Minutes
Neighborhood Advisory Commission
February 3, 2016

Minutes of the Neighborhood Advisory Commission (NAC) held on February 3, 2016 from 5:30-7:00 p.m., at 3rd Floor Conference Room of City Hall, 31 East 5th Street, Tempe, Arizona.

(MEMBERS) Present: Karen Adams, Isela Blanc, Jack Escobar, Matt Korbeck, Kiyomi Kurooka, Nancy Lesko, Candyce Lindsay, Josephine McNamara, Robert Miller, Bill Munch, Julie Ramsey, Carol Shixue Hu, Scott Smas.

(MEMBERS) Absent: Nancy Buell

City Staff Present: Elizabeth Thomas, Neighborhood Services Specialist; Ryan Levesque, Deputy Community Development Director-Planning, ryan_levesque@tempe.gov, 480-858-2393; Shelley Seyler, Deputy Public Works Director -Transportation/Traffic Engineering, shelly_seyler@tempe.gov; Shauna Warner, Neighborhood Services Manager.

Guests Present: ASU Student, name not provided

Agenda Item 1 – Call to Order
The meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m.

Agenda Item 2 – Public Comment
None.

Agenda Item 3 – Consideration of Minutes: December 2, 2015
Commissioner Lesko made a motion to approve the December 2nd minutes as presented, Commissioner Smas seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Agenda Item 4 – Welcome New Members
New members Isela Blanc, Jack Escobar, Carol Shixue Hu introduced themselves and provided their zip codes and noted any areas of particular interest to existing members who introduced themselves and offered their zip codes.

Agenda Item 5 – Elections for Chair and Vice Chair
Chair Miller affirmed his prior nomination for chair and his willingness to continue serving. Commissioner Munch reiterated his nomination for Commissioner Korbeck to serve as Vice Chair. No other nominations were offered. There were 11 yeah votes for Chair Miller to again be

reelected Chair with him abstaining from the vote. There were an additional 11 yeah votes for Commissioner Korbeck to be elected Vice Chair with him being the one abstention.

Agenda Item 6 – New Development and Impacts Discussion

Ryan Levesque, Deputy Community Development Director Planning emphasized that the General Plan is the guiding policy document for the City of Tempe. The plan which is updated every 10 years as required by state law establishes land use and intensity of land use including density, height and setbacks.

Ryan and Shelly Seyler, Deputy Public Works Director of Transportation/Traffic Engineering added that Traffic Impact Analysis are executed by consultants and then reviewed by Transportation Engineering staff. Roadways are limited in the number of vehicles they can carry and the city of Tempe has always taken pride in encouraging and promoting multi-modal options like transit, biking and walking with abundant bike lanes, multi-use paths and shaded sidewalks providing alternatives particularly for short trips.

Commissioners asked about the cumulative effects of a series of projects such as multiple new builds along Rio Salado? Staff explained that each project is looked at individually as it makes its way through the development plan review process. Factors like how many trips it will generate and if mitigation is needed to address any impacts are considered. It can be challenging and somewhat hard to isolate projects occurring in clusters and not every project that gets consideration or approval gets built. Staff is optimistic regarding a comprehensive Traffic Impacts Study underway that will be done by one consultant looking at the area from 101 to Priest and the Lake to Apache/Broadway.

Commissioners had the following additional comments and inquiries:

- What about modifications to the General Plan?
  These types of requests from Developers undergo additional Mayoral/Council review and scrutiny and require a majority of 5 of 7 votes.
- Is there too much student housing?
  That question has been coming up more along with demand from developers to develop in Tempe. Project requests come in from private development and apartments and student housing projects continue to be funded through private investment interests.
- Can some of the new impact fees be directed to key intersection and street improvements?
  The majority of the new impact fees go towards Police Department and Fire needs, however, there are some grant monies that can be sought to help pay for intersection improvements.
- Concern was expressed regarding the intersection of University and College being further impacted by a proposed project when it is already very congested with bicyclists, skateboards, pedestrians and vehicles. The development project in question (The Maxwell), request has been pulled from the regular development plan review commission agenda at the request of the applicant. Planning staff anticipates receiving a revised proposal from the developer expanding their project scope. This updated submittal will require another neighborhood meeting to be conducted by the applicant, followed by public hearings to be determined at a later time.
  Commissioners were assured that multiple Transportation Engineering staff go to and view the highly traveled and problematic intersections and also live in and travel throughout

Tempe experiencing roadway issues first hand. Student behavior is hard to control, intersections around the ASU campus are challenging. Ultimately, Mayor and Council have the final say and are provided information from staff to make their decisions.

- What are the parking requirements for buildings like this one in the downtown area?
  There are separate Downtown parking standards which are lower than surburban standards. Ryan agreed to provide NAC members with notification of the future meetings related to this project once set.
- When General Plan 2040 was approved in 2014, what was the voter turn-out?
  It was a separate, stand-alone election and voter turn-out was low.
- How far have we deviated from GP2040?
  To date, two applications have sought amendments to GP2040. Both cases passed with some density reductions required and there are two more potential cases.
- Any instances of city proposing land use changes?
  Typically, this would only happen when the plan goes out to public vote, next in 2050.
- Is there a cap on downtown building heights or density?
  There are height limitations, base zoning is 50' height, some areas allow up to 100' with height tiers as you setback from Mill Avenue streetscape.
- Is there a number of square feet per occupant requirement?
  There are minimum standards for bedroom and living area size.
- Are Tempe staff members staying abreast of best practices and innovations?
  Yes, city staff attend various conferences and participate in forums and stay in touch with peers in other cities. Staff also come from various home cities and bring that experience too.
- Are we fully considering real impacts of building up - on traffic, sustainability initiatives and existing Tempe residents' quality of life? For example, the new State Farm building gives off an intense glare that impacts drivers' visibility particularly in the morning and in the late afternoon. This same building dwarfs lake area multi-path users with its looming size and heat and glare from all of the glass.
  Planning and internal review processes include staff from multiple departments such as fire and police. Their comments are provided to applicants. Calls for service are monitored and we rely on technology to communicate with traffic signals and to prioritize emergency vehicles as well as working with our neighbor cities to improve their response times and ours.
- Are there any mechanisms after a development goes in to correct problems?
  If something is noted during the process such as the need for an additional right hand turn lane, the developer can be asked to help mitigate traffic impacts, but city typically has to address situations that arise after a development is in place.
- Concern was expressed that it is hard to judge full impacts of development until it is done and variances are applied for and approved before Character Area plans are completed or approved.

There was some additional discussion and varied opinions shared regarding the McClintock Street Improvements Project between Broadway and Guadalupe Roads which presented the opportunity to add bike lanes and remove vehicle lanes as part of the scheduled mill and overlay process. Shelly noted that since 2004, vehicular traffic volumes have decreased, on average, by as much as 22 percent in this north/south corridor stretch. The wide, straight streets proved challenging for pedestrian and bike safety.

Ryan distributed copies of the February 2016 Development Projects List noting that commissioners had found the font size too small when he last visited the commission so it has since been enlarged. Commissioners concluded the discussion by agreeing to compile a list of thoughtful development considerations and priorities they want to forward to Mayor and Council, to ask they be mindful of, when making planning and development related decisions.

Agenda Item 7 – Discussion of 2016 State of the Neighborhoods, Neighborhood Awards and Workshop Planning

As in recent years, there are anticipated to be four workshops total. A Downtown session is planned with city planning staff and Downtown Tempe Authority staff jointly presenting information about engagement plans, character area planning, downtown updates and activities. Based on post-event survey responses from 2014 and 2015 and internal staff discussion, a variety of workshop topics were proposed. Ideas included: Chicken Coop Design 101, Starting a Lending Library, Volunteerism and Organizing Success Stories, Code Compliance overview, Local businesses as neighbors, Meet and Greet with our new Police Chief, Town and Gown, Animal Issues and Community Gardens. Commissioners liked the idea of a Meet and Greet with the new Police Chief, a Code Compliance and Tempe 311 Customer Care Center joint session. They also recommended a session specific to ASU/university planning and building plans. There may be innovative ways to combine topics. Staff will move forward on confirming topics and speakers in order to meet print deadlines.

Agenda Item 8 – Sign Code Reform Update

Ryan provided a Sign Code Reform update noting that the three elements currently being discussed are:
Proposed improvements to the code
Ramifications due to the Gilbert court case
Political signs component

The current direction is to host a business stakeholders meeting seeking business owner input and then come back with results to the Council Committee. Ryan agreed to come back to NAC to share what is being taken to Council Committee.

Agenda Item 9 – Joint meeting/gathering with Historic Preservation Commission Update

NAC commission members were invited to attend the December 10, 2015 Historic Preservation meeting for a meet and greet opportunity. Commissioners Buell and Kurooka briefly met the Historic Preservation Commissioners and staff and attended their meeting.

Agenda Item 10 - Proposed Agenda Items for March or Future Meeting

- Neighborhood Awards discussion and voting

Agenda Item 10 –Adjournment

Meeting was adjourned at 7:00 p.m.

Prepared by: Elizabeth Thomas, Neighborhood Services Specialist
Reviewed by: Shauna Warner, Neighborhood Services Manager