floor Conference Room, Tempe, Arizona.

(MEMBERS) Present: Karen Adams, Nancy Buell, Kiyomi Kurooka, Nancy Lesko, Josephine McNamara, Robert Miller, Bill Munch, Russ Plieseis, Julie Ramsey, Scott Smas, Bill Wagner, Christopher Ware.

(MEMBERS) Excused Absences: John Chester, John Sanborn, Jon Mulford.

(MEMBERS) Unexcused Absences:

City Staff Present: Elizabeth Thomas, Neighborhood Services Specialist; Shauna Warner, Neighborhood Services Director, Aaron Peterson, Tempe Learning Center, aaron_peterson@tempe.gov.

Agenda Item 1 – Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 5:35 p.m.

Agenda Item 2 – Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Agenda Item 3 – Consideration of Minutes: June 22, 2013

Commissioner Ware made a motion to approve the June 22, 2013 minutes and Commissioner Munch seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Agenda Item 4 – City Code Nuisance Parties and Unlawful Gatherings Update

The changes to the City Code pertaining to Nuisance Parties and Unlawful Gatherings that commissioners heard about and expressed support for at the March meeting have recently been adopted. The meeting packet included the previous code language (with visible strike outs) alongside the amended code language, allowing commissioners to see exactly where and how the code was changed.

Commissioner Lesko offered the aside that ASU was not listed in the latest top 20 party list. Commissioners inquired how and when the specifics of the code changes will be shared with ASU

students. Staff noted that ASU begins August 22 and that the week of August 16 the party patrol starts up. Initial outreach efforts typically center on education and awareness rather than citations. In addition, there is an entire Back to School campaign with information for elementary through college students.

Commissioners requested follow up information regarding proactive efforts and methods used for getting the word out about the ordinance changes for the next meeting. Staff also offered to get them the PD report out regarding types and number of violations issued when available.

Agenda Item 5 – Further discussion and refinement of Commission Priorities and Goals

Aaron briefly reiterated his understanding of the main points of the group discussion at the June retreat. As noted in the retreat meeting minutes, there was a strong desire expressed to create some type of a process, ideally during the planning phases, to know what is going on sooner with the goal of better providing feedback and recommendations to Council and City Staff when appropriate to do so. Aaron explained that commissioners can start by working together to create a process or work on further identifying priorities and let the process organically evolve.

Also from the retreat discussion, the following broad commission focus areas were identified:

Neighborhood Workshop and Awards

Education and Awareness

Planning and Sustainability

Code Compliance and Solid Waste

Aaron requested commissioners elaborate on what they are trying to accomplish for each focus area, why and how they intend to get there. Commissioners expressed a desire for greater involvement and opportunities for input in decision making processes. Even when they are involved, they feel strongly it is after the fact rather than prior to the decision being made – if at all. The recent changes to solid waste were repeatedly noted.

A significant and lengthy discussion then took place which included the following comments:

- There is a lack of communication or at least prompt communication.
- What is it we are supposed to be doing?
- NAC members should be educated and made aware sooner so they can serve as a vehicle for educating the community.
- Solid Waste Changes – This is just one example of a complete lack of opportunity to provide input regarding changes on an issue that impacts all neighborhoods.
- Items have to be agendaized, they cannot be discussed otherwise.
- If items come up between meetings, how do we get them on the next agenda?
- How do we solicit input from residents in our zip code and avoid problems with Open Meeting Laws?
- How do we interact with residents in our zip codes who don't know us or even know we represent them on NAC?
- We are not hearing anything from Mayor and Council –we need to know we are valued.
- There are lots of different departments and staff. With some there is good communication, with others there is no communication.
- This body has no real authority over anything. We don't have statutory authority, some boards and commissions do.

- Yes, NAC has no regulatory authority but we can comment on the broader issues, patterns and areas of concern we do have.
- Where is the tipping point?
- Why can't we be included in the broader issues and the bigger issues beforehand?
- There seems to be a disconnect with what is desired by the commission and what is our responsibility and what is the responsibility of various staff and Mayor and Council.
- There is a constant challenge of trying to make a difference.
- Council Committees. Why aren't we personally invited to those? We need to know what is going on. Maybe we even need to know prior to that.
- NAC has been active and purposeful when called to be. (i.e. Ad Hoc Rental Housing Task Force, Code Compliance – code change issues and recommendations)
- Lots of information we receive is through emails. When we are out in public we are not identifying ourselves as a commissioner.
- Per City Attorney's office, we are not allowed to convene our own meetings by zip code identifying ourselves as representatives of our zip code and soliciting input on issues or concerns.
- How do we create a "go to NAC" initiative or encourage Mayor/Council and staff to solicit us for opinions?
- We need to be mindful of the need to bring holistic issues forward rather than personal issues in our neighborhoods.
- If it's a personal or individual issue, have them call 311.
- All significant redevelopment with the potential for profound impact on neighborhoods and the community should be forwarded to NAC for review too.
- If you are sent an email with an agenda, you might want to read it over and look at it.
- If you want to know about it, you can know about it.
- It's not that easy to locate information about specific developments or cases on the website.
- NAC has always had peaks and valleys.
- Both the General Plan 2040 draft document and the annual budget provide opportunities for the group to be involved and have a role and provide input collectively rather than as just individuals. A letter from NAC identifying what we like and don't like could be impactful.
- The GP2040 is a visionary document. We also want tangible opportunities for real change now.
- Don't want to be "come lately" anymore, want to be educated and informed.
- I don't want to be the neighborhood scold. I want to bring things forward I'm passionate about such as multi-housing and density concerns.
- NAC should either become relevant or go away.
- We need some concrete direction.
- There is no mechanism for information sharing amongst us and amongst our neighbors. Too many limitations.
- Keep in mind we only have 16.5 hours of meetings per year plus one retreat. We can only get so much accomplished.

Agenda Item 6 – General Plan 2040 Community Working Group Update

Shauna distributed a General Plan 2040 Fact Sheet and reminded commissioners the deadline for submitting comments on the preliminary draft plan is the end of September. The entire document is online at www.tempe.gov/GP2040. Commissioners may also opt to prepare a letter from the commission with any areas of concern identified along with elements they really like.

Commissioner Ramsey was not asked to provide a Community Working Group Update due to meeting time constraints.

Agenda Item 7 – Neighborhood Workshop and Awards Planning

Potential dates were examined and commissioners agreed to move forward with an April 5, 2014 event at the Escalante Multi-Generational Center. Setting the dates earlier may allow for additional outreach and greater participation. Staff asked that they also confirm the awards categories as this information will be needed to meet print deadlines. They agreed to keep the same categories as last year. Commissioner Miller made a motion to accept the existing application form with the new deadline and event date noted along with any other needed changes. Commissioner Lesko seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Agenda Item 8 - Proposed Agenda Items for September 4 or Future Meeting

- General Plan 2040 First Draft

Staff agreed to send out an email reminder to request September agenda items.

Meeting was adjourned at 7:00 p.m.

Prepared by: Elizabeth Thomas, Neighborhood Services Specialist

Reviewed by: Shauna Warner, Neighborhood Services Manager