



Minutes

City of Tempe Sustainability Commission January 23, 2023

Minutes of the Tempe Sustainability Commission meeting held on Monday, January 23, 2023, 4:30 p.m. at a virtual meeting on MS Teams, through City Hall, 31 E. 5th Street, Tempe, Arizona.

(MEMBERS) Present:

Barbie Burke (Vice Chair)
Natalie Mendoza
Katja Brundiers

Meaghan Coon
Jake Swanson
Shawn Swisher
Erin Boyd
Morgan Winburn

(MEMBERS) Absent:

Kendon Jung (Chair)

City Staff Present:

Brianne Fisher
Andy Escobar
Maddie Mercer
Evelyn Brumfield
Braden Kay

Guests Present:

Barbie Burke called the meeting to order at 4:31 p.m.

Agenda Item 1 – Welcome and Mission of SRC

Vice Chair stated the commission's mission, which is to research and advise on how to advance sustainability in Tempe in areas of city management, operations, and the city as a whole.

Agenda Item 2 – Public Appearances

Gretchen Reinhardt did not present herself as she attended the meeting late.

Agenda Item 3 – Approval of Meeting Minutes

Vice Chair called for a motion to approve the minutes from December 19, 2022.

Commissioner Boyd reminded commissioners of the emails regarding revisions to last month's meeting. Information was received by the Chair and Brianne Fisher.

Motion: Natalie Mendoza

Second: Shawn Swisher

Decision: Approved 6-0

Voted to Approve:

Natalie Mendoza

Shawn Swisher

Katja Brundiars

Jake Swanson

Barbie Burke

Meaghan Coon

Absent:

Kendon Jung (Chair)

Agenda Item 4 – Morgan Winburn, Establishing Roots

Fisher added agenda item to give opportunity for new commission members to present themselves to the commission. All commissioners fill a requirement that is outlined in the commission charter that makes sure there is diverse perspective. These presentations provide opportunities to members to describe their background and how they play a role in the position they are holding. Would like to continue this with future members.

Morgan Winburn is an Urban Agriculture Consultant and is involved in a number of projects. Winburn is the Community Garden Chair for Keep Tempe Beautiful. She outlined projects she is working on.

- Developing community gardens for Creighton Community to establish food security
 - o Distribute 300 produce boxes every Saturday
- Finished ASU KER fellowship funded by the Virginia G Piper Trust
 - o To look at how academia and communities can come together to create resilience. Focused on community gardens in lower socio-economic areas
- Consults for 7 community gardens

- One project is a ranch in Laveen who provides opportunities for children to interact with animals and learn about Arizona's agricultural history
- Manages the Clark Park community garden.
- Works with the City of Phoenix on its backyard garden project and micro farm grant
- Water conservation to elevate food security in low socioeconomic neighborhoods.

Fisher noted Winburn is a great fit to the commission as her work is around local food and she can provide valuable advice on the programs and policies Tempe puts in place.

Questions:

- Fisher asked for an update on Clark Park.
 - Winburn: The grand opening will February 11 from 1-4 pm. The community garden has 22 boxes that people can steward, including communal spaces. They have 3 different types of composting and are working with ASU to create an automated composting system. 10 trees will be planted as part of the food forest and shade tree program. CSA will help support the garden and local farmers.
- Mendoza typed in the chat: I have a question. There's a lot of discussion about food access and in the budget supplemental, we have a one-time request of \$100,000 for "food access and food justice." How does food access pertain to sustainability and resilience to climate crises such as drought, which is the purpose of this commission?
 - As it relates to the commission, Winburn is still learning how everything correlates with each other. How it pertains to sustainability is through the climate crisis. Tempe is growing at an exponential rate and must be responsible for its water usage. Tempe needs to utilize resources more appropriately and responsibly.
 - Fisher notes that the Sustainability and Resilience Office has a supplemental intended for food justice, an issue highlighted throughout the agendas within the Climate Action Plan Update. Ideas on how to use the supplemental include supporting the USDA Roadmap and exploring a partnership with Local First Arizona in regard to a composting pilot.
- Swisher feels that exploring aquaponics or hydroponics farming could introduce different ideas into the community about how water should be used rather than the standard way that is not a sustainable method of farming. He appreciates the work Winburn is doing and is looking forwards to hearing more.

Vice Chair thanked Morgan for her presentation.

Agenda Item 5- Erin Boyd, Culdesac

Erin Boyd presented herself to the commission. She leads government relations and external affairs at Culdesac. She gave a presentation on how Culdesac is helping address the Climate Action Plan Highlight Action Transportation Demand Management (Mobility Hubs).

Boyd described Culdesac as a developer and property manager that prioritizes local community and sustainability. Culdesac is located on plot on Apache Blvd, east of McClintock, west of 101, and adjacent to Escalante and Alegre neighborhoods. The developer is building a car free neighborhood where people can access daily needs of their life by walking, biking, and shared or public transportation. Residents will not have private vehicles; the only exception will be 150 parking spots to support onsite local businesses. This will contribute to a radical reduction in carbon emissions. The design elements of the property are focused on green design by using permeable materials that reflect heat and over 50% of the neighborhood is landscape. Buildings are designed to provide greater shade coverage. The light rail station serving the apartment complex will be the Smith/Apache stop. The site will have a grocery store to help alleviate the effects of Food City closing down.

Boyd highlighted three examples about Culdesac that connect to the commission's work:

1. Mobility hub:
 - a. Transportation amenities include
 - i. ride share pickup location, light rail station, Byrd Scooter and bike parking spots, EV charging stations
2. TDM in Action (Platinum Pass for multi-family)
 - a. Worked with Valley Metro to change its Platinum Pass policy.
 - b. Tenants will have access to a Platinum Pass that is subsidized in rental fees
 - c. The hope is that this policy is expanded to all multi-family housing along the light rail corridor
3. TDM in Action (Little Cholla)
 - a. Weekly pop-up market
 - b. Incentives (\$5 token to spend at event) given to those who attend the event by walking, cycling, or using, light rail

Boyd reminded the commission that the development is still under construction. There will be a soft launch of a restaurant opening in February. A larger opening will be held in March. She extended an invitation to the commissioners.

Questions:

- Mendoza typed in the chat: Can you share exact numbers of your expected profits and how it compares to other neighborhoods that use cars?

- Boyd stated that Culdesac invests differently compared to other developers. The developer is investing in pavers, green landscaping, and partnerships in the community. They are trying to prove to other developers that it can be a successful model and want to see others follow in their footsteps.
- Mendoza types in the chat: How do the expected profits for the Culdesac neighborhood project compare to the expected profits for regular car-centered neighborhoods?
 - Boyd does not have the exact expected profits but can reach out to her at another time to provide that information.
- Swisher asked about Culdesac's experience in getting approval by the City to build this type of development and what can do the commission do to make this process easier and faster to streamline the approval of other similar developments.
 - Boyd stated that while the city's leadership supported the development's priorities, they did push Culdesac to include public space as a design element. There was no pushback about the limited parking spaces.
 - Swisher commented that he hopes there will be more live/work architecture in the area that can contribute to sustainable development. He also thinks about how these types of developments can make non-forward-looking developers see the economic opportunities in this type of design.
 - Boyd said there will be live/work in the units that will open fall of 2023.
- Brundiers shared that what stuck out to her from both presentations was that they both brought forth the practice of not solely striving for profit. It inspires her that the commission might be able to focus on economic mechanisms that enable environmental sustainability rather than just environmental sustainability.
- Dr. Kay commented on Swisher's earlier statement. The last time the Urban Core Master Plan was drafted, it did not have an example like Culdesac. The plan did not get passed but hopes there is another policy window to look at the next generation of transit-oriented development and the codes and standards the City puts near the light rail, streetcar, BRT. With Culdesac as an example, there is opportunity to include this language in the General Plan and transit-oriented development plans. Dr. Kay believes one aspect of Culdesac that is exciting is that the development is not just showing landscape policy change but also transportation and asked Boyd what the benefits are to being able to spend a lot of time on developing policy that goes beyond the immediate needs of a development.
 - Boyd feels fortunate to work at Culdesac as the company sees talent in different backgrounds and has a diverse team. In order to develop communities, a team needs to be diverse. The developer wants to prove that their model is one to copy.

Vice Chair thanked Boyd for the presentation.

Agenda Item 6- FY23/24 Proposed Budget Supplementals

Fisher presented the proposed budget supplementals and is in the current process of submitting the requests for the next fiscal year. The Chief Financial Officer announced that the City will have a conservative budget due to concerns about the economy. The office's approach is to be think about what the community needs if there is a recession, layoffs and if inflation continues. This year's supplements will be submitted with other departments to show coordination and partnership. This will not be the last time the supplementals are shown to the commission.

- Youth Climate Action Coordinator
 - o To fully cover the cost of the position
- Extreme Heat Mitigation and Resilient Neighborhood Roadmap
 - o Moves forward work with FMR around EnVision and community resilience
 - o Funding to go towards education and outreach
 - o Figure out the trusted places community members go to and what they need to be outfitted with through a Resilience Hub Masterplan
- Mobile Water Distribution
 - o Providing resources to special events team and human services team
 - o Helping the DTA provide water distribution stations at yearly events
 - o Acknowledges and puts visual message that we care about water conservation
- Energy Equity program Development
 - o To continue outreach work
 - o To hire energy policy consulting
 - o To pilot residential energy equity project
- Food access and Food Justice
 - o Pilot food distribution at EnVision
 - o Test out new pilots in workforce, entrepreneurship, and backyard gardens
- Clean Energy Jobs and Workforce Development
 - o Fund for Economic Development when they are talking to businesses about tenant improvements around energy efficiency
 - o To support residents interested in electrical and building trades
 - o To support green job training with youth
- Shade and Indigenous Land Stewardship
 - o To support adding shade and Indigenous land stewardship to the Resilient Tempe Master Plan
 - o To support Indigenous land stewardship in the Salt River corridor and Indian Bend Wash
 - o To support a communications and maintenance guide for operating and maintain indigenous and native landscaped

- To increase shade with low-water and indigenous practices

Questions:

- Brundiars noted that the one area that is under researched about heat events is the recovery phase, especially in urban agriculture.
 - Fisher announced that the office has created a position for the hiring of a fellow to think through what that plan is and what the strategies are during a disaster, pre, during, and post.
- Vice Chair noted that she and the Chair and will follow up with commissioners regarding the proposed budget supplementals.

Agenda Item 7 – Housekeeping Items

Burke announced that the Sustainability Award application opened, and that the celebration event will take place on Saturday April 1st. A form with instructions is attached to the agenda packet and the deadline is Tuesday February 15. The application needs to be submitted before the next commission meeting. A copy will be sent, and it will also be posted to the City of Tempe website.

Burke announced that the SRC Year at a Glance annual planning document is attached to the agenda packet. It lists all topics that will be discussed in every meeting.

Agenda Item 8 – Future Agenda Items

Burke stated that City Staff are not working on President's Day, next scheduled commission meeting. Fisher scheduled the moved the meeting back one week on the 27th. Burke asked the commission to add future agenda items. None did.

Motion: Jake Swanson

Second: Shawn Swisher

Decision: Approved 6-0

Voted to Approve:

Natalie Mendoza

Shawn Swisher

Katja Brundiars

Jake Swanson

Barbie Burke

Meaghan Coon

Absent:

Kendon Jung (Chair)

The meeting was adjourned at 5:44 pm.

Prepared by: Andy Escobar

Reviewed by: Brianne Fisher

Addendum:

Chat record for Sustainability and Resilience Commission January 23, 2023, meeting:

[Yesterday 4:32 PM] Fisher, Brianne

Hello Katja and Morgan!

[Yesterday 4:32 PM] Katja Brundiers

Hello everyone, apologies for joining a bit late.

[Yesterday 4:41 PM] Katja Brundiers

Really appreciate this focus on evolving urban AG through cooperative business models that create more resilient livelihoods (and local economies) thank you Morgan

like 2 heart 1

[Yesterday 4:43 PM] Mercer, Madeline

We're really interested in piloting Phoenix's backyard garden program as part of our urban agriculture & food access work in Tempe, I'd love to connect with you about this!

like 4

[Yesterday 4:46 PM] Kay, Braden

So wonderful that you were supported by the KER fellowship! [New Homepage | Knowledge Exchange for Resilience \(asu.edu\)](#)

like 2

New Homepage | Knowledge Exchange for Resilience

[Yesterday 4:47 PM]

Gretchen Reinhardt was invited to the meeting.

[Yesterday 4:48 PM] Katja Brundiers

In the future, I'd also love to learn more how you helped writing codes successfully - that offers great insights into policy-making ...

like 2

[Yesterday 4:48 PM] Natalie Mendoza (Guest)

I have a question. There's a lot of discussion about food access and in the budget supplemental, we have a one-time request of \$100,000 for "food access and food justice." How does food access pertain to sustainability and resilience to climate crises such as drought, which is the purpose of this commission?

like 2

[Yesterday 4:49 PM] Kay, Braden

That's a question for the office not Morgan

[Yesterday 4:50 PM] Kay, Braden

The commission deals with sustainability issues beyond climate but food access is a climate justice and resilience issue. Well said Morgan

[Yesterday 4:51 PM] Kay, Braden

The request is proposed but not approved.

[Yesterday 4:51 PM] Mercer, Madeline

+1 Braden and Morgan -- Food access and food justice are essential components of community (social) resilience, and directly impacts the livability of our community. Like Morgan just said, we can absolutely grow food here, we just need to be mindful of the practices we're using.

like 1

[Yesterday 4:51 PM] Natalie Mendoza (Guest)

Morgan, I have been on this commission for over a year now. It has a focus, but I am not sure how it connects to climate crisis. Many local farmers in the agricultural industry already do that work. I'm asking why we need to come in and interfere with the current agricultural industry and the already existing local farmers here in Tempe?

[Monday 4:53 PM] Natalie Mendoza (Guest)

Madeline: But we are the sustainability and resilience commission. Isn't our concern the focus of ensuring environmental resilience, not "social resistance"?

[Monday 4:55 PM] Fisher, Brianne

Natalie, the SRC is focused on the highlight actions, however these elements are policy development are great to hear the Commissions perspective on.

[Monday 4:56 PM] Fisher, Brianne

We are happy to meet with you and dive in deeper about the local food/climate and resilience connection

like 3

[Monday 4:58 PM] Natalie Mendoza (Guest)

Brianne: Alright, that sounds good. I understand the connection between water security and desert sustainability, but I don't see a major food crisis occurring.

[Monday 4:59 PM] Natalie Mendoza (Guest)

(Question for Erin): How do the expected profits for the Culdesac neighborhood project compare to the expected profits for regular car-centered neighborhoods?

[Monday 5:00 PM] Natalie Mendoza (Guest)

*compared not compare

[Monday 5:01 PM] Mercer, Madeline

Natalie: It's less related to resilience to widespread food crisis (though major supply chain disruption is possible in disaster events, as we saw during COVID), and more related to expanding local food access for communities through varying modes of sustainable production & distribution of locally-produced foods.

[Monday 5:03 PM] Katja Brundiers

I love the emphasis on building a culture - this is as important as building physical infrastructures. I've not owned a car since I live here. Using other mobility options is a reminder that our culture has not yet embraced 'alternative modes of transportation' as a lifestyle.

like 4

[Monday 5:07 PM] Natalie Mendoza (Guest)

Katja: A culture can be a very beneficial part of a community for many individuals, however, I find the cars (and this includes electric vehicles) are much more convenient when it comes to transportation, even within Tempe. It's a 15-20 minute drive anywhere you go in Tempe, but it can be a multi-hour walk to travel the same distance. Additionally, coordinating times with the times that buses go can be challenging and takes time as well. Yesterday, I discovered just how long it takes me to walk across Tempe (and take a short bus ride towards the end when one of the busses caught up with my path), when I needed to get to South Tempe (around Elliot Road) from North Tempe (at University Road).

[Monday 5:08 PM] Natalie Mendoza (Guest)

I think alternative energy sources is a much more realistic focus than alternative mobility options

[Monday 5:09 PM] Natalie Mendoza (Guest)

Can you share exact numbers of your expected profits and how it compares to other neighborhoods that use cars?

[Monday 5:09 PM] Natalie Mendoza (Guest)

natalie.sustainability@gmail.com

[Monday 5:09 PM] Mercer, Madeline

I love to hear about the many ways you're partnering with local businesses and other community stakeholders!