



## Minutes City Council Retreat March 4, 2013

Minutes of the Tempe City Council Retreat held on Monday, March 4, 2013, 4:00 p.m. at Hatton Hall, 34 East 7<sup>th</sup> Street, Tempe, Arizona.

### **COUNCIL PRESENT:**

Mayor Mark W. Mitchell  
Councilmember Robin Arredondo-Savage  
Councilmember Kolby Granville  
Councilmember Corey D. Woods

Vice Mayor Onnie Shekerjian  
Councilmember Shana Ellis  
Councilmember Joel Navarro

### **STAFF PRESENT:**

Andrew Ching, Interim City Manager  
Judi Baumann, Interim City Attorney  
Lisa Collins, Interim Community Development Director  
Kathy Berzins, Community Services Director  
Ken Jones, Finance and Technology Director  
Mayor and Council Chief of Staff and Aides

Jeff Kulaga, Assistant City Manager  
Brigitta M. Kuiper, City Clerk  
Alex Smith, Technology Development Specialist  
Don Bessler, Public Works Director  
Various Department Heads or their representatives

***Mayor Mitchell called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. and welcomed staff in attendance.***

Mayor Mitchell stated that this meeting serves at the mid-year Council Retreat as agreed to at the August 2012 Annual Council Retreat. The purpose of this meeting is to review progress and determine future direction.

## **1. Development and Redevelopment Policies**

Andrew Ching, Interim City Manager, explained that the purpose of this agenda item is to check-in with the City Council regarding current development standards, the role and duties of the Development Review Commission (DRC), and the tools available for development incentives. Lisa Collins, Interim Community Development Director, reviewed the current development standards as outlined in the Zoning and Development Code (ZDC). Most developments in Tempe are mixed-use developments and are typically governed by Planned Area Developments (PADs) and/or Development Agreements (DAs). Ms. Collins reviewed the history behind combining the Design Review Board with the Planning and Zoning Commission so that the newly-formed DRC could review zoning, land use, and design issues at the same time. The powers and duties of the DRC are outlined in the ZDC. The DRC has limited decision making authority; DRC recommendations or decisions are appealable to the City Council. Using several recent examples, Ms. Collins explained how projects were reviewed using development standards, a PAD, a DA, or a combination of both. A proposed development in a certain zoning classification could look different if a PAD was applied.

Councilmembers discussed the difference between underlying zoning and the vision for a property, applying conditions of approval to PADs, the possibility of developing design guidelines for downtown Tempe that could be shared with the DRC, building heights in the downtown and the need to determine a clear vision for sections of the City including the downtown area, the Apache Boulevard corridor and Elliott Road corridor, as examples. Streetscapes and surrounding areas should also be included in the vision. Once the City Council's vision is determined, it should be clearly articulated to the DRC and the development community.

Discussion continued regarding holding joint meetings with the DRC to discuss the vision of the City, DRC's role with respect to policy, taking a proactive role by soliciting feedback from stakeholders, and reviewing development codes to determine if changes

are needed. The role of the DRC is to advise the City Council, not to create the vision. It was suggested that the DRC be asked to provide input in advance of a joint meeting, which could serve as a starting point for discussion. It would also be helpful to have historical data regarding "lessons learned" for discussion purposes.

Although the market dictates types of development, perhaps guidelines and standards for PADs would be helpful to outline City Council's vision for certain areas; this information would be helpful to staff, developers, and the DRC. Councilmembers also discussed the need to work on strip centers, to include South Tempe when visioning for the community, and the importance of branding/marketing Tempe as more than just a college town.

Alex Smith, Technology Development Specialist, reviewed and explained how the following four development incentives work: 1) Government Property Lease Excise Tax (GPLET), 2) waived development fees, 3) Transaction Privilege Tax rebates, and 4) Transient Lodging Tax rebates. Councilmembers discussed the use of incentives, the tools available to developers and City resources to inform developers of those tools, Arizona Commerce Authority assistance and incentives, the impact of the Arizona gift clause requiring community value in exchange for an incentive, and that incentives should be reviewed on a case-by-case basis as projects occur. Staff is seeking direction regarding how incentives are structured, what businesses would and would not qualify for incentives, and what Council considers as value in exchange for incentives.

Based on City Council discussion, development/redevelopment issues will be included on the March 20, 2013 City Council Strategy Session agenda for continued discussions regarding the City Council's vision for the community and to identify economic priorities, goals, strategies, and incentives. Staff will identify key locations/corridors in the City, determine what City assistance can be provided, solicit DRC feedback regarding development codes and issues, and solicit input from various development stakeholders.

## **2. Park Rehabilitation Program**

Kathy Berzins, Community Services Director, provided Councilmembers with an overview of the development of the Parks Master Plan, since its inception in 2006. In 2008, voters approved bonds for the purpose of funding the Master Plan. Parks plans and construction plans were developed for several parks; however, development was halted in 2010 due to the economic downturn. Five parks ranked highest for redevelopment – Hudson, Hallman, Daley, Scudder, and Goodwin – with the remaining parks ranked for rehabilitation based on multiple factors including age, usage, infrastructure, age/condition of amenities, and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements, etc. The parks projects were placed on hold and then reprioritized for rehabilitation with the funding based on park acreage.

Councilmembers discussed the prioritization of park rehabilitation funding based on park acreage versus usage, changing neighborhood needs versus wants since the master plan was initially developed, park safety, asset management and infrastructure, and criteria for ranking parks. From a financial standpoint, rehabilitation of parks is preferable to rebuilding a park.

Don Bessler, Public Works Director, explained that the Community Services Department provides for the usage and programming of parks while Public Works is responsible for the infrastructure. Parks projects in the Capital Improvements Program (CIP) budget are primarily to maintain existing infrastructure and to address safety concerns, such as broken concrete or lighting. Ms. Berzins explained the three types of funding available for parks are based on: 1) health and safety issues, 2) asset management/aging infrastructure, and 3) park enhancements. The amount of funding available for park enhancements could be spread out and used to impact a greater number of parks.

Councilmembers continued discussions regarding funding of parks and how to make the biggest impact to the largest number of parks, identifying the most important park needs, the costs associated with different park enhancements, the life cycle of parks and parks infrastructure, use of neighborhood grant funding, and use of a parks impact fee. Ken Jones, Finance and Information Technology Director, addressed bonding capacity for parks and the availability of additional funding due to a recently approved development project near Tempe Town Lake. Revenues from this project may be allocated to a CIP contingency fund for park rehabilitation purposes. The current Parks Master Plan may not be relevant today given changing priorities; it should be based on need instead of which neighborhood has completed a parks or construction plan. Staff was asked to bring the Parks Master Plan back to the City Council every few years for review and feedback.

Based on City Council discussion, the parks rehabilitation program will be included on the March 20, 2013 City Council Strategy Session agenda for continued discussion. Staff will prepare information for discussion, to include: alternative scenarios regarding

parks enhancements and costs, operating costs of park assets, lifecycles of equipment, and information from other cities concerning use of impact/system development fees for parks.

*The Council Retreat was recessed at 6:22 p.m. for a dinner break and reconvened at 6:52 p.m. with all Councilmembers present.*

### **3. Assessment of Council Committees Moving Forward**

Mayor Mitchell stated that the purpose of this discussion is to determine if the current Council Committee structure is working or if modifications should be made, including committee assignments. He reviewed the 2010-2012 Committee structure, comparing it to the current structure. Councilmembers discussed the current Council Committees, the Open Meeting Law requirements of a two-member committee, and how a third Councilmember can become involved in an issue being discussed by another Council Committee. All issues reviewed by a Committee must be presented to the City Council as a whole; any Councilmember may make suggestions or recommendations for changes at that time. Reaching a consensus is a component of the process. Councilmembers discussed the purpose of Issue Review Sessions (IRS), City Council Strategy Sessions (CCSS) and Committee of the Whole (COW) sessions with respect to staff presentations, staff resources, and policy discussions. COW sessions could be used to focus on one or two key policy issues. COW and CCSS meetings have traditionally not been televised, which changes the nature of Council discussions by making them more informal and open. Councilmembers continued discussions about the best meeting type to hold discussions, noting that policy discussions should include all Councilmembers. Concerning the Economic, Lake, Downtown and Advanced Transportation (ELDAT) Council Committee, Mayor Mitchell suggested, and Councilmembers discussed, expanding the vision for Mill Avenue, downtown, and the lake area, to all of Tempe, and that the vision is reviewed/studied by the entire City Council; this change would help relieve the ELDAT Council Committee's workload.

Based on the discussion, the following was agreed upon:

- The Council Committee structure will continue to serve as a tool to move the City forward.
- Downtown and lake issues/vision will be removed from the ELDAT Council Committee's purview, modified to include the vision of Tempe, and discussed during City Council Strategy Sessions.
- Affordable housing issues will be addressed by the Finance and Effective Infrastructure Council Committee
- IRS will continue in the same format.
- The CCSS / COW meetings will include both strategic issues and visioning.

Councilmembers were asked to contact Mayor Mitchell or Andrew Ching if they wish to add items for discussion to CCSS / COW agendas. These changes will be reviewed by the City Council in six months.

### **4. Televising of Public Comments During Formal Council Meetings**

Mayor Mitchell stated that he would like to see public comments at Formal Council Meetings televised, but that he will follow the City Council's recommendation. Andrew Ching, Interim City Manager, stated that the public comment section of Formal Council Meetings has not been televised for several years based on an administrative decision by the former City Manager. There is no new information about this subject since he provided a legal, confidential memorandum to Council. Councilmembers discussed whether or not to televise the public comments portion of the meeting, that televising is not required, and that the meeting is an open public meeting as the public is invited to attend and listen to the entire meeting. Based on the City Council discussion, there will be no change to procedure; the public comments portion of the Formal Council Meetings will not be televised.

*There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 7:50 p.m.*

I, Brigitta M. Kuiper, the duly-appointed City Clerk of the City of Tempe, Maricopa County, Arizona, do hereby certify the above to be the minutes of the City Council Retreat of March 4, 2013 by the Tempe City Council, Tempe, Arizona.

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Mark W. Mitchell, Mayor

ATTEST:

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Brigitta M. Kuiper, City Clerk