

# DOWNTOWN LINKS CITIZEN ADVISORY COMMITTEE – MONTHLY MEETING

## ACTION REPORT AND SUMMARY

Monday, May 12, 2008

FROM: TDOT Project Manager Shellie Ginn

Chair Gene Caywood called the meeting to order at 7:35 p.m. at the Tucson Convention Center.

### COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

**Chair** Gene Caywood (Old Pueblo Trolley)  
**Vice-Chair** Don Durband (Downtown Tucson Partnership)  
John Burr (Armory Park Neighborhood Association)  
Daniela Diamente (Dunbar-Spring Neighborhood Association)  
Mary Ellen Wooten (Tucson-Pima Arts Council)  
Jonathan Levy (Iron Horse Neighborhood Association)  
Charles Davis (Barrio Anita Neighborhood Association)  
Korey Kruckmeyer (Pie Allen Neighborhood Association)  
John Sedwick (Fourth Avenue Merchants Association)  
Christopher Carroll (El Presidio Neighborhood Association)  
Joseph Maher, Jr. (Citizen Transportation Advisory Committee)  
Susan Gamble (Warehouse Arts Management Organization)  
Mindy Bernstein (West University Neighborhood Association)

### PROJECT TEAM PRESENT:

Jim Glock, TDOT  
Andrew Singelakis, TDOT  
Mike Barton, HDR Engineering, Inc.  
Joan Beckim, Kaneen Advertising & Public Relations, Inc.  
Corky Poster, Poster Frost

### AGENDA ITEM/COMMITTEE ACTION

### STAFF ACTION

AGENDA ITEM/COMMITTEE ACTION	STAFF ACTION
<b>1. <u>Meeting Called to Order</u></b>	<u>NO ACTION REQUIRED</u>
<b>2. <u>Introduction of Committee Members and Staff</u></b>	<u>NO ACTION REQUIRED</u>
<b>3. <u>Approval of Meeting Minutes</u></b> Minutes of the May 12, 2008 CAC meeting were approved with corrections.	<u>MINUTES APPROVED WITH CORRECTIONS AND POSTED TO WEBSITE</u>
<b>4. <u>Announcements</u></b> None	<u>NO ACTION REQUIRED</u>
<b>5. <u>Review / Refinement of Alignments</u></b> A moderated Question and Answer session with the CAC was held for public comment from 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.	<u>NO ACTION REQUIRED</u>

Andrew Singelakis reminded everyone that the role of the Downtown Links Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) is to bring forward a project concept to the Mayor and Council. There were many comments from the audience against doing the project, but the reason the CAC exists is because Pima County voters approved the RTA and this is one of the projects in it.

Michael Barton from HDR briefly discussed the previous suggested alignments shown to the CAC in January. There were three options shown and it was suggested that they combine a couple of those alignments together which is now Option 3-d. HDR had been asked to avoid impacting certain buildings in the warehouse historic district, and they have been working on a drainage plan keeping the drainage structure underneath the roadway as much as possible to also minimize impacts. Because of the grade issues with the railroad underpass, they have moved drainage north of the roadway alignment to appropriately drain the facility to the river. Other important issues that revealed themselves during this analysis were that by shifting the alignment to the north, they did not have to change the grades along Stone Avenue and could build the roadway at existing grades. They could also build the roadway by leaving Stone Avenue and Sixth Street open during construction, and avoid impacts to certain historic structures that prompted this alignment to begin with.

A discussion followed regarding other possible roadway concept options proposed by other engineering/architectural firms and about the drainage for the project. Also points were made supporting the continuation of pedestrian connections and crossings from the neighborhoods to the north into the downtown area and discussions with Union Pacific Railroad regarding these issues.

**6. Downtown Links Project Community Discussions**

- **Comments from representative organizations by each CAC member**

Joan Beckim explained that this time was agendized to provide the CAC members the opportunity to discuss any comments they may have heard back from their respective neighborhoods or organizations. The CAC members have been very active in taking the concept back to their organizations and having staff make presentations at meetings. One CAC member commented that several neighborhoods and organizations had sent in statements to various members of the CAC. These comments are attached.

After several CAC members commented, the consensus was that the committee needed more time to develop a better picture of what they are considering, however, it was determined that the time should not be unlimited.

MOTION MADE AND PASSED

A motion was made by John Burr to meet in 30 days and have a vote on an alignment in six weeks. Motion was seconded.

After a discussion of the Committee, Mindy Bernstein amended the motion as follows:

A motion was made that the Committee meet in June, July and vote at the August meeting. Motion was seconded.

An audience member asked if one of those meetings would be a meeting for public comment. Gene Caywood, Committee Chair, agreed that that would be the right thing to do.

After more committee discussion, there was another amendment to the motion by Mindy Bernstein.

A Motion was made that the Committee will meet in June and July and that by or at the August meeting, a decision will be made on a new alignment. Motion Seconded. The Motion was carried and passed unanimously.

- **March 11, 2008 Character Workshop Comments**

The March 11, 2008, Character Workshop comments have been distributed to the CAC members and are posted on the Downtown Links web site. If someone does not have access to the web site, let the Downtown Links Team know and copies will be provided.

- **May 12, 2008 Public Meeting Feedback**

The May 12, 2008 feedback will be documented and provided to the CAC members and posted on the web site.

### **7. Call to the Audience**

Terrence McMahon/Dunbar Spring: Dunbar Spring NA recently discussed obstacles and pointed out that there are always exceptions to the rule – the Sonoran Desert Marketplace on Oracle Rd. sticks out a lane and half into traffic. That’s a highway and yet the curve went around it. Why can’t that be done with the Steinfeld building? Look at the alignment asked for on 6<sup>th</sup> Street as if there are no surmountable obstacles. If we can bend the rules to make it work, we should. Don’t make it look like the alignment has to go through the neighborhood – put it where it is now – through 6<sup>th</sup> Street.

Sonya Dee: Referring to an illustration, she commented that the 9<sup>th</sup> Ave. connection to downtown is not clear. The illustration shows a right angle and it doesn’t appear to connect with downtown. She reiterated that other engineering expertise should be brought in for a fresh perspective on the plan.

**NO ACTION REQUIRED**

Paul Schwam: Thanked the committee, the City and the audience for the meeting – good energy and very productive. He commented that he would like the designer in the future to consider taking the pedestrian and bicycle transportation as a design overlay perpendicular to the roadway to see what that gets. It seems to come up a lot, with the amount of crossing that everyone needs. Maybe not parallel to the roadway with walkways.

Chris Stebe/Armory Park resident: Commented that ‘Not in My Backyard’ is a phrase that keeps popping up, but this project is in his backyard. When he heard about the project, he got involved by attending almost every CAC meeting. He felt that the emotion at this meeting is slightly misdirected and that the people who feel like they are being impacted by this project have had the opportunity to attend CAC meetings and get the information. Misinformation was used as emotional debate at this meeting as many respectfully made their pleas, but the minute those pleas were over, they did not offer the CAC the respect to stay and listen to their reply. They got what they wanted – a delay. He further commented that he feels the same as they do and is not in favor of this alignment, but he is in favor of the process that’s being followed. After 20 years the CAC now needs to make a grave decision, very quickly. It happened on the Fourth Ave Underpass which is now a fairly nice project out of the ashes of something disastrous. He thinks this also applies to the Downtown Links process. People don’t buy price, they buy benefit. The more benefits we can show of any alignment that comes up, the more people will buy into it and get involved and not feel like they are getting another Aviation Parkway rammed down their throats.

**8. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 9:08 p.m.

NO ACTION REQUIRED