

Meeting Summary
City of Tucson
Ward 4 Citizen Design Review Committee (CDRC)
June 18, 2008
Clements Center, 8155 E. Poinciana Drive

ATTENDEES:

Ward 4 CDRC Members

Rick Hanson, Civano Neighborhood Association (NA)
Randall Pierce, Mesquite Ranch NA
Rudy Lopez, Rita Ranch NA
Ken Moyes, Rita Ranch NA
Al Wiruth, Rita Ranch NA

Ward 4

Andy Squire, Aide to Council Member Shirley Scott

Guests

Scott Lantz, Civano Neighbors NA Commercial Areas Working Group
Shay Pedersen, Mesquite Ranch NA
Tom Willard, Rita Ranch NA

City of Tucson Department of Transportation (TDOT) Staff and Consultants

M.J. Dillard, TDOT Project Manager, Central (22nd Street to Valencia Road)
and Northern (Speedway Boulevard to 22nd Street) Segments
Craig Saltzman, TDOT Project Manager, Southern (Valencia Road to Interstate 10) Segment
Gary Wittwer, TDOT Landscape Architect
Melanie Rice, Psomas Project Engineer, Central Segment
John Litter, Castro Engineering Corp. Project Manager, Southern Segment
Elliot Silverstein, URS Corporation
Jan Gordley, Gordley Design Group, Public Involvement
Arizeder Urreiztieta, Gordley Design Group, Public Involvement

MATERIALS:

- Agenda
- Feb. 27, 2008, CDRC Meeting Summary
- Regional Transportation Authority (RTA) brochures

INFORMATION:

Arizeder opened the meeting by asking those present to introduce themselves and their guests. He reviewed the agenda items and reminded the committee that members of the project team would be available after the meeting for individual questions. In addition he requested that

presenters be allowed to complete their presentations before taking questions, and referenced the places in the agenda intended for questions and discussion.

M.J. introduced a discussion of the Implementation Plan, briefly touching on the variety of its funding sources, which include Pima County bond funding, RTA (half-cent sales tax approved by voters in 2006) funding, and Pima County and City of Tucson impact fees. Although construction will be linked to funding as it becomes available. The preliminary plan – how the project will actually begin to be built – calls for the following areas to be given earliest priority:

- Intersection of Old Vail Road and Houghton Road (Southern Segment). A contractor, Borderland Construction, is on the team as Construction Manager-at-Risk working with the project team. Seventy-five-percent plans are expected to be finalized in August 2008, construction to begin by the end of 2008, and the project completed in summer 2009.
- The area between Irvington Road and Valencia Road, including the Irvington intersection but not including the Valencia intersection (Central Segment).
- Intersection of Broadway Boulevard and Houghton Road (Northern Segment). Fewer permits may be required to improve this portion of Houghton Road, as opposed to other portions.

CDRC members questioned the plan to construct Houghton Road north of the Valencia intersection without including the Valencia intersection, and asked whether a study had been completed to evaluate delayed development of the Valencia intersection. Several members agreed that the intersection is now in need of improvement. CDRC members also requested a meeting with the design team regarding the Old Vail Road intersection design and construction plans. M.J. stated that an open house will be scheduled and that the contractor will provide public mailings to alert the community of construction activities.

TDOT is finalizing the remainder of the implementation schedule and will provide this information upon its completion.

M.J. discussed proposed private development planned for the Houghton Road Corridor area that the City has heard about, and asked the committee to share any information they may receive, when they hear about it.

The committee briefly discussed HAWKs (High Intensity Activated Crosswalk) proposed for the Rita Ranch area (outside of the corridor project area) as well as a proposed AT&T cell phone tower. The Ward office is working with City staff regarding these issues.

City of Tucson Landscape Architect Gary Wittwer spoke about landscaping the project area and outlined four principal overriding factors and considerations:

- Houghton Road's status as a scenic corridor; commercial developments in the area are being required to donate a 30-foot buffer adjacent to Houghton Road for natural growth.

- Adherence to the Native Plant Protection Ordinance (NPPO); inventory is complete within the Houghton Road corridor.
- City of Tucson funding for landscaping is at an all-time low, without a budget increase in the last 10 years; indigenous plants will be used wherever possible.
- Dwindling water resources; water-harvesting characteristics will be a main feature.

Gary also described a successful landscaping concept with unique opportunities to link areas together, making the most of native plants that start out in small containers for increased survivability, with little to no irrigation. He added that because plans call for a more natural look, the use of decomposed granite will be minimized, and that due to water issues, it is expected that plants will be self-sustaining.

Gary took several questions regarding his presentation. They included:

When will existing plants be identified for removal or transplant? Plants have been tagged as a part of the inventory process, but determination of removal or transplant will be made near the completion of design, when landscape plans are finalized. Those plans will be made available at future meetings.

Did the Rita Road irrigation system fail, and if so, why? The contractor used PVC pipe, which is only expected to last five to 10 years.

What happens if there are impacts or disruptions to common areas (specifically at Mesquite Ranch) where the Homeowners Association (HOA) pays for and maintains the area up to Houghton Road? The City of Tucson will work with the HOA to maintain/relocate landscaping.

A lengthy question-and-answer period and discussion followed.

Discussion was held regarding the median width, and whether eliminating the median landscaping would allow a reduced median width and result in an increased buffer to the homes at Rita Ranch. The team discussed that the median width has been established, and that reducing the median width would compromise design standards.

Arizeder asked M.J. to reiterate current plans for public outreach. M.J. indicated that after the contractor is officially under contract for the work on the Old Vail Road intersection, the project team would schedule and plan for a meeting with the CDRC with the contractor, leading to a public information meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 7:41 p.m.