



Planning Commission Infill Subcommittee

**Design Guidelines Manual Working Group
City of Tucson Planning Commission's
Infill Planning Subcommittee
Minutes**

Monday, December 12, 2005 at 5:30 – 7:30 P.M.
345 E. Toole, 3rd Floor Conference Room
Tucson, AZ

Attending: Andrew Singelakis, Deputy Director of Urban Planning and Design; Sarah More, Urban Design and Code Development; Rebecca Ruopp, Neighborhood Infill Planner; Rafael Sebba, Lead Planner; Tracy Williams, NIC; Ruth Beeker, NIC; Wendell Niemann; Daniel Williams, Planning Commission; Lori Lustig SAHBA; Tina Lee, Ward 2 Council Office.

Meeting Summary

The Design Guidelines Working Group meeting was the fifth in a series of meetings to foster more in-depth and focused discussion on several initiatives the Infill Planning Subcommittee has been exploring, including the Design Guidelines.

The meeting began with Sarah More, Head of the Urban Design and Code Division of the Urban Planning and Design Department, welcoming attendees. Other city staff in attendance included Andrew Singelakis, Deputy Director of Urban Planning and Design, Rebecca Ruopp, Infill Planner, and Rafael Sebba, Lead Planner.

Sarah explained that this meeting was the second of three to review the Draft Design Guidelines (hereafter referred to as “the guidelines”) and to provide an opportunity for participants to share comments, concerns and/or questions about the guidelines. Staff noted the following future meeting dates: January 9, 2006 - Mixed Use Zone; and January 23, 2006 - Single Family DGM.

Discussion began with general Design Guidelines issues and questions. Discussion then turned to the Landscape and Signage sections of the Commercial guidelines. Once these sections were reviewed, discussion focused on the Multi-Family Residential guidelines. During the meeting, city staff provided explanations and clarification regarding guidelines, and participants raised questions, identified issues, and discussed possible additions and revisions. Following is a summary list of questions, answers, comments, and suggestions as documented by city staff over the course of the meeting.

General Issues/Comments

Of the 3 DGM examples, the City's is the weakest.

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Some guidelines are adopted in ordinances as regulation – the City has tried to avoid leading people to believe that policy is regulation.

Benefit of being less concrete (policy rather than regulation) - not all sites are the same; the City's approach is more like a menu of options.

Tucson has some particular challenges - lots of different styles, distinct communities that we want to maintain.

Scottsdale's guidelines - development community seems to like them because they know what to expect.

Marana's guidelines are probably not appropriate, but Scottsdale (or maybe Riverside) identifies different areas.

Are the guidelines used? Do they have teeth? *Answer given:* Progress has been incremental; the building/design community doesn't really see guidelines as having teeth because they are not adopted.

How do we make it have teeth? *Answer given:* It's part of an overall program

1. Brochure is education piece
2. Design review process established in LUC, DGM adoption helps support process
3. Prioritize types of development that should go through DRB and DGM review. Other types/classes of development – such as big boxes – have their own standards.

Need something that reinforces compatibility within existing neighborhoods. Guidelines have to deal with both infill and new development. How do you determine what is compatible? *Answer given:* Can develop compatibility checklist or test based on infill issues

How will guidelines impact affordability? Will older/existing houses become affordable? *Answer given:* It can take time for the building industry to retool production housing to meet new criteria.

How many plans/ projects are farmed out to outside reviewers? *Answer given:* DSD sends out for structural review, not for land use or zoning compliance.

Commercial Guidelines

Update reference to Water Harvesting Manual date in Landscaping section on page 10, or change to “current or latest” and take out date.

Trees and site visibility can conflict - put something in to remind people to consider site visibility

Need to address increased tree well size and health of plants in new DGM

Refer to other plant lists and standards in LUC/Development Standards

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Scottsdale prohibits plain block walls

Signage

Try to get landscape plans and signage plans coordinated - helps define area

Need to reference sign code in DGM

Require address numbers to be clearly visible

Is there a way to enforce visibility of numbers for existing buildings?

Lighting

Add reference to Dark Skies ordinance

DSD enforces lighting ordinance, will have DSD review guidelines

What about radiation out? *Answer given:* Full cutoff language tries to limit impact on adjacent properties

Are we going up, or retaining one story character? *Answer given:* Depends on area, hard to make it a hard and fast rule

Add statement in introduction that Tucson has a mix of styles and cultural resources

List diverse architectural styles, maybe in Architecture section

Strengthen compatibility - checklist might help provide substance rather than perfunctory type of review now

Add/clarify purpose/intent statement for each category

References to Scottsdale means it came from their guidelines, these will be removed eventually

Multi-Family Guidelines

Add Safe by Design and Lighting sections to be consistent with Commercial and Single Family

What is the definition of “multi-family”? How many units?

Needs to be specified

Would duplexes or triplexes fall under single family? *Answer given:* Probably

What about four-plex intentionally built for rental?

If duplex or triplex falls under single family, then it should look like a single family development

Need to define Single Family versus Multi-Family

Mention cactus in all references to landscaping and plant varieties

People don't replant though they are supposed to – need enforcement of landscaping standards

People complaining about lack of enforcement at Univ. workshop

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Important to recognize not all builders are part of SAHBA

Add “to create an aesthetically pleasing effect” to II.A.1.b.3 – in relation to varying setbacks
Clarify setbacks with compatibility checklist

Define “usable” in relation to open space and common areas

Passive vs. active recreation

Distinguish between infill and edge open space and common areas

Outdoor recreation references sound more as if they are for big development, but not infill – courtyards more appropriate for infill

Staff working on Glossary - identify terms that should be included

Go through Open Space/Environmental sections with Leslie Liberti

Relationship or overlap with Habitat Conservation Plans

Clarify connectivity in relation to wildlife corridors

Leave vegetation undisturbed if applicable

Make distinction between infill & edge development

Confusing point about use of alleys for access and parking

Appropriate maneuvering area on site is required

Needs to be clarified – maybe a question for Walter?

Primary access vs. other access

More of an infill issue

Reinforce compatibility under Architectural Design

How do you address very different styles, materials, scale, etc.?

Historic districts require review of architectural treatment

Need to clarify difference between townhomes, condos, single family, and multi-family

Trash enclosures

bins taller than enclosures

enclosures too small - bins don't go back

Parking lot screening requirements

Depends on type of street parking is on