



Citizens Steering Committee (CSC)

April 15, 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; Erik Nielsen; Eunice Jacobsen; Bernadette Jilka; Darel Magee; Martina O'Brien; Leon Solomon; Lois Roth; Gloria Townsend; Bob Wright; Vicente Zarate

CSC Members Absent: Bill Quiroga; Joshua Randell; Cathy Rex; Ken Scoville

Staff Present:

UPD OARP Team – Chris Kaselemis, Administrator; María Gayosso, Lead Planner; Jennifer Burdick, Planner

Ward 3 Staff – Tamara Prime, Council Aide

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

Meeting Agenda & Discussions	Actions Taken/ Follow-Up Required
<p>1. Welcome and Introductions The CSC members introduced themselves by name and affiliation to the project area. Staff members and audience members introduced themselves.</p>	
<p>Regular Business</p> <p>2. March 18, 2009, CSC Meeting Summary – The meeting summary will be brought to the next full meeting of the CSC on May 27, 2009, for review and approval.</p> <p>3. CSC Announcements and Membership – No changes to announce or other updates.</p> <p>4. Updates and Announcements –</p> <p>■ Tucson Electric Power (TEP) Transmission Line Project – Ed Beck, Director, Line Siting Services Ed Beck provided an overview of the DeMoss Petrie (DMP) Substation to Tucson Substation 138-kiloVolt (kV) Transmission Line Project. This project will provide a larger transmission line between the two substations, going from the existing 46-kV transmission line to one that is 138-kV. The proposed siting of the new line passes through the OARP boundaries, and the OARP area is served by these substations. Beck described the process that will be followed to site the location and route of the new line. Once it is sited, the route will need final approval from the Arizona Corporation Commission (ACC).</p> <p>An Open House was held on April 2, 2009, to inform residents and businesses from the study area about the project. OARP CSC members in attendance at the Open House requested staff to have a presentation at this CSC meeting. About 20,000 meeting announcements were mailed for the meeting. (A copy of the powerpoint presentation made at the Open House and at this CSC meeting can be found online at: http://www.tep.com/Company/News/DMP/.)</p> <p>CSC members and the public were invited to ask questions. Larry Lucero from TEP also assisted in answering questions. Questions and comments related to the discussion were as follows:</p>	



- ♦ *CSC Member:* What is the impact of not doing this?
TEP Response: The expanded capacity of a 138-kV connection between the two substations will help prevent power outages. At this point, there are two substations serving the area. If one of the substations fails, the remainder substation does not have the capacity to serve the entire two areas and power outages would occur.
- ♦ *CSC Member:* Does the Arizona Corporation Commission (ACC) have the ability to change the plan without notifying the public?
TEP Response: It depends on the specific proposed change and the area. There are requirements for notification regarding ACC proposed changes.
- ♦ *CSC Member:* Will the ACC look at a specific proposed route?
TEP Response: In general terms, they will, but the committee will not deal with the impact on specific parcels.
- ♦ *CSC Member:* What is the impact of electromagnetic frequencies (EMF) on people in the area?
TEP Response: Many studies have been performed, with no conclusive results. Some show that you can get more EMF exposure pushing a vacuum cleaner than from overhead utility lines. In general, there is less exposure when lines are overhead many feet above ground, than when buried underground, where they are only a few feet below ground level.
- ♦ *CSC Member:* What is the impact on pacemakers and defibrillators?
TEP Response: None. It is still valid that the further away someone is from the lines, the lesser the impact. Underground lines have a greater impact than overhead lines.
- ♦ *CSC Member:* Is there a preferred route? Will there be any further progression?
TEP Response: There is no preferred route yet; plans to extend are not being discussed as part of this project.
- ♦ *CSC Member:* What is a 138-kV line?
TEP Response: It means that there are 138,000 volts (or 138-kiloVolts) coursing through the lines.
- ♦ *CSC Member:* Are the power lines used to carry other signals, such as radio frequencies?
TEP Response: No, not anymore.
- ♦ *CSC Member:* Is it possible to redesign the poles?
TEP Response: The size of the conductors and insulators make it difficult to play with the design.
- ♦ *Technical Advisory Team (TAT) Member:* Is there a plan to extend the El Paso and Southwestern Greenway project beyond Speedway?
UPD Staff Response: Not that we are aware of.
TEP Response: TEP and EPG, TEP's consultant on this project, have been made aware of the Greenway plan and there are no formal plans to extend it at this time. But this is something that could be discussed.
- ♦ *CSC Member:* What were the comments from attendees at the Open House? And how was it advertised?
TEP Response: As mentioned, over 20,000 invitations were sent out. The

question posed is whether the new 138-kV line should go along the same alignment as the existing 46-kV line, or along a different route. It seems that the preference expressed at the Open House was to look at other options rather than putting the new line along the existing line. EPG is putting together all the comments collected at the Open House.

- ◆ *CSC Member:* I need to understand the terms being used for this project.

TEP Response: We can discuss all of your questions during the break, if you would like.

■ **Speedway/Main Intersection Improvements – UPD Staff**

OARP project staff team member Jenn Burdick briefly explained the planned improvements for the Main Avenue and Speedway Boulevard intersection, which will include a second left hand turn lane on southbound Main Avenue onto Speedway Boulevard, and a bus pullout on the northbound side of Main Avenue, north of Speedway. Graphics were provided to illustrate the planned improvements. The goal is to get the work completed by the beginning of school in August 2009. (A copy of the graphics can be found on the OARP web site at: www.tucsonaz.gov/planning/oarp.)

■ **New Market Tax Credits Application – UPD Staff**

OARP project staff team member Jenn Burdick briefly explained that the City has applied to the Federal Community Development Financial Institutions Fund for new market tax credits. The credits would be offered as incentives to investors, attracting investment in areas where it is not as high. The application area covers the downtown area, and extends beyond to include areas such as the OARP. The City partnered with the Business Development Finance Corporation in the application. The awards will be announced in October 2009.

If Tucson's application is awarded, investors would work with the Business Development Finance Corporation to invest in eligible projects. As an incentive for their investment, they would have the potential to receive tax credits over seven years that would apply toward their corporate income tax liability for up to a total of 39% of their overall investment.

Staff will provide more information at a later date. General information about the federal program is available online at:

http://www.cdfifund.gov/what_we_do/overview.asp

■ **4/24/09 Blue Chip Case Competition – UPD Staff**

OARP project staff team member Jenn Burdick announced that the Blue Chip Case Competition is scheduled for Friday, April 24, 2009. The competition is the culmination of research that 16 teams of UA sophomores have been working on since January 2009, in answer to a question developed by the CSC:

“People living and working in the Oracle Area say that those living in other places in Tucson have a negative perception of the area based on media coverage related to crime and the prevalence of deteriorating properties that people see as they drive along Oracle Road, Miracle Mile, and other roads in the area. While people don't argue that there are crime and property maintenance issues in the area, they point out that there are many assets in the area also. What would you propose neighborhood residents and businesses with limited funds do in the near future to help counteract this negative image?”

Many CSC members have volunteered to be judges for the competition. Two Blue



Chip members were in attendance at the meeting.

■ **Gateway Business Alliance (GBA) – Erik Nielsen, President**

Erik Nielsen provided a summary of GBA achievements since the last CSC meeting. Among the milestones are: a new logo developed for the GBA by Dirk Arnold, a leadership meeting that occurred on 4/2/09, work of the social committee regarding the Historic Tour, and a business mixer that is planned (no date yet). Nielsen commented that the GBA would most likely not have formed without the OARP effort. He also thanked Ward III and the MainStreet Business Assistance Program for their generous awards to support and assist the GBA as it forms and grows.

■ **2nd Annual Historic Open House & Tour – Planning Committee Members**

OARP project staff team member Jenn Burdick provided the details of the upcoming tour, with comments from CSC members. A logo designed by Dirk Arnold was shown. The date of the tour is Saturday, May 9, 2009, from 9:00 am to Noon. College Place will be used as the staging area. The new official name is “Historic Miracle Mile Open House and Tour.” Burdick showed some slides that provided details of the event, which include live music, classic cars and motorcycles cruising routes, and banners. The next planning meeting will be April 17, 2009, at College Place at Noon.

Break (10 minutes)

5. Introduction to Housing Discussion – OARP project staff team member Jenn Burdick went through a short powerpoint to introduce the housing discussion. Burdick provided demographic information and other existing condition data, market analysis information, and visioning session comments before introducing Ron Koenig from the Community Services Department. The Housing Brown Bag will take place at 7:30 am on Friday, April 23, 2009, at College Place.

6. Housing Initiatives Over the Years – Ron Koenig, Community Services

Ron Koenig made a presentation to describe the work that the Community Services Department has performed in the OARP area over the years. He provided a handout showing the type of work that has been performed and the dollar value of that work, which includes housing rehabilitation, housing studies, sidewalk and street lighting improvements, and new homes. He also provided a handout showing the approximate location of the work performed. Koenig explained that the Community Services Department has four main divisions that provide services to the community:

- 1) Public Housing (like the Tucson House)
- 2) Section 8 (rental assistance to over 4,500 households)
- 3) Code Enforcement (recently merged into CSD)
- 4) Community Development (Ron’s division that has rehabbed 500 homes, provided \$3.6 million in funding to 90 non-profits, and provided new housing to 163 new homeowners)

The funding over the years has mostly come from the Federal Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program. At one time, funding was targeted to certain areas of town in the belief that this would provide the most dramatic change to an area, but this approach was changed in 1995 to provide more balanced funding. Now there is an application process. There is more of a reliance now on down-payment assistance, which is anticipated to have more of an impact during the current economy. Koenig touched on the mobile home problems in our community, and also



described briefly how a community land trust model works (the trust owns the land and sells improvements to the homeowner and both the trust and homeowner share in the appreciation in value).

Questions and comments related to the discussion were as follows:

- ♦ *CSC Member:* How does your review of the City's investment in the OARP area over the years compare with other neighborhoods in the City?

Koenig's Response: The Community Services Department (CSD) has the investment information on its web site and anyone can review it and compare. Overall, this area has generally gotten more investment than other target areas. One thing that I can provide you with is a matrix of support programs that your neighborhoods may want to apply to.

Another area that we are finding to be rewarding is the assistance we can help provide for down payments on homes/properties. By providing a relatively small assistance, there is a big return in the amount of investment that it brings into the area. These investments bring value into the area.

- ♦ *CSC Member:* Would you say that the most downtrodden mobile homes are on land owned by one landowner?

Koenig's Response: It varies. One approach that the landowners take is to "sell" the mobile homes to the renters and rent the land the homes are on to them. If there are any code violations, then the homeowner is responsible, not the landowner.

- ♦ *CSC Member:* Is there anything going on at the State Legislature to fight this practice?

Koenig's Response: Not really. You need a sponsor at the Legislature to move any bills and the mobile home lobby is active and fighting hard. It's really the management that is the issue.

- ♦ *CSC Member:* Can you describe again the Community Land Trust model?

Koenig's Response: The Community Land Trust is a model of investment used by jurisdictions around the nation that focuses on wealth-building. The City of Tucson program is structured such that the City buys property with a home on it, and then sells the home to a qualifying homeowner. The City remains the landowner, but the homeowner owns the home. This model helps to keep housing costs affordable. It also helps to stabilize neighborhoods.

- ♦ *CSC Member:* Are there any programs that help to teach first time homebuyers how to own a home?

Koenig's Response: The City provides mandatory classes to teach qualifying homebuyers in its programs.

CSC Member Response: Pima Community College has a program for single, head of household homebuyers, as well.

Koenig's Response: The City has had very few foreclosures historically and, more importantly, very few during the current economic crisis. The homeowner programs build on financial literacy to support homeownership, holistically.

- ☐ Koenig will forward a matrix of support programs to UPD staff to give to the CSC



- ♦ *CSC Member:* Do you help people with water harvesting or solar energy?

Koenig's Response: Energy can be part of rehabilitation projects that the City supports or undertakes. Staff performs analysis to make sure that the essentials needed to protect each asset are taken care of, which can include utility costs and options.

- ♦ *CSC Member:* We need to stress accessibility as an important element of the housing conversation.

7. Call to the Audience – There were no comments or questions.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:05 p.m.

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