



## **Transportation Advisory Committee Minutes**

Thursday, February 5, 2009  
6:33 - 8:24 p.m.  
Town Hall – Council Chambers

### **Committee Members:**

Bill Fischbach	Present
Chris Clark	Present
Jeff Brown	Present
Kyle Robinson	Present
Milos Pavicevich	Absent
Robin Benning	Present
Silvia Centoz	Present
Thomas McCarthy	Present

### **Town Staff Members:**

Dick Schaner, Transportation Director	Present
Mark Young, QC Government Liaison	Absent
Mike Pacelli, Asst. Public Works Director	Present
Norma Hernandez, Management Assistant	Present
Shane Dille, Deputy Town Manager/Acting PW Director	Present
Wayne Balmer, Planning Manager	Present
Lance Decker, LL Decker & Associates, Inc	Present

### **Public/Observers:**

Bob Hildebrandt, resident/QC business owner  
Ed Welsh, non-resident/QC business owner  
Jill Charette, resident  
Paul Osterman, resident/QC business owner  
Richard Stewart, resident  
Todd Sautter, resident  
Toni Valenzuela, resident/QC business owner

### **Call to Order:**

Robin Benning, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 6:36 p.m.

### **Introductions:**

All members and staff introduced themselves and guests were welcomed.

**All**

**Public Comment:**

Toni Valenzuela – resident/business owner: I want to commend TAC on their hard work on the Ocotillo Road median issue. I feel bad that the Council did not feel you did your job. Council sent back to this group twice now; Council did a bad thing for you guys.

No other public comment at this time.

**Item A: Approval of January 22, 2009 minutes **All****

Motion to approve the January 22, 2009 minutes, (Chris Clark/Jeff Brown/Unanimous approval).

**Items for Discussion**

Robin Benning read the letter that Mayor Sanders provided to the TAC members thanking them for their continued service and recommendations to Town Council. He addressed the median issue and why Council did not approve removal of median segment #4 at this time. He informed the members that the Town is facing a challenging time right now because of the economy, housing market, decrease in projects and funds. He advised that Council did not question the recommendation from TAC; rather they questioned approving removal at a time when it did not have the benefit of knowing the collective needs of the Town as we look to next fiscal year.

Lance provided an overview of the agenda, and asked how the group wanted to review the material in order to create a final report. Lance summarized the Mayor's letter, he stated that the vote was 3-3, motion failed. He asked the members for feedback in regards to the letter from the Mayor. He asked the members to limit the discussion to 10 minutes total; he also informed the members that before the discussion began, to remember to be civil with each other, that they are part of a committee.

Jeff: I cannot allow an expenditure of \$50K right now with the budgetary issues as they are. I was a minority on the TAC recommendation, I do support TAC, I asked the Town Attorney if I could vote and was told yes. All six Council Members were nodding to go ahead with removal, but this is a rough economy. We did not have the time to review the fiscal budget to see if costs were there to remove. I am in support to remove the medians, but we do not have the funds to do so. I took my commitment to the town very seriously when I ran for Council. I cannot recommend the expenditure of \$50K at this time.

Kyle: If it came down to funds, do they want to spend the funds? Process was performed by TAC to recommend to Council. Item did not pass due to economy; we have to be able to afford it. We have to plan for the future whether we have the funds or not. I'd rather see the Town spend the \$50K on another road, a priority for the Town. We should not make this personal. I feel that a Council Member should be on committee.

Tom: I agree with Kyle.

Chris: The agenda said up to \$50K, the other median costs about \$30K, would this median be the same cost? Is there a difference in the median, is this one longer? I think that John Kross said that there are funds but it may have to be used on another project.

Dick: The price quote received was for \$44K, testing would be about \$2K, a little leeway for extra funds if needed, would be pretty close to \$50K. Yes, this median is longer, which requires additional funds.

Bill: I recall last year John Kross said the funds were available for the removal of the median. Council said that the median would be removed. Jeff sent back to TAC, Council members carry a lot of weight; Jeff has routinely put this item off. At the last TAC meeting, the vote was 7-2 to have median removed, the vote should have carried forward to Council. Council said they support removal but not funds. Council should not be sending items to TAC and back to Council and Council members should be removed from committees. How can we as a committee make recommendations when there are no funds? It is a waste of time. It was said over and over again there were funds available. Why plan a recommendation, research and at the end not get approved. Some of you are probably not aware of the medians that happened last July. The medians were installed wrong, the town put them in fast, and I am not okay with that, I am going home.

Lance summarized what Bill said.

Robin: I spoke with several Council Members and the Mayor; I feel comfortable to pass on that they are in support of the removal but the funding is the problem. I do have a concern with the verbiage on the staff report. What it did was create a perception. Council I think wanted to let it be known that they cannot afford at this time. I did not feel staff prepared the staff report accurately to represent the TAC recommendation. In my mind, we should have chosen someone else to speak, not a Council and committee member. People took what you said that the committee also voted like that. It was meant to say we didn't discuss safety, I would have preferred for someone who was not in both groups to do the report.

Jeff: Committee members are appointed by the Mayor, they are to provide recommendations to Council.

Lance: Now we will begin the discussion.

**Item B: Access Management** **All**

Wayne Balmer, Planning Manager, provided a "Draft" report and a series of maps. He incorporated the comments from the members and the public from the meeting on January 22. He also added the information on the policy statements, and a new section "Revised Design Standard Implementation" (page 4). He tried to capture what the members want; changes can still be made if needed.

Review of maps:

- Map 1 – north coming south, 1 lane each direction.
- Map 2 – Parking behind by library holds about 100 vehicles.

Members want to add on page 3, 2<sup>nd</sup> bullet – The private parking is to have access via the library driveway rather than the southern driveway.

Robin: We talked about having parking on both east and west sides of the road. Is the Circle K going away? I was told the town would purchase the store.

Wayne: We are still looking at having a driveway on Ocotillo Road and on Ellsworth. The parallel parking on the east didn't seem a priority as on the west side.

- Map 3 – Parking in front of Rudy's may be best for people to park in front, maybe for people that are picking up food and not necessarily eating there. The back parking has easier access to get in and out.

Comments:

Jeff: Will a map be created and submitted with recommendation to Council?

Robin: I am creating an updated map, with current developments (2008 arterial) I will provide to Wayne.

Chris: North of library and up – section bothers me. We have a problem. I believe it should be 1 lane each direction. If we say pedestrian friendly, and then we are sending them down the block, that is not creating a friendly pedestrian area.

Kyle: I thought we already voted on this topic/area. I thought we were done.

Chris: Yes, we voted - we fast tracked; I still have issues with this. Town Center has then moved down closer to the library?

Silvia: North of Ocotillo by the library, I would like extended bays for bus pullouts – for the future. We should leave places for bus bays; make sure future developments incorporate into their plans. Do we want people from the condos to walk ½ mile to the Loop to get on the bus?

Jeff: I always thought transit would be on Ellsworth Loop. I don't think it is a ½ mile. Also there may be a connection from Ocotillo Road. Yes, we need a statement in recommendation for bus pullouts.

Robin: We need to accommodate bus pullouts and encourage cross access easements. We need to encourage cross property line driveway access. Have driveways that connect, for example, Quick Trip's connection to the automotive shop and Sunland Realty.

**Public Comment:**

Bob Hildebrandt – resident/QC business owner: Medians should be taken out; I have lost a lot of respect for some Council members and the Mayor, however, TAC is doing a good job. Medians make it dangerous for people to get in and out. Town said they had funds, if they don't have too bad – they should have saved up for this. There was no mention in the "Alternative" in the staff report that there were no funds. A few months ago, the Town gave Dibble \$300K to do a re-design. There should not be a Council Member on this committee. The map is great on paper, but you need to take a ride and look at the impact the medians are doing to this town; you are impacting the businesses.

Richard Stewart - resident: If the area is going to be 25 MPH or less, why put in medians. This area is supposed to be pedestrian friendly – we do not need medians. Medians are going to close out businesses. I also have a problem with other medians in town.

Jill Charette – resident: There is a raised median in front of my house, there was nothing on the Council agenda with a timeline, maybe we do need to wait until funds are available, but at least have this approved to do in the future. Having raised medians in the downtown area of Town Center does not make sense. I cannot find research that supports medians at locations that are 45 MPH or less. People agree that the medians are not working. Council Members should not be on committee.

Paul Osterman – resident/QC business owner: I own the Sushi Bar, I speak for most businesses in the development; eight businesses have gone out of business in the past few months. Closure is partially due to economy, but also because of Ellsworth Loop. Traffic in our center has been reduced; the impact to our community is significant. Russ had a voice, just like many of us, but we go unheard. It is about doing what makes sense to this community. On the map, north of Ocotillo/Ellsworth, behind the Circle K, the driveways are blocked?

Wayne: We are planning for the future, there will be many more vehicles traveling through this town. The yellow area is protection for left turn traffic (Map 2; Ellsworth north of Ocotillo area). We have to think of "where is the traffic coming from", the Town wants people to come here, spend money, go to the movie theater, and retail shops. On Ocotillo N/B turn lane will have heavy traffic with the anticipated traffic volume in the future, we need to prepare. This was the reason for the parallel parking on the west side of the road.

Toni Valenzuela – residents/QC business owner: I agree with everyone, I don't like the raised median in front of my restaurant. Seems like the Town does not want people to go to my restaurant, I don't know why. Council Members don't go to the small businesses; they go to the new businesses - maybe they want us out of here. Maybe the Town wants to buy these businesses at a low cost because of the market conditions right now. What they did to the residents west of Ellsworth on Ocotillo was not fair. The Council Members should go to the homes of these residents and tell them why they

voted like this. Jeff says he represents 20,000+ residents, no; you represent all these people too. People want to hear that this is approved.

El Welsh – non-resident/QC Business Owner: I own Cactus Plaza; I am very disappointed with the medians. I was not notified before about this meeting that these discussions were taking place. There are four businesses in the Cactus Plaza, we have 100 cars in and out everyday, we have 24 parking spaces, and 7 additional diagonal spaces east of Cactus. The Town owns the property north of me, the parallel parking you are talking about will take our parking away, and we will lose 5 parking spots. The proposal says no N/B turns into to this area where the businesses are – you are closing down businesses.

Lance asked if there was any further public comment.

No additional comments received.

Chris asked if the members could receive larger detailed maps showing egress and potential parking spaces, one map per section. The maps have to show Rudy's driveway, see if the traffic flow really works. A diagram would be nice, something that shows what the area would be at build out.

Robin: I would also like better maps with graphics to be provided; the business owners are not going to be happy with any limited access. The goal was to forward a recommendation to Council from tonight's meeting. I can work with the Town's GIS person on updating the maps.

Lance: Questioned if the members wanted an exhibit for Council or public and if the members wanted to extend to another meeting since it was 8:06 p.m.

Robin said he does not want to extend.

Wayne informed members that we can have detailed maps and make them larger as well. It is really not going to show more detail though.

Kyle asked if there was a national standard for the traffic flow. Also said it is nice that the Town put in a large parking area behind Rudy's. The map is an adequate size, it just needs more detail, needs to show where the exact parking spaces are.

Mike: There are several national studies; there is not a national standard. A lot of it is local standard. We used the comments received from the members and our experience in traffic engineering to reach this compromise.

Silvia: I want a simple map, a map that shows N/W and N/E driveways, the medians are going to affect the businesses. I want to see what businesses will be impacted by limited access. No one is going to list which businesses are going to be affected – I want to see a list. Some businesses may not have access; we need to see if they will.

Shane: Silvia, what I hear you saying is that you would like to see a map showing the businesses affected, or that will have limited access clearly marked on a map. Staff is going to clarify your concerns and provide to Council.

Lance: What I hear the members say is they want a detailed map showing access to each business in that area. They want to see a list of businesses affected.

Wayne: The challenge is the roads on the map we created lay over the current roads and driveways. Our staff can work on the revised map on Monday and Tuesday of next week, we need to submit to Council on Wednesday afternoon, we don't have much time.

Kyle: I move to accept existing maps with changes we discussed.

Tom: I 2<sup>nd</sup> that motion.

Robin: Motion to accept report with amendments and graphics with changes.

Vote: All members in favor/unanimous.

Final comments:

Robin: We have come a long way; we have had a big improvement since we started this task. I want to thank the committee and public for their input.

In summary- items to be changed/added:

1. Members want to add on page 3, 2<sup>nd</sup> bullet – The public/private parking is to have access via the library driveway rather than the existing driveway.
2. We need to accommodate bus pullouts
3. Encourage cross access easements, connecting driveways.
4. Have detailed maps, showing egress, showing potential parking. Want to be able to see the traffic flow, how are medians going to affect businesses.

**Item C: Scheduled future meeting All**

March 5, 2009, @ 6:30 p.m. Council Chambers:

**Adjournment:** Motion by Kyle Robinson to adjourn the meeting. Motion passed by Tom McCarthy. Meeting adjourned by unanimous vote and concluded at 8:29 p.m.

PREPARED BY: Norma Hernandez, February 9, 2009

PASSED AND APPROVED ON: March 5, 2009

  
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Robin Benning, TAC Committee Chair