

From: Rebecca Ruopp
To: Burdick, Jennifer
CC: Ewing-Gavin, Nicole
Date: 3/18/2014 4:31 PM
Subject: Re: Panda Building Issues

Thanks for the quick response, Jenn. I will follow up with JD to make sure he received this information and whether he needs any further clarification.

>>> Jennifer Burdick 3/18/2014 3:41 PM >>>
J.D., Rebecca -

I will take a stab to provide some answers to this, since they were provided at the December 13, 2013 meeting with community members held at Ward 6. I am copying our colleagues so they are aware of what information I share, and can provide corrections in case I misstate something or elaborate on anything. And, because I am referencing a meeting at the Ward 6 office, I am including Council Member Kozachik and Molly Thrasher.

The December 13, 2013 meeting at Ward 6 was convened to discuss the proposed demolition of Panda Buffet. A group of staff came to discuss with the Council Member, Ward staff, and community members in attendance the proposed demolition, including: City Attorney Mike Rankin, Assistant City Manager Albert Elias, Daryl Cole (TDOT Director), Hector Martinez (Real Estate Office Director), Tim Murphy (Real Estate Office), and myself. Also in attendance was Swain Chapman, owner of Chapman Property Management company.

The questions you raise in your email were asked then, and I am providing the answers given then (I have copied and pasted your questions in groupings to respond to):

1) Responsibility for the vandalism, theft of kitchen equipment, and stripping of the copper? Has there been an investigation of these criminal acts? Has anyone been held responsible?

The vandalism and stripping of the copper are separate issues from the kitchen equipment, which was removed when the owners of Panda Buffet restaurant ended their lease voluntarily and left the building (Sept. 2012).

The vandalism and copper theft occurred in Fall 2013. On Nov. 4, 2013, a call was made to TPD by the property management company, and a police report was issued for the break-in to the property and the theft of the copper wiring. The damage done to the building rendered the electrical system completely unusable, and damaged the AC units and other mechanical systems. Estimated costs to repair just the electrical system alone were upwards of \$50,000.

No one has been apprehended for the criminal acts at this time.

It has come to light that two privately-owned properties in the vicinity of Panda Buffet also experienced copper theft within the same time period. The Continental Building property owners had to replace their elevators (a roughly \$60,000 investment). Just west of that building, a property owner of vacant space experienced similar damage as occurred in Panda Buffet (copper wiring theft from electrical and mechanical systems). I am not aware that the owner has decided to invest in repairs.

2) Do we know who was supposed to be taking care of the property?

The City hired Chapman Property Management Company in Fall of 2012 and their property management staff has been monitoring the City-owned properties along Broadway. They conduct regular drive-throughs of the area, and are very responsive to calls in regarding dumping/trash, graffiti, and weeds/appearance. They have done - and continue to do - everything that they have been hired to do.

Unfortunately, copper theft occurs wherever the criminals attempt it. City Attorney Rankin clarified at the Dec. 13, 2013 meeting that the property management company is not at fault.

It was asked at the meeting if insurance claims could help restore the Panda property. Because the City is self-insured, it is our understanding that the City would be responsible for paying the claim to itself. This approach is not recommended by any city staff.

I hope this information helps to answer your questions.

Respectfully,
~Jenn

>>> On 3/18/2014 at 6:35 AM, Rebecca Ruopp wrote:
Good morning, JD:

Thanks for your email, JD. I will follow up with others in the City to see if I can get answers to the questions you have asked. I know that the oversight of vacant properties is of concern to many citizens.

Rebecca

>>> "Garcia, Jose D - (jdgarcia)" <jdgarcia@email.arizona.edu> 03/17/14 10:09 PM >>>
Rebecca,

Encouraged by your note, I would like to raise the issue of responsibility for the vandalism, theft of kitchen equipment, and stripping of the copper while the City owned the building. Has there been an investigation of these criminal acts? Has anyone been held responsible? Do we know who was supposed to be taking care of the property?

Many citizens have commented on this.

Are there answers to these questions?

Please let us know.

JD Garcia

From: Rebecca Ruopp [Rebecca.Ruopp@tucsonaz.gov]
Sent: 07 March 2014 17:13
To: Garcia, Jose D - (jdgarcia)
Cc: Nicole Ewing-Gavin
Subject: Re: Broadway Corridor CTF meetings

Greetings, Jose:

Thank you for your email expressing your concerns about several aspects of the Broadway Task Force meetings. Next week I will share these issues -- several of which I have heard from other members of the public -- with my colleagues in the Office of Integrated Planning, so that we may consider them in terms of the Broadway Corridor Project specifically and City public participation activities more broadly. Improving our public participation process to increase active engagement, inclusivity, and transparency is an important goal. We encourage you continue sharing your observations and experiences -- both positive and not so positive - you from participation efforts in which you have been/are involved.

Have a good weekend,
Rebecca

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>>> "Garcia, Jose D - (jdgarcia)" <jdgarcia@email.arizona.edu> 3/6/2014
10:55 PM >>>
March 6, 2014

To: Office of Integrated Planning

Attn: Rebecca Ruopp

I am writing to convey my disappointment with the conduct of the City's Broadway Corridor Project Citizens' Task Force (CTF) meetings. The Task Force has had very little face-to-face discussion

time thus far. The meetings, of which I have attended all but two, have been dominated by lectures from the consultant, Phil Erickson, who only occasionally listens to CTF members, often talks over what they are saying, and steers the conversation with personal biases which are not informed by the express wishes of the CTF, nor do these biases appear to me to be consistent with the facts. The CTF needs unbiased professional consultation.

Case in Point: tonight was scheduled to be a Charrette, a discussion among CTF members, to try to begin to reach consensus through small group meetings about the roadway options. Instead, Erickson lectured from about 5:45 PM after call to the audience, until 7:40, when there was a 15 minute break, followed by a whole group meeting, also led by Erickson, which was ended at 8:20.

It is, in my view, unprofessional for the Design Team to have set pluses and minuses for all of the design criteria prior to the CTF even seeing or discussing them, thus biasing the guideposts to be used in deciding about roadway designs.

Tonight's meeting was also advertised on the Project website as one in which the CTF members could interact with their constituents at certain points. That was not going to happen, except that an audience member asked about it, but little time was allowed. I believe that shows serious disregard of the public who might have made a special trip for that purpose.

These discussions by Erickson continue to disregard and play down the expressions by an overwhelming majority of the public who attended during the two Open Houses, who asked for a minimum of widening and of destruction of historic buildings, and emphasized that Broadway has a sense of place that should not be destroyed.

I hope the City can do better.

Jose D Garcia

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