



Transportation Advisory Committee Minutes

Thursday, December 2, 2010

6:30 – 8:30 p.m.

San Tan Room – Development Services Building

Committee Members:

Ryan Nichols – Chair	Present
David Brandhorst – Vice Chair	Absent
Robin Benning – Council Member	Present
Chris Clark	Present
Debbie Reyes	Absent
Gregory Arrington	Present
Kim Mlazgar	Present
Nichelle Williams	Present
Patricia Conrad	Present
Richard Turman	Present
Ryan Nichols	Present

Town Staff Members:

Bill Birdwell, Traffic Analyst	Present
Norma Hernandez, Management Assistant	Present
Tom Condit, Development Services Director	Present
Troy White, Public Works Division Manager	Present

Public:

Sara Christopherson
Anthony Almeda- resident

1. Call to Order:

Committee Chairman, Ryan Nichols, called the meeting to order at 6:35 p.m.

2. Introductions:

Self introductions were made around the table.

3. Public Comment:

Anthony Almeda, resident voiced his concern in regards to the speeding issues on South Village Loop Road, and some of the collector streets within The Villages subdivision. Staff informed Mr. Almeda that since the item was not on the agenda, no further discussion or action was allowed at this meeting. This concern could be brought back as an agenda item at a future TAC meeting, via recommendation of the TAC.

4. Items for Discussion and possible action

Item A: Consideration and possible approval of November 4, 2010 minutes

Motion to approve the November 4, 2010 minutes, (Benning/Williams/Unanimous).

Item B: Presentation on the Apache Junction Comprehensive Study Troy White

Mr. White opened dialogue on the Apache Junction Comprehensive Study. The Study will consider possible traffic impacts within the next 5-10 years, focusing on the geographic area of McKellips to Elliott Road (north to south) and Meridian to the Barkley Road alignment (west to east). The "impact area" for the study extends from Power Road to W El Camino Viejo (west to east) and McDowell Road to Queen Creek Road (north to south). The Study will capture the impacts of new developments and roadway improvements in the surrounding area on Apache Junction's roads. The Study will review bike/trails/equestrian trails; crash data, demographic information and future socioeconomic data. The Study is in the beginning stages, and it will be six months before additional information is available. The Town will have the opportunity to provide input as the Study moves forward. Apache Junction will have public involvement to provide the Study information.

Item C: Update and overview of the Pinal County Transit Study Tom Condit

Mr. Condit provided an overview of the Pinal County Transit Study. This is a long range study that focuses on regional transit needs. Staff explained that one of the challenges Queen Creek faces is that it crosses two counties. This is illustrated in the study by the lack of connectivity between transit in Maricopa County and proposed future transit options in Pinal County.

Mr. Condit also reviewed staff recommendations on the study; he commented that the recommendations will be forwarded to Pinal County for consideration. These recommendations included the modification of the local fixed route from Queen Creek Road to Germann road and the addition of a local fixed route connection at Ocotollo Road between Signal Butte and Meridian. Another important recommendation for the Pinal County study is the addition of a "Hunt Highway to Ellsworth" connection as a regionally significant local route.

A question came up from the TAC regarding connectivity and bus service. The question was raised that even if there was connectivity between the two County Transit systems, would Queen Creek have bus service since the two counties would likely have different operators. Staff responded by saying that they will be advocating for bus service in Queen Creek, however the biggest challenge in creating a regional transit system is developing an institutional structure to operate, administer, and sustain it. Meridian Road shows up on both plans, the Town will submit its comments on the study, but will have to wait and see what is decided - riders will demand regional cooperation to allow for connectivity between Pinal and Maricopa counties.

Item D: Annexation of Riggs Road between Hawes and Ellsworth Troy White

Mr. White provided information about the potential annexation of Riggs Road between Hawes and Ellsworth. Maricopa County is interested in having the Town annex this section of road; they may agree to do street improvements should the Town be willing to annex. A key factor for the Town to consider in evaluating the annexation is that Horseshoe Park & Equestrian Centre (HPEC) is on this section of Riggs - and the Town could save money on future roadway improvements if the County constructs them.

Question: What if the Town is required to fully improve Riggs Road in the future? The property is not going to be commercial, and would the Town have to purchase the right-of-way (ROW)?

Staff said the ROW will be part of the annexation; the Maricopa County Flood Control District had to obtain ROW for the Sonoqui Wash Project. If the Town decides to move forward, the full ROW would already be purchased and be part of the annexation. As far as roadway improvements, the Town would still be required to improve the half-street adjacent to HPEC regardless, and this could be an opportunity to get partial improvements by the County (in return for annexation).

Question: Is there any commercial development along that section of the road?

Staff's response was no, with the exception of a 10-acre parcel on the northwest corner of Ellsworth and Riggs that may become commercial in the future; there is also a 40-acre commercial/employment site on the northeast corner of the Ellsworth and Riggs.

Question: Is Maricopa County going to improve the road if the Town does not annex? There may be an incentive for development if the road is improved; developers may look to build commercial in that area.

Staff said the County is not going to improve the road at this time if the Town does not annex the road. The section of Riggs east of Ellsworth does not belong to the County; however the County has shown interest in assisting the Town with construction funds to build the Riggs between Ellsworth and Meridian. A single lane-mile is estimated to cost approximately \$1,000,000.

Comment: Having two lanes may attract developers to build in the area. What is the cost to maintain the road?

Staff said they will obtain an answer and report back to the TAC.

Item E: Riggs Road: Upcoming Environmental/Archaeological Study Troy White

Mr. White provided information on the Environmental/Archaeological Study on Riggs Road. The environmental assessment is likely to take 18-24 months. The Town received

\$2,000,000 in federal funding for the design; MCDOT has included a possible \$2,000,000 match for construction, potentially allowing two lanes to be constructed between Ellsworth and Meridian.

Question: If there are any human remains will they be relocated to the in Gila River Indian Community, or is it more involved than that?

Staff said it is more involved, how burials are handled will be left up to the tribes. Sometimes the tribes don't ask for the remains to be removed, it depends on the project - what types of remains are found and the type of project (roadway projects typically do not require as much excavation as other projects).

Is there going to be an opportunity go visit the site when ADOT is digging?

Staff said in Phase I, a ball court was identified. The ball court would likely be the most significant item that people may have interest in. ADOT would have to give the Town permission to be onsite during the assessment.

As a final thought, the TAC discussed the possibility of turning the site into a public exhibition, an attraction to draw visitors to Queen Creek. Staff had no comment on this idea.

Item F: Update on ITS

Bill Birdwell

Mr. Birdwell provided an update on the Intelligent Transportation System (ITS). Phase I is wrapping up; a total of 12 traffic signals and 7 cameras were added to the system. An Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) is going to Town Council on December 15 to allow ADOT to acquire the federal funding the Town received for the project. Once the IGA is in place, Phase II of the ITS project will begin. This phase will add 20 traffic signals and 13 additional cameras to the system, which will cover the majority of the signals in the most populated areas of Town.

Mr. Birdwell also informed the members that the traffic signals on Ellsworth Loop Road were synchronized; this significantly improves traffic flow. The traffic signals on the Loop between the South Ellsworth Road connector and Queen Creek Road, and Rittenhouse between Ocotillo and Hawes, are now coordinated for better flow.

Item E: Request for future items

The upcoming January 2011 TAC meeting was cancelled by a vote of the TAC members. Therefore, the next TAC meeting will be February 3, 2011 at 6:30 p.m. in the Development Services Building – San Tan Room.

Early 2011

- Town's current adopted policy on traffic control in residential areas
- Trail System – status report, exhibits to demonstrate what has been completed.

- Disaster Management Committee – Summary/information
- ITS – Discuss all five phases

5. Announcements

Mr. Condit handed out the letter he sent to ADOT on November 10, 2010 with comments on the North-South Corridor Study. This is going to Town Council on December 15 for their approval.

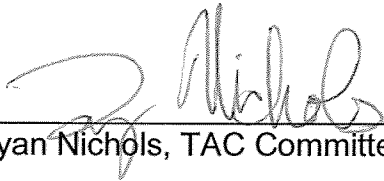
Milos Pavicevich has resigned the TAC; staff (and also, members of the TAC) thank him for his continued involvement throughout the previous years and wish him well. A certificate of appreciation and letter will be sent to him by the staff.

6. Adjournment:

Meeting adjourned at 8:04 p.m.

PREPARED BY: Norma Hernandez, December 6, 2010

PASSED AND APPROVED ON: February 3, 2011



Ryan Nichols, TAC Committee Chair