



Minutes Rio Salado Advisory Commission May 27, 2008

Minutes of the Rio Salado Advisory Commission held on May 27, 7:00 PM at the Rio Salado Operations Center, 620 N. Mill Ave., Tempe, Arizona.

Members Present:

Dana Burkhardt
Christina Cenzano
Maureen DeCindis
Mary Hannaman
Sue Lofgren
Julie Ramsey
Brett Siegal

Members Absent:

Alana Chavez
Michael Curlee
Sharon Doyle
Walter McCraney
Chase Wiles

City Staff Present:

Neil Calfee
Hansen
Diane Johnson
Nancy Ryan
Karl Stephens

Guests Present:

Mike Branom – Mesa Tribune
John Arnold

Christina Cenzano called the meeting to order at 7:02 PM.

Agenda Item 1 – Consideration of Meeting Minutes from April 22, 2008

Christina asked the commission members if there was a motion to approve the RSAC minutes from April 22, 2008.

MOTION: Sue Lofgren moved to approve minutes

SECOND: Julie Ramsey

DECISION: Minutes were approved unanimously

Agenda Item 2 – Public Appearances

There were two public appearances, first was John Arnold who stated he is a long time Tempe resident attending the meeting tonight to observe how the commission works. The second appearance was from Mike Branom, a Mesa Tribune reporter, who stated he was attending the meeting because Rio Salado is part of his new beat for the paper.

Agenda Item 3 – Parking in Downtown

Neil Calfee, Deputy Community Development Manager, gave a brief summary of parking spaces availability in downtown Tempe. He reported the peak time for parking is Monday

through Friday at lunch time. He said with approximately 11,000 parking spaces, the City found they have enough parking spaces except when there are major events like the New Year's Eve Block Party and the 4th of July Festival.

- 1) Neil reported two factors that have affected the current parking availability. The first was the extra parking spaces in downtown Tempe are being taken up by construction workers working on development projects. The second factor was ASU has raised their parking rates on campus and Tempe has not which made students start to park in the downtown area because it was cheaper.
- 2) COT and DTC are introducing a new universal sign program where signs will have a big blue "P" on them to direct the public to different parking areas. About 60 new signs will be placed around downtown Tempe.
- 3) The City and DTC want to make parking as seamless as possible with a validation program for six different lots. You will be able to have your parking ticket validated at different places around the City. The first hour of parking will be free. Also some downtown merchants will be able to validate their customers parking tickets.
- 4) Neil said they are re-surfacing the temporary parking lot at 5th & Farmer and adding another parking lot at 6th & Forrest. He said more parking lots will be determined by demand.

General discussion regarding the **parking downtown**, including:

- Dana Burkhardt asked what future parking projects are planned. Neil stated there will be a new parking garage east of City Hall. He also said each new development will provide a parking plan for their project.
- Sue Lofgren asked if there is any free parking beyond one hour. Neil said no because the challenge is ASU students will use up the parking spaces if it is free for more than an hour.

Agenda Item 4 – ADA Accessibility

Karl Stephens, ADA Compliance Specialist, came to the RSAC meeting to present the recommended new Federal ADA Accessibility Guidelines for recreation facilities. Changes emphasized for Rio Salado were the guidelines for boat facilities. He said the ADA standards have been around since 1990.

- 1) These guidelines were completed on October 3, 2002 but have not been incorporated in the ADA standards by the Department of Justice and are, therefore, not enforceable.
- 2) Karl would like to see Tempe become one of the model communities to test out new ideas of accessibility by voluntarily implementing the guidelines early. He said Tempe can develop standards that go above and beyond what they are doing now. After testing these guidelines staff can go to Council to say they are not asking for a codified law but they believe these standards are the best practice for the City.
- 3) Karl said he would like to educate people on the Boards and Commissions to realize that Tempe is leading the pack and we should go to the next step with accessibility guidelines.

Agenda Item 5 – Historic Designation of the Tempe [Hayden] Butte and listing in the Tempe Historic Property Register.

Hansen, COT Planner, passed out a letter dated April 3, 2008 written by Mayor Hugh Hallman stating Council has directed the Tempe Historic Preservation Commission to bring forward the historic property designation of the Tempe [Hayden] Butte and listing on the Tempe Historic Property Register.

- 1) Hansen said the local designation for the register will be only for the portion of the butte owned by the City. On the butte there is a fence that runs north and south, the east side of it is owned by ASU and the west side is owned by Tempe.
- 2) He reported any designation or listing would not supersede the Parks & Recreation Board jurisdiction regarding the management of the butte. It also does not affect land uses or zoning of the property. If approved this will be the 34th addition to the Tempe historical property register.

Committee Consensus: Maureen DeCindis made a motion to approve the historical designation of Tempe [Hayden] Butte and listing on the Tempe Historical Property Register. Sue Lofgren seconded the motion. The Rio Salado Advisory Commission unanimously approved the designation and listing to the register.

Agenda Item 6 – Papago Park and Rio Salado Ad Hoc Committee

Nancy Ryan, passed out a memorandum dated May 8, 2008 from Mayor Hugh Hallman identifying the creation of an Ad Hoc Committee for Papago Park and Rio Salado. The Mayor has appointed Sharon Doyle to chair the committee which will include representatives from the Parks & Rec Commission, Rio Salado Commission, Historical Museum Advisory Board, Historical Preservation Commission, and the North Tempe Neighborhood Homeowner's Association.

Agenda Item 7 – Playa del Norte Park Update

Nancy gave an update on the design of the Playa del Norte Park located on the north side of the lake between the 202 Freeway and Grigio on Playa del Norte Drive. She said the concept for the park has changed very little since the last time the RSAC members were shown the design. Staff did some value engineering and took out a lot of retaining walls made of concrete because of the cost. Instead of the concrete walls there will be gabion rock walls held together in a wire basket. The plan will also add tree cover to the park. Included in this plan is the traffic circle on Playa del Norte Drive which will have gabion rock baskets and plants.

Agenda Item 8 - Committee Updates

- Friends of Rio Salado – Julie Ramsey had nothing to report from Friends of Rio Salado this month.
- Enhanced Services Commission – Nancy Ryan reported the ESC met on May 14 where they had a downtown parking presentation, a tourism report, and set their summer meeting schedule. Their June meeting has been canceled.
- Parks Board Commission – Nancy Ryan shared with the Parks & Rec Board members the Rio East Linear Park design and updated them on the same items listed below in project updates.

Agenda Item 7 – Project Updates

Nancy gave a short summary of Rio Salado Projects.

- 1) The 60% drawings of the Rio East Linear Park have been completed. The park is located on the south side of the lake from Rural Road to the east dam. Construction is intended to start in August or September of this year.

- 2) Nancy announced Tempe Town Lake was chosen as the Best Place to Live for Vertical Dwellers in May 2008 Phoenix Magazine. Town Lake was also chosen as the Best Day Trip by Sunset Magazine.
- 3) South Bank linear path from Tempe Center for the Arts to Priest is under construction.
- 4) New restrooms for Tempe Beach Park (TBP) are in the design stage. Staff is working on design plans to build restrooms on the backside of the baseball field. The City will be increasing the number of restroom stalls from 8 to 12.
- 5) Onyx Towers launch party was held last week.
- 6) Staff is working on the design of the Phase III Habitat Restoration. They will be working with ADOT, the Flood Control District, and the BLM for permission to put a multi-use path on top of river banks from the upstream dam to McClintock Drive.
- 7) Music at the Marina, a free concert series, will be held on the first four Sundays in June from 7 pm to 9 pm. The concert series is sponsored by the Wolff Company and PCL. The first concert will be on June 1st featuring Billy Cioffi and the Monte Carlos. There will be give-a-ways at each concert.

Nancy announced Chase Wiles has given his resignation as a member to the Rio Salado Advisory Commission. He is moving back to California.

MOTION: Brett Siegal moved to cancel the July Rio Salado Advisory Commission meeting

SECOND: Dana Burkhardt

DECISION: It was unanimously approved to cancel the RSAC July meeting

The Committee's next meeting will be **June 24**.

MOTION: Maureen DeCindis moved to adjourn the meeting

SECOND: Dana Burkhardt

DECISION: Meeting was adjourned at 8:18 PM

Prepared by: Diane Johnson

Reviewed by: Nancy Ryan

Nancy Ryan
Rio Salado Manager