



Citizens Steering Committee (CSC) January 22, 2009 Meeting Summary

Pima Community College Downtown Campus, Amethyst Community Room, 1255 N. Stone Avenue; 5:30 PM, Conversation & Refreshments; 6:00 – 8:00 PM, Meeting

CSC Members Present: Charlie Wachtel, Chair; Jason Brown, Vice Chair Dick DeNezza; Bernadette Jilka; Darel Magee; Martina O'Brien; Ken Scoville; Leon Solomon; Lois Roth; Erik Nielsen, Joshua Randell, Bob Wright, Vicente Zarate

CSC Members Absent: Tad Denton; Bill Quiroga; Cathy Rex; Gloria Townsend

Staff Present:

UPD OARP Team – Rebecca Ruopp, Project Manager; Jennifer Burdick, Planner; Ramona Williams, secretary

Ward 3 Staff – Tamara Prime, Council Aide, Karin Uhlich, Vice Mayor and Ward 3 Council Member

Technical Advisory Team – Ron Thompson, Tucson Police Department; Karen Larkin, Parks & Recreation

Meeting Agenda & Discussions

Actions Taken/ Follow-Up Required

1. Welcome and Introductions

Staff members introduced themselves. CSC members introduced themselves by name and affiliation to the project area. Audience members introduced themselves.

2. Regular Business

3. December 17, 2008, CSC Meeting Summary – CSC members approved the summary, with Leon Solomon moving to approve, and Josh Randell seconding the motion.

3. CSC Announcements – CSC member Erik Nielson announced the upcoming Gem Show (beginning Jan 30) and the Denmark National Gymnastics Team coming to Tucson Jan 24. Team is staying with host families & performing at various locations around town.

CSC Chair Charlie Wachtel noted that the Arts for All Graffiti Art Contest was underway. A staff person from Arts for All, who was in the audience, noted that the contest was ending the next day, Jan 23. There were 20+ submissions and judging begins next week.

4. Updates and Announcements

■ **Vice Mayor Karin Uhlich** announced that tax credits have been approved for Ghost Ranch Lodge. (CSS member and others applauded this announcement.) The Vice Mayor went on to say that this is a good time to contact the Governor's Office and State Housing Department to express support for this project since there are still a few more steps before the tax credit approval is fully completed.

CSC member Ken Scoville noted that in this current economic situation this is thrilling news, but three things should be considered: (1) an Oversight Committee, (2) Public Access, (3) On-Site Tour. Ken also stated that security needs to be stepped up right now at Ghost Ranch Lodge.

CSC Chair Charlie Wachtel stated to Vice Mayor Uhlich that Ghost Ranch developers do not seem to communicate regularly. The Vice Mayor said that they have been in touch with the developers.

Approved by vote of 13-0



Meeting Agenda & Discussions

**Actions Taken/
Follow-Up Required**

- Vice Mayor Uhlich announced that the City was partnering with Old Pasqua regarding open space. Information would be presented at the Tues City Council meeting. Rebecca said that strengthening the boundaries of the neighborhood would be great.

- **CSC Membership** – No more members have been added to the CSC. CSC Chair Charlie Wachtel asked if anyone has spoken to Tad Denton regarding absences from the CSC. Staff member Rebecca Ruopp said she would follow up with Tad.

- **CSC and Brown Bag Meeting Schedule Revisions** – Staff member Jennifer Burdick noted that the CSC meetings have shifted back to Wednesday evenings beginning next month due to conflicts. Standard meeting dates will be 3rd Wed, but May is an exception and will be the 4th Wed (May 27).

- **Public Art Project** - Project has moved through various reviews and is now in City Procurement for finalization of contract.

 CSC member Ken Scoville asked if there was a timeline. OARP Team Member Rebecca Ruopp replied she would check with Tucson/Pima Arts Council (T/PAC). Ken also asked if something about the art project could be included in Second Annual Historic Open House and Tour in May.

- **Business Association** – CSC member Bob Wright briefed committee on status of the business association. He stated there have been 3 meetings that were focused on the formation of the association. Each had about 25-30 business people in attendance. A name was approved at the last meeting for the association, the “Gateway Business Alliance.” A subcommittee is working on management, organization, and structure. The Gateway Business Alliance has good momentum and a good beginning.

 CSC Chair Charlie Wachtel stated that with Jan Aalberts (facilitator provided by the MainStreet Program funded through RTA), we can’t go wrong. Staff member Jennifer Burdick announced that the next meeting is scheduled for February 19, from 6-7:30 p.m.. Upcoming meetings will be at the Executive Inn & Suites, 333 W. Drachman. CSC Member Dick DeNezza wanted to thank the City for its support and the Council, as well.

 CSC Member Leon Solomon asked if business association participants have considered relocation of Grant businesses that will be displaced by the Grant Road Improvement Project to the Oracle Area. Bob Wright replied that they had not yet discussed this issue.

- ♦ **Second Annual Historic Open House & Tour** – OARP Project Manager Rebecca Ruopp reminded the Committee that the Second Annual Historic Open House & Tour of the Oracle Road Area was coming up. The first one met with tremendous success and had 160+ attendees. The Second Annual Open House and Tour will be held some time in the beginning of May, and noted that the new Gateway Business Alliance might want to participate as a sponsor. Suggestions from the CSC included making Ghost Ranch Lodge a key stop on the tour and closing down Drachman to traffic and having local businesses participate as

Rebecca to contact Tad Denton

Rebecca to check with T/PAC on timeline for public art.



Meeting Agenda & Discussions

vendors, etc.

CSC members Ken Scoville, Dick DeNezza, and Charlie Wachtel agreed to act as a subcommittee for the Second Annual Historic Open House and Tour.

CSC Vice Chair Jason Brown said that Pima Community College was celebrating its 40th anniversary in the same time period and perhaps that could somehow be incorporated into the Open House and Tour.

CSC member Ken Scoville suggested that if a date is tied down, AZ Illustrated (PBS) might be willing to do a story about the history of the area prior to the event.

- **UA Blue Chip Program Question Selection** – OARP Project Manager Rebecca Ruopp described the UA Blue Chip Project that the Phase II (second year) students are working on. Sixteen teams of 4-5 students each will work together throughout the Spring semester to develop proposals that will address the question the CSC chooses for them. Of the eight questions forwarded to the CSC prior to this meeting, Question A – What would you propose neighborhood residents and businesses with limited funds do in the near future to help counteract this negative image? – received the most votes.

The OARP Project Staff Team and volunteer CSC members will present the question and background information to the Blue Chip Phase II students on Saturday, Jan. 24. The students will compete in a Case Competition on Friday, April 24, in which the student teams will present their proposals to panels of judges. CSC members are invited to participate as judges.

- Break -

Meeting back to order @ 6:58

5. Land Use Element Presentation and Discussion

OARP Project Manager Rebecca Ruopp provided a brief overview of land use issues and challenges in the Oracle area.

Questions and comments related to the discussion were as follows:

- ♦ *CSC Member:* Would an overlay change existing zoning?
Staff Response: No, the underlying zoning of a property does not change when an overlay district is created.
- ♦ *CSC Member:* We should look at the corner of Speedway and Main. That area could be developed as a gateway corridor.
- ♦ *CSC Member:* Palm trees along Oracle would be great.
- ♦ *CSC Member:* Looking at the Existing Land Use map, Coronado Heights Neighborhood identifies business and office instead of residential along the corridors. Is this a problem?
Staff Response: No, residential is still allowed in some of those uses and within the interior.
- ♦ *CSC Member:* Be careful when planting landscaping in dangerous places, such as in the medians along Stone Avenue, south of Speedway.
- ♦ *CSC Member:* We do need to be careful what goes in to the median islands.



**Actions Taken/
 Follow-Up Required**

Meeting Agenda & Discussions

Also, property maintenance is a problem for the area.

- ♦ *CSC Member:* I am thankful to the City for the clean ups they've done. The Department of Neighborhood Resources has issued notices and there have been some big clean ups going on. Dumpsters have been provided and many manpower hours have been volunteered. There is help out there to be had; we just have to find it.
- ♦ *CSC Member:* The Grant Road Widening project provides a good chance for the City to show off the OARP area and provide incentives for relocation.
- ♦ *CSC Member:* We need a clean up in the broader sense. Use Drachman on posters- make the street more attractive and show what has been done.
- ♦ *CSC Member:* Address the north side of Drachman. Let's find a way to do something creative with parking would make it more appealing.
- ♦ *CSC Member:* With the area's history, what about putting antique shops along the Oracle corridor? Also, we should make Drachman and Oracle a year-round gem corridor or mineral corridor. The area has to be unique.

6. Call to the Audience

No comments from the audience.

Closing comments were:

- ♦ *CSC Member:* The cheap hotels are the biggest problem on Oracle. We need to bring them up to standard.
- ♦ *CSC Member:* Bernadette Jilka announced the opening of a new park. Coronado Heights has opened a new park called "Laguna Park," which is open to the public and an Open House is scheduled for February 3, 2009. The park is located on Laguna and Balboa in the Habitat for Humanity development on the southwest corner.

7. Closure of Formal Meeting (8:05 PM)