



Minutes City Council's Neighborhood Parks Rehabilitation & Maintenance Committee April 15, 2009

Minutes of the meeting of the City Council's Neighborhood Parks Rehabilitation & Maintenance Committee held on Wednesday, April 15, 2009, 3:00 p.m., in the 3rd Floor Conference Room, Tempe City Hall, 31 E. 5th Street, Tempe, Arizona.

Committee Members Present:

Councilmember Joel Navarro, Chair

Committee Members Absent:

Councilmember Mark Mitchell

City Staff Present:

Kathy Gasperich, Comm Rel
Jan Hort, City Clerk
Bob Pohlit, CIP Coordinator
Mark Richwine, Parks & Rec Mgr
Sam Thompson, Dep Mgr, Parks
Shauna Warner, Neighborhood Svcs Dir
Robert Yabes, Prin Planner

Guests Present:

Kevin Moore, The Moore/Swick Partnership
Ann Patterson, Historic Preservation Commission

Councilmember Navarro called the meeting to order at 3:03 p.m.

Agenda Item 3 – Update on Connectivity Within Neighborhoods

Robert Yabes asked that this item be continued to the next meeting.

Mark Richwine added that Sam Thompson and Bob Pohlit might be able to provide a brief update on the Western Canal, however.

Sam Thompson summarized that

- Construction is about 65% to 70% complete on the Western Canal.
- Construction on Ken McDonald will start up again in May once the season slows down.
- On Kiwanis, the lights are up, and construction is about 65% complete.

Mr. Richwine added that there is another project of similar nature on the canal that extends from Riverview Park in Mesa along the canal to the canal's termination at Broadway. That is also about 65% to 70% complete. Trees are installed and grading is being done for the pour of the concrete path, so probably within the next nine months there will be an additional 7.5 miles of trail along canal banks in Tempe.

Councilmember Navarro added that he rides the path to downtown from Lakeshore. It is a heavily used bike lane along Lakeshore on weekends. The City has good bike paths that connect to parks and canals, but we need to make sure that we have something that connects into the neighborhoods. He suggested determining if the neighborhoods would sign off on dedicated bike lanes.

Mr. Yabes added that the City doesn't typically stripe bike lanes on residential streets, but they are simply signed. Collector streets are striped (Hardy, 8th Street, College, Alameda, Carver).

Mr. Richwine noted that he would provide an overlay.

Councilmember Navarro clarified that he was concerned about the missing pieces in the bike path where there is striping and then it stops for a distance and starts again.

Shauna Warner added that there is no signage to direct riders from Lakeshore to College for the route that takes them downtown. Is there signage along the canal path that states where the connections are?

Mr. Yabes responded that there is not.

Councilmember Navarro added that when riding down Lakeshore, it dead-ends at Rural Road. There is a side street behind the Lakes shopping center with a light, but there's no indication that by taking that street, the bike lane will start again to College Avenue and over the bridge. That type of thing would be more neighborhood-friendly.

Agenda Item 4 – Update on I-10 & Warner (ADOT Pit)

Mr. Thompson stated that the site is approximately 31 acres and extremely deep. He has contacted the Town of Gilbert staff to determine what they utilized to do their similar projects. They had an IGA with ADOT and had a joint use agreement to develop that park along with flood retention for the freeway. It cost them a lot less money. Currently, staff is applying for a grant to obtain funding to begin a feasibility study for this site. Also, he has contacted Jim Bond in Engineering. A group of ASU engineers did a study ten years ago and as soon as he secures that document, he will bring it to the next meeting.

Councilmember Navarro stated that it appeared there is land next to the site which could potentially be a parking lot. He asked if there was available land on the east side.

Mr. Richwine specified, concerning the triangular piece on the far east end of the property, when the developer built that site, the City negotiated with him and required him to build a bike path along the canal. The City got that parcel of land (about 1.5 or 2 acres) to be able to construct a parking lot so that if that site was ever developed in the future, the City had the parking capacity to be able to meet the needs of the design. The development agreement entered into by the City allowed the City develop that parcel and to use the balance of the site's parking for recreational purposes in the pit during the evening and on weekends, but no access on weekdays for normal business hours.

Councilmember Navarro asked about whether that park could be viewed as more of a high end ballpark with the side used as stadium seating of some type. He didn't know if it would be only soccer or baseball or both. He asked if there has ever been consideration of a joint partnership with the public to have ball fields that could also be dedicated to physical therapy.

Mr. Richwine added he strongly encouraged ASU to build that kind of sports complex there, but it was too far away from ASU since they wanted the connectivity. It would have been close to the Cardinals facility, there would have been property at the sports complex on weekdays when that property was having limited use, there would have been potential to do some trading of things as far as their physical therapy and rehabilitation programs, but it didn't work out.

Councilmember Navarro added that at some of the other complexes, there is the possibility of a restaurant type atmosphere overlooking the complex. It could be a private restaurant, but something that attracts to the venue. That might be something ASU would like to do as a study.

Mr. Thompson agreed to approach them on a grant, plus visit their urban planning department to seek interest there.

Councilmember Navarro added that a lot of tournaments could be hosted in that area.

Mr. Thompson added that Jim Bond advised that the site must stay a retention site. He didn't know how much water goes in there.

Councilmember Navarro asked about a clean-up grant that could be used.

Mr. Thompson responded that a group takes care of graffiti and dumping in that area.

Agenda Item 5 – Svob Park Master Plan

Kevin Moore, landscape architect with Moore/Swick Partnership, summarized that for the past year, they have been working with the residents of the Tempe South Mountain Neighborhood Association to develop a master plan for the park. Three meetings have been held with 25 to 30 people in attendance at each. The first meeting introduced the project and team and received programming input, the second meeting presented three alternatives, and the third was to present the final master plan.

- Park is east of 48th Street between Baseline and Southern.
- 6' – 8' wide planter with street trees to separate the sidewalk from the park and to prevent people from driving in randomly.
- There is a 6' to 8' wide stabilized granite exercise trail with stations.
- Cutting through the middle of the park, there are existing trees and people have to walk across the lawn to get there. Proposal is to follow the natural flow lines of circulation to put in a 15' wide paved area for maintenance and emergency vehicles.
- On either side of that is a children's playground.
- Across from the playground areas are two ramadas (20'x 20'). Each would have two tables and a barbeque.
- Game tables will be installed.
- On the upper portion, instead of having one field running east and west, there will be two fields running north and south.
- Existing backstop will be moved so people are heading away from the residential areas.
- Concrete walkways will come from the existing sidewalk and another one comes off the curve in a spiral down to the bottom of the basin
- Two basketball courts will be lighted and there will be a dog walk/leash area.
- Landscaping would be enhanced with trees, and in the planter between the sidewalk and the exercise trail, there would be low-growing flowering shrubs and trees in honor of Robert Svob.

Councilmember Navarro asked how much neighborhood involvement there has been.

Mr. Moore responded that there had been three meetings with 25 to 30 people at each meeting. There was a range in age groups from college ages to young families to long time residents.

Councilmember Navarro asked when ground will be broken.

Bob Pohlit responded that this will be No. 6 on the list. It depends on Council's direction.

Councilmember Navarro asked if it is the same with the other parks, and whether there will be another tweaking session.

Ms. Warner responded that this will be done again and then there will be another year for construction design and then ground will be broken.

Bob Pohlit added that for the ones that sat on the shelf for a long time, staff went back to the neighborhoods to make sure that they still wanted it. Hudson Park and Hallman Parks basically sat for about 5 years and they had the opportunity to change priorities. Next year, they would start on design and there will be very little gap time between what they have told us what they want and when we start actually designing.

Mr. Richwine added that the typical process is a program validation meeting with the neighborhood to assure it still meets their desires. He wasn't sure that these would rise to the same level as some of the previous parks because the gap is not as wide, but if that is something Council would like them to do, they would do it.

Mr. Pohlit stated that Hudson Park will open approximately May 1st. Hallman Park will begin construction in the fall. While staff may not go back to review the master plan in entirety, they do touch base with the neighbors on specific elements.

Agenda Item 2 – Review of Minutes

The minutes from the February 18, 2009, meeting were approved.

Agenda Item 6 – Future Agenda Items

Next meeting will be on May 20, 2009.

- ITD – Phones in parks
- ADOT Pit
- Neighborhood Connectivity
- Recreation Program Update

Agenda Item 1 – Public Appearances

Ann Patterson, Historic Preservation Commission, stated that the commission is collaborating on getting local and national register listing for the Tempe Butte, including the rock paintings. The committee might consider working with ASU to require permits to do painting on the Butte. They are also working with the tribal groups for funds to get that moved forward. The commission is moving forward to Council at the next meeting to get Date Palm Manor listed on the local register. They were able to get 93% of the residents to agree to be put on the local, state and national registers. What has been holding this back is Proposition 207 which said that if the City proclaims any kind of zoning and the value of the property goes down, the owner can sue the City. That was an unintended consequence of the Proposition. The result is that no new neighborhood has gone forward to get local and national registry in Arizona. Now with 93% of the residents in favor, they are moving forward and it will probably be the first neighborhood district in the State. The commission believes that when districts are listed on the national register, their property values increase.

Meeting adjourned at 3:30 p.m.

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Prepared by: Connie Krosschell
Reviewed by: Sam Thompson

Jan Hort
City Clerk