



## **APPROVED**

### MINUTES

#### **TOWN CENTER COMMITTEE MEETING**

April 28, 2009 7:30 a.m.

San Tan Conference Room

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#### **Call to Order and Roll Call**

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 a.m. At roll call the following people were in attendance:

#### **Committee Members:**

Cynthia Buffington  
Chris Webb  
Jason Gad  
Steve Ingram  
Monica Munoz  
Toni Valenzuela  
Ryan Desmond  
Marvin Smith, Jr.

#### **Town Staff:**

Doreen Cott, Economic Development Director  
Kim Moyers, Economic Development Mgmt. Asst.  
Wayne Balmer, Planning Manager  
Fred Brittingham, Principal Planner  
Terry Fawley, CIP Program Manager  
Tom Narva, Sr. CIP Project Manager  
Michael Pacelli, Assistant Public Works Director  
Laura Moats, Community Development Assistant

#### **Arriving shortly after roll call:**

Council Member Barnes  
Brian Frakes  
Randy Green  
Nancy Diab

#### **Others Present:**

Reggie Purugganan, EPG  
David Wilson, EPG  
Kevin Roberts, Dibble Engineering  
Richard Dyer, Independent Newspapers

## 2. Introductions

David Wilson and Reggie Purugganan of EPG were introduced. They were present to give a follow-up overview of the two alternative design themes being acted upon by the Committee.

## 3. Public Comment: Members of the public may address the Committee on items not on the printed agenda. There were no public comments.

## 4. Items for Discussion and Possible Action

### A. Consideration and possible approval of the March 24, 2009 Minutes:

Motion: Toni Valenzuela 2<sup>nd</sup>: Steve Ingram

To approve the March 24, 2009 Meeting Minutes, as presented.

Vote: All ayes. Motion carried unanimously.

### B. Chairman's Review of the March 24, 2009 action items: overview of meeting guidelines; introduce plus/delta tool:

Chairman Buffington stated the goal of each meeting is to cover all agenda items and related materials. At the end of the meeting, a brief plus/delta process will be conducted.

### C. Discussion and possible action on Ellsworth Road Design Project – Alternative 1 or Alternative 2

Economic Development Director Cott stated Mr. Wilson from EPG was present to provide a brief review and answer questions on the two proposed Town Center design themes, specifically for the section of Ellsworth Road from Ocotillo Road, north to Rittenhouse Road. Following the review and discussion, the Committee will take action.

David Wilson displayed illustrations for each of the proposed design themes: Rural and Arroyo. These themes outline the aesthetic treatments and engineering requirements of the updated roadway. Mr. Wilson stated based on numerous engineering efforts, EPG got involved in the development of the streetscape project. The two versions are different from each other, yet still fit within right-of-way and other parameters. He explained the main differences between the rural and arroyo themes:

RURAL

Agricultural  
Old town feel  
Linear  
Colorful ground treatments  
Column and rail

ARROYO

Riparian style  
Natural wash elements  
Curvilinear  
Wider, meandering sidewalks  
Desert oriented  
Decorative or textured pavements  
Pedestrian links

Mr. Wilson stated in both cases, the medians would be limited to small landscaped areas with flowering ground covers.

Mr. Wilson stated the objective at this stage is to have buyoff on one of the two alternatives in order to proceed with construction documents. The chosen plan will advance into detailed drawings to proceed into engineering plans. It is intended the theme chosen for the first stage of Ellsworth Road will carry through to other portions of Ellsworth Road.

**DISCUSSION on two concepts:**

Council Member Barnes asked if there will be parking in front of Rudy's Restaurant. Kevin Roberts of Dibble Engineering responded that Dibble is in charge of function, while EPG is in charge of design. He stated Town Council has directed Dibble to incorporate on-street parking in front of Rudy's, with room for 6-10 parking spaces. This was a result of modifications Dibble was directed to make including parking spaces and median areas. Specifically, Council direction was to provide more access in front of businesses.

Council Member Barnes stated he would like to see the use of more Orange and Pecan trees, as they seem to be disappearing in number since he moved to Queen Creek. In response, Mr. Wilson stated site materials would be discussed at the next stage of the process. He provided examples of plantings that would fit into each of the two proposed themes, stating any tree selection would also go through Town staff for approval. He cautioned even though citrus trees would provide more of an "old town" feel, there is more maintenance involved with citrus.

Ms. Cott reminded the Committee of the need to be consistent throughout Town Center. Mr. Frakes asked if the idea is for Ellsworth to have a different feel than Ocotillo. Chairman Buffington stated a theme has already been selected for Ocotillo Road. Mr. Roberts of Dibble clarified the existing contract is for the segment of roadway between Ocotillo and Rittenhouse only. However, the Town desires to distinguish the entire Town Center area. There is an element of precedent-setting going into this project as far as landscape themes and colors. There is a distinction between Ellsworth Road demands (i.e. traffic) and what Ocotillo will have in the future. Ocotillo will continue to be a main east-west thoroughfare through town.

Planning Manager Balmer questioned if what is on Ocotillo now would remain in place. Mr. Roberts responded before the Town Center Committee was formed concern had been expressed regarding sidewalk widths, planting materials and alignment, and how this would fit into the Town Center area, but still be consistent. No direction has been issued to save existing landscaping if it is inconsistent with the directive or theme.

Jason Gad stated the sidewalks shown in each alternative provide a clear distinction between the two themes, and asked if the same would be true with vegetation. He asked if there would be more covered/shaded areas with one theme versus the other. Mr. Wilson provided examples of the plant materials that would typically be used in each themed area. In the Arroyo theme, there would be slightly less trees as compared to the rural/linear arrangement. The desert palette would include trees with a lower branching structure such as Palo Verdes or Willows. The ground cover in the rural theme would include lantanas. The Arroyo theme would include desert spoons and desert accent plants for a dramatic look, whereas there are more shrubs with the Rural theme. Ground cover treatments in either theme could be decomposed granite.

Discussion took place on truncated domes being placed at every access point going into the roadway, which is federally required. Additional discussion also followed on the landscaping materials for each themed area. Mr. Wilson provided a list with pictures of different types of trees and plant material that was developed for the Design Concept Report. He noted most desert trees (shrubs) are messy in nature. These types of plantings include Palo Verde, Desert Ash, Willow, Sophora, and the Texas Mountain Laurel. Maintenance on these trees would include pruning and

irrigation, which would be handled by Town staff. Ms. Valenzuela noted her dislike for the Palo Verde trees in front of her restaurant.

Chairman Buffington asked what the easement width between the sidewalks and buildings is on the two different plans, and if there is there a huge variance between the two. Mr. Wilson stated the right-of-way is consistent on both plans. The pin-points for curvilinear (meandering) sidewalks can be targeted for which areas meander close to the right-of-way or close to the building. In response to questions from Chairman Buffington, Mr. Wilson stated the space where a double band of trees would be planted is the same width in both the Arroyo and Rural themes. The scale for planting double rows of trees is 25-40 feet. An area of 12-14 feet is provided for groundcover in medians. The sidewalk width in both plans is 5-6 feet, depending on funding.

Mr. Roberts stated at the Design Concept stage, one of the options was to have a pedestrian active area which was concrete from the back of curb to the face of buildings, with plantings interjected so that a majority would be concrete, planters and benches. This option was supported by only part of the Council. Mr. Wilson pointed out meandering sidewalks may be more difficult to tie into areas where new businesses are developed, whereas a more linear walkway is not as difficult for future business development.

Ms. Valenzuela questioned plans for rainwater drainage. Town CIP Project Manager, Tom Narva, stated the drainage design will be a separate plan and may be done earlier than the rest of the project, at Council's discretion. Pothole repair will take place first in the problem portion of the intersection.

Marvin Smith, Jr. asked if a bike lane will be installed on Ellsworth. Mr. Wilson responded the bike lane will be flush with the roadway pavement; it will not be a separate trail.

Mr. Frakes asked about the timing of improvements and whether or not they can occur independently. Mr. Roberts responded that with the exception of the storm drain, roadway improvements are stopping far enough north of intersection (north of the north driveway of Circle K) that they will not be impacted by this design.

In response to a question by Brian Frakes about a cost estimate, Mr. Roberts stated the design team produced 30% plans with a cost estimate for 30%. Dibble's work was then put on hold so that the Town Center Committee and TAC could make recommendations on the design concept report.

Mr. Narva stated the approximate cost estimate was \$3.7 million, which included several assumptions. Mr. Roberts added the next submittal would be at the 60% level of design and would also include a 60% cost estimate, and will incorporate changes directed by Council. The landscape portion is approximately \$850,000 for the Rural design concept and \$800,000 for the Arroyo design concept.

Discussion took place on choices of landscape materials and whether or not modifications could be made after the Town Center Committee made a formal recommendation. Mr. Wilson replied the selection of plant materials will be decided in a future stage, followed by the creation of a plant palette for approval.

Ms. Valenzuela asked if accommodations will be made for people who ride horses in Town. Mr. Roberts state the Parks, Trails and Open Space (PTOS) plan illustrates the trail along Ellsworth Road. During the development of the DCR, Council approved elimination of the equestrian trail along the Ellsworth corridor and identified a different corridor for an equestrian trail, which is not in the Ellsworth right-of-way.

Chairman Buffington cautioned the Committee not to put too much emphasis on specific plant materials at this stage, since those can be modified later. She suggested the Committee focus on the design of the roadway and sidewalks.

**VOTE:**

Motion: Jason Gad 2<sup>nd</sup>: Toni Valenzuela  
To recommend approval of Design Concept Alternative #2 – Arroyo Theme.  
Motion failed due to lack of a majority vote. (Vote was tied 6-6)

**DISCUSSION:**

Nancy Diab stated the reason for her vote was that she feels linear sidewalks would be more accessible for families and new businesses coming in.

Vice-Chairman Webb asked what the current policy is, stating neighboring towns such as Gilbert, have a linear feel which is not unique. He feels a straight sidewalk is old and stale, while walking along a meandering sidewalk would be more enjoyable. Meandering sidewalks with an Arroyo theme would feel different and can be incorporated in different areas of the town.

Chairman Buffington noted she feels businesses will accommodate any space, whether it's linear or meandering. She added as far as access points, if sidewalks are curvilinear or straight, the space is the same. Pinch points can always be worked with and variances can be obtained. Pinch points can have softer curves, rather than being too straight. Straight is not what the Town has been doing thus far.

Vice-Chairman Webb requested a re-vote.

**VOTING on the original motion:**

To recommend approval of Design Concept Alternative #2 – Arroyo Theme Motion carried 8-4.

**D. Discussion and possible action on Town Center Streetscape Design (site furnishing, street lighting, signal equipment, etc.)**

Ms. Cott illustrated photos of various types of street lights, parking lights, pedestrian lighting and traffic signal poles throughout the Town Center area. The different types of lighting included: shoe box fixtures, bell shaped fixtures with one and two bell shapes, and different types of poles and bases, both painted and powder coated in the following areas: Town Hall/Development Services Building parking lot; outside and inside rings of library parking lot; Queen Creek Marketplace; the covered walkway at Queen Creek Marketplace, pedestrian seating areas, Cornerstone, Queen Creek Fiesta, Shoppes at Indigo Trails, Queen Creek Village Center, and the Utaz development. Brian Frakes pointed out the inconsistency between the lighting approved in Queen Creek Fiesta and what was approved for Queen Creek Marketplace and Cornerstone.

Mr. Wilson pointed out that the beveled poles shown behind the bell fixtures are SRP standard street poles. He noted at one point EPG was directed to incorporate these poles in the design concept due to the cost advantage. SRP will maintain these poles if the Town uses them. Mr. Narva added the Town pays a set fee for electric and maintenance to use these SRP poles. Queen Creek is the last community in the area to do this.

Further discussion took place on the different types of streetlight poles, traffic signal poles and pedestrian light poles and the photo metrics for the different types of light poles. Mr. Wilson stated whatever the Town's ordinance is (i.e. Dark Sky Ordinance), the photo metrics can be matched for either type of streetlight fixture.

Mr. Roberts pointed out not only are there different styles, but different colors of poles, and even the use of concrete poles and bases.

Mr. Gad clarified the Committee would be recommending a style, while Town staff would manage development. He pointed out there is inconsistency in Town Center lighting due to lack of a plan.

Mr. Balmer responded the Town would like to move towards a theme, or standardized light fixture. He stated the trend has been more rural ranch style in parking lots around buildings, and these can be incorporated into the plan. The Town has tried to set a direction in Queen Creek Marketplace and Cornerstone, while in the smaller developments, Town staff has not scrutinized details.

Ms. Cott clarified that once the Committee recommends a theme/plan, a palette will be developed.

Mr. Balmer added this is a two-part process: what the Town is putting in its own rights-of-way and what is being incorporated into new developments.

Mr. Roberts stated it is important to note Council approved galvanized unpainted traffic signal poles on Ellsworth Loop Road near Victoria. Brief discussion followed on street light poles, versus traffic signal poles.

Council Member Barnes stated if it cost a little more to have painted traffic signals to make the downtown look nicer, it's worth it to bring people into Town. Queen Creek



is trying to show it is unique. Mr. Narva stated the Committee can decide on colored traffic signals at a later date (when the economy improves), since they can be painted any time.

Ms. Cott added this issue can be put into a Committee recommendation for one of the plans. Discussion took place on spacing of streetlights and pedestrian lighting. There is a distinction between the two because street lighting must meet national safety standards, whereas the placement of pedestrian lighting can be a TCC decision. Street lighting occurs every 220 feet.

In response to a question asked by Ms. Valenzuela, Mr. Wilson stated pedestrian lighting on both sides of Ellsworth Road is planned, since sidewalks are on both sides of the street.

Mr. Wilson illustrated additional site furnishings for the Town Center area, stating the chosen items must be durable in that they should be able to withstand the desert lifestyle. He referred to what is currently in front of M&I Bank, and the metal bench style that occurs along Ellsworth Road. He mentioned trash receptacles usually match benches, and tree grates may be needed in some areas. Discussion took place on colors for street light poles and traffic signal poles, and painting versus powder coating. Mr. Wilson noted that powder coating lasts longer than paint, however, if dark, rich colors are used, they will oxidize more quickly. The Committee discussed costs of painting and powder coating.

Ms. Cott clarified what items need action and what the related options are, as follows:

**Street lighting** – stay consistent with what’s out in front of M&I Bank.

**SRP poles** – leave as is, or choose to replace with something else at Town’s expense;

**Pedestrian lighting** - bell or shoebox, or rounded bezel\shoebox; and

**Traffic signal** – choose galvanized metal, or something else.

After further discussion on maintenance costs associated with painting poles versus powder coating, Chairman Buffington requested Town staff obtain more detailed information from the Town’s Public Works/Transportation Department and report back to the Committee next month.

**STREET LIGHT POLES**

**Motion:** Brian Frakes 2<sup>nd</sup>: Toni Valenzuela  
**To maintain the SRP street light poles.**  
**Vote:** All ayes. Motion carried unanimously.

**PEDESTRIAN LIGHTING:**

**Motion:** Craig Barnes 2<sup>nd</sup>: Ryan Desmond  
**To retain the bell-shaped pedestrian lighting.**  
**Vote:** All ayes. Motion carried unanimously.

**STREET SIGNALS (including pedestrian lighting)**

General discussion took place on color schemes for pedestrian parking lights, including grays, lighter browns, or deeper chocolates.

**The Committee concurred that the lighting color be complementary to the basic color scheme of buildings in the development, to be consistent with the specific, individual project.**

**E. Plus/Delta review of the meeting**

Chairman Buffington asked for an evaluation of the meeting: what worked well, and was there anything that could be improved.

The Committee felt that the meeting ran very smoothly; everything that was on the agenda was accomplished; and the meeting stayed on track.

Jason Gad requested clear options be provided in advance of the meeting if there are any action items, as opposed to just discussion items.

Additional discussion took place on truncated domes, the various color and material options available and the effectiveness of them. Examples of two different types of truncated domes were shown (cast iron and terra cotta). Mr. Narva stated direction on truncated domes is not needed at this time. Chairman Buffington requested additional information, specifically what the ADA requirements are, additional color options and related costs.

**5. Announcements**

The next meeting is Tuesday, May 26 (immediately following Memorial Day weekend). There was no negative feedback regarding this meeting date.

**6. Adjournment**

Motion to adjourn: Toni Valenzuela 2<sup>nd</sup>: Chris Webb

The meeting adjourned at 9:10 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

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Laura Moats, Community Development Assistant

Passed and approved this 26th day of May, 2009.

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Cynthia Buffington, Chairperson