

## **Minutes Neighborhood Advisory Commission May 3, 2017**

**Minutes of the Neighborhood Advisory Commission (NAC) held on May 3, 2017, at the City Hall, 3rd Floor Conference Room, 31 E. 5th Street, Tempe, Arizona.**

**(MEMBERS) Present:** Karen Adams, Jack Escobar, Jonathan Gelbart, Barb Harris, Matt Korbeck (via phone), Kiyomi Kurooka, Nancy Lesko, Candyce Lindsay, Bill Munch, Julie Ramsey, Daniel Schugurensky

**(MEMBERS) Absent:** Carol Shixue Hu, Emily Leppert, Josephine McNamara

**City Staff Present:** Elizabeth Thomas, Neighborhood Services Specialist; Shauna Warner, Neighborhood Services Manager; Eric Iwersen, Principal Planner, Public Works Light Rail Project, 480-350-8810, eric\_iwersen@tempe.gov; Ryan Levesque, Deputy Community Development Director Planning, 480-858-2393, ryan\_levesque@tempe.gov

**Guests Present:** None.

### **Agenda Item 1 – Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 5:31 p.m.

### **Agenda Item 2 – Public Comment**

None.

### **Agenda Item 3 – Consideration of Minutes: March 1, 2017**

Commissioner Munch made a motion to approve the March 1 minutes as presented, Commissioner Adams seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

### **Agenda Item 4 – Tempe Streetcar Update**

On May 1, the Tempe Streetcar was identified in the FY 2017 federal budget to receive \$50 million from the Federal Transit Administration. The project, currently at 30% design, features a three mile route with 14 stops and two Light Rail connections. Off-wire design concepts are again being explored for portions of the route along Mill Avenue as well as both gateway intersections - Mill Avenue and Rio Salado Parkway and Mill Avenue and University Drive. Mayor/Council has also directed staff to look at off-wire for the Gammage Curve portion. Any use of off-wire will need to be evaluated for reliability and financial feasibility for ongoing maintenance and operations. Along the Mill Avenue segment, the opportunities and challenges of a Shared Lane versus a Dedicated Transit Lane are again being discussed and considered.

To allow for both on and off-wire, the streetcar would use a pantograph device which raises the wire when the train is on-wire and lowers when the train is off-wire allowing the battery to recharge. (Battery life is anticipated to be three years in our climate and conditions.) The longest section of operational off-wire in North America is a one-mile segment, Tempe's would be closer to 1.5 miles. Detroit and Oklahoma City are also looking at this same technology with the same manufacturer for their systems. Evaluation results will be shared at the May 15 or May 22 City Council meeting, staff will share the date when available.

Six vehicles are being purchased from Brookville Equipment Corporation out of Brookville, Pennsylvania. Each is 69 feet in length, similar to two articulated, attached buses. Streetcar vehicles will always operate one vehicle at a time. Input is now being sought on three vehicle paint scheme options. Stops will feature elements including seating, shade, landscape, schedule information and public art elements.

Fares have not been determined, they are anticipated to be lower than light rail due to the shorter distance of the streetcar segment. Ultimately, they will need to go before Mayor/City Council as well as the Valley Light Rail Metro Board for final approval. The streetcar is expected to complement existing Orbit and fixed route service and no route changes are anticipated at this time.

Annual operations are expected to be \$4.2 million with fares offsetting some of that cost. The cost for maintaining and replacing pantograph technology and battery replacement is anticipated to run up to an additional \$300,000 annually. There is no special assessment for businesses adjacent to the route, however, 10-13 major property owners are self-assessing and contributing to a fund to help offset costs for construction.

A business assistance fund is being established to help businesses within the project area stay well informed and positioned during construction. Tempe and Valley Metro successfully used this model for the Light Rail Project. Utility relocation is scheduled to take place over summer 2017 when schools are out, tourism is seasonally low, traffic is lighter and impacts to downtown Tempe businesses are lessened. The next public meeting regarding the Streetcar Project is on Wednesday, June 7 from 6 to 8 p.m. in the Don Cassano room. NAC members were encouraged to attend.

#### **Agenda Item 5 – Discussion and Possible Action on a Proposed Code Text Amendment within the Zoning and Development Code, Section 3-426, Medical Marijuana**

At the February 2, 2017 City Council Issue Review Session, staff provided a one year review and evaluation of the last ordinance amendment. Staff was then directed to prepare a new ordinance amendment removing the limitation on the total number of dispensaries allowed in Tempe, and increasing the separation requirements from one dispensary to another from ¼ mile to ½ mile distance. Subsequently, many concerns regarding this proposed change were shared by the public along with questions about how many total dispensaries might be allowed.

Staff is examining options and the consequences of each and will come back to the City Council on May 25 with a menu of options, along with mapping, for consideration. The state ratio is one medical marijuana dispensary for every ten pharmacies, this would allow for up to five in Tempe. Another option is to extend the dispensary to dispensary separation requirements to 1 mile and increase the distance requirement from schools, post-secondary schools, rehab facilities and residential. Phoenix, Chandler and Mesa also have a 1 mile dispensary to dispensary separation. Chair Lindsay commented that she prefers a cap on the total number allowed. Commission members briefly discussed whether to take action as a unit and provide a statement from the commission but determined they did not have a strong recommendation to make at this time.

#### **Agenda Item 6 – 2017 State of the Neighborhoods, Neighborhood Awards and Workshop Planning Update**

The eligibility criteria for the Neighbor of the Year Award includes: individuals, groups and organizations. Members considered if they wished to create separate categories but determined that the current application allows the flexibility to award an individual or a group and no changes were needed. They briefly discussed if any other changes should be made to any of the award applications or rater forms and determined none were necessary. Some members commented that the current materials were a result of prior significant changes and those materials worked well this cycle. The review process was also deemed efficient with the number of before and after pictures provided for property beautification nominees seen as especially helpful.

Commissioners praised the overall State of the Neighborhoods Awards and Workshop noting the overall attendance, enthusiasm of the honorees and very good presentations. A number of attendees left after the awards portion of the event but those who stayed offered praise for the series of short, varied, visual, sustainable topics workshop format. Having youth involved in presenting was a nice addition this year. Chair Lindsay remarked that how we measure success may not be in numbers but in reaching others and engaging them.

**Agenda Item 7-Discussion regarding potential dates and location for August Commission Retreat**

The Tempe History Museum Community Room has availability on Saturday, August 5 and Saturday, August 12 between the hours of 8-11:30 a.m. Commissioners present agreed that the Saturday, August 5 date worked. Staff reminded them to save the date and to remember that there will be no commission meeting in July and the August retreat date will replace the regular August meeting.

**Agenda Item 7-Proposed Agenda Items for June or Future meeting**

Commissioners requested to keep the June meeting agenda light in order to allow time to attend the Wed., June 7 Public Streetcar meeting in the Don Cassano room of the Tempe Transportation Center.

- Retreat Agenda
- Urban Forest Update (June)

**Agenda Item 9 – Adjournment**

Meeting was adjourned at 7:00 p.m.

Prepared by: Elizabeth Thomas, Neighborhood Services Specialist  
Shauna Warner, Neighborhood Services Manager