



## **Transportation Advisory Committee Minutes**

Thursday, March 1, 2012 - 6:30 – 8:30 p.m.  
San Tan Room – Municipal Services Building

### **Committee Members:**

Ryan Nichols – Chair	Present
Chris Clark – Vice Chair	Present
John Alston – Council Member	Absent
David Bond	Present
Gregory Arrington	Absent
Kim Mlazgar	Present
Nichelle Williams	Present
Richard Turman	Present
Tom Nelson	Absent
Steve Conklin	Absent

### **Public:**

None

### **Town Staff Members:**

Bill Birdwell, Sr. Traffic Engineering Analyst	Absent
Chris Dovel, Town Engineer	Absent
Laura Catanese, Sr. Administrative Assistant	Present
Tom Condit, Development Services Director	Present
Troy White, Public Works Division Manager	Absent
Tom Narva, Sr. CIP Projects Manager	Absent

### **1. Call to Order:**

Committee Chairman, Ryan Nichols, called the meeting to order at 6:37 p.m.

### **2. Introductions:**

No introductions were deemed necessary.

### **3. Public Comment:** None in attendance.

### **4. Items for Discussion and possible action**

#### **Item A: Consideration and possible approval of February 2, 2011 minutes**

Nichelle Williams made a motion to approve the 2/01/12 minutes. Chris Clark seconded the motion. Motion was carried **UNANIMOUSLY**.

**Item B: Discussion on pedestrian crossings & possible solutions for Rittenhouse & Ellsworth roads.**

This subject was introduced last month when comparing Dibble’s Council approved Design Concept Report to the ULI Transportation recommendations. The railroad crossing at Rittenhouse Road presents a connectivity impediment to pedestrians.

As an example of a completed sidewalk crossing, staff presented pictures of a concrete sidewalk and landscaping improvements at the railroad crossing at Higley & Recker roads. Staff noted how the sidewalk meandered around the existing railroad equipment boxes, switches and cabinets, thus minimizing project costs. Staff also noted the safety concern of sidewalks at freight rail crossings – for strollers and wheelchairs, the wheels can easily go sideways and end up creating a safety hazard where the agency tried to improve connectivity. One of the TAC members noted they saw just such a situation within the past couple of months near the Town Center area.

There are no sidewalk improvements to the railroad crossing at Rittenhouse and Ellsworth in the Town’s current 5-year CIP. Staff noted there may be opportunities for grant funding that would offset some of the costs for such an improvement.

**Discussion/Questions:**

- **Question:** As a hazard to the public exists (danger when walking, inconsistent bike lanes), are there any grant funding opportunities? For example, can the Town work with the Safe Routes to School program to pay for a sidewalk crossing? What about the MAG Bike and Pedestrian Committee, and possible funding through that group?  
**Answer:** Staff will look into grant and other funding opportunities and report back at the next regularly scheduled TAC meeting.
- **Question:** Can a pedestrian push button be installed where the railroad crossing and road meet?  
**Answer:** It almost certainly can be done, but the logistics and technical details need to be further discussed. Bill Birdwell might be able to best answer that question. We will confer on this and return with an answer at the next meeting.

**Item C. Presentation and discussion of trails and bike lanes for Rittenhouse & Ellsworth roads.**

This item was partially combined with Item B, with a recommendation to bring this back for discussion at a future meeting, within the context of a more complete analysis and decision making session on the ULI Study results.

**Item D. Discussion of the abandoned right-of-way on old Ellsworth Road (north of Rittenhouse Road), and possible alternate options.**

Before Ellsworth Loop Road was realigned to cross Rittenhouse west of the historical Ellsworth Road alignment, concept drawings shown in the Town’s General Plan and other documents identified the main 6-lane road to be immediately adjacent to the Queensland Manor subdivision. During the subdivision approval process, a 70-foot (half street) roadway dedication was required from the Queensland Manor developers. Now that the principal arterial has been relocated to the west, there is a large (30-40 foot) undeveloped strip of right-of-way in front of the subdivision. The discussion included ROW abandonment procedures and the ultimate use, construction and maintenance of the land area.

**Discussion/Questions:**

- **Question:** What is the process for abandonment? When abandoned, does the Town need to dedicate the land back to the original developer, or can the land be dedicated back to the current owner / HOA?  
**Answer:** Staff will bring the State Statute concerning abandoned right-of-ways to the next TAC meeting for information and discussion.

- **Question:** What are the benefits of the Town keeping the property? Could the land fulfill a useful purpose in the future (i.e. drainage channel / retention basin)?  
**Answer:** Staff will review the drainage reports for this area and determine if there are any future needs for a drainage channel or retention basin in this area.
- **Question:** Would the HOA be interested in taking control of the right-of-way?  
**Answer:** In theory, the HOA has expressed some interest in taking ownership, but the details will need to be worked out first.
- **Question:** What is the cost for construction and/or maintenance within this unused strip of right-of-way? What are the unknowns?  
**Answer:** Preliminary discussions have occurred at various times with various staff members, many of whom are no longer with the Town. Town staff will attend the March 29<sup>th</sup> HOA meeting to discuss possible abandonment of the right-of-way and to develop a “shared vision” that includes funding options.
- **Question:** Can the Town enter into an agreement with the HOA for them to maintain the right-of-way in the interim?  
**Answer:** The Town can certainly enter into maintenance agreements, but has no available funding.

**Item E. Discussion concerning possible public confusion of Town Center road names (specifically between Ellsworth Road & Ellsworth Loop Road).**

Chamber of Commerce members and members from the Town Alliance Committee (not a Town Committee) are worried that confusion between Ellsworth Road and Ellsworth Loop Road exists in the minds of customers trying to find their retail/service establishments. Discussion by TAC members proceeded as follows:

- The “original” business owners should have been aware that the major traffic flow would loop around (old) Ellsworth Road during its’ design process.
- Ellsworth Road at Queen Creek Road “hooks” into Ellsworth Loop Road. It would make more sense to rename Ellsworth Loop Road to Ellsworth Road and then rename (old) Ellsworth Road something else.
- This could be a good opportunity to create a real Town Center identity (“Rename old Ellsworth Road campaign”).
- Renaming (old) Ellsworth Road will also affect some home residences as well.
- Suggest to the Town Center Committee to meet with the Town Alliance Committee to discuss and come up with a solution.

**Discussion/Questions:**

- **Question:** Should the TAC be considering this question now, or should we wait until the Town Center Committee reviews this matter and makes a recommendation?  
**Answer:** There was consensus from the majority of the TAC committee that the Town Center Committee was the appropriate place for this item to be presented. If renaming is proposed by that group, and their decision would somehow affect traffic safety, perhaps the TAC should be consulted in the future.

**Item F: Request future agenda items.**

1. Staff will provide the committee with a summary of available grant opportunities for pedestrian crossings (grants pertaining to RR connectivity/safety).

2. Staff will bring the State Statute for right-of-way abandonment for group discussion, and will attend the 3/29/12 Queenland Manor HOA meeting to discuss the right-of-way abandonment issue. This will be added for TAC discussion / update on a future TAC agenda.

3. The April 2012 TAC meeting will be cancelled; the next TAC meeting will be on Thursday evening, May 3, 2012.

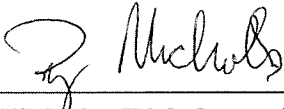
5. **Announcements**

Patricia Conrad has resigned from the Transportation Advisory Committee. Staff sent Patricia a Certificate of Appreciation.

6. **Adjournment**

The committee adjourned at 8:12 p.m.

PREPARED BY: Laura Catanese  
PASSED AND APPROVED ON: 5/3/12



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Ryan Nichols, TAC Committee Chair