

Mayor's Community Roundtable Committee

Harry E. Mitchell Government Center
Third Floor Executive Conference Room
31 East 5th Street, Tempe, Arizona
Tuesday, October 29, 2013
4:00 PM

Members of the Committee may attend either in person or by telephone conference call.

AGENDA

Chair: Mayor Mitchell

Call to Order

1. Public Appearances – The committee welcomes public comment. According to the Arizona Open Meeting Law, the Committee may only discuss matters listed on the agenda. Matters brought up by the public under public appearances that are not listed on the agenda cannot be discussed by the Committee. A 3-minute limit per person will be in effect.
2. Review Meeting Minutes of: August 20, 2013*
3. General Plan 2040 Update
4. Community Development and Character Areas/Visioning/Development Standards
5. Open discussion on the City Council's priorities: 1. Ensuring long-term financial stability through quality economic development, 2. Maintaining high quality of life through safe and vibrant communities, 3. Creating an atmosphere of fun through innovative programs and special events.
6. Future Agenda Items
7. Future Meeting Date:
8. Announcements

*Background material included

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Minutes

Mayor's Community Roundtable August 20, 2013

Minutes of the Mayor's Community Roundtable meeting held on Tuesday, August 20, at 4:00 p.m., in the Don Cassano Room, Tempe Transit Center, 200 E. 5th Street, Tempe, Arizona.

MEMBERS Present: Mayor Mark W. Mitchell, Harry E. Mitchell, Randy Gross, Maryanne Corder, Julian Wright, Eric Gudino, Spike Lawrence, Andrea Esquer, Bobbie Cassano, Mark Yselas

MEMBERS Absent: Jim Scussel, Stephanie Nowack, Mary Ann Miller, Barb Carter, Steve McGrady

CITY STAFF Present: Steven Methvin, Chief of Staff to the Mayor and Council; Elizabeth Higgins, Mayoral Aide; Donna Kennedy, Economic Development Director; Sue Taffee, Public Information Officer; Eric Iwersen, Community Development; Shelly Seyer, Public Works;

GUESTS Present: Maryanne Mitchell; Ben Limmer, Valley Metro; Lisa Saldeen, Valley Metro

Mayor also called for the group to introduce itself.

Agenda Item 1 – Call to Order Public Appearances

Mayor Mitchell, Chair, called the meeting to order and asked for any public appearances.

Agenda Item 2 – Review of Meeting Minutes of April 23, 2013

Minutes were reviewed. Andrea Esquer moved to approve, the motion was seconded by Maryanne Corder and passed unanimously.

Agenda Item 3 – Downtown Tempe and Taxicab Regulations

Donna Kennedy, Economic Development Director from the City of Tempe presented information on the current economic development in the Tempe. She shared a map of the city showing where projects that are under review or recently entitled.

Donna Kennedy spoke specifically about State Farm/Marina Heights project, a Sunbelt Holdings \$600 million project. It is set to include five buildings total, the highest being 18 stories. They are going to start with 2100 jobs and then

add another 900 so start so this will be quite a regional draw. State Farm is #44 in the Fortune 500 List. The city and State Farm are also looking at streetcar connectiveness as that is important to State Farm.

Donna Kennedy also talked about the importance of the proposed USA Place project, the hotel conference center and multi-use development set for the corner of University and Mill Avenue. It's a \$350 million project that will be managed by Omni Resorts. This project could also attract USA Basketball, which would bring the training for the Olympics to Tempe. Mayor Mitchell stated that while USA Basketball has voted to come to Tempe, all of this is still under development and nothing is set in stone, but things are looking positive.

Donna Kennedy also mentioned the Liberty Center, which is an office park located at Rio Salado Parkway and Priest. They are 20% pre-leased and are starting to move dirt on the property. It is going to be Class B office space.

Donna Kennedy also talked about the companies that have recently moved to Tempe, including the Wells Fargo Home Mortgage, Allstate, Direct Energy, Go Daddy and Union Bank.

Mayor Mitchell talked about how Go Daddy is building their Global Technology Center in ASU Research Park in the southern part of Tempe. Also mentioned possible changes to Fountainhead Parkway Business Park, with proposals for Class A office space and residential.

Mayor Mitchell also announced that Sam Fox is exploring bringing his Yard concept to Tempe, in the area of First Street and Farmer Avenue, near the downtown. It is an indoor-outdoor bar/restaurant.

Spike Lawrence announced that he is opening a new restaurant on College Avenue called Sol Diablo. First day open was to be ASU's Football Game Day and will focus on Mexican cuisine.

Donna Kennedy also mentioned that the city is reaching out to grocers to attract an urban grocery to the downtown. Mayor Mitchell mentioned that the old Harkins Centerpoint is now being renovated into an AMC Movie Theaters that will serve beer and wine.

Agenda Item 4 – Tempe Streetcar

Eric Iwersen from Community Development introduced **Ben Limmer and Lisa Saldeen from Valley Metro**, who gave the group information about the Tempe Streetcar and the public process that has been happening over the summer. The end of the process will be a preferred alignment that we can forward as part of the federal process and that is hopefully to be completed by the end of the year.

Ben Limmer started the presentation by giving a brief history lesson on where the project was and the original alignment, which was a 2.6 mile project with Rio Salado on the north and Southern on the south, with a one way downtown loop. This route went through a community working group and a public input process, however it was not chosen for funding by the federal government. It did not meet the federal funding criteria.

At that point, Valley Metro decided to work with the City of Tempe to see if they could modify the route in order to meet the federal criteria. After contacting the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), it did approve for the Tempe Streetcar to move through to the "Project Development" phase, but with the understanding that a new preferred alignment would be chosen. Tempe was 1 of 2 streetcar projects to advance nationwide.

In looking at the new routes, Valley Metro decided to take a look at having the streetcar route go either east on Rio Salado Parkway or east on Apache Boulevard, or combining the two in some manner. The options are still around the 2.6 mile range. The cost is estimated to be \$130 million.

In looking at whether to fund a project, the FTA looks at 6 factors: land use, economic development activity, cost effectiveness, mobility, environmental concerns and congestion relief.

Ben Limmer explained that the FTA liked the top half of the last project submitted to them for funding. This would be the loop around the downtown and down Mill Avenue to 13th Street, but did not like the streetcar going further south to Southern.

Andrea Esquer asked about straightening the Apache Boulevard curve. Eric Iwersen clarified that the track alignment would not eliminate the curve as part of the streetcar project.

There was discussion on why the streetcar route included Ash Avenue. It was explained that most of the utilities on Mill Avenue are on the west side of the road and in order to avoid the extra cost in disturbing those utilities and in order to avoid the special events on Mill Avenue, it was decided that Ash Avenue was a good alternative. Ash Avenue also connects to the neighbors on the west side of Mill Avenue.

Mayor Mitchell mentioned that if the streetcar is to go north on Mill Avenue, he would like to see that there are no overhead wires so that the city would not lose the integrity of Mill Avenue.

Valley Metro is going to be issuing a request for information with streetcar vehicles vendors and they did mention the ability to run off wire on Mill Avenue in their request.

Ben Limmer also mentioned that the streetcar would run on the Lightrail line and would use the current Lightrail Maintenance Yards for storage.

There was a question as to why a track and not more of a bus system. It was explained that a growing Tempe needs to have increased public transportation and that more people are likely to ride a streetcar than a bus. It is also shown itself to be a way to attract economic development and more character to a neighborhood.

There were also additional questions about the cost of the street car. The operating of the streetcar is included in the long range forecasting of the transit fund and it is paid with the transit tax.

Ben Limmer stated that Valley Metro was taking the different proposed routes to public comment and that it would hopefully make a recommendation to Council in the fall. The project is set to open in the spring of 2017 if all goes well. Currently, at this time the public is preferring the route that includes Rio Salado Parkway, but the FTA looks at the current existing density, which may be an issue as Rio Salado is not yet built up.

Agenda Item 5 – Hayden Flour Mill

Mayor Mark Mitchell presented a presentation that he previously presented to the Mayor's Institute on City Design about a possible project with the Hayden Flour Mill. The city is getting ready to put out a Request for Proposal on the property.

Mayor Mitchell showed pictures of the Hayden Flour Mill, what it looks like now and what it looked like in the past. He also showed pictures of the proposed Marina Heights or State Farm site and talked about their investment in Tempe and the Town Lake area. Mayor Mitchell stated that he would like the Hayden Flour Mill to be the entrance on to Mill Avenue and to connect the two areas.

Mayor Mitchell showed pictures of the city's ownership of the Flour Mill and explained that the Mill and not the Silos are the historic aspect of the property. The Mill was built in 1918 and the Silos were built in 1951. The diameter of the silos is only 13 feet wide.

Mayor Mitchell then showed pictures of other redevelopment projects around the country that also involved mills and silos, including some in the Minneapolis area and in Akron, Ohio. These silos were much wider than the 13 foot wide silos that we have in Tempe.

Mayor Mitchell then opened up the discussion to the Roundtable to discuss what they think the Flour Mill should be used for. There was a general consensus that it is a gateway to downtown Mill Avenue. There was interest in meeting rooms, a restaurant, an observation tower, a recreational facility including a possible rock wall on the outside or a museum. Mayor Mitchell explained that the city owns the Mill so there is an opportunity to see if something works. There was also discussion as to how we can incorporate the lake or water into the redevelopment as a way to help attract families.

Agenda Item 6 – Council Retreat Update

Elizabeth Higgins from the Mayor's Office presented information about the City Council's retreat at the Tempe Center for the Arts on Saturday, August 17th. During that retreat, the Council looked at reexamining the current strategic priorities into priorities that make sense for Tempe, something shorter and more straight-forward. They also decided to change the Council Committee process. Currently, two members of the Council each serve on a Council Committee focuses on certain areas in the city. There will now be a Community of the Whole where all 7 sit and have a study session. Ideas and projects will flow through that Committee with the goal of getting more things accomplished. Finally, the Council also looked at the Boards and Commissions and are going to examine consolidating some and wrapping up a few others. Council is also looking at how they can include veterans and education groups and involve them with what is going on with the city.

Agenda Item 7 – Future Agenda Items

None specific.

Agenda Item 8 – Future Meeting Date

Possibly October 22nd.

Agenda Item 9 – Announcements

The meeting adjourned 5:21 p.m.

Elizabeth Higgins, Mayoral Aide