



Minutes

City of Tempe Sustainability Commission January 24, 2022

Minutes of the Tempe Sustainability Commission meeting held on Monday, January 24, 2022, 3:30 p.m. at a virtual meeting on MS Teams, through City Hall, 31 E. 5th Street, Tempe, Arizona.

(MEMBERS) Present:

Kendon Jung (Chair)
Barbie Burke (Vice-Chair)
Natalie Mendoza
Katja Brundiers

Megan Coon
Shawn Swisher
Jake Swanson

(MEMBERS) Absent:

Ryan Mores
Stephanie Milam-Edwards

City Staff Present:

Braden Kay
Grace DelMonte Kelly
Henry Pearson
Brienne Fisher
Shauna Warner
Jill Buschbacher
Ambika Adhikari

Guests Present:

John Kane
Bryan Esparza
David Sokolowski
Joyce Vesper

Matt Smith
Shane Brennan
Sydney Files
Tom Reilly

Chair Jung called the meeting to order at 3:35 p.m.

Agenda Item 1 – Public Appearances

Chair Jung asked guests to introduce themselves.

David Sokolowski addressed the commission. He shared thoughts on items 4, 5, and 6. He believes that we need to create a great transportation system. He wishes that the commission will work with the Transportation Commission to determine which specific investments must be made. He wishes for both commissions to work together and approach council with the same goals.

Agenda Item 2 – Approval of Meeting Minutes

Chair Jung mentioned that some misspellings of commission names need to be corrected on the December 20, 2021 meeting minutes.

Chair Jung called for a motion to approve the joint meeting minutes from January 10, 2022 and the meeting minutes from December 20, 2021 with corrections to name misspellings.

Motion: Barbie Burke

Second: Shawn Swisher

Decision: Approved 7-0

Voted to Approve:

Kendon Jung
Barbie Burke
Natalie Mendoza
Meg Coon
Katja Brundiars
Jake Swanson
Shawn Swisher

Chair Jung motioned to move the NAC Letter of Support to item 3 and move on.

Motion: Kendon Jung

Second: Barbie Burke

Decision: Approved 7-0

Voted to Approve:

Kendon Jung

Barbie Burke

Natalie Mendoza

Meg Coon

Katja Brundiers

Jake Swanson

Shawn Swisher

Agenda Item 3 – NAC & SRC Letter to Council in support of Climate Action Plan Update

Chair Jung asked for thoughts from the commission about the second version of the CAP letter of support. This letter was drafted by Chair Jung on behalf of the NAC and the Sustainability Commission.

Commissioner Swisher asked for clarification on who the letters are addressed to. Chair Jung clarified that the one letter will be in the introduction to the 2022 Climate Action Plan Update while the other will be sent to Council on behalf of the Sustainability Commission and the NAC. The structure of the letter to residents will be mirrored in the NAC letter.

Commissioner Brundiers stated that she had comments for the NAC letter and wants to ensure they have been seen. Chair Jung assured that they will be.

Agenda Item 3 will be pushed to an asynchronous vote.

Agenda Item 4 – Design Guidelines for Smith and Maker District

Jill Buschbacher spoke about the Smith Innovation Hub and Maker District.

- Design Guidelines will help guide the development community and the city.
- Have been working on this area since 2018. With feedback from citizens, sustainability has been incorporated into the guidelines.
- They seek feedback on how they can better integrate sustainability into the project.

John Kane gave the presentation of the guidelines:

- This presentation is a draft, and they seek feedback from the commission.

- Smith Innovation Hub:
 - Light industrial zoned area with many adjacencies to transit and mixed uses.
 - Finer grained than maker, with numerous existing artisans, crafters, and makers.
 - Many artists work with fabricators and painters in this district.
- Maker District:
 - Bigger than Smith with much larger buildings. More distribution means many semi-trucks going in and out.
 - Adjacent to freeway, numerous hotels, food centric production, and a natural history collection from ASU.
- About the Guidelines:
 - Want to keep the unique character of the district without displacing any existing business, while encouraging new projects in the area.
- Chapters of the Guidelines: Sustainability, Mixed-Use, Public/Private Spaces, Art Integration, Building Design, Gateways + Signage, and Multimodal Transportation + Pedestrians.
 - There is a large amount of crossover between these interests.
- Sustainability Guidelines:
 - They want to align with the CAP guidelines.
 - Change the vehicular-dominant nature of the area.
 - Maintain character while improving infrastructure.
- Catalytic Strategies:
 - Public/Private Investments.
 - Create business community associations
 - Create pilot demonstration projects with storytelling and communication.
- Strategy: Tactical Infill Housing:
 - Provide affordable housing for artisans and workers, woven into the existing framework of the area.
 - They will intensify the existing sights as opposed to clearing the area for market-rate housing.
- Strategy: Mixed Use Programming
 - Starts with residential, but buildings are flexible and allow for various types of uses.
 - Spoke with the arts commission about combining housing, workspaces, supply spaces and more.
- Strategy: Green Infrastructure
 - Integrate bio swales and other stormwater management.
 - Opportunities for various green pilot projects.
 - LED lighting needs to be changed, can use LEDs.
- Strategy: Green Buildings
 - Adaptive reuse of the buildings
 - Energy use reduction with building envelopes.

- Renewable energy opportunities, like solar on the large roofs and parking lots.
- Strategy: Upcycling Materials
 - More useful for Smith.
 - Many local industries create by-products, looking and ways to reuse them and integrate into projects.
- Strategy: Urban Forestry
 - Low carbon neighborhoods, reducing Urban Heat Island Effect.
- Smith Innovation Hub Asset Map demonstrates planned projects which include lighting improvements, infrastructure, bioswales, and demonstration projects.
- Maker District Asset Map showed abandon rail spurs which could become art spaces. Fire station number 2 has opportunities for green building infrastructure. There are large unused right of ways and other potential improvement areas.
- John finished the presentation by requesting questions and comments.

Questions:

Commissioner Mendoza: I notice the sample houses are significantly narrower buildings.

Are there enough structural supports to keep these buildings safe?

John replied by saying that these are unorthodox housing units. They will have very flexible spaces within and will not be conventional. They will meet code and be safe. There are a lot of existing spaces in the area that could be converted.

Vice Chair Burke: Will any of them be LEED certified or have any other certifications around IGCC?

John replied that LEED is not an option, but they are looking at ways to ensure that the buildings are efficient. They are looking at ways to reduce the urban heat island effect and increase shade. He believes that they can do this without LEED.

Chair Jung ensured that the Roberts Rule is being followed and asked Commissioner Swisher for his questions.

Commissioner Swisher asked if these guidelines will be codified into the city zoning requirements, or will they be given to developers in hope they follow them.

Mr. Adhikari answered that the guidelines are not zoning ordinances. Once they are adopted, they are taken seriously. When a private developer or the city propose a project, they will ensure the guidelines are allowed. The city is looking at the IGCC. These are not codes, but they become the policy through which the process goes.

Commissioner Swisher suggested that developers will do the least amount that they can. He encourages that they eventually become codified in zoning ordinances.

Chair Jung gave an example of the Carvana project. The council was unable to get the developer to put solar panels on the building. They barely were able to get the developer to make the building solar ready. He echoed Shawn's concerns and asked what the barriers to ensuring a baseline adoption of the sustainable guidelines. He believes these maker spaces will follow the guidelines but wants to ensure that future development follows the guidelines.

Chair Jung read comments of support from the chat:

Commissioner Burke voiced her support of the bio swells idea.

Commissioner Mendoza voiced her support of the adaptive reuse so that we are not creating more waste.

Jill mentioned the example of adaptive reuse in the Circuit and Circa 78.

Commissioner Brundiers asked for details about how the guidelines will align with CAP. John asked for clarification, and Commissioner Brundiers replied that she wishes for clarification on how the guidelines will adhere to the CAP update recommendations. She asks how specific they will be on their adherence to the CAP.

John replied that they can give principles of adaptive reuse and transforming building envelopes. There are fundamental design strategies for desert architecture and the guidelines are designed to help developers see the benefits of these strategies. They have had discussions about the extent to which they can reference the CAP. They are open for suggestions for how they can give this document more teeth.

Chair Jung recommended that they work with city staff to identify pilots that demonstrate the city's goals.

Commissioner Brundiers said you mentioned "gateway and signage" which offers a great connection to a request that will be in the CAP Update: to recognize indigenous land stewardship. The City of Tempe is also exploring changing of street names in this regard. Could this be accounted for here as well?

John replied that they have not gotten there yet, and they will take a look at that.

Commissioner Brundiers offered to share equity maps which highlight the inequities in the two districts.

Chair Jung said mentioning for the record: what are some pilots that Architekton can work with the City to demonstrate concepts that the city is wanting to make progress on?

Commissioner Swisher encouraged that innovation hubs should include green infrastructure. This communicates to the community the importance of water in the desert. It

can be an educational tool, either via the representative nature of the infrastructure or signage indicating the importance.

John agreed and said they continue to look at it. The guidelines will be shared among the districts. He liked the idea of signage to communicate what the infrastructure is doing.

Commissioner Swisher encouraged a large resilience hub be installed in one district. An industrial warehouse would be a perfect place to install one of these places.

The unanswered questions will be recorded in the chat, and Chair Jung asked that Architekton review and answer them after the meeting.

Chair Jung said that they would love to see an updated version of the presentation with their comments. After that, they would like to create a letter of support for the guidelines. He thanked the presenters. They are aiming for May for final approval from council. He clarified that they would like to see answers to the questions and indication that they will include the commissions' concerns in the updated presentation.

Commissioner Swisher asked if they could receive communication on the updates of the guidelines in order to ensure their support. Commissioners can attend public meetings to see the progress and provide support.

Agenda Item 5 – CAP Intro Letter

Chair Jung asks for support for the letter to be included in the 2022 CAP.

Commissioner Coon mentioned that the guiding principles all start with the letter “E” except for “fiscal responsibility” and thought that it could be changed to “Economic responsibility”. Chair Jung replied that perhaps in a future version the alliteration could be added.

Chair Jung called for a motion to approve the intro letter as written to be included in the CAP update to the public.

Motion: Barbie Burke

Second: Shawn Swisher

Decision: Approved 7-0

Voted to Approve:

Kendon Jung

Barbie Burke

Natalie Mendoza

Katja Brundiars
Megan Coon
Shawn Swisher
Jake Swanson

Agenda Item 6 – CAP Update

Braden spoke about the CAP Update.

There will be two public events. 3 pm on Wednesday they will present to the sustainability and resiliency commission, then a public forum after. Saturday morning 9-11 at Tempe library will be an open house. A native plant and shrub giveaway will take place at the open house.

They have 12 actions coming from the plan, with 4 highlight actions. They have been renamed to three actions: Resilient energy hubs, transportation demand management and mobility hubs, and green codes and standards.

Resilience to extreme heat:

- Our extreme heat days will continue to increase, so it is important to change the way we build cities.
- Heat effects people differently and focus needs to be placed on the most vulnerable. These areas need much deeper investment in cooling infrastructure
- Need to communicate why this is an important issue.

Climate action in Tempe Stories:

- Downtown Tempe Authority worked with Local First on water audits for local businesses.
- Unlimited Potential works with residents experiencing energy insecurity and extreme heat. They realized that residents have a lot of ideas on how they can improve their communities. SRP agreed to do deeper listening to residents and have said that they are ready to change their Empower program. This is an example of how listening to marginalized voices can help us find solutions.
- The city has created a new Sustainable Facilities Plan. Changes are being made across city buildings with improved lighting efficiency.
- These are a few examples of what climate action looks like. They showcase how we can make our city better for everyone, and how much opportunity there is for this change.

CAP Progress:

- Agendas done with public/private partnerships.
- Youth Agenda:

- Food Equity
 - Never had these in budget requests, will be in this one.
- Transportation Equity.
- See more collaboration with school leaders.
 - Proposal for youth climate engagement coordinator position.
- Highlight Action: Green Stormwater Infrastructure
 - Pilot program in schools
 - Specialist position
- Business
 - Water Conservation
 - Energy Efficiency
 - Partnerships with Local First
 - Highlight Action: Mobility Hubs
- Climate Justice
 - Heat Awareness and energy.
 - Upgrades to homes.
 - Land Stewardship.
 - Indigenization of Tempe, partner with tribal members on sustainability work.
 - Supporting urban forestry and sustainable landscapes.
 - Partnerships with community-based organizations.
 - Highlight Action: Resilient Energy and Resilience Hubs
 - Community Resilience and Self Sufficiency through workforce development, housing support, healthcare, and education
- Neighborhood
 - Review of the work contains elements from the other agendas.

Proposed Investments:

- Policy
 - Building Codes, Energy equity program
 - Residential green stormwater program
- Personnel
 - Neighborhood, Youth engagement, policy and grants coordinators.
- Infrastructure
 - Transit shelters, BRT, Streetcar extension, urban forestry.
- Municipal
 - Green City building policy
 - Sustainable facilities
 - Workforce EV Charing and EV feet roadmap
 - Energy efficiency retrofits
 - Resilient energy hubs

- Grants
 - Climate sensitive Urban Forestry
 - Install green stormwater infrastructure.
 - Work in schools.
 - Cool Kids
 - Working on youth councils that support neighborhood, city, and regional change.
 - Eventually need cooling authority across Maricopa County.
 - Modeling that at schools and neighborhoods.

Next Steps:

- February: Update GHG Emissions and Recommendations.
- March: Final Approval
- Ongoing: Adopt policy, invest in infrastructure.

Questions:

Chair Jung mentioned that the updated presentation is very helpful to aid in understanding of the CAP. He asked Braden to summarize his top budget requests

- Braden said there are 23 requests, and they are ordered by importance. They hope to get somewhere between 5-10 of those requests funded in one year. They don't expect to get all of those to be funded. It is unlikely they will go from 2 staff to 9. They would really like the coordinator positions to continue the community engagement work and they need to take advantage of federal money with a grant coordinator.
- They are most excited about the cool and resilient master plan.
- The five main asks are the three coordinator positions and the master plan, along with the Indian Bend wash program.

Chair Jung noted that he was grateful that it was clear that all these requests are not coming from the sustainability office. They are getting traction within the city to change their processes in various departments.

Commissioner Mendoza mentioned that in the presentation there is a list of budget requests that was formatted with parentheses around the dollar amount requested and whether it was one time or recurring, but the formatting was inconsistent. She suggested keeping the format consistent.

Commissioner Swisher talked about a pilot program for a one-time fund and future recurring. He mentioned that single cool areas in homes do not address the energy use issue.

The remaining questions will be followed up on.

Agenda Item 7 – Sustainability Awards

Chair Jung wants the commissioners to submit nominations. They close on Feb 15 but should be submitted before that. There are resident, neighbor and business positions. He will send out an email update to remind everyone. There have been a few already submitted. Vice Chair Burke has submitted one and encouraged others to submit as soon as possible.

Agenda Item 8 – Housekeeping Items

Virtual CAP Update on 25th.

In person event on Saturday and the library the 29th from 5:30-7:00.

A poll was done to determine when to start future meetings. The next meeting will be changed to 4:30 to allow more people to attend.

Agenda Item 8 – Future Agenda Items

Chair Jung requests any items be sent to staff.

Chair Jung asks for motion to adjourn at 4:59 pm.

Motion: Barbie Burke

Second: Natalie Mendoza

Decision: Approved 7-0

Voted to Approve:

Kendon Jung (Chair)

Barbie Burke (Vice-Chair)

Natalie Mendoza

Katja Brundiers

Megan Coon

Shawn Swisher

Jake Swanson

The meeting was adjourned at 5:00 pm.

Prepared by: Henry Pearson

Reviewed by: Grace DelMonte Kelly

