



Minutes City Council's Transportation, Housing and Environment Committee February 26, 2008

Minutes of the meeting of the City Council's Transportation, Housing and Environment Committee held on Tuesday, February 26, 2008, 3:00 p.m., in the 3rd Floor Conference Room, Tempe City Hall, 31 E. 5th Street, Tempe, Arizona.

Committee Members Present:

Councilmember Shana Ellis, Chair
Vice Mayor Hut Hutson

City Staff Present:

Jennifer Adams, Dep Pub Wrks Mgr
Chris Anaradian, Dev Svcs Mgr
Angel Carbajal, Asst. Chief of Police
Dawn Coomer, Sr. LRT Planner
Carlos de Leon, Dep Public Wrks Mgr
Kathy Gasperich, Council Aide
Don Hawkes, Water Utilities Mgr
Craig Hittie, Affordable Hsg Coor
Gregg Kent, Light Rail Engineer
Glenn Kephart, Public Wrks Mgr
Charlie Meyer, City Manager
Lucy Morales, Pub Wrks Mgmt Asst
Amanda Nelson, Comm Outreach Mktg Supervisor
John Osgood, Dep Pub Works Mgr
Bonnie Richardson, Trans. Principal Planner
Chris Salomone, Comm Dev Manager
Shelly Seyler, Traffic Engineer
Teresa Voss, Asst City Atty
Shauna Warner, Neighborhood Svcs Dir

Guests Present:

Chris Samila, Green Summit/ASU
Stephen Sparks, TCAA
Patricia Walsh, Realtor

Councilmember Shana Ellis called the meeting to order at 3:08 p.m.

Agenda Item 1 – Public Appearances

None.

Agenda Item 2 – Approval of Housing Forum Minutes of February 8, 2008

The minutes of the February 8, 2008, Affordable Housing Forum were approved.

Agenda Item 3 – Affordable Housing Forum Wrap-Up and Next Steps

Craig Hittie summarized that the Affordable Housing Forum was held on February 8th at the Tempe Center for the Arts. There were about 40 people in attendance with a good mix of developers and non-profit community members. Neil Calfee made a presentation outlining the current City programs, their funding sources, limitations, etc., as well as potential programs. Erich Schwenker, Cardinal Capital Management, facilitated the discussion with developers. The discussion centered around the concept of affordable housing and whether the concept was on their radar, and if not, what could the City do to get it on the radar. Good feedback was provided.

Councilmember Ellis added that this forum included a breakfast at the Tempe Center for the Arts, and an anonymous sponsor covered the cost.

Councilmember Ellis stated that the next forum will be held in May. The faith community has asked if they could be included so they can get the word out to their congregations. They are good at helping with basic needs, but they need to know what to do after the basic needs are met. Details will be provided at the next committee meeting.

Agenda Item 4 – 2008 Green Summit

Chris Samila, Green Summit Director and ASU student, is working full time this year as an event manager to move forward the concept of sustainability. The Green Summit event is scheduled for September 5th – 7th at the Phoenix Convention Center. Last year, the intent was to host a small event showcasing products and actionable things people could do. Over 55 companies attended the first event with more than 4,000 attendees. This year, experts in event management have assisted and a larger event is planned.

- Green Summit is a student-founded event, showcasing green products, services and ideas. Primary goals are to promote sustainability and accelerate green industry.
- Unique Event Format
 - Target both businesses and consumers
 - University support through an education series
 - Powerful accessory events with a career fair and venture capital event
 - Support through the Summit Alliance.
- Event Details
 - 130-160 companies
 - 10 categories including University sustainability, progressive corporations, consumer products and services, green building design, organic market, green chemistry and materials, business products and services, renewable energy, progressive government, advocacy and transportation technology
 - Green industry seminars
 - Education series
 - Organic cook-off
 - Eco-fashion show
 - 15,000 expected attendees
- Green industry growth potential

- Improve performance and efficiency
- Reduce consumption and waste
- Increased awareness for consumers, government, industry
- Major opportunity
- Prepare for success
 - Successful businesses look for sustainable cities
 - Build environment: LEED Buildings
 - Foster Smart Growth: Planning
 - Empowered public: education
 - Engaged Government: think Future Forward

Mr. Samila continued that “green” is a monstrous industry today. It is what needs to happen and people are asking for these solutions. The Summit Alliance includes non-profits such as the U.S. Green Building Council, ASU, academia, and governments as a platform for consumers and industry to embrace sustainability. He is asking City governments to join the Alliance to provide guidance on green buildings and create more cohesive plans for development. He also thanked Bonnie Richardson for her guidance in this effort.

Carlos de Leon added that part of the purpose of Mr. Samila’s presentation today is to get governments to join the alliance. This is a networking opportunity at no cost to the City. He asked for the Committee’s approval to join.

DIRECTION: Councilmember Ellis directed staff to move forward with membership on the Alliance and to provide updates at future committee meetings.

Bonnie Richardson added that staff would also have a City booth at the Summit and there will be participation with other cities. Chandler has used a citizen task force to move this concept forward.

Agenda Item 5 – Sustainability Task Force Update

Chris Anaradian summarized that the investment being made in this task force is energy that will be well invested. Over 200 ideas have been submitted so far. They are about 80% through the information collection period and have done some assemblage, and with the Committee’s direction, staff will come back with a compendium with some priorities attached. The task force is trying to help understand what we do already that we don’t talk about, what can be easily implemented, what things are about to be implemented, and new ideas that have moderate to low fiscal impact.

- Example of something we do now that no one talks about is a sprinkler control system in the parks. Already moving to a turf irrigation system that uses less water.
- Example of something that could be easily implemented at low cost is a measurement for tracking City fleet vehicles using alternative fuel. No one has tracked this.
- Example of a moderate idea is buying new “big belly” trash cans with a solar-powered built-in compactor. There is an initial cost, but a two-year return on investment.
- Example of a long term idea is a program of recycling food waste. It is complex to implement.

Staff is collecting all ideas and taking stock and hopes in the next few months to bring back a report that breaks out the categories.

Mr. Anaradian continued that the Chandler report talks about having a green building program requiring either certain standards of themselves, or providing benefits to developers who meet that standard in private development. The number one benefit is expedited plan reviews. We are at a competitive disadvantage because we exceed plan review times in other communities for ALL projects. Maybe we need to tell more about the stories we have. The water sprinkler system is a good example. Don Hawkes also submitted an idea for changing out water fixtures. This would have a dramatic impact on water usage. Staff will try to produce a report that has real substance categorized by environment, cultural or economic impact. The report will be in database format, not only written.

Vice Mayor Hutson asked whether a fixture replacement was done within the last ten years.

Don Hawkes responded that there is a toilet rebate program and they have also given away a lot of fixtures.

Mr. Anaradian added that we do that type of thing, but not enough people know about it. The City does not have an office of sustainability. Other cities are putting out manuals and taking credit for it. He added that the legislature is looking at how to incentivize solar energy without cutting into the services.

Agenda Item 6 – Recycling, Solid Waste Education and Community Outreach Program

John Osgood summarized one of the programs submitted to the Task Force by Public Works. Employees have said they wanted more recycling options.

Jennifer Adams summarized that the internal recycling program began with 403 containers and currently includes 1553. Staff has also delivered 23 of the 28-gallon containers where there is more recycling, and 63 new 90-gallon containers.

She continued that the Custodial Operations' program promotes sustainability:

- The majority of cleaning supplies are green products
- Recycling of custodial uniforms for new custodial employees
- Distributed updated stickers for the blue recycling containers
- Delivered blue cans to all the break and meeting rooms throughout the City.
- Implemented internal office recycling program.

She showed examples of acceptable recyclable products, such as newspaper, magazines, paper, chipboard, cardboard, shredded paper in clear plastic bags, plastic containers with recycle symbol 1-7, water bottles, plastic cups, aluminum, tin and steel cans, glass and phone books.

Lucy Morales summarized the "Reaching the Recyclers of Tomorrow" Program. East Valley Institute Technology (EVIT) students have been invited to design a children's activity/coloring book to bring recycling awareness to children as well as to the students who are designing the books. It also provides them an opportunity to fulfill their community service requirement. Prizes will be offered for most creative, best of show and most useful. Contest winners will be announced on April 3 at the Public Works Employee Appreciation Breakfast. Two presentations have been made to the EVIT students and they are excited. Staff will work with the City's graphic designers to incorporate the designs and will distribute the books to the schools.

John Osgood outlined the new MRF (materials recycling facility) that processes the City's recycling materials.

- In terms of education and outreach, an initial goal is to increase the amount of recycling materials into the resident blue barrels and decrease what goes into the landfill.
- Like the Green Summit, this is not a "feel-good" thing, but rather a bottom line issue.
- The City receives about \$35 and \$40 per ton for the recyclables. Conversely, the City spends about \$26 per ton to take garbage to the landfill. The bottom line is a financial issue.
- The most recent citizen satisfaction survey showed that Tempe residents have a high satisfaction with solid waste and the recycling program. We have been working hard to improve, however.

He continued that the recycling program has been in existence for fifteen years. The curbside program is good, but we need to reduce the bad things that go into the recycling barrel. Just like the employees, our residents are always asking about recycling. He showed the new recycling sticker. The idea for the stickers on the blue cans originally came from Councilmember Ellis. This sticker can cover up the "no-glass" sticker currently on some of the cans. The sticker will be in two languages. The stickers are put on all new cans, and staff is putting them on the old cans at the curb.

Councilmember Ellis suggested adding the year on the bottom of the sticker so people will know it is current.

Mr. Osgood added that the City's website also contains a current list of recyclables. He added that staff is:

- Performing a route-by-route analysis of the tonnage collected to determine which areas need to be targeted for outreach.
- Working with the graphic design staff to produce a cohesive professional image and a new logo has been designed.
- Working to reduce the "no" list. (Plastic bags are recyclable if collected separately and staff is working with various entities to recycle bags. The bags are not able to be processed at the current process plant.)
- Working on a rigid plastic drop-off center (such as for toys).

Mr. Anaradian added that his staff is working with CORE which works with refugees. If items like appliances or toys cannot be recycled, CORE will take them because they have distribution centers which could use them.

Patrick Walsh noted that last year he have been creating a niche on his website about green buildings as well as a recent door hanger which included the importance of recycling. A visual would help people remember. If he were to direct people to the City's website and they could see a picture of what is recyclable, that might be easier.

Mr. Osgood noted that Graphics has taken the pictures and they will be featured. There are also web links to other sites that could use items.

Bonnie Richardson added that it is important to have a website for sustainability to include green building, recycling, etc. Have a cohesive program so people don't have to search.

Chris Samila added that economic development should be included in sustainability to attract businesses.

Ms. Richardson added that Portland considers sustainability a business. They are looked to as a leader and it brings a lot of money into their city.

Councilmember Ellis asked if neighborhoods could request flyers and stickers.

Shauna Warner responded that staff will have stickers at their neighborhood workshop on April 5th.

Mr. Osgood thanked Charlie Meyer for including the recycling effort in his weekly update last week.

Mr. Anaradian suggested having an award for the best route.

Mr. Osgood added that staff has been talking to apartment complexes and showing how they can save money by reducing large garbage containers. City will pick up recycling, and all they have to do is pay for large recycling containers. That would reduce the number of trash containers, which saves money with the right management, and provides the option of recycling for their tenants.

Agenda Item 7 – Battery Collection and Disposal

Don Hawkes summarized that this issue is being worked in tandem through this committee and the Education, Technology and Economic Development committee. A lot of work has been done, but there is one small hitch. There are three recall notices for Kyocera, Motorola and one cell phone manufacturer for their exotic, rechargeable batteries. There have been instances where the batteries have overheated and melted and the result was property damage. With students bringing in batteries, it could be a small, but manageable risk. The next step will be to talk to the school risk management representatives to be sure there is agreement. The solution could involve bagging the batteries separately or taped over the contacts with electrical tape at least at the collection point. Staff needs to educate the schools about the requirements.

Mr. Hawkes continued that has also made contact with the Rio Salado Community College representatives for their battery recycling program. The program is run by Interstate Battery Corporation which only collects the exotic, rechargeable batteries. Rechargeable Battery Recycling Center (RBRC) is the end recycler and they handle this at no charge. The downside is that the City's experience at the Household Products Collection Center shows that 75% of the batteries turned in are alkaline batteries and they are not recyclable. They can be disposed of in landfills, but the City prefers to incinerate them. Staff separates them and does that. In rolling this program out to the schools, a preponderance of alkaline batteries will come in and the City needs to be prepared. The right way is for the City to provide the receptacles, have the schools bring them in or the City could collect them, and the alkaline batteries could be segregated. The City will sustain some cost, and the true recyclables will be at no cost to the City. Staff will report back.

Agenda Item 8 – Mayor’s Youth Advisory Committee Recommendation – Left Turns

Shelley Seyler summarized that in response to the Mayor’s Youth Advisory Committee recommendations, staff reviewed the six public high schools regarding installation of left turn lanes and left turn signals at the schools. Three of the schools are adjacent to signalized intersections where direct access to parking lot or collector street is provided. The other three schools are closely located to signalized intersections which makes it difficult to provide additional access to a signalized intersection. The study reviewed crash history and delay analysis at the three schools where there is access to a signalized intersection. Based on those studies, staff is not recommending changes at this time. There was minimal delay at the intersections, so there would not be much benefit in converting those intersections to protected left turns. During the peak hours, the majority of vehicles were experiencing little delay. Staff is requesting feedback from the committee.

Vice Mayor Hutson concurred.

DIRECTION: Councilmember Ellis directed staff to bring this study back to the Mayor’s Youth Advisory Commission with an explanation of why it is not feasible.

Glenn Kephart suggested including an explanation of the study in a Friday packet memo. Vice Mayor Hutson suggested using the explanation on pages 2 and 3 of the study.

Agenda Item 9 – Youth Bus Pass Program Update

Carlos de Leon summarized that the Youth Bus Pass Program is moving into its third year this summer. With light rail coming, staff recommends changing the Youth Free Bus Pass program to a Youth Free Transit Pass program to allow youth to ride light rail as well. Adding a light rail component to the pass would require changing the pass from a magnetic stripe card to a Smart Card. The cost per pass is estimated to be approximately \$2.36. This would increase the annual cost of the program by \$8,260, in addition to potential increased cost for usage which cannot be estimated at this time. Moving to a Smart Card technology would require ordering the cards in advance.

Vice Mayor Hutson noted that there are very few residential households along the light rail line, and asked which kids would really benefit by this change.

Mr. de Leon clarified that the current policy is 18 years of age and under. ASU has a separate program.

Vice Mayor Hutson asked staff to provide him with the benefits and a cost analysis.

DIRECTION: Councilmember Ellis directed staff to meet with Vice Mayor Hutson and make a determination whether this recommendation should be taken to the entire Council. She concurs with the conversion to the smart card system.

Councilmember Ellis asked if the system was not changed to the smart card, is there a way to stay with the traditional card program.

Mr. de Leon responded that the smart card is being applied to the bus card system. The traditional card wouldn’t be usable on the light rail. .

Agenda Item 10 – Future Agenda Items

- Sustainability Task Force Update - Chris Anaradian
- Battery Collection and Disposal Update
- Update on the next Affordable Housing Summit
- MAG Update

The next meeting will be on March 25, 2008.

Meeting adjourned at 4:20 p.m.

Prepared by: Connie Krosschell
Reviewed by: Carlos de Leon

Jan Hort
City Clerk