



MINUTES

Town Center Committee

22358 S. Ellsworth Rd., Queen Creek, AZ

Development Services Building

San Tan Conference Room

January 11, 2012

8:00 am

1. **Call To Order and Roll Call**

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Jason Gad at 8:06 am. The following people were in attendance:

Committee Members: Council Member Barnes, Chairman Jason Gad, Barbara Khalsa, Marquis Scott, Shane Randall, Hannah Dixon Grabe (telephonically), Steve Ingram, Council Member Oliphant, Monica O'Toole

Town Staff: Kim Moyers, Economic Development Specialist; Doreen Cott, Economic Development Director; Joy Maglione, Town Clerk Assistant

Absent Members: Nancy Diab, Vice Chair Chris Webb

2. **Introductions/ Announcements**

None.

3. **Public Comment:** Members of the public may address the Committee on items not on the printed agenda. Please observe a time limit of three minutes.

There were no public comments.

4. **Items for Discussion and Possible Action**

A. Consideration and possible approval of the October 12, 2011 Town Center Committee meeting minutes.

Motion: Shane Randall 2nd: Barbara Khalsa
To approve the October 12, 2011 minutes as presented.
Motion carried.

B. Update and discussion on land uses within Town Center

Chairman Jason Gad gave an update from the Town Center subcommittee that was formed to review various parcels in Town Center and how the parcels relate to the General Plan and the findings of the ULI and ASU Capstone studies.

The first parcel reviewed was a 16 acre commercial zoned parcel along Ellsworth Loop Road and Rittenhouse. Chairman Gad pointed out that the parcel is owned by the Town with the exception of two small triangular pieces that are privately owned. He provided a status update on the recent RFP for entertainment uses for this parcel. Three proposals were received and based on the responses, the RFP review committee recommended that the Town take a different approach towards the development of the parcel. The vision for this parcel is for an entertainment destination to tie in with the existing shopping plazas. Ms. Cott added that the Town is also exploring options to promote the parcel in other ways, including the possibility of working with a broker.

The second parcel reviewed was an 11- acre parcel along Maya Road and Ellsworth Loop Road. The Town owns 1 acre and the remaining area has multiple owners. Chairman Gad noted that this is the former Queen Creek Fiesta project where McDonalds and Discount Tires are located. Kim Moyers stated that the project has been purchased by the Sorenson Group who is using the site as a long term investment. The sub-committee concurred with the ASU Study recommendation that this parcel include a friendly, walkable area going north/south with a central greenbelt or park that is surrounded by businesses. It is also recommended that Town staff help to market the parcel through open communication with property owners and by providing contact information to interested parties. Ms. Cott noted that the parcel is located just north of the upcoming communiiversity project, which may help to motivate buyers.

Chairman Gad said the remaining parcels in Town Center will be reviewed and reported at the monthly meetings.

C. Discussion on façade improvement program

Kim Moyers gave an overview of the Facade Improvement Program and provided a draft version to committee members. She asked the committee to consider recommendations for program criteria, program administration and the application process. The purpose of the program is to improve the appearance of street facing exteriors on commercial buildings in Town Center, particularly in the older sections. The program will be managed by Economic Development staff along with a review committee. The following areas of the program were discussed for possible recommendations:

ELIGIBLE CRITERIA:

Eligible improvements must contribute to the visual enhancement of the property as viewed from the street. Ms. Moyers added that in some circumstances the sides of the building may be eligible if viewed from the street. Typical eligible improvements and ineligible activities of the program were discussed by the group.

- Council Member Barnes suggested that Item #8: “*Addition of a patio or outdoor eating space*” be modified by deleting the word “eating” in order to allow for expansion of all outdoor spaces.
- Discussion took place on roof repairs, interior work and other items not specifically mentioned or needing clarification.
- Chairman Gad suggested that a disclaimer line be added for eligible and ineligible improvements stating that the review committee will have final approval of all projects.

PROGRAM SCHEDULE:

Discussion took place on when and how often applications for the program will be accepted and distributed. The example provided in the draft for discussion was: Two (2) times per calendar year (February and August). The following comments and questions were brought up:

- Committee members discussed the idea of allowing for applications as they come in (anytime throughout the year) rather than on set dates, re-addressing the idea of twice per year at a later time if necessary.
- There was concern that limiting the application process to twice per year may deter applicants from doing a project if the timing does not match their schedule.
- Questions came up that funding might be gone too quickly if there were open applications and would all businesses get at fair chance. Setting a schedule allows business owners to know the time line and gives them a chance to plan for available funds. A set schedule allows the review committee to see all the interested projects in one time period to help make funding decisions.
- Committee members discussed how often applicants can apply and receive grant money.
- Marketing concepts were discussed. It was suggested that staff provide information that outlines the process and lets business owners know the total amount of money available in the program. Consider marketing the program twice a year but allowing applications to be submitted anytime.

PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION

The committee was asked to recommend the percentage of reimbursement for eligible pre-approved improvement costs; the maximum amount for any individual grant award per individual property owner, program goals, and to establish who can apply for funding. Comments and discussion followed:

- It was noted that any commercial property in Town Center is eligible for the program as long as it is for a renovation. New construction does not apply.
- Discussion took place on what is considered commercial; such as homeowner associations applying to improve club houses or home-based businesses. Chairman Gad suggested that the wording for properties be clarified by adding the word “commercial” to the description in the section that addresses who can apply for funding.
- Chairman Gad asked how much money is available for the program and if there are other uses the funds may be used for. Ms. Cott responded approximately \$500,000 is available in the Town Center fund and other uses for the funds have not been specified at this time.
- The committee agreed that the main focus of the program is to revitalize the Town Center and to inspire businesses to take on renovation projects. The committee agreed that it is important to allocate enough money initially to make the program beneficial. They felt it was essential to attract quality projects that improve the Town Center and encourage program participation.
- The average cost of a renovation and reimbursement amounts were discussed. It was suggested to provide participants up to 50% reimbursement of pre-approved eligible costs up to \$40,000 per commercial building (\$20,000 maximum reimbursement). The suggested total budget for the program was \$100,000 for the first year.

APPLICATION PROCESS:

Ms Moyers gave an overview of the application process including the pre-application information sessions, program application, review process, and approval and reimbursement policies.

Details of the reimbursement process were outlined and there was discussion on whether reimbursement should occur as work is completed or upon final completion of the project. Council Member Barnes suggested that reimbursements be distributed as work is completed to help assist in the construction process. It was emphasized that work must be completed within 6 months of approval unless otherwise noted in the application. Marketing concepts for the program were discussed, which included brochures, press releases, website, social media and face to face meetings with local business owners.

Motion: Marquis Scott 2nd: Monica O’Toole
To approve the Façade Improvement Program with the following modifications:

- **Applications for the program will be accepted and distributed as applied for.**
- **Typical Eligible Improvements - Item #8: Remove the word “eating” so it reads: *Addition of a patio or outdoor ~~eating~~ space.***
- **Eligible Criteria: Add a disclaimer stating that the Review Committee will have final approval on all applications.**
- **The total amount allocated to the Façade Improvement Program for FY12/13 for the first year is \$100,000 from Town Center funds.**
- **Participants have the opportunity to receive a reimbursement of up to 50% of eligible pre-approved improvement costs. The maximum amount for any individual grant award is up to \$20,000 per individual property owner/business location.**
- **Businesses (property locations) can be awarded grant money up to two (2) times in a five year period, not to exceed \$40, 000 unless there is an ownership change.**
- **Façade Improvement Program Administration – Who can apply for funding: Add the word “commercial” to this description.**
- **Application Process - Item #6: Reimbursement will be distributed as work is completed on a monthly basis.**

Motion carried.

D. Discussion on banners and flags in Town Center along Ellsworth Road

Ms Moyers showed the committee an example of an existing Town of Queen Creek banner and reviewed the details of the program. She explained that the marketing partners for the Town could be given the opportunity to purchase banners for their special events with the Town providing installation.

Council Member Barnes asked if other businesses and organizations would have the opportunity to purchase banners for their special events as well. The committee discussed the option of opening up the program to allow for this. Further discussion on program details took place including design standards; application and permitting processes; policies and fees; how long to display banners; how many banners would be

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required for purchase; and staff time for installation and take down. It was suggested that the Town get first preference for banner display times and the businesses would be on a first come first serve basis. The idea of leaving a minimum amount of Town banners up at all times vs. having all 19 special event banners displayed was discussed. It was noted that aesthetics and continuity need to be considered when planning which banners to display.

Ms. Moyers said that she would share the program ideas with the Marketing Department for their input. She will present the committee with options for discussion and possible recommendations at the next meeting.

E. Summary of current events – Reports from Chair, Committee Members and Economic Development Staff

Council Member Barnes updated the committee on temporary roadway improvements on Old Ellsworth Road.

Ms. Moyers announced new businesses in Town Center. Palma Riccobono Pastries moved to the Queen Creek Village Center and Firehouse Subs will be opening at Queen Creek Crossroads.

Chairman Gad said the Town Center Committee is looking for new members and encouraged local business owners to apply by completing a Notice of Interest Form.

Council Member Oliphant invited members to attend the January 18, 2012 Council Meeting which will include the State of the Town address, Star Student Program and recognition of Citizen Leadership Alumni.

5. Announcements

None.

6. Adjournment

**Motion: Shane Randall
To adjourn meeting.
Motion carried unanimously.**

2nd: Steve Ingram

Meeting adjourned at 9:35 am.

TOWN OF QUEEN CREEK

Chairman Jason Gad

ATTEST:

Joy Maglione
Town Clerk Assistant

I, Joyce Maglione, do hereby certify that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, the foregoing Minutes are a true and correct copy of the Minutes of the January 11, 2012 Town Center Committee Meeting. I further certify that the meeting was duly called and that a quorum was present.

Joy Maglione
Town Clerk Assistant

Passed and approved on: FEBRUARY 8, 2012