



## **Transportation Advisory Committee Minutes**

Thursday, October 1, 2009

6:30 - 8:47 p.m.

San Tan Room – Development Services Building

### **Committee Members:**

Chris Clark	Present
David Brandhorst	Present
Debbie Reyes	Present
Jeff Brown	Present
Kevin Fosburgh	Present
Kyle Robinson	Present
Milos Pavicevich	Absent
Richard Turman	Absent
Robin Benning	Present
Ryan Nichols	Present
Thomas McCarthy	Absent

### **Town Staff Members:**

Laura Catanese, Sr. Admin Asst	Present
Mike Pacelli, Asst. Public Works Director	Present
Norma Hernandez, Management Assistant	Absent
Shane Dille, Deputy Town Manager/ PW Director	Present
Troy White, CIP/Environmental Division Manager	Present
Wayne Balmer, Engineering Manager	Present

### **Public:**

Dick Schaner, Resident  
Jim Schaner, Resident

### **Call to Order:**

Committee Chairman, Robin Benning, called the meeting to order at 6:33PM.

### **Introductions:**

Introductions made by Laura Catanese and Troy White

### **Public Comment:**

No public comments were made.

### **Item A: Approval of September 3, 2009 minutes **All****

Motion to approve the September 3, 2009 minutes, (Clark/Fosburgh/Unanimous approval).

## **Items for Discussion**

### **Item B: Consideration and possible action on GP09-57& RZ09-59**

Wayne Balmer, Planning Manager, informed members that agenda items #4-B&C were two separate cases but he would discuss each proposed General Plan Amendment in one presentation as each had the same timeline schedule. Applicants filed in June 2009; there was an open house on August 26, September 24, and the last one will be on October 21. These requests will go to the Planning Commission Hearing on November 10; to Town Council on November 18; and the Town Council Public Hearing will take place on December 2, 2009.

GPA09-57 & RZ09-59 involves 131 acres of land on the NEC of Hawes & Ocotillo roads (with an access point on the newly constructed Victoria Lane which runs behind Queen Creek Marketplace). The land is currently zoned as a medium density residential area (2-3 du/ac). The applicant (Taylor Morrison) has requested to be changed to medium-high density residential zoning (3-5 du/ac) for an active adult community (+55) to be developed and be called Victoria Estates. There are 457 residential lots within Victoria Estates which are planned to be conventional, single family homes.

Nichols asked if surrounding property owners would have access to Victoria Lane or would access be limited to property owners in Victoria Estates. Mike Pacelli reported that a trip generation study was previously completed and it revealed that the high number of residential lots in this area would definitely mean more traffic but an adult community typically results in fewer trips per day from home. Until now, there hasn't been a need to update the transportation study. A new traffic study that takes the surrounding area into account is highly recommended. Hawes & Ocotillo roads should be able to withstand the additional traffic; however, Victoria Lane is presently a two-lane roadway (not open to the public as yet). Uncertainty and concern exist for possible traffic congestion in the future if plans proceed for development of the proposed subdivision. It is unknown as to how much traffic a two-lane roadway can adequately accommodate. Shane proposed two access points for residents onto Hawes Road (not on Victoria Lane). Chris Clark thought the residents (55+) of the future subdivision would want an access point on Victoria Lane for easier traveling to/from Queen Creek Marketplace.

Wayne Balmer pointed out there were a few points of consideration when deciding if general plan and zoning should be changed. First, should the piece of land be included within the Town Center? Secondly, what should this piece of land be used for? Wayne cautioned the committee that this could become a problem in the future depending on how the general plan for the Town evolves. There is no subdivision plan as yet from Taylor Morrison. Typically, the developer first files an application to build with the Town which includes a plat; geo-tech, environmental, and traffic studies follow shortly afterward. The Town does not propose a rezoning case, the applicant does.

Robinson asked if a traffic analysis between the current general plan amendment and the proposed general plan amendment could be performed. Mike Pacelli said that the traffic analysis at present was very conservative (currently 390 residential homes vs.

650 residential homes proposed in the adult community). Since it is an adult community it is conceivable for there to be less traffic even though there are more homes.

Motion for the committee to recommend approval of GP09-57/RZ09-59 providing that a comprehensive traffic analysis be made at the time of plat submittal. (Nichols/Fosburgh/Unanimous in favor).

**Item C: Consideration and possible action on GP09-58 & RZ09-60 ALL**

Barney Farms is the applicant of GP09-58/RZ09-60; it concerns 257 acres of land on the northwest corner of Meridian and Queen Creek Roads. The land is currently zoned as Industrial (Employment Type B), GP09-58 is requesting that the land be rezoned as follows:

- 20 acres of Industrial (Employment Type B)
- 20 acres of Community Commercial
- 79 acres of Medium-High Density Residential (up to 8 du/ac)
- 138 acres of Medium-High Density Residential (up to 5 du/ac)

There are many significant challenges with regard to the current roadways (or lack there of) that need a resolution for the success of proposed GP09-58/RZ09-60. The applicant would like for the TAC to advise Council on the best way to resolve these roadway challenges/issues.

Council approved Resolution 780-09 on April 15, 2009:

- The Transportation Element of the Town of Queen Creek General Plan is hereby amended to incorporate the need for the realignment of Signal Butte and Meridian roads between Queen Creek and Ocotillo roads.
- Section 2: The future land use plan map for the Town shall be amended to graphically reflect the change shown on Exhibit A.
- Section 3: Future land use plans and development proposals submitted for review and consideration by the Town in the area affected by the change will be asked to reflect the road realignments in their plans.

Wayne presented the committee with two roadway realignment choices developed by staff. The following transportation issues must be considered in depth with forethought to a planned implementation before a definite course of action is decided:

- Is the plan consistent with Resolution 780-09?
- What changes can be made to improve the roadway system in the area?
- Should the Town consider a trade/relocation of the park to facilitate improvement of the system?
- Should the Town work with the property owner in the area to develop an alternative street system?

**Discussion:**

Benning: A lot of things about this proposed GP09-58/RZ09-60 bother me; it's non-compliant with Council approved Resolution 780-09. This really is not appropriate for

the TAC to spend a lot of time on because there is not a lot that can be done about the situation. It would probably be best to relocate the park.

Robinson: Can the applicant can come up with a proposed solution to the roadway realignment.

Clark: An applicant can not make such a proposal (concerning roadway realignment) but the applicant has expressed their willingness to work with the Town to find the right solution. P&R may not be willing to entertain the thought of relocating the future park now that their design plans are almost complete (for current location). I recommend that TAC adopt what Council has already approved of in Resolution 780-09; that TAC is willing to work to find a solution on the realignment of Signal Butte & Meridian roads between Queen Creek & Ocotillo roads.

Brandhorst: TAC doesn't have anything definitive that shows what the traffic will be.

Nichols: Should the burden (of finding workable roadway realignment) be on the property owner. Can TAC recommend (transportation based) any reason that one of the road transfers is better than the other? Can the GP09-58/RZ09-60 be changed to a minor amendment?

Schaner: Is there realistically enough time for the committee to work out a viable solution by deadline (Dec. 2, 2009).

Pacelli: Can the proposed amendment be continued for a year?

Balmer: No, the applicant would have to withdraw his proposal.

CM Brown: There are too many unknowns involved to come to a definitive decision – is the applicant willing to withdraw the proposal?

Balmer: Possibly.

Motion for the committee to not recommend GP09-58/RZ09-60 because it doesn't take into account Resolution 780-90. (Robinson/Nichols/motion passed not to recommend).

**Item D: Capital Improvement Project (CIP) updates **Troy****

A handout of the Capital Improvement Project Map 09-10 was provided, a brief update of some of the current and active projects is as follows:

A0102 Ocotillo Road @ 205<sup>th</sup> Street to Loop - Construction will begin (to go to the Loop Road) within the next couple of weeks.

10030 Cloud Road @ Rittenhouse Road – Installation of the northbound turn lane off of Rittenhouse Road onto westbound Cloud Road has begun. This project is expected to be completed within three weeks. Staff is working closely with Mark Schnepf (Schnepf Farms) so that construction does not coincide with their busy event season; some project items may be left to be finished once events are over.

D0004 Cloud and Sossaman Drainage –Design of Cloud Road retention basin and storm drain (underground) pipe is still scheduled to begin in October 2009.

RW001 Reclaimed Waterline (Ocotillo Road) – Staff tried but failed to obtain federal stimulus money for this project. Project will be funded by a grant (no match). The design alignment study did not include adding a flume.

**Item E: Discussion of Village Loop Road South**

**All**

Robin advised the members that residents from The Villages @ Queen Creek had concerns with the (excessive) speed of “cut through” traffic on the main collector roads within the sub-division and with poor pedestrian visibility at the roundabouts. He drove through the areas in question and understands the safety concerns expressed. Shane gave a brief synopsis of the concerns; including one resident that had a near miss accident at a roundabout. Residents suggested that in order to reduce traffic speed through the subdivision, the Town install stop signs at the roundabouts (considered to be a low cost, economical solution to the excessive speed and poor visibility issues).

CM Brown agreed that there was limited visibility at the roundabout at 213<sup>th</sup> Street (with reference to the crosswalks near the school). SW Gas installed a 3’ fence that prevents children from running in the street at the tot lot.

Pacelli provided an aerial map of the area he explained that the roundabouts in question were “traffic circles,” they were not designed with the correct degree of “flair”, nor are they large enough to be considered true roundabouts. Mike pointed to the three (3) neighborhood access points (and 4 traffic circles) of concern:

- Sierra Park Blvd.
- Village Loop Road North
- Village Loop Road South

Traffic counts have been performed numerous times on the roads in question. Although having a school in the area always increases road traffic, the traffic count studies do not indicate that the cut through traffic is in excess (based on the number of homes, the order of magnitude remains consistent). Rather, this was more an issue of the operation of the traffic circles.

CM Brown stated his concern for pedestrians crossing the street at 213<sup>th</sup> Street and that pedestrians must enter the traffic circle to cross the street, he asked if a stop sign should be placed at the intersection. Mike demonstrated on the aerial map that in order for pedestrians to be visible, the proper design of traffic circles calls for pedestrians to walk around the corner ramps before crossing the street, thereby avoiding wandering into the traffic circle (and possible danger). The traffic circles require a re-design and are a potential (future) CIP project for the Town to consider. Council has the authority to order that stop signs be placed at the intersection; Mike does not recommend that they do so.

### **General Discussion:**

Clark: What would be most cost efficient; a) changing the design from round to oblong b) cutting back the sides of the traffic circle, or c) removal of the traffic circles and installing stop signs on three sides.

Robinson: Is installing speed humps a possible solution.

Brandhorst: This may be a good solution to the cut through traffic (speed) issue but not at the circles.

Shane: A main issue here was the obvious disrespect the public at large had for dealing with traffic circles (this is more of a driver etiquette problem than anything else).

Benning: He personally followed a few drivers on these roads and found that they were not cut through traffic (they were actual residents) but that the average speed observed was about 45 m.p.h. (when the posted speed limit is 30 m.p.h.). A way to slow traffic down needed to be found, can staff provide TAC with costs of speed humps and stop signs?

Shane: "Speed humps are not always the answer" but that staff could get the pricing for the committee to review.

Clark: I agree with Shane that speed humps are not always the answer but that QC Ranchettes has one that seems to work well.

Fosburgh: Use caution when using "divets" to slow traffic as Cambria did and resulted in a few speeders crashing into resident homes.

Nichols: Stop signs are not a plausible solution because of a regulatory issue and it doesn't make sense to install them when the real issue was a poorly designed road.

CM Brown: Can we call upon MCSO to step-up speed enforcement on the roads concerned. MCSO has told Robin that there is no place to park a squad car on the various Village Loop Roads. Shane stated that the Town is currently working with MCSO on how they can step-up their speed enforcement efforts.

The committee elected to carry over the discussion regarding Village Loop Road South & traffic circles to the next TAC meeting.

### **Item F: Discussion of upcoming agenda items/schedule next meeting**

- Village Loop Road South
- Cost to install speed humps/cushions
- Cost to correct the design flaw in the traffic circles
- Cost for removal of the traffic circles and installation of stop signs
- Cost to change the point of access for pedestrians so that it aligns with pavers

### **Announcements:**

Robin Benning informed the committee that Ocotillo Road residents are extremely happy that the medians on Ocotillo Road have been removed. He thanked the committee (and Council) for the hard work and team effort put into this issue and for deciding on the correct course of action (removal of the medians).

Mike Pacelli informed the committee that there is to be an open house given by MCDOT on October 6 from 5-7 p.m. at TOQC, Founders Room concerning the Signal Butte Corridor Study. An event flyer was given to committee members. MCDOT is close to finalizing their reports and will have (map) displays at the open house. Mike encouraged the committee members to attend the open house if possible so they can give their input/recommendations.


Robin announced that the next Transportation Advisory Committee Meeting is tentatively on Thursday, November 5, 2009 at 6:30 p.m. in the San Tan Conference Room (DSB building).

**Adjourn:**

Meeting adjourned at 8:47PM.

PREPARED BY: Laura Catanese, October 5, 2009

PASSED AND APPROVED ON: November 5, 2009



Robin Benning, TAC Committee Chair