



MINUTES

Town Center Committee
22358 S. Ellsworth Rd., Queen Creek, AZ
Development Services Building
San Tan Conference Room
November 10, 2010
8:00 am

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

(One or more members of the Committee may participate by telephone)

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Jason Gad at 8:15 a.m. The following people were in attendance:

Committee Members: Brandon Walsh, Monica O'Toole, Angela Troge, Shane Randall, Steve Ingram, Chairman Jason Gad, Hannah Dixon, Marquis Scott (telephonically-arrived at 8:30am)

Town Staff: Doreen Cott, Economic Development Director; Kim Moyers Economic Development Specialist; Joy Maglione, Town Clerk Assistant; Wayne Balmer, Community Development Division Manager; Chris Dovel, Principal Engineer; Bill Birdwell, Traffic Specialist

Absent Members: Shawn Valdez, Nancy Diab, Vice Chair Chris Webb, Barbara Khalsa, Council Member Julia Wheatley, Vice Mayor Craig Barnes

2. **Introductions:** Bill Birdwell, Town Traffic Specialist and Chris Dovel, Town Principal Engineer introduced themselves to 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 October 13, 2010 minutes

Motion: Monica O'Toole 2nd: Steve Ingram

To approve the October 13, 2010 minutes as presented.

Motion carried.

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B. Discussion and possible approval of the FY10-11 Work Plan

Kim Moyers outlined the work plan items that were discussed at the last Town Center Committee meeting. She distributed a list of prioritized items that will serve as a guide for future meetings. The items are as follows:

1. **Provide directional signage to help identify the Town Center; provide a unified wayfinding system throughout the Town Center.** (Nov/Dec 2010)
2. **Create an Identity for the Town Center. Engage the Town Center businesses to inform and include them in future plans for the Town Center.** (Dec10/Jan11) Ms. Moyers noted that Communications & Marketing Director, Marnie Schubert will attend the next meeting to facilitate the branding initiative for the Town Center.
3. **Investigate a competitive analysis for the Town Center with emphasis on benchmarking and comparing the Queen Creek Town Center with surrounding city's Town Center development zones for the purpose of recommending types of business Queen Creek should attract and recommend changes to governmental policies to ensure Queen Creek's Town Center area is among the most competitive in the east valley** (Dec10/Jan11)
4. **Research options and make recommendations o how the .25% sales tax surcharge can be best utilized.** (Feb/Mar)
5. **Develop, adopt and implement Town Center architectural design standards and guidelines that include varied materials, adopted themes and unique building designs.** (Feb/Apr)
6. **Develop Town Center design guidelines including gateway monument/signage theme and design and parking requirement and design standards.** (May/June ongoing)
7. **Update, adopt and implement Town Center zoning districts.** (April/May)

Wayne Balmer presented the Committee with information on the General Plan Amendment that will go to Town Council on December 1, 2010. Major General Plan Amendment (GP10-039) will update the Town's General Plan to include the updated Town Center Plan. The updated Town Center Plan was completed by the Town Center Committee in April 2010.

Mr. Balmer discussed proposed changes to the Zoning Ordinance. Draft proposals will be presented to the Planning & Zoning Commission in December as an informational item

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and to the Town Council in January 2011. The Town Center Committee will have the opportunity to make comments and suggestions as well.

Mr. Balmer provided handouts and explained the different zoning classifications, definitions of the different districts and Table 4.6.2- Principle Uses Allowed in Non-Residential Districts and Table 4.7.1- Density and Intensity Regulations. Mr. Balmer explained maximum density, lot coverage and floor area ratio as it relates to the Town Center district. He outlined the following changes in the draft ordinance that is being compiled by staff:

- **B-1: Neighborhood Commercial/Office District** will be renamed OS: Office Service District. This district will allow offices or retail uses and will also allow for existing single family homes to be converted to offices and low intensity uses. Large or small projects will be allowed in this district.
- **TC: Town Center District:** The wording in the Town Center definition will be changed from “pedestrian circulation is *encouraged*” to “pedestrian circulation is *required*”.
- **MU: Mixed Use:** A new definition of the Mixed Use district will be added to the ordinance. This will allow mixed use areas to be developed consistent with Town Center Committee proposals. The MU district has more latitude than typical zoning districts and allows for a range of intensities and uses. It will require a Planned Area Development (PAD) Overlay for processing.
- **Table 4.6-2: Allowed Uses:** Updates were made to this table to include the Mixed Use zoning district and O/S District. Mr. Balmer pointed out some of the allowed uses in the different districts and noted that a large number of permitted uses will be included in the Mixed Use district. General professional offices will be allowed in all districts.
- **Table 4.7-1: Density and Intensity Regulations:** Mr. Balmer explained changes to the density regulations and noted that the highest intensity uses will be proposed in Town Center.

Chairman Gad asked how the Town Center zone and the Mixed Used zone in the ordinance relate to the Zoning Land Use Map. Mr. Balmer responded that the Land Use Map is the policy guide from Council identifying what can be done in commercial areas. The Zoning Ordinance gives the specifics on how to implement the Land Use Map policy and gives details on setbacks, density, and uses. The Town Center zone can also be used in conjunction with commercial, mixed use or multi-family zones. Mr. Balmer explained that we already have Town Center zoning and the Mixed Use zone was recently added to help implement the Town Center Plan.

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Steve Ingram asked what the floor area ratio would be for a Town Center Mixed Use project. Mr. Balmer responded that it would be 18 dwellings to an acre for residential. The Town Center zone could have 3 square feet of building for every 1 square foot of land. Mixed Use would have a floor area ration of 1.0.

Mr. Balmer explained the PAD process which allows variances to the normal code and allows for more flexible planning in conformance with the approval process. It makes it easier for applicants to convert existing properties to small businesses within the Town Center area.

There was discussion on how to determine which zone applicants should select when submitting a project to convert an existing building. (e.g. Town Center, Mixed Use or Office- Service). Ms. Moyers asked how the end user would be assisted through the process. Mr. Balmer explained the pre- application conference will offer applicants the needed information specific to their project; staff will recommend what zoning is best for their project and inform them if a PAD approval is needed. Mr. Balmer noted that it would be a case by case decision for each individual business to determine what best fits their needs. The zoning district selection depends on what is being proposed.

There was further discussion on density and how that might determine which zoning district to choose for particular projects.

C. Presentation and discussion on Library Park & Ride

Chris Dovel, Principal Engineer for the Town, gave a power point presentation on the Library Park & Ride program. The program is funded by grant money through the Local Transportation Assistance Fund (LTAF II). Funds are available to towns and cities based on population and the focus is on transit use only, such as rideshares, carpools and busing. To be eligible cities must apply for a grant and provide a 25% funding match. Mr. Dovel reported that Queen Creek submitted a grant to build a park and ride lot in Town Center in 2008 and applied for additional grant money in 2009. The total amount of funding available for this project is \$128,000. J2 Environmental Engineering has been contracted to develop concepts to implement the project. Estimated construction start date is the first quarter of 2011.

Mr. Dovel explained that park and ride is intended to be a lot for people to park their cars who are carpooling or ridesharing. He stressed that there is no bus service scheduled at this time. The lot will be located in the southeast lot of the library overflow parking in the area behind Rudy's Restaurant. There are 6-8 parking spots planned at this time. There will also be a small landscaped sitting area for people waiting for rides. Grant funds can be used for landscaping purposes as well.

Mr. Dovel presented the following suggestions from the Transportation Advisory Committee regarding the park and ride program:

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- Relocate lot to the north end for safety reasons to be closer to other vehicles at the end of the day
- Move the bench to provide transition to the overflow lot into the library site
- Keep the existing asphalt in the recycling bin area for a smoother transition, rather than the proposed grey concrete.

Ms. Moyers asked if there was any discussion about encouraging residents/visitors to shop while waiting for rides. Angela Troge suggested a marquee sign at the carpool lot for local businesses to advertise. Mr. Dovel responded that they hope the program will attract new traffic to the Town Center area and he will forward the suggestions.

Ms. Cott asked how the park and ride will be marketed to the community. Mr. Dovel suggested they work with the traffic group to provide clear signage and directions.

There was discussion on the option to use the lot as overflow parking on weekends or special events and if any special decals or designation for carpooling will be required in the lot. Mr. Dovel pointed out that it is a public parking lot and can be used by anyone. No decals are necessary. It is designed to encourage carpooling and there will be signs for the carpool area. It can be used as an overflow lot.

Shane Randall commented that consideration should be given to the location regarding access for future bus routes. He suggested keeping it south, closer toward Ocotillo Road for convenience to mass transit in the future. Marquis Scott asked if there was room for expansion if there was an express bus route in the future. Mr. Dovel responded that right now the purpose is to encourage carpooling and to provide safe parking. Expansion and transit routes will be considered in the future.

Steve Ingram asked if the \$128,000 is the total amount of funding from the Town and the grant. Mr. Dovel said yes, the amount includes the state and town share.

Mr. Ingram suggested removing the recycle bins to free up space now that the Town provides residents with recycling.

Ms. O'Toole commented that the lot is a good idea to direct carpooling to a central location in Town. She suggested a sidewalk or path for safety reasons.

Chairman Gad commented on the landscaping and pocket park that is planned for the lot. He suggested they consider the Town Center vision when designing the landscape area. Ms. Cott recommended that the benches, landscape and design be consistent with the Town Center character element.

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D. Discussion on directional signage approved by Town Council

Ms. Cott gave a power point presentation on the directional signage program that was approved by Council. Vehicle orientated directional signs will direct residents to specific areas in Queen Creek and home builder signs will help residents and visitors find new housing developments.

Council recommended that vehicle oriented directional signage be considered at:

- **Town-Owned Properties:** (e.g., Library, Town Hall, Parks)
- **Special Activity Areas** (e.g. Town Center, QC Chamber of Commerce, Performing Arts Center)
- **Event Venues** (e.g. Queen Creek Olive Mill, Schnepf Farms)

Ms. Cott showed the members the design concepts that were chosen by Town Council for directional signage and the homebuilder signs.

Council directed staff to enter into a contract with National Sign Plazas (NSP) and they are working with the Town to locate the most strategic locations for sign placement. Development Services staff will work to update sections of the Town's Sign Code to simplify implementation of the program.

Ms. Cott explained the phased approach. Phase I includes the Homebuilder Sign Program and the purchase of 5 vehicular orientated directional signs to be place in strategic areas to be determined. The initial cost would be approximately \$16, 000.

Phase II would come later as the homebuilder program generates revenues to offset the sign program and at that time additional directional signs could be added. Ms Cott stated that the Town is able to utilize a few panels on the homebuilder signs for directional signage to key areas in the interim.

Marquis Scott asked how NSP was chosen as the contractor and if they would be open to subcontracting to local businesses. Ms. Cott replied that they were a vendor at the Arizona League of Cities and Towns Conference. She added that NSP is open to subcontracting to local business when possible.

Chairman Gad asked if signs would be removed when subdivisions are completed and would they be replaced by a subdivision name sign. Ms Cott responded that the builders pay for the panels on a yearly basis, so it would be up to the homebuilder.

Mr. Ingram asked if we are putting any money up front for homebuilder signs. Ms Cott replied that the homebuilder signage program is at no cost to the Town.

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E. Discussion and possible action on decorative street signs in Town Center

Bill Birdwell, Traffic Specialist for the Town, gave a power point presentation on decorative street signs. Mr. Birdwell outlined the options available for street signs including mounting options, face color, color of housing, size of housing, text and logos.

Mr. Birdwell explained that fluted poles are a requirement in the Town Center area; however there are concerns about what type of fluting will be available on the signal poles that are generally used by the Town. Currently the Town is using a flag type mount above the mast arm that is 8ft wide by 2 ft high; this is a little heavy and large. Mr. Birdwell stated that we may have to go with something smaller and not as heavy. There may be a need to modify the pole slightly so the pole will be smaller and the mast arm will be shorter. He cautioned that we may be restricted by weight issues. He explained that it depends on the type of pole that is chosen.

Mounting Options

Mr. Birdwell discussed different ways of hanging the sign on the mast arm. He indicated that in areas with slower speeds slightly smaller signs are acceptable. There are five “core” traffic signals in town center that this would apply to. The Victoria and Maya poles are coming to bid very soon. Examples of different mounting options were shown to the committee.

Face color design and size options – Any color on the housing is okay but Mr. Birdwell recommended matching the pole color.

Lighting – Fluorescent bulbs inside the internal illuminated street signs vs. LED bulbs were discussed. Mr. Birdwell stated that LED is expensive but requires less maintenance.

Visibility: Mr. Birdwell cautioned the committee to consider visibility when choosing signs in regards to trees. Hanging the signs over the street is easier for the drivers to see but will require a little more maintenance.

Colors: White letters will be used. There are options for background colors. Mr. Birdwell did not recommend blue as it is already being used in other areas. The committee was shown different colors combinations.

Letter Style – Federal guidelines recommend the use of one font style only. Mr. Birdwell asked them to consider font style for driver recognition. Examples of different designs, borders and logo placement were presented to the committee.

The Committee had further discussion regarding mounting options, styles, size of signs and LED lighting.

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Mr. Birdwell explained to the Committee the circumstances regarding the fluted poles. At this time the pole size has not been determined. The Town uses Arizona Department of Transportation standard pole designs. To use the fluting that that the committee recommended, a slightly smaller pole with less weight and wind load ability may be used, but a decision has not been made yet. The manufacturer is in the process of sending the Town examples of poles. Mr. Birdwell asked the Committee to allow staff some latitude and set wide parameters because the pole size has not been determined. Weight to pole ratio has to be considered.

Mr. Birdwell asked the Committee for recommendations on the following:

- **Type of sign**- Hanging or mounted flag style
- **Housing size** - Is a smaller box and smaller letters acceptable depending on wind load issues?
- **Sign Width** - Are alternate widths acceptable depending on which poles are selected?

Motion: Steve Ingram 2nd: Monica O'Toole

Recommendation for mast mounted hanging signs with a width between 4 feet and 7 feet.

Discussion: The Committee discussed LED lighting and mounting options that included rigid mounts with less sway.

Amended Motion: Jason Gad 2nd: Monica O'Toole

Recommendation for hanging mounted signs with a more rigid or solid mount and a width between 4 feet and 7 feet.

Motion carried.

Motion: Steve Ingram 2nd: Angela Troge

Recommendation for use of LED as opposed to fluorescent illumination.

Motion carried.

Chairman Gad stated that color and branding will be addressed in the future.

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Motion: Shane Randall 2nd: Brandon Walsh

To adjourn the meeting.

Motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 9:40 am.

Respectfully submitted,

Joyce Maglione
Town Clerk Assistant

Chairperson

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 November 10, 2010 Town Center Committee Meeting. I further certify that the meeting was duly called and that a quorum was present.

Dated this 16th day of November 2010.

Passed and approved on December 8, 2010.