



## Minutes

### Mayor's Community Roundtable October 29, 2013

Minutes of the Mayor's Community Roundtable meeting held on Tuesday, October 29, at 4:00 p.m., in the 3rd Floor Conference Room, Tempe City Hall, 31 E. 5th Street, Tempe, Arizona.

**MEMBERS Present:** Mayor Mark W. Mitchell, Harry E. Mitchell, Spike Lawrence, Julian Wright, Randy Gross, Barb Carter, Chris Busch, Mark Yslas, Eric Gudino

**MEMBERS Absent:** Steve McGrady, Bobbie Cassano, Mary Ann Miller, Jim Scussel, Andrea Esquer, Maryanne Corder

**CITY STAFF Present:** Steven Methvin, Chief of Staff to the Mayor and Council; Elizabeth Higgins, Mayoral Aide; Nancy Ryan, Community Development; David Nakawara, Community Development Director

**GUESTS Present:** Marianne Mitchell

#### **Agenda Item 1 – Call to Order Public Appearances**

Mayor Mitchell, Chair, called the meeting to order at 4:09 pm and asked for any public appearances.

#### **Agenda Item 2 – Review of Meeting Minutes of August 20, 2013**

Minutes were reviewed. Spike Lawrence made a motion to approve the minutes, motion was seconded by Julian Wright and passed unanimously.

#### **Agenda Item 3 – General Plan 2040 Update**

**Nancy Ryan, Community Development**, gave information regarding the General Plan 2040. She explained that the city was just completing a year-long public involvement process that was used to develop the General Plan 2040.

Nancy talked about what is new and different in the General Plan 2040 from the General Plan 2030. The plan looks at what attributes that the City of Tempe can move forward to become a leader in urban living. It also creates additional land use hubs with mixed use at the core so that these areas are an attraction. The General Plan focuses on making Tempe a 20 minute city by connecting these hubs.

To help become a leader in urban living, Nancy explained that the city wants to make sure it is championing sustainable development and other public service practices to make Tempe a sustainable place to live, work and play. Also the General Plan focuses on quality of life items, such as public art, libraries, light rail, bus transit, walkability, biking and parks. Want to use preservation and revitalization to make neighborhoods stronger and strengthen community living through choices. Plan also looks at creating a supportive environment so that businesses and individuals can reach their top potential.

Nancy spoke of how the Downtown and the Town Lake will continue to be the urban core of Tempe under the plan, it also provides for mixed use development into existing commercial and employment hubs. Plan is looking at extending the urban pattern to parts of south Tempe, to build upon its current urban form. New hubs will be social hubs for the area and will also come under the planning and development of character areas.

There are several hubs under the General Plan, the downtown area, Baseline/Rural, the Discovery Business Campus/Technology Corridor area, and the Warner and I-10 area. The development of these areas was something that was emphasized by the General Plan Community Working Group.

The Community Working Group was trying to identify the hubs that would help in the creation of a 20 minute city. Wanted to create safe walking and biking to schools, shopping, and services and enhance these uses to encourage walkability and bikability. The hubs are meant to be places where one could take a break and relax. The goal of a 20 minute city is that any individual could get anywhere in the city in a 20 minute walk, bike or transit ride. It is also essential that the individual is safe in their travels.

This goal of a 20 minute city is realized in multiple ways: a pedestrian and bikable network, a transit and rail system that includes neighborhood circulators, public services located in or near hubs that would be connected to the network, and inclusion of recreational parks in neighborhoods. Cultural amenities also provide an added value to the hubs, through public art and museums.

Nancy then explained what the changes were from the General Plan 2030 and the General Plan 2040. The ASU stadium district will provide a large mixed use area with commercial, retail and residential. There is more industrial over on the west side of Rio Salado Parkway and Priest. There is additional mixed use at Warner and I-10 and the Technology Corridor as well as enhanced mixed use at Rural Road and Baseline. The General Plan also shows school fields as open space.

Nancy further explained the two new densities that are included in the General Plan, the high density and high density urban core essentially take a look at the downtown, ASU and Apache Boulevard area along the lightrail. These densities divided a previous density.

The process for the General Plan is still going through the process. One of the next steps is to take the plan to the City Council for its review, it just underwent review by the Development Review Commission. If it passes the Council review, it will be lined up for a ratification vote in May, 2014.

Mayor thanked the 2040 General Plan Working Group for all of their work on the plan. Roundtable member Randy Gross expressed some concerns about the hub concept in contrast with how neighborhoods might feel outside the downtown urban core.

**Agenda Item 4 – Community Development and Character Areas/Visioning/Development Standards**

**David Nakagawara, the Community Development Director**, presented information Tempe's new Character Area program. Mayor Mitchell spoke of a recent tour that he went on with Councilmember Corey Woods where they toured south Tempe to see what kind of services and stores were in need.

David explained that the General Plan is the 30,000 foot level look at the city, while the Character Areas are meant to be a guidance or set of principles for a specific geographical areas, usually areas that have something in common. As you boil it down, it comes down to a conglomeration of neighborhoods, and then down to a specific area neighborhood itself. The plan is meant to look at a particular area and start with an inventory of the area as to what is already there, from grocery stores to what the housing stock currently looks like. The city is trying to identify categories: topography, geography, age and style of housing, retail/recreational experience, cultural resources, open space and what the streetscapes look like. These will allow city staff to identify the certain areas in Tempe that have a distinctive quality that sets itself apart from the other areas.

David explained that city staff came up with 8 separate and distinct districts, some with natural geographic boundaries, some with freeways or other limits. City then did an inventory or a scouting report of the areas and listed the various aspects of each area. The next step is a public input process to work with the residents and businesses in the character area to develop a template that can help guide the city in development, planning, design standards, programs and processes for the future. It is meant to help create a toolbox.

David then went through the 8 specific Character Areas and show the areas to the group on a map. He explained that the City Council had given direction to start the public input process in central and south Tempe with the Kiwanis/Lakes character area and the Corona/south Tempe character area. City staff is going to work on the public process rollout and will get meetings scheduled in the community. This is the next major project after the city is through with the General Plan.

Mayor expressed his excitement at getting feedback from residents as to what they would like to see. The Mayor asked for the group's help in spreading the word about these Character Areas.

Spike Lawrence also brought up the issue of streamlining the process for development or redevelopment. Mayor Mitchell agreed that the city is trying to be user friendly.

Barb Carter asked if the city has an inventory of vacant buildings. Mayor Mitchell said that that is something that the city is working on and will be a part of this Character Areas scouting report. Mayor Mitchell spoke again about his tour of the city with Councilmember Woods and the areas where the city does have some vacant shopping centers. He explained that the city is willing to look at these areas and work with the property owners, just like the Council did with the old site at the Rural and Baseline.

**Agenda Item 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 of through safe and vibrant communities, 3. Creating an atmosphere of fun through innovative programs and special events.**

**Mayor Mark Mitchell** presented the Council's new set of priorities. He explained that councils from around the Valley all have a set of priorities that they look at in helping to guide their decision making process. He explained all three of the priorities and explained that the Council is trying to think bigger with what it is doing but within the means of still being fiscally responsible.

Group discussed the economic development coming to the Town Lake area, including State Farm. They also talked about Sun Devil stadium and the changes that are coming to help maintain the quality of the stadium.

Mark Yselas suggested that the City take a look at Los Abrigos and the holiday lights that they do upnorth. He suggested that it could be a way to create an atmosphere of fun through such a special event.

Julian Wright suggested that in order to contribute to economic development that we have to make certain areas of Tempe more aesthetically pleasing, with trees and plants and a plan for walkability.

Barb Carter brought up the need for some restaurants to be developed in the south Tempe area. Julian again talked of synergy and a hub type atmosphere. Members talked about the important of clustering and having an area that people would enjoy walking and biking. The Community Roundtable also discussed the possibility for restaurants to develop in south Tempe.

There was also discussion about how we need smaller, senior living in Tempe where older couples that are in transition can move to a smaller home. Barb Carter felt that this type of development could contribute to the quality of life for residents who would like to age in place.

**Agenda Item 6 – Future Agenda Items**

Broadway road streetscape.

**Agenda Item 7– Future Meeting Date**

Discussion of a holiday party.

**Agenda Item 8 – Announcements**

No discussion.

The meeting adjourned 5:05 p.m.

Elizabeth Higgins, Mayoral Aide