



Citizens Steering Committee (CSC) Meeting Summary

February 27, 2007 Meeting

Pima Community College Downtown Campus, Amethyst Community Room, 1255 N. Stone Avenue
5:30 p.m. Conversation & Refreshments; 6-8 p.m. Meeting

CSC Members Present: Jason Brown, Liz Cerepanya, Tad Denton, Richard DeNezza, Alexandra Etheridge, Bernadette Jilka, Karen Lamberton, Martina O'Brien, John Polder, Bill Quiroga, Cathy Rex, Lois Roth, Ken Scoville, Leon Solomon, Gloria Townsend, Charlie Wachtel, Robert Wright

CSC Members Absent: Jeff Bliznick, Joshua Randell, Joe Yee

Staff Present:

Ward III Office - Karin Uhlich, Council Member; Tamara Prime, Council Aide (Project Core Team)

UPD OARP Team - Chris Kaselemis, Administrator; Rebecca Ruopp, Project Manager; María Gayosso, Lead Planner; Jennifer Burdick, Planner, Barbara Hayes, Public Information Specialist

Technical Advisory Team - Karen Larkin, Parks & Recreation; Frank Sousa, Tucson Department of Transportation; Ron Thomson, Tucson Police; Teresa Williams, Department of Neighborhood Resources

Meeting Agenda & Discussions

Actions Taken/ Follow-Up Required

1. Welcome

2. Introductions

The CSC members introduced themselves by name and affiliation to the project area. Five new members were added to the Committee since the December meeting: Martina O'Brien, John Polder, Bill Quiroga, Lois Roth, and Leon Solomon. (*Note: The committee is now at its cap of 20 members.*) Staff members and all audience members introduced themselves.

A member of the public, Mylo Groen, provided for the CSC's information a copy of a proposed model to be considered for future development, called the Groen City Cells (Mylo Groen, April 11, 2005). The development model is aimed at encouraging pedestrian and bicycle traffic by placing high-traffic uses along the perimeter of "cells", approximately one square mile in size, and low-traffic, residential uses within the interior.

3. Regular Business

- *CSC Notebook Update* – Staff provided revised contact lists for the CSC reflecting addition of the new members.
- *December 12, 2007 CSC Meeting Summary* – CSC members accepted the summary of the December meeting without changes.
- Gloria Townsend expressed her concern that the editing of a TV interview with her at the 11/14/07 CSC meeting was not a balanced representation of what she said. Ms. Townsend indicated that the emphasis was on crime, which was not the focus of the OARP. Leon Solomon suggested that all media inquires could be directed to the Chair of the CSC.



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**Actions Taken/
Follow-Up Required**

- *Market Analysis Progress Report* – Staff reported that the consulting firm Economic & Planning Systems, Inc. (EPS), which was hired to provide an analysis of the real estate market within the OARP project area, is scheduled to provide a draft written report in the first week of March for staff review. Staff is tentatively planning a presentation on the initial findings of the analysis at the March CSC meeting.

- *Oracle/Drachman/Main Art Project Update* – Mary Ellen Wooten, the Public Art Program Manager at the Tucson-Pima Arts Council (TPAC), reported on the progress of a public art project for the area near the Oracle/Drachman/Main intersection.

Since this effort began before the formation of the CSC, Ms. Wooten provided some background on the project. She began by explaining the public art project was conceived in conjunction with the reconfiguration of the new intersection from a “circle” to a “T.” The original public art budget was \$25,000. Last fall, Tucson-Pima Arts Council put together a Selection Committee of volunteers representing different perspectives in the OARP area. A “Call for Artists” was sent to names on an established TPAC of artists qualified and able to work in the budget range. After the process was under way, City DOT allocated some additional money for the public art project, bringing the total to \$67,500. This increased budget expanded the list of artists and required that a new “Call for Artists” process be undertaken. The new deadline for submittals is in about 6 weeks, and it will take 4 or 5 months to select an artist.

Ms. Wooten invited CSC members to participate in future TPAC public meetings related to the art project. TPAC will provide updates and alerts about when those meetings will be held.

Questions and comments on the public art project were as follows:

- *CSC Member:* Type of art that will be placed at the intersection?
 - *Ms. Wooten:* Artist will submit different ideas that will be evaluated.
 - *CSC Member:* The art should acknowledge the historic circle that was in place.
- *CSC Member:* Where will the art piece be placed?
 - *Ms. Wooten:* The original location discussed was the southeast corner of the intersection; however, this is still under consideration.
 - *CSC Member:* The northeast corner of Oracle/Drachman
 - *CSC Member:* Near Speedway/Main, which will also undergo intersection improvements in the next year. Another CSC Member responded to the above suggestion with the concern that the historic circle, which was removed as part of the intersection improvements, was a large reason that the art project came to be. Therefore, if the project is moved, that connection may be lost.
- *CSC Member:* Consider incorporation of neon in the design to complement and celebrate the existing neon signs in the area.
- *CSC Member:* Use native vegetation.

A copy of the PowerPoint presentation is available online at the OARP web site and upon request.

- TPAC will keep the CSC and OARP Project Staff Team updated on progress and upcoming public meeting dates



Meeting Agenda & Discussions

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Follow-Up Required**

- *Public Participation and Community Outreach Update* – UPD OARP Team Member, Jennifer Burdick, provided an update regarding outreach efforts to area stakeholders about the OARP. Since January 2008, introductory presentations about the OARP project have been made to 4 of the 7 neighborhoods in the area. More are planned in the next months.

Staff provided the CSC members with informational flyers and posters on the OARP project and the upcoming CSC meeting for distribution to neighbors, businesses, and other potentially interested parties. Additionally members were given OARP project business cards and blank comment cards for use in their outreach efforts. Members were encouraged to ask staff for other tools that may be helpful to them in sharing information about the project and encouraging participation.

CSC Member, Ken Scoville, expressed that an Open House focused on historic preservation could be done during the month of May (Historic Preservation month).

CSC Member, Leon Solomon, indicated that he invited members of the Islamic mosque located on Speedway to attend this CSC meeting.

- CSC members will let UPD staff know about additional groups interested in OARP presentations (and upcoming visioning workshops).

4. Area Visioning Sessions Approach

Staff reported that between March and May, the UPD Project Team will be organizing and holding workshops with neighborhood groups and other OARP area stakeholder groups, such as businesses, institutions, and youth. These workshops will use group activities and constructive dialogue to gather information about the project area and to elicit participants’ ideas for the future.

The information gathered from the workshops will be added to the growing body of project area data, which includes results from the August 2007 survey, the January 2008 field trip, the draft Existing Conditions Report, comments received through CSC meeting to date. This project data will assist the CSC in identifying principles and goals to guide the development of the revitalization plan.

A copy of the PowerPoint presentation and the handout is available online at the OARP web site and upon request.

- CSC members will let UPD staff know about additional groups interested in OARP presentations (and upcoming visioning workshops).

5. CSC Chair and Vice Chair Selection

UPD OARP Team Member, Rebecca Ruopp, reviewed the responsibilities of the Chair and Vice Chair and provided the list of nominees received from members in writing.

Individuals nominated were:

Chair: Charlie Wachtel, Gloria Townsend (declined), Richard DeNezza (declined)

Vice Chair: Charlie Wachtel, Jason Brown, Richard DeNezza (declined), and Tad Denton

With 15 votes, CSC members selected their new Chair, Charlie Wachtel, and with 11 votes, their Vice Chair, Jason Brown. At the March 26, 2008 meeting, the new Chair and Vice Chair will propose for discussion Rules and Procedures by which to conduct meetings.

A copy of the PowerPoint presentation is available online at the OARP web site and upon request.



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Follow-Up Required**

7:00 – 7:15 PM Break

6. Ghost Ranch Lodge Proposed Redevelopment

Brad Davis of Atlantic Development and Paul Macy of PHM Ltd. provided an overview of the proposed redevelopment of the historic Ghost Ranch Lodge campus located at the southeast corner of Fairview Avenue and Miracle Mile. Atlantic Development is proposing a two-phase development plan. The developers' current focus is on Phase I, which addresses the eastern half of the property, will consist of affordable senior (age 55 +) housing. Seven (7) of the existing buildings on the site were designed by renowned Tucson architect, Josias Joesler, and these will be retained and renovated. New structures, including some 2-story units along the south side of the property, will be built to complement the Joesler style.

The project is contingent upon approval of tax credits by the State of Arizona, which requires Atlantic Development to submit an application by March 15, 2008. This is a statewide competitive process and only a few applications will be approved. Results will be announced in late May or June 2008. If the application is approved, Atlantic Development could break ground within 9 months.

The CSC was asked whether they might consider preparing a letter in support of the proposed Phase I redevelopment project. If the CSC was so inclined, the developer indicated the letter would be need in early March, so that it could be included with the application.

Comments and questions were as follows:

- *Audience Member:* A member of the public suggested Atlantic Development follow The University of Arizona's example of selection of cactus to provide screening of property along the eastern property line, adjacent to adult entertainment use.
Atlantic Development indicated that big cactus with see-through screening may be utilized.
- *Audience Member:* What are the plans for the former restaurant building?
Atlantic Development responded that if purchase is finalized from COPE, the building will be utilized for an office and clubhouse.
- *Audience Member:* What is the timeline for Phase I?
Atlantic Development responded that they plan to breaking ground in about 9 months if tax credits are approved.
- *Audience Member:* Community gardens should be incorporated for seniors.
- *CSC Member:* This redevelopment proposal is an example of what the OARP project area needs, which includes the preservation of historic features.

Following the developers' presentation and discussion, the CSC voted in favor of providing a letter of support and CSC member, Ken Scoville, noted that he was also going to write a personal letter of support and suggested other might was to consider writing personal letters of support also. Members agreed that it would be appropriate to have the new Chair, Charlie Wachtel, and Ken Scoville, as the member representing historic interests, draft the letter. Staff said they would forward the letter to members for review before it was finalized and mailed.

A copy of the PowerPoint presentation is available online at the OARP web site and upon request.

- Charlie Wachtel made a motion for the CSC to write a letter of support for the project; Leon Solomon seconded.

CSC approved unanimously (17-0).

- Ken Scoville and Charlie Wachtel will work together to write the letter, which will be distributed to all CSC members for their review/input.

- Comments will be added to the Input & Response Journal



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7. January 26, 2008 Field Trip Report

UPD OARP Team Member, María Gayosso made a presentation on the documented observations made during the two-hour Oracle Area field trip that was organized by the UPD OARP Team for the Citizens Steering Committee and the Technical Advisory Team. CSC and TAT members recorded a total of 542 comments in their guide/workbooks. Ms. Gayosso’s presentation summarized the challenges and opportunities identified in the following subject area: economic development, environmental, historic preservation and cultural resources, housing, land use, landscaping and screening, parks and recreation, safety, transportation, architectural and urban design, and other.

This field trip input, along with the project data collected from the August 2007 survey, the January 2008 field trip, the draft Existing Conditions Report, comments received through CSC meetings, the Market Analysis, and other sources, will assist the CSC in identifying principles and goals to guide the development of the revitalization plan.

A copy of the field-trip report and the presentation are available online at the OARP web site.

8. Preliminary Agenda Items for Next CSC Meeting (March 26, 2008)

At the March 26, 2008 CSC meeting, the following items will be discussed:

- Regular Business
 - o February 27, 2008 CSC Meeting Summary
 - o Market Analysis Progress Report
 - o Public Participation and Community Outreach Update
- OARP Purpose and Overarching Principles Identification

9. Call to the Audience

The following were comments received during the Call to the Audience. *(Note: These include comments from both CSC members and members of the audience. Answers provided by members of the UPD OARP Team or of the Technical Advisory Team are indicated.)*

- *Audience Member:* How do you complain about vacant lots?
Staff response: Teresa Williams from the City of Tucson Department of Neighborhood Resources shared that the City can issue citations for weeds, trash, junk cars and other items. Complaints can be registered by calling 792-CITY (792-2489).
- *CSC Member:* Can we develop some guidelines for how to work with developers that will want to develop in the area while we are in the OARP planning process?
- *CSC Member:* It would be helpful to make all the information gathered as part of this process visual?
- *CSC Member:* Let’s work with and support our local businesses in the area.
- *Audience Member:* Let’s make some desert gardens on vacant land using native vegetation. We can showcase “our desert”.

Comments will be added to the Input & Response Journal

Meeting adjourned at 8:15 p.m.