

Minutes Rio Salado Advisory Commission August 26, 2008

Minutes of the Rio Salado Advisory Commission held on August 26, 7:00 PM at the Tempe Public Library Board Room, 3500 S. Rural Road, Tempe, Arizona.

Members Present:

Alana Chavez
Michael Curlee
Maureen DeCindis
Mary Hannaman
Sue Lofgren
Walter McCraney
Julie Ramsey

Members Absent:

Dana Burkhardt
Christina Cenzano
Sharon Doyle
Brett Siegal

City Staff Present:

Diane Johnson
Dee Dee Kimbrell
Joe O'Connor
Kevin O'Melia
Nancy Ryan

Guests Present:

John Arnold
Nathan Kuenster
Scott Sumners

Alana Chavez called the meeting to order at 7:28 PM.

Agenda Item 1 – Consideration of Meeting Minutes from June 24, 2008

Alana asked the commission members if there was a motion to approve the RSAC minutes from June 24, 2008.

MOTION: Maureen DeCindis moved to approve minutes

SECOND: Mary Hannaman

DECISION: Minutes were approved unanimously

Agenda Item 2 – Public Appearances

There were no public appearances.

Agenda Item 3 – Riverside Office Plaza Phase III Site Plan Review

Kevin O'Melia, COT Senior Planner passed out the site plan for the Riverside Plaza III Office & Hotel. He gave a presentation on the plan stating the case revisits the site design. The current proposal is for a 60 ft. high office building and a 75 ft. high hotel. Building heights will gradually step up from east to west towards the Priest Road and Rio Salado Parkway intersection. Riverside Plaza Phase I and II are 35' high.

RSAC Comments:

- 1) Each phase of the Riverside Office Plaza has pedestrian access north-south through the site with walkway connections south to First Street. There are no vehicle points of access to First Street, except for normally closed and gated emergency driveways.
- 2) A neighborhood meeting is recommended but is not required. Neighborhood notification is required as part of the Use Permit request.
- 3) Concern that the hotel will be entitled but will not be built.
- 4) Make Use Permit request for the hotel specific to the site design development and not transferable.
- 5) If Riverside Plaza III is built in two phases they would like to extend emergency access drive to the north leg of First Street in the first phase or build the entire parking lot in the first phase.

RSAC Recommendations:

- The proposed Riverside III Hotel and Office uses are appropriate for the Rio Salado Overlay District
- This Development is compatible with the goals of the Rio Salado Overlay District

Agenda Item 4 – Lake Boating Programs

Joe O'Connor from the City of Tempe Boating Programs gave a presentation on recreation programs at Town Lake. He stated the five largest recreation lake user groups on the lake are rowing, outrigger paddling, dragon boat, kayak, and youth paddling. Rowing is the oldest group while the fast growing groups are outrigger paddling and dragon boats. Other lake users are the ASU men's and women's rowing club, ASU sailing club, and ASU Engineering Department's concrete canoe club. Last year the club placed fourth in national concrete canoe regatta.

Joe reported there are many youth programs on the lake including Escalante, Boys & Girls Club, Pappas School, and the Gila River Indian Community. He announced the Arizona Disabled Sports presented Tempe Town Lake with the 2008 Community Facility of the Year Award.

The recreation staff is encouraging people to use the whole lake from dam to dam, not just the area between Mill Avenue and Rural Road. Staff would like to see a facility at the lake called Welcome Center & Boathouse which would be used by boaters, walkers, runners, and bikers. With a facility at the lake youth programs could be increased by facilitating lake and classroom time at one location. Nancy Ryan reported last year COT sold the highest number of Town Lake boat permits for a year since the opening of the lake.

Agenda Item 5 – Splash Playground

Nancy reported in July the Cox Splash Playground tested positive for cryptosporidium. The playground was closed for two weeks to maintain the health and safety of the public. On July 21st the City of Tempe installed an Ultraviolet (UV) disinfection system at the playground in Tempe Beach Park. Tempe is one of the first municipalities to install this system at a splash playground in Arizona.

Agenda Item 6 - Committee Updates

- Friends of Rio Salado – Julie Ramsey stated there was nothing new to report.

- Ad Hoc Committee for Papago Park and Rio Salado – Sharon Doyle sent an email listing the approved participants for the Ad Hoc Committee. Nancy reported Sharon is chairman of the committee and the other participants are Bob Gasser, Ed Parker, Stu Siefer, Darlene Justus, Lisa Roach, and Mary Ann Miller.
- Enhanced Services Commission – Nancy Ryan reported the ESC did not meet in August.

Agenda Item 7 – Project Updates

Nancy gave a summary of project updates in Rio Salado.

- 1) Elements Project had a neighborhood meeting on August 11 at TCA. The project includes Meltdown Glass, Roberto Venn Luthiery, Arizona Bronze, and Childsplay. Council has approved a DDA for Meltdown Glass & Roberto Venn. Nancy reported it will cost 6.5 million for environment remediation and infrastructure. Artists will lease the land from COT.
- 2) ADOT is widening the 202 from the Loop 101 to State Route 51. Construction has started with piers being poured at Mill Avenue. Rio Salado's lease with ADOT expires June 2009. Rio Salado Operations Center will have to move but the parking and boat storage will stay under the 202 at Mill Avenue. Staff is looking into cost estimates to move.
- 3) Staff met with elected officials from Tempe, Mesa, and USACOE to discuss the Tempe-Mesa Path. Staff is filling out grant forms for federal funding. Next they will meet with ADOT and Flood Control.
- 4) Council approved Segway tours at Town Lake. Tours will start when it cools down. TCC will receive \$1 for every tour sold.
- 5) SRP bought naming rights to the Town Lake Marina.
- 6) South Bank Path from TCA to Priest is installing lighting and irrigation at this time. The art elements for this path have been funded.
- 7) Staff is confirming the federal funding for the Pedestrian Bridge. Construction will start in January.
- 8) During the summer Rio Salado has pumped water around the lake. Staff is looking for additional funds to continue the pumping.

General discussion regarding the **Project Updates**, including:

- Asked which Rio Salado CIP projects were funded for this fiscal year. Nancy said funded projects are Rio East Linear Park, Pedestrian Bridge, Phase III Habitat, and dam replacement.

The Committee's next meeting will be **September 23**.

MOTION: Julie Ramsey moved to adjourn the meeting

SECOND: Mary Hannaman

DECISION: Meeting was adjourned at 8:29 PM

Prepared by: Diane Johnson

Reviewed by: Nancy Ryan

Nancy Ryan
Rio Salado Manager