



Minutes Mill and Lake District Council Committee April 28, 2011

Minutes of the Tempe City Council Mill and Lake District Council Committee held on Thursday, April 28, 2011, 4:00 p.m., in the City Council Chambers, Tempe City Hall, 31 E. Fifth Street, Tempe, Arizona.

COUNCIL PRESENT:

Mayor Hugh Hallman

Vice Mayor Joel Navarro

Councilmember Shana Ellis

Councilmember Corey D. Woods

Councilmember Onnie Shekerjian

Councilmember Robin Arredondo-Savage

Councilmember Mark W. Mitchell

STAFF PRESENT:

Charlie Meyer, City Manager

Brigitta M. Kuiper, City Clerk

Nancy Ryan, Senior Planner

Various Department Heads or their representatives

Jeff Kulaga, Assistant City Manager

Chris Anaradian, Community Development Director

Ryan Levesque, Senior Planner

GUESTS PRESENT:

Shannon Scutari, Director of Rail and Sustainability for the Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT)

Mayor Hallman called the meeting to order at 4:11 p.m.

Mayor Hallman referenced a previous discussion about renaming the Mill and Lake District Council Committee. He suggested that it could be renamed to Development and Redevelopment Committee of the Whole. Charlie Meyer, City Manager, stated that the prior discussion also included consideration of strategic planning. The suggested name may not include this component. It was agreed that the current name of Mill and Lake District Council Committee does not capture what the scope and intent of this committee. Mr. Meyer was tasked with developing a more suitable committee name.

Public Appearances

None.

Review of minutes

Motion by Councilmember Shekerjian to approve the meeting minutes from March 24, 2011; second by Councilmember Woods; motion carried unanimously.

101/202 Interchange Planning

Chris Anaradian, Community Development Director, stated that there are significant happenings with the 101/202 interchange planning. Presentation highlights include:

- Councilmembers may wish to have additional meetings, including joint meetings, with the Mesa City Council to discuss this project
- Mr. Anaradian and Mr. Meyer met with Mesa city officials regarding locating the Cubs Stadium at this site

- This interchange location has evolved from a backwater site to potentially a point of pride in the east valley
- There is a tremendous amount of opportunity for this area
- The Army Corps of Engineering habitat projects are converging at this location
- This location provides excellent visibility; signage opportunities
- Bike path projects
- Properties are underutilized; some are government owned
- Discussions have been held regarding Tempe and Mesa staff and policymakers working jointly; shared plan for continued development
- Amenities could join both cities; intergovernmental agreement; tax incremental financing
- Staff is preparing for the next conversation with Mesa

Nancy Ryan, Senior Planner, and Mr. Anaradian presented the following information:

- Basic principles on common ground were identified: Plan together; execute together
- Include Salt River Pima Maricopa County Indian Community (SRPMIC), Mesa and Tempe
- “Whats” were identified:
 - Create an identify for this area; have its own brand
 - Build connections – sidewalks, bike paths, shuttles, transit, signage
 - Support redevelopment opportunities
 - Pursue new uses – part of economic development strategy; target sites with targeted development. Targeted joint economic development planning.
 - Make it sustainable – habitats exist, open space, connection with bike paths, etc.
 - Track revenues and shared reinvestment

Mayor Hallman stated that Tempe has worked with Chandler on joint projects; this would be an opportunity to do the same with Mesa. East Valley Mayors have created a discussion group to consider joint economic development opportunities. There could be cooperation moving forward in branding the broader east valley community in this effort. The streetcar is an area of great interest to Mesa. Their support could assist with federal funding. Discussion highlights include:

- Distinctive architecture – important for this area
- No specific staff in either city dedicated to this project
- Concept is years away
- Soil considerations
- Freeway system took 45 years to develop; planning for project like this takes years; should include public mass transit component and be holistic in nature
- Regulatory environment does not exist to allow for the reuse of water from Mesa’s water plant; should be useable for the Town Lake; water should be reused in a more robust way
- Shared reuse of the water from the Mesa water plant is desired
- Full body water contact in the Town Lake is a possibility
- Significant area for some type of development; connectivity with pathways is key
- Shared facilities; stadium district opportunities
- Army Corps of Engineers is working with staff to evaluate expansion of the habitat from McClintock Drive to Loop 101; recently completed a preliminary study for funding/project expansion. The Corps has its own process; they would continue to pursue joint local funding opportunities.
- Area for bike path was described; there is a gap between the bike path and the planned area in Mesa
- Supportive of working synergistically with Mesa
- Good streetcar opportunity
- Additional sports fields could be part of the synergy

Mr. Anaradian was asked to set up a joint Tempe/Mesa City Council meeting to discuss the following issues:

- 101/202 Interchange Planning
- Marketing approach for the east valley
- Revenue sharing between Tempe and Mesa
- Streetcar project
- Water issues

- Tax incremental financing
- Intergovernmental agreements
- Fiesta Mall area
- Joint planning along city borders
- How to approach SRPMIC regarding a dialogue for future plans for their land bordering Tempe and Mesa
- Meeting to be held in June 2011 timeframe

Continued discussion highlights:

- SRPMIC does not want a bike path on their property
- Proposed bike path involves Tempe, Mesa, Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT) and the Flood Control District; McClintock Drive (north bank, top of levy) under the Loop 202 on an elevated pathway, continues along levy connecting via a tunnel to the Mesa Riverview development.
- Staff is in discussions with Flood Control District regarding a nature path located close to the water
- Current bike path ends at McClintock Drive; intent on pursuing that as a future project; not currently funded; will require authorization of ADOT and the Flood Control District
- Slip ramps at McClintock Drive and Loop 202 were being considered at one time; geometry does not work for that project
- Vector control/mosquito problems in the past -
- Multiple jurisdictions own property – Tempe, Mesa, Scottsdale, ADOT, Flood Control District, SRPMIC; difficult to determine who owns what land in the river bottom
- Perhaps consider including SRPMIC in the district; SRPMIC is in a specialty land category which complicates planning efforts
- ASU involvement is an opportunity to seek an overlay district

Downtown Parking

Mr. Anaradian stated that approximately three years ago, the City's parking standards were one size fits all. Council gave staff permission to study parking issues with members of the Development Review Commission, Downtown Community Inc. (DTC), and Arizona State University (ASU) to determine if there should be multiple parking standards for the City of Tempe. Ryan Levesque, Senior Planner, conducted a study of developments that had been approved during the building boom. In every instance, parking standards had been changed, primarily because the ordinance is one size fits all. Staff recommends changes to the ordinance based on uses. Presentation and discussion highlights include:

- 3 zones – downtown core, transit oriented development area (TOD) and all other areas
- TOD grows over time, based on the development in the ground, not speculative development
- Staff would like to present the proposed city code language changes concerning parking to Council in a formal meeting for approval and incorporation into the Zoning and Development Code
- Ordinance language changes parking ratios; addresses specific uses/considerations
- In general, there will be a reduction in requirements for commercial development parking
- Reduction in parking for hotel/conference
- Exceeding parking standards is acceptable
- Ordinance sets baseline expectations
- Reductions in residential areas; currently fluctuates from requiring too many parking spaces to not requiring any parking spaces
- Code changes will allow for more specific and accurate requirements, based on Tempe's zoning history
- Planned Area Developments (PAD) and parking studies will still be allowed
- Downtown parking standards would supersede TOD
- Will not require parking for outdoor dining; same for TOD
- Promote shared parking downtown
- Actual parking spaces to be identified; will not allow developers to pay in order to not provide parking
- Developers will submit employee parking management plans; allows for improved management of parking
- Developers have previously requested that the City not be in the parking business
- Pricing parking spaces correctly is important
- Inventory existing parking spaces; future sale of those spaces should not be precluded

- Parking rates are \$100/quarter for employees and \$45/month for the general public parking in the garage located to the east of City Hall on Fifth Street; that facility is close to full utilization; consider selling these parking spots to the highest user
- This is the first time that this parking proposal has been presented
- Parking standards currently exist
- Several other cities have similar downtown parking standards as to what is being proposed
- DTC has conducted a downtown working center analysis that includes parking conditions
- Ordinance provides for a more efficient method, easier for developers; may not have a need to hire traffic engineers which lowers the cost to developers
- Consideration and discussion will take place when developers want less parking than the minimum required
- Some more urbanized communities have minimum and maximum parking concepts
- Streetcar is not driving the parking standards for downtown
- In the TOD, street parking is taken into consideration
- Consideration will be given to the impact the streetcar may have on sidewalks, bike paths, on-street parking, where stops/tracks are located, traffic flow
- Staff will present these recommendations to the Development Review Commission, then to the City Council

Light Rail Project Initiative

Mr. Anaradian stated that Shannon Scutari, Director of Rail and Sustainability for the Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT), contacted him to discuss the possibility of Tempe being part of a community Sustainability Working Group to better utilize opportunities that exist. Partners include:

- Arizona Departments of Housing and Transportation
- Cities of Phoenix, Tempe, and Mesa
- Metro Light Rail
- ASU Stardust Center for Affordable Homes and the Family
- Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC)
- Urban Land Institute
- Downtown Phoenix Partnership
- Phoenix Community Alliance
- Arizona Community Foundation
- Discovery Triangle
- St. Luke's Health Initiative

Ms. Scutari stated that this partnership consists of state, local, non-profit and private sector entities. Presentation and discussion highlights include:

- Light rail should be an option for individuals at all income levels
- Working group partners are not competitors, but collaborators in the process
- The Housing and Transportation Affordability Index study results are as follows:
 - Families in Arizona spend up to 60% of their incomes on the combined costs of housing and transportation
 - Poster child for "drive 'til you qualify"
 - Decreasing these costs enhances real income to spend on other things
 - People are searching for other lifestyle options
 - Need to promote location efficiency and access to affordable choices
- Placemaking
 - Planning for different outcomes
 - Economic opportunities
 - Sustainable communities
- Place Matters
 - Young educated people are being disproportionately drawn to certain cities
 - 2000 – this mobile, high-earning, and highly-educated population was about 61% more likely to live in close-in urban neighborhoods

- 2011 – now they are 94% more likely
- Livability
 - Connecting the daily needs of the neighborhood
- Sustainability Communities Fund
 - Raising a \$50 million *Sustainable Communities Fund*
 - Incent, leverage, and guide TOD along light rail line
 - 3 Valley jurisdictions
 - Already capitalized at \$20 million, THANK YOU to:
 - Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC)
 - Raza Development Fund
 - Affordable residential development at light rail station areas. Essential related development, such as:
 - Grocery stores for access to fresh and healthy food
 - Child care facilities to support working families
 - Health care facilities to increase access to health care, etc.
 - Project costs associated with providing sidewalks, bike paths, shade structures and other community improvements
- Launch Celebration!
 - June 1, 2011 - 9:30 am – 10:30 am; First Solar Building, 305 West Washington, Tempe, AZ
- Connecting funding to outcomes to help make light rail more successful
- Councilmembers voiced their support for this concept
- A TOD project scorecard is being prepared with staff assistance; will be presented to Council when completed
- Chicanos por la Causa is an organization that receives tax credits which could provide an opportunity
- Bundle resources and identify areas of focus
- Commitment of City staff has been helpful
- Partnership has attracted money outside the state of Arizona
- Staff recently met with a developer to discuss a business model involving redevelopment of strip centers
- The Zoning and Development Code was amended to allow for reuse of strip centers
- This ties into Tempe's major infrastructure investment on light rail
- Middle and lower income individuals tend to use the transit system more frequently; increasing ridership numbers
- Appreciate the conversation about redevelopment and the opportunity redefine affordable housing as there are still stigmas and stereotypes associated with it
- People using multi-modal transit options create a more sustainable community.
- Important to bring opportunities for education to determine how transportation and affordable housing can change an experience
- Redevelopment of strip malls is a good opportunity for Tempe; important to create a look and feel for Tempe
- Collaboration between public and private entities creates a good opportunity to leverage resources; minimizes duplication of effort and maximizes efficiencies
- Need to revitalize existing neighborhoods also
- Attracting developers from out of state to assist with strip malls is positive; perhaps replace with housing units
- Proactively promote this concept using the Techie Tuesday program to attract local builders and promote benefits; third party resources to assist in funding improvements; Developers Workshop 101
- Need to promote and market the first development; will attract local developers
- Marketing depends upon the market sector. Meetings are held locally and across the country with representatives from biotech, healthcare, housing, etc. Business representatives sometimes approach management to discuss their interests.
- Shade structures, bike paths should be a component
- Perhaps schedule a lunch meeting with the Mesa City Council after the June 1, 2011 event

Future Agenda Items

Charlie Meyer stated that he and Mr. Anaradian are working on defining future agenda items, their scheduling and will bring that plan back to Council. At the next two meetings, perhaps discuss a process to develop a vision and strategy at the Council level.

Councilmember Shekerjian stated that the shared visioning process with Downtown Tempe, Inc., (DTC), will fit well with developing a vision as Mr. Meyer described.

Mayor Hallman stated that visioning sessions work better when dealing with sectors of the community, such as areas of the City – for example, business neighborhoods from Broadway Road to Southern Avenue. Compiling data on similar areas prior to seeking Council feedback for the development of the area would be helpful.

Future Meeting Date(s)

The next meeting is scheduled for May 19, 2011.

Announcements

None.

The meeting adjourned at 5:25 p.m.

Brigitta M. Kuiper, City Clerk