



MINUTES

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

1. Call To Order and Roll Call

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Jason Gad at 8:05 am. The following people were in attendance:

Committee Members: Vice Mayor Barnes, Nancy Diab, Chairman Jason Gad, Steve Ingram, Barbara Khalsa, Monica O'Toole, Shane Randall, Angela Troge, Shawn Valdez, Brandon Walsh, Vice Chair Chris Webb, Council Member Julia Wheatley

Town Staff: Doreen Cott, Economic Development Director; Kim Moyers, Economic Development Specialist; Joy Maglione, Town Clerk Assistant; Bill Birdwell, Traffic Specialist; Tom Condit, Development Services Director; Wayne Balmer, Community Development Division Manager; Rebecca Gledhill, Management Assistant II

Absent Members: Hannah Dixon, Marquis Scott

2. Introductions/ Announcements

Chairman Jason Gad discussed quorum requirements and asked members to notify staff in advance if they are unable to attend a meeting.

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 November 10, 2010 minutes

Motion: Shane Randall

2nd: Barbara Khalsa

To approve the November 10, 2010 minutes as presented.

Motion carried.

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

Bill Birdwell, Traffic Specialist, provided a handout with sample street sign face concepts for the Town Center. The concepts were drawn by Fluoresco with a display of sizes, colors, and font choices. Mr. Birdwell outlined Fluoresco's recommendations and the options as follows:

Housing Sizes:

- Two sizes are shown that will be suspended under traffic signal mast arm: 7 foot and 4 foot
- Logos were not included on housing due to size
- Smaller sign housing (4ft wide) is only recommended for slower traffic areas in the Town Center.
- Larger standard size sign housing is recommended for high traffic areas such as Ellsworth Loop Rd

Color Choices:

- Blue- blue signs are currently used on private streets in the town and the county
- Green – standard street color sign that is currently used on public streets. Green is already approved by Town Council. Mr. Birdwell recommended green.
- Light Rust Brown- typically used for national forests and recreation areas, also used by the City of Chandler.

Font & Border Choices:

- Two Border Choices- a decorative border and a decorative border with the words "Town Center" on the top.
- Three font choices were given.
- Garamond ITC- allows for easier condensing and is recommended by Fluoresco.

Committee members discussed the different color options, fonts and decorative borders. The Committee preferred the decorative border with the wording "Town Center" in Garamond ITC font. Chairman Gad asked if the Garamond ITC font could be expanded or "stretched out" on the larger sized signs. Mr. Birdwell replied that it was possible and he could check with the sign company.

Extensive discussion on color choice took place. Members discussed different colors other than green to separate the Town Center to make it more distinctive. Chairman Gad added that the fluted light poles in the Town Center will help to differentiate the Town Center area.

Vice Mayor Barnes asked if different shades of green were possible. Mr. Birdwell said that almost any color shade is available but a different shade of green probably would not be visibly distinctive on signs.

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Ms. Moyers pointed out that green signs are currently used on public streets. If a different color was chosen they would have to consider where to start and stop using the different color. The Committee discussed the boundaries of the Town Center and where the new signs would be placed. The committee discussed the expense of changing signs in the Town Center if a different color was chosen and the time frame that it would take to change existing signs to match a new color choice.

Mr. Birdwell explained that the signs options that are under consideration at this time will be for new construction and for new traffic signals. He commented that to switch colors on every sign would be costly and the existing signs would not be replaced until they were in need of replacement or until funds become available.

Committee members were concerned that a mixture of sign colors in Town Center would create a “hodgepodge” look. They further discussed the financial impact that changing colors would create.

Vice Mayor Barnes asked if instead of replacing signs, could a decorative item be added to the top of the sign that designates Town Center. Mr. Birdwell responded that a new frame may be necessary to accomplish this and he will look into it.

Motion: Shawn Valdez

2nd: Nancy Diab

Recommendation for green signs with Garamond ITC Font with the Town Center decorative border on signs for new traffic signals in Town Center and to phase in existing signals in Town Center as money allows.

Motion carried.

Vice Mayor Barnes commented on the information he received at a conference concerning fiberglass composite streetlight poles and traffic signals. He said that the poles were extremely durable and cost effective. Ms. Cott stated that the information was forwarded to staff for review.

C. Discussion and possible action on directional signage as it relates to Town Center

Doreen Cott gave a background on the vehicle orientated directional signage program that was recently approved by Town Council and she also brought up the topic of temporary signage for businesses in Town Center. In May 2009, the Town Council addressed temporary signage and agreed to extend the time allowed for grand opening banners for local businesses. Ms. Cott suggested the committee focus discussion on short term temporary signage for Town Center businesses during the upcoming construction project on Ellsworth Road.

Tom Condit, Development Services Director, stated that the Ellsworth Road project will be starting in February/March 2011. Mr. Condit estimated that construction will last approximately 6-9 months completing in December 2011.

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A-Frame signs were discussed by the committee. Angela Troge stated that A -frame signs should be allowed for businesses that sit back from the road and are not visible to customers. She added that signs should be regulated so they are uniform and more elegant.

Shawn Valdez emphasized that access is a problem because 28 small businesses have closed since the opening of the Ellsworth Loop Road. Business access, especially during construction, must be addressed. He acknowledged the directional signage program as a permanent solution but said that a temporary fix is needed. He added that consistency with the regulations of the sign ordinance for all businesses is important.

Wayne Balmer suggested that the Town explore installing temporary signage with a uniform look that matches the Town Center brand. The signs will help direct traffic toward shopping areas in Town Center during the construction project.

Ms. Cott clarified the intent of the directional signage program. She stated that signs installed during the construction project would serve as a short term solution. Ms. Cott explained that the more specific wayfinding signs are planned for the future and will be a permanent solution.

The Committee discussed business access during construction. Mr. Condit stated that business access will not be blocked and if any driveways are temporarily blocked the Town will provide signage. Vice Mayor Barnes added that during the construction all businesses will have secondary access.

Further discussion took place on A-frame signs, flag mount pole signs and responsibility of individual businesses to market and promote their own business. Mr. Balmer provided a background on A- frame signs. He explained that the Chamber of Commerce was interested in this topic for businesses in Town Center in the past. Council did not support A-frame signs at that time. Mr. Condit explained that the opposition from Council included clutter, difficulty monitoring the large number of signs, and signs being placed in the right of way.

Chairman Gad concurred that the creation of the Loop Road, which diverted traffic, was the root of the problem. He recommended signage that highlights the Town Center shopping area until the wayfinding portion of the signage program begins.

Mr. Balmer outlined some options for the committee to consider for signs during the construction period. He explained that the Committee could re-address the use of A-frame signs for small business during the construction period. This option would require Council approval. Another suggestion was to use Town resources to put up temporary signs during construction to assist businesses in the interim. The signs could be placed in Town right of ways and could be removed by the Town when construction is complete. Mr. Balmer suggested that the temporary signs use the new directional sign design to introduce the Town Center brand. He suggested placement of two signs that highlight Town Center shopping to be located at the Loop Road split and at Ocotillo Road. Mr. Balmer added that the idea is to keep it simple so they are easy to put up or take down.

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The Committee discussed the time frame to make the signs and have them installed. Location of signage was also discussed. Mr. Condit suggested a total of four signs accounting for both northbound and southbound traffic

Ms. Troge asked if small businesses could contribute to the cost and have their name on the sign. Mr. Balmer responded that there is not enough room on the signs for individual names. Ms. Cott added that too much writing on signs can cause driver distraction.

Vice Mayor Barnes asked if the temporary construction signs would require Council approval. Ms. Moyers replied that staff will look into that.

Further discussion on A-frame signs took place. Monica O'Toole stated that temporary signs for businesses are necessary. She said the reason businesses are failing is not because of construction but due to visibility issues and should be addressed.

Committee agreed that additional discussion concerning alternative signage options should be a future agenda item.

Motion: Shawn Valdez

2nd: Chris Webb

Install temporary directional signs with Town Center branding at 2 to 4 gateway locations directing people to shopping for one year during the construction period.

Motion carried.

D. Discussion on Urban Land Institute Study

Ms. Cott gave an update on the Urban Land Institute (ULI) Study. The program is designed to assist communities in addressing land use questions and long-term economic sustainability. Town Council authorized staff to proceed with the application process for this program. Annually, the ULI advisory service panel completes about 12-15 studies nationally. Ms Cott added that if the Town of Queen Creek application is accepted by ULI, specific questions related the Town Center would be included in the study.

Ms. Cott explained that the program involves an intensive five day effort during which the panel members visit the community, perform interviews and develop a preliminary report with recommendations. Ms. Cott stated that some of this information will relate to Town Center. Town staff drafted some preliminary questions for the ULI panel. Questions relating to the Town Center include issues on development strategies and trends, properties in Town Center that can be considered for alternative uses and sites for focus areas.

Mr. Balmer added that if our application is accepted the estimated start date is March or April and the Town Center Committee may be asked for some feedback from the panel. Mr. Balmer said that after ULI completes their study they will provide the Town with a presentation and a published report.

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Ms. Cott mentioned that ULI was hired to study the Gateway airport area and a copy of that study can be viewed if interested.

E. Discussion on Vision and Branding for Town Center

Rebecca Gledhill, Management Assistant II, gave a presentation on Vision and Branding for the Town of Queen Creek. She provided a background on the process which started in Spring 2009. The Town's current brand was defined and outreach to the community was done through surveys, emails and other outlets. Five visual concepts were developed and presented to Town Council for feedback and three options were chosen. These options were presented to the public in October 2009. Results from the public feedback were approved and are now being promoted and marketed. The brand that was approved by the public was an update of our current brand with the tagline: "Convenience of the City and Comfort of the Country".

Ms. Moyers stated that an email attachment of the brand will be sent to the Committee along with a list of questions for discussion and feedback at the next meeting. The questions are as follows:

- What attracts people to the Town Center?
- What would a completed downtown look like?
- What aspects of the Town's branding initiative best fit into the Town Center vision?
- What marketing tools can be used in the Town Center to convey the Town's brand?
- What features can best distinguish the Town Center from the rest of Town while still conveying the Town's overall brand?

5. Adjournment

Motion: Nancy Diab

2nd: Council Member Julia Wheatley

To adjourn the meeting.

Motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 9:23 a.m.

TOWN OF QUEEN CREEK

Jason Gad, Chairman

ATTEST:

Joyce Maglione, Town Clerk Assistant

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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 December 8, 2010 Town Center Committee Meeting. I further certify that the meeting was duly called and that a quorum was present.

Joyce Maglione
Town Clerk Assistant

Passed and approved on: JANUARY 12, 2011