



**MINUTES OF THE WORK STUDY MEETING OF THE QUEEN CREEK
PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
Wednesday, January 12, 2011 6:30 P.M.
San Tan Conference Room, 22358 S. Ellsworth Road, Queen Creek, AZ 85242**

1. **CALL TO ORDER** The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by Chairman Sossaman in the San Tan Room of the Development Services Building.

2. **ROLL CALL**

Present

Chairman Sossaman
Vice-Chairman Steve Ingram
Commissioner Jason Gad
Commissioner Alex Matheson
Commissioner Ryan Nichols
Commissioner Debbie Reyes
Commissioner Kyle Robinson

Absent

Staff Present

Director of Development Services Condit
Community Development Manager Balmer
Director of Parks and Recreation Debbie Gomez
Parks Management Assistant II Lisa Padilla
Chairman of PRAC, David Dobbs

Absent

Community Development Assistant Moats

3. **Discussion on Ellsworth Road (Rittenhouse to Ocotillo roads) Project for the Town's "Scalloped Street Assessment Program"**

At the request of Director Condit, discussion of this item was deferred until after the training/presentation.

4. **Commission Training provided by Parks and Recreation Staff**

Director of Parks and Recreation Gomez and Chairman of the Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee, David Dobbs, were introduced. Management Assistant Lisa Padilla noted Mr. Dobbs was on the PTOS Steering Committee, and served on the Town Council during the 2002 General Plan Update.

Ms. Padilla gave a presentation on the Parks, Trails and Open Space Master Plan, and how it relates to Planning and Zoning. Ms. Padilla noted the presentation would focus mostly on the Trails system. She stated the Town's PTOS Master Plan won the Best Master Plan at the Arizona Planning Association conference in 2006, due to its public participation, as well as it being multi-faceted, in that it includes parks, recreation, trails and open space planning

categories. The plan was adopted by Council in November, 2005. Ms. Padilla presented an historical timeline of the PTOS Master Plan. She explained the PTOS Vision Statement had three major themes: Interconnectivity, Opportunities and Character. She noted the purpose of the PRAC is to assist and advise Queen Creek Parks & Recreation staff, and act in an advisory capacity to the Town Council in the development and continuing review of goals and objectives for Queen Creek's parks, trails and open spaces, as well as recreational programs and events.

Ms. Padilla illustrated the Trails and Path Plan, showing 171 miles of planned trails that provide connectivity through the Town limits. The trails also go to subdivisions, schools, shopping, dining and the Town's municipal campus. Regional destinations include San Tan Regional Mountain Park, the Town of Gilbert, City of Mesa and Eastern Pinal County. The yellow-dashed line on the map delineates where 'equestrian-only' trails are located. She noted not all of the areas shown on the map are completed. The map is based on build-out.

Ms. Padilla illustrated the six different types of trails/paths, and their uses. Director Condit complimented Ms. Padilla on the many grants she has been awarded (on behalf of the Town) in the past three to five years.

Ms. Padilla spoke briefly about the trails/washes that go under the main roads, such as the Desert Mountain Park trail going under Hawes Road, and a new grant just recently awarded that will be used to put a path under the six-lane Ellsworth Loop Road. Director Gomez pointed out various funding sources, such as a combination of private and public funding, development fees that provide cash-in-lieu, and grants from organizations such as the Foundation for Horse Lovers. Ms. Padilla added the chances for receiving grant monies are greater when the applicant can demonstrate a trail or path not crossing a road at-grade, but rather going under or over a road or bridge, and when several destination locations are shown on the application.

Director Gomez addressed fragmented trail systems, where trails are put in place that appear to go nowhere or dead-end. She explained how this is a sign of a good trails system because it shows the municipality has planned the trails system ahead of development, meaning there will be less infrastructure torn apart and rebuilt, which frequently happens in other jurisdictions where trails are installed after development has already occurred. She noted another reason some trails lead to nowhere is because some portions of the wash/trails are privately owned. In some of these instances, the Town is negotiating with the property owner for acquisition of these wash areas. She pointed out the cost savings of placing trails within setbacks along roadways so that the entire Master Plan includes trails that are maintained by the developers. She also briefly spoke about funding guidelines, and the scheduled review of the Master Plan according to growth.

A Commissioner asked what percentage of trails already built have been funded by grants and how much has come from developers. Ms. Padilla responded:

- The trail from Power to Hawes roads was done through a shared agreement with the Maricopa County Flood Control District.

- The trail from Hawes Road to Desert Mountain Park was funded by cash-in-lieu from the Victoria Lund developers;
- The trail from Desert Mountain to Ellsworth Road will be funded by a transportation enhancement grant.
- Sonoqui Wash was also funded through a cooperative agreement with MCFCD;
- The trail from Ellsworth (at Hastings Farms) to Crismon on Queen Creek Wash will be developed with grant funding from federal dust control measures. This funding will come in 2013.

Within the next 24-months there will be connectivity from Power Road to Crismon Road. Director Gomez stated the Town has approximately five miles of developed trails, mostly along the two washes. She noted trail areas will be pieced together as developers come in.

Commissioner Nichols asked if the “planned path” shown on the map that runs south through a platted subdivision in unincorporated Maricopa County has been coordinated in order to make sure the planned path gets completed. Director Condit noted this area is actually the wash, and it is unlikely a developer would develop in this area. He also noted the Town has very limited input where County islands are involved.

Chairman Sossaman asked if schools contribute financially if they are, or become, a destination point on the trail systems map. Ms. Padilla responded, ‘no’.

Commissioner Gad asked about view fence requirements for housing developments located along open trails, specifically related to the proposed Emperor Estates, Phase IV West subdivision. He asked for input from Parks and Recreation regarding this. Ms. Padilla noted this a dual (paved/unpaved) corridor along the sidewalk, to be built in the setback. Commissioner Gad restated the policy staff explained at the December Commission meeting, that any new developments along open trails are only allowed to have a four-foot solid/two-foot open view fence. Director Condit clarified this was a Town Council policy. He stated that for many years, the Town only allowed view fencing adjacent to arterial roadways, which became a major concern for some residents whose lots abutted major arterials and who wanted solid walls. At that time, the Council decided that it would be permissible for homes located in R1-35 and smaller to have a six-foot solid wall along arterial roads; however, to maintain open view fencing along open space and paths/trails.

Commissioner Gad then noted he is Chairman of the Town’s “Town Center Committee”. He asked about the amphitheater/park which is part of the Town Center Plan, and asked what priority this falls under. Director Gomez responded Founders’ Park includes a master plan which was done prior to the Town Center Plan. When this park is developed, items included in the Town Center Plan will be considered for incorporation into the master plan for Founders’ Park. She noted the current Master Plan for Founders’ Park does not show an amphitheater.

ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS

Due to the lateness of the hour, all Administrative Items were deferred to the Regular Session.

5. **Review** of next month's agenda items.
6. **Report** on Town Council Action
Town Council minutes from the December Town Council meeting were included in the agenda binders.
7. **Summary of Current Events** from members of the Commission.
8. **Adjournment**
Motion by: Vice-Chairman Ingram
To adjourn.
Seconded by: Commissioner Gad
Vote: **All ayes. Motion carried 7-0.**

The meeting adjourned at 7:05 p.m.

PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION

Steve Sossaman, Chairman

ATTEST:

Laura Moats, Community Development Assistant

I, Laura Moats, 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 January 12, 2011 Work Study of the Planning and Zoning Commission. I further certify that the meeting was duly called and that a quorum was present.

Dated this 12th day of January, 2011

Passed and Approved this 9th day of February, 2011.