

**Downtown Links  
Citizen Advisory Committee Minutes  
January 9, 2006  
5:30- 7:00pm  
Joel D. Valdez Main Library**

***Attendees:***

**CAC Committee**

John Burr, Armory Park Neighborhood Association  
Charles Davis, Barrio Anita Neighborhood Association  
Natasha Winnik, Dunbar-Spring Neighborhood Association  
Christopher Carroll, El Presidio Neighborhood Association  
John Sedwick, Fourth Avenue Merchants Association  
Eugene Caywood, Old Pueblo Trolley  
Kory Kruckmeyer, Pie Allen Neighborhood Association  
Don Durband, Tucson Downtown Alliance  
David Hoyt Johnson, Tucson-Pima Arts Council  
David Bachman-Williams, Tucson-Pima Bicycle Advisory Committee  
Gerald Juliani, Tucson-Pima Historical Commission  
Mindy Bernstein, West University Neighborhood Association

**Project Team**

MJ Dillard, TDOT  
Mike Barton, HDR Engineering, Inc.  
Michael Graham, TDOT  
Joan Beckim, Kaneen Advertising & Public Relations  
Lucas Phillips, Kaneen Advertising & Public Relations

**Observers**

Terrence McMahan, Barrio Anita  
Ron Wilson  
Lucy Mitchell, Small Planet Bakery  
Claire Fellows  
Liba Wheat, Wheat Scharf Associates  
Carrie Calvert  
Lorraine Hernandez, Ward III  
Shana Oseran, Hotel Congress  
Bill Ball, TUSD  
Alex Hingle, Ward VI  
Carol Anton, Pima County DOT

**I. Opening Remarks and Introductions**

Eugene Caywood called for opening remarks and introductions. Council Aides Alex Hingle from Ward VI and Lorraine Hernandez from Ward II were introduced to the committee.

**II. Approve Meeting Minutes from December 12, 2005**

The minutes from the last meeting were distributed and approved with changes.

### III. Announcements

There were no announcements made.

### IV. Approve Bylaws

Gene asked if the Bylaws had been reviewed since the last meeting and if anyone had any changes. Gerald asked that “Impact on historic structures” be added to the Bylaws. The committee voted to approve with changes.

### V. Member Reports on Group Feedback

MJ asked that each committee member report on what kind of feedback they have heard from the groups they are representing and how often they meet.

- **Gene Caywood** – Old Pueblo Trolley meets twice per month. Their agenda includes an update on all issues impacting the Trolley and Downtown. The Downtown Links project has been discussed at these meetings and there have been no questions or concerns.
- **David Bachman Williams** – The Bicycle Advisory Committee meets the second Wednesday of each month from 6-8 p.m. at the Himmel Park Library. They were informed verbally about the project and the CAC. They expressed concern about the potential cut in pedestrian/bicycle amenities to save money.
- **John Burr** – Armory Park Neighborhood Association meets the second Tuesday of each month from 7-9 p.m. The Downtown Links project was discussed at the last meeting. John gave them an update after the walking tour and explained the Committees’ responsibility to advise TDOT and the Mayor and Council on a Downtown Links alignment. The neighborhood was also interested in the Fourth Avenue Underpass project.
- **John Sedwick** – Fourth Avenue Merchants Association meets the third Tuesday of every month from 11-2. There has been no significant concern yet about Downtown Links. The association wants to make sure the trolley tracks are not removed from the Fourth Avenue Underpass plans and believes that closing the underpass during construction would be detrimental to Downtown.
- **Charles Davis** – Barrio Anita Neighborhood Association meets the second Wednesday each month at 6:30 p.m. at the Oury Recreation Center. The board has been briefed on the project but there has not been a formal meeting since the walkthrough. The association is concerned about how the proposed linkage will affect the west end of the neighborhood. Because the final alignment has not been decided it is too soon to discuss in depth. Charles asked that City staff attend a meeting and provide some information, possibly sometime in February. MJ agreed and asked that Charles schedule it and let her know.
- **David Hoyt Johnson** – The Tucson-Pima Arts Council Public Art Committee meets the second Wednesday of each month at 4:00 p.m. David has not reported much to them yet as there is no real impact to the committee or artists at this time.
- **Chris Carroll** – El Presidio Neighborhood Association meets the second Tuesday each month. Some members have expressed concern that there have been no changes to west end of the plans. Members have shown excitement for the quiet zone work.
- **Gerald Juliani** – The Tucson-Pima Historical Commission meets the second Wednesday at 12:00 p.m. The commission’s primary concern is preserving any historical structures on the project. MJ asked if there were any historical concerns

brought up at the field trip. Gerald stated that if the right alignment was designed the majority of historic structures could be saved. MJ agreed that the City is working to save as many structures as possible.

- **Mindy Bernstein** – West University Neighborhood Association meets the first Thursday of every month at 7:30 p.m. Mindy would prefer the City staff to make a presentation to the association. MJ agreed and requested that Mindy call her to set up a date and time.
- **Natasha Winnik** – Dunbar Spring Neighborhood Association meets the last Monday of the month at 7:00 p.m. at the Dunbar Auditorium. There have not been any new decisions or alignment ideas to inform them of. The association is opposed to the project until something new is proposed for them to consider. They would like to see the work on the train whistle issue continue.
- **Kory Kruckmeyer** – Pie Allen Neighborhood Association meets the first Wednesday of each month. There have not been many comments as there has not been much to report to them.

## **VI. Traffic Modeling Methodology and Assumptions**

Mike Barton showed a presentation and explained traffic modeling. He explained how PAG collects data and uses it in the Regional Transportation Plan, currently through 2030.

Gerald questioned who makes the assumptions and how they are made. Mike explained that PAG collects various data to make the assumptions in addition to traffic data. Gerald expressed concern that the predictions are not accurate because PAG's focus is mainly transportation and something like a possible water shortage could affect area growth. Gene clarified that PAG pulls information from many sources outside of transportation. Mike explained that the focus in recent years has been expanding the capacity of existing roadway facilities instead of building new ones. The modeling will start with the RTA transportation plan as the base condition because some of the elements of the plan are relative to this project. The RTA plan includes widening 22<sup>nd</sup> Street and the connection of 22<sup>nd</sup> Street and Barraza Aviation Parkway, which will help move traffic to the interstate without coming through Downtown. Regional traffic modeling is not a perfect science as it is developed from so many variables. Because these variables can change the model is reviewed regularly. The 2030 model that will be used as the base includes parts of the original plan that this Committee is replacing which will have to be taken out of the model before entering data for the new alignment alternatives. Mike described the three alignments that have been talked about and stated that they would try to avoid impacting Stone Avenue Underpass.

Gerald asked if the second alignment would have any impact on the proposed brewery in the area and Mike responded that it would have a significant impact. While waiting for the new models to be developed by PAG, Mike Barton and others will be reviewing many of the existing studies done in the Downtown area including the Rio Nuevo Circulation Plan, Congress Street Master Plan, Stevens Alignment Study, 2-way Downtown traffic, and the I-10 plans.

Mindy asked if St. Marys would remain closed permanently. Mike answered that the closure of St. Marys is in the plans and will remain closed as far as he knows. The reason for the closure is due to the exits being too close to each other. Mindy would like to add the St. Marys closure to the next agenda. Gerald pointed out that Downtown Links would not actually connect to the Interstate but to the frontage road.

Charles Davis expressed some concerns about the amount of traffic being redirected from Congress on to St. Mary's in addition to the current amounts of traffic in the area. He would like to see some sort of study on traffic in this area. Mike responded that they are working on such a study and the model will show "peak hour" information for the intersections in this area. Charles stated that the west end of the alignment would be a better place to start instead of doing it backwards, because the connection to the interstate is already so congested. Mike agreed that we have to do something to alleviate the current traffic situation but it also has to be economic. Gene explained that the traffic model will cover a large area over the project, not just the east or west end. John Sedwick asked what the guidelines are that classify an area or intersection as congested. Mike answered that there are no solid guidelines because the data is subjective, but those thresholds will be defined for this model. Charles asked how they will account for the train in this model. Mike answered that the new software they are using has more capabilities and can account for more variables. MJ explained that once the model is done the committee will be able to see the calibration which displays the current conditions of the area and then the alignment options from that base.

#### **VII. Requested Materials**

Information on the Warehouse Historic District was distributed to the committee. MJ explained that they are still trying to locate the noise study information that is in storage, and that it should be available for the next meeting.

#### **VIII. Train Whistle Blowing Issue**

MJ read the rules regarding the whistle blowing. The rule is written that outside of quiet zones railroads must sound the horn 15-20 seconds prior to arrival of the crossing, but not more than ½ mile in advance of the crossing. The pattern for sounding the horn shall remain as it currently exists today (two long, one short, one long repeated or prolonged until the locomotive traverses the crossing). In addition, locomotive engineers retain the latitude to vary this pattern where crossings are closely spaced (as is the condition through our downtown area). The minimum level is 96 decibels and the maximum is 110 decibels. Natasha suggested getting someone out to test the decibel level. Although there is money to research the quiet zones there may not be to test the decibel level.

#### **IX. Future Agenda Items**

Downtown Links and section 106 National Historic Preservation  
MLK Housing – Quiet Zone issues – Noise study will be brought next time  
Update on one-way two-way  
I-10 Update  
Tucson Arroyo drainage/design issues

#### **X. Call to audience**

The audience had no comments.

#### **XI. Adjournment – At 7:05 p.m.**