

DOWNTOWN LINKS CITIZEN ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MEETING SUMMARY
Monday, June 9, 2014

Approved at the Downtown Links CAC meeting on July 14, 2014

FROM: TDOT Project Manager Tom Fisher

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Chair, Eugene W. Caywood, Old Pueblo Trolley
John A. Sedwick, Fourth Avenue Merchants Association
Kylie Walzak, Tucson-Pima Bicycle Advisory Committee
Gail Ryser, Barrio Anita Neighborhood Association
Richard Mayers, West University Neighborhood Association
Mary Ellen Wooten, Tucson-Pima Arts Council
Carlos Lozano, Tucson - Pima County Historical Commission
Susan Gamble, Warehouse Arts Management Association
Michael Keith, Downtown Tucson Partnership
Korey Kruckmeyer, Pie Allen Neighborhood Association
Susan Marshall, Citizen Transportation Advisory Committee
Daniela Diamente, Dunbar Spring Neighborhood Association
Debbie Chandler, Fourth Avenue Merchants Association (to replace John Sedwick)

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT:

Vice Chair, John Burr, Armory Park Neighborhood Association
Kristi Frank, El Presidio Neighborhood Association
VACANT, Iron Horse Neighborhood Association

PROJECT TEAM PRESENT:

Sam Credio, City of Tucson Department of Transportation (TDOT)
Tom Fisher, City of Tucson Department of Transportation (TDOT)
Brent Kirkman, HDR Engineering
Kathy Jirschele, Kaneen Advertising and Public Relations
Laura Mielcarek, Wheat Design Group
Corky Poster, Poster Frost Mirto

1. Meeting Called to Order

Quorum confirmed. Tom Fischer called the meeting to order at 5:42 p.m. (Gene Caywood, Chair arrived shortly after call to order and resumed the regular responsibilities as Chair of the committee.)

2. Introduction of Committee Members and Staff

CAC and Project Team Members introduced themselves.

3. Approval of Meeting Minutes

The minutes of April 14, 2014 were unanimously approved.
John Sedwick moved; **Michael Keith** seconded.

4. Announcements

- **John Sedwick** announced his retirement from the CAC after 15+ years and informed the Committee that Debbie Chandler will be his replacement going forward. The committee thanked him and applauded his long-standing service. John also distributed information about the Safe Harbor Project Recommendation about to go before the Mayor and Council. He recommended a sub-committee be created to assist with the planning process and follow any subsequent action being taken so that

stakeholder interests will be represented and protected.

- **Richard Mayers** announced that Jarrett Walker will be in town on Friday, July 11, 2014.
- **Tom Fischer** announced that the City of Tucson has applied for funds designated for Brownsfields clean-up and were awarded \$400,000. This will pay for the clean-up of soil contaminated by fuel and a portion of this will be allocated to the Downtown Links project. **Gail Ryser** asked what properties would be associated with the clean-up effort. **Tom Fischer** said this is still unknown at this time. He also announced that the RTA bond rating has gone up which reduces the rate for borrowing money for RTA projects. They are issuing \$150 mil in bonds for RTA projects and a portion of this will go toward Downtown Links.

5. Reports and Presentations

- **Infill Incentive District/Urban Overlay district update**– **Corky Poster** presented an updated report clarifying the progress and changes in how the project has moved forward. The most significant change is how the Downtown Links has now become a sub-district of the Infill Incentive District. **Corky P.** shared a brief history of how the Downtown Links roadway was first proposed and how Poster, Frost Mirto initially got involved as a sub-consultant to HDR in the creation of an urban overlay zone design also known as Downtown Links. A detailed set of new zoning recommendations were drawn up and presented to the Zoning Examiner that allowed landowners to choose between their current zoning or the optional zoning choice provided by Downtown Links. The goal was to protect historic neighborhoods, provide increased density where most people thought it should occur and provide solutions to landscape and parking. Due to Proposition 207, mandatory zoning wasn't allowed and optional zoning was created and offered instead. **Corky P.** outlined a visual map of the separate districts that are presently in place. He explained that what was decided and also recommended by the Mayor and Council was to make the Downtown Links Urban Overlay District a separate or third subset of the Infill Incentive District, rather than a stand alone, separate zone. In the process of doing this, PFM was also encouraged to expand the boundaries of this new district which was, in fact, done. This will go before the Mayor and Council appointed task force in June, July and August and there will also be a required neighborhood meeting to discuss recommendations. Following this it will go before the planning commission and Mayor and Council for a public hearing and then hopefully adopted by the end of 2014. (Corky presented detailed information regarding individual neighborhoods within the Infill Incentive District his power point presentation can be viewed at www.downtownlinks.info) **Susan Gamble** commented on her observation that the word “Arts” has been taken out of recent references made to the original Warehouse Arts District. She would like to see the word ‘art’ reinserted in place of a reference made to the “shape” (ie. triangle) of a particular district.
- **Project Update** – **Sam Credio** updated the members on the progress of the project. He encouraged all present to visit the new Downtown Links website which is much different from the old and is still a work in progress. He gave a brief outline of his agenda for his presentation and stated it was his intention to provide answers to the questions posed at last month's meeting that he did not have answers to at the time.
- **General Design Update** – **Sam Credio** said that HDR has finalized all of its 75% comments and has been working toward a 90% design submittal which is planned to occur in August. Coordination with Union Pacific Railroad concerning the underpass plans submitted for review is progressing well and HDR is currently reviewing their comments and preparing responses. Soil borings for the underpass near 6th Street and Church Avenue will take place on June 16th and should take about one week to complete. At this level of the design plans, coordination with utilities has ramped up considerably. Sewer modification plans have been submitted to Pima County Wastewater and water modification plans submitted to Tucson Water. Due to the nature and size of these modifications, the team will be working very closely with these two public utilities. Ongoing coordination with private utilities such

as TEP are now in progress with discussion surrounding design and relocation of electrical poles, etc. A meeting will be held with CenturyLink on June 11, to review where their lines are located and to definitively provide them with an outline of the project. Finally, the drainage benefits of the project are well known and the reports have been approved by TDOT. The consultant on the project is now moving toward the task associated with the Army Corp of Engineer improvements. **Sam C.** responded to some of the questions posed at the April CAC meeting. **Gail Ryser** asked if *Do Not Block Intersection* signs could be installed at the intersection of St. Mary's Road and Hughes Street where traffic often gets backed up and may interfere with train activity. **Sam C.** said he's learned that TDOT's Traffic Dept. does not support these types of markings or signage, but will attempt to take this further if it continues to be a problem. **Gail R.** remarked that this is an issue of concern for both the St. Mary's/Granada and Davis intersections. **Sam C.** addressed **John Burr's** (who was not present) question as to, whether a north or north/south crosswalk at the Broadway Boulevard/Barraza Parkway intersection could be incorporated into the design plan. This is something that is being looked into and currently evaluated by the traffic department. Consideration of doing a "roadway safety assessment" is now being looked into wherein recommendations to the design team would be made by a team of professional consultants not associated with TDOT or HDR. This option is now being explored. Regarding the proposed "bike-about" on 6th Avenue, the question was asked if it was necessary for cyclists to use the circle (or round-about) in order to make a right hand turn. **Sam C.** stated the radius has been flattened out so the circle does NOT need to be used and cyclists can simply make a right turn. The final question asked was whether steps could be provided from the sidewalk along the north side of the new 6th Street/7th Avenue near the new Barraza Parkway intersection. He said because it was clear there was grade difference in this walkway location people are likely to walk there and that steps will be incorporated into the design.

- **Main Avenue Crosswalk** – Discussion continues about whether, or not, striping for a crosswalk along Main Avenue can be added. Based on safety precautionary history and statistical findings of the TDOT Traffic Department (Diahn Swartz), striping for this crosswalk will NOT be placed at this time. Pedestrian and cyclist counts were observed and evaluated to determine this outcome and justification for this decision. **Susan Gamble** asked "What is an unmarked crosswalk?" **Sam C.** replied it is a legal crossing with access ramps on both sides which allows pedestrians to cross safely. **Tom F.** mentioned it is a street intersection where there are two marked streets. **Richard Mayers** commented that the alignment is not straight at this crosswalk, it is offset, which makes it difficult to cross safely. He also said the other crossing (at Granada and Church) will not be integrated until some point in the future which is why he is advocating for a temporary pedestrian crosswalk at this time. **Gail R.** agreed that the alignment is offset and when coming up 6th on her bicycle she actually comes against eastbound traffic to get to the break in the median. **Gail R.** said that she won't travel that route again as it forces her to travel against traffic to get to a "safe spot." **Daniela Diamante** said she has traveled this a few times when traveling eastbound in the bike lane and felt the angle was off somehow sending her the wrong way and causing her to feel somewhat uncomfortable. She said she would have especially felt uncomfortable if automobile traffic would have been present at the time. **Sam C.** said these were good comments and he would be bringing them back to their traffic department for further review. **Richard M.** said what triggered his response to this was that absence of a marked crosswalk does not indicate to motorists their need to respect a pedestrian or cyclist's right-of-way. **Susan Gamble** thanked the bike advocate group for their protected lanes work – particularly along the 6th Street & Granada route. She said this has changed her view on how she perceives bikes not only in a recreational or sport context, but also as a viable means of transportation which shares our roadways. **Sam C.** stated they have received a letter from the *Living Streets Alliance* along with about thirty comments stating their support of protected bike lanes.
- **ADOT Warehouse Update** - **Sam C.** explained there are three (3) ADOT warehouses - 140 W. 6th Street, 530 N. Stone Avenue, and 510 N. Stone Avenue (and 15 E. 6th Street). Two of the three structures have had asbestos and lead abatement done. Notably, the historic documentation of 510 N. Stone/15 E. 6th Street has not been completed. Demolition and abatement cannot move forward until

historic documentation is completed. This service has been contracted by Logan Simpson and is scheduled to be completed by July 7, 2014. Assuming abatement goes smoothly and is completed as scheduled, ADOT anticipates this work to be completed by late July 2014. **Sam C.** stated the idea is to clear all three sites at the same time. He provided the members with contact information for the ADOT representative explaining that- because these properties belong to ADOT- determination of what happens to them at this stage of the project lies with them. He suggested members bring any continuing concerns and questions to them. **Susan G.** asked, "What is the abatement process?" **Sam C.** explained that TDOT has contracted with ACT, a company that identifies and removes any hazardous materials such as lead or asbestos found in or around the three (3) subject properties. Once these hazardous materials are sufficiently removed and the properties considered safe, the demolition crew can proceed without fear of breathing in or being exposed to anything considered unsafe or dangerous. **Susan G.** said that she wanted to move on to the subject of property demolition. She asked if it would be possible to use money from an escrow fund containing an estimated \$200K (established over 10 years ago as part of the Master Plan) to make the structural improvements necessary for restoration of one or more of the historic warehouses ADOT has slated for demolition. She said she felt that, because it is the role of the CAC to try to save as many historic buildings along the roadway as possible, alternatives to simply auctioning off and ultimately raising these buildings should be further explored. **Tom Fischer** explained the present deteriorated condition of these buildings and reiterated that TDOT does not own the buildings, ADOT does, and thus has the final say in the course of action taken. **Susan G.** said she would like to have a discussion with ADOT regarding the possibility of saving these buildings. **Tom F.** said they have been asking for direction from the CAC on this matter for months. **Daniela Diamente** asked when the historic evaluation of the property at 530 N. Stone was conducted. **Sam C.** said this evaluation was done internally. **Daniela D.** said her neighborhood group has been in discussions about this and believes salvaging items from this building and incorporating them into the Deck Park nearby would be a great way to honor their memory. She said she also thinks doing so would give the CAC group something to "hang their hat on" in retrospect. She asked when determination of what items could be used could take place and how this might be accomplished before the company doing the demolition completes their work? **Tom F.** said the materials removed would need to be paid for and reminded members that when contractors bid on these buildings, they're bidding based on what they can salvage and sell. He said that many of the steel beams are in good condition but it's important to determine how these would be used. **Sam C.** agreed the effort would be worthwhile and suggested TDOT send structural engineers in to evaluate and make recommendation for their possible future use. **Tom F.** asked the members present if any of them would be interested in visiting the site and when? **Mary Ellen Wooten, Gail Ryser, Daniela Diamente** and several others indicated interest and **Sam C.** said he will send out a Doodle Poll to determine the best date and time to do this. **Kylie Walzak** asked if private citizens can approach Greg Rodriguez at ADOT for making amendments to the contractual agreement with regard to salvage materials. **Tom F.** said a private citizen can approach ADOT with a request which will be forwarded to the contractor for consideration. **Carlos Lozano** asked about the possibility of using salvaged bricks for sound walls. **Sam** said that the walls are all cast in place concrete, but salvaged bricks would work well as pavers. **Susan G** said if you fire the bricks, the mortar will fall off. **Carlos L.** mentioned the Broadway terminus and the pocket park on 6th Avenue and 7th Street where he thought salvaged brick could be used. There was additional conversation regarding other areas for potential use of salvaged materials. **Susan G.** clarified that the next steps for her would be to provide the letter regarding the re-use of escrow funds and asked what the CAC thought about the idea. **Gene Caywood** asked if the letter could be provided to the members so they could have a chance to review prior to commenting on it. **Tom F.** confirmed that the potential motion from the CAC is to *seek funding from the Warehouse Arts District escrowed money to preserve the property at 15 E. 6th Street.* **Tom F.** also said that if the warehouse can be preserved, it becomes a public asset and the members need to consider what the purpose of the warehouse would be in that scenario.

- Property Acquisition Update – Sam Credio** told the CAC members that the Downtown Links Corridor map had been updated to reflect the proposed right-of-way lines. As the design moves closer to 90% completion, they are better able to define what the project needs are. The map includes information on proposed right-of-way, proposed drainage easements (DE), proposed temporary construction easements (TCE) and proposed slope easements (SE). **Sam C.** said that the priority acquisition properties have been identified and *Tierra Right of Way Services* is working with those owners on what the next steps are. HDR is finalizing the right-of-way plans, which will be included with the 90% design submittal, and includes the final legal descriptions and parcel maps of affected properties. **Sam C.** provided contact information for *Tierra Right of Way Services* and advised members to call them if they had any questions regarding impacts to their property. **Richard Mayers** commented that it would have been useful information to know what some of the implications would be from requested changes the CAC members made as it related to pedestrian and/or bike lanes and walkways. The result is additional property acquisition, especially along 7th Avenue. He wished the CAC members had been provided that information when they were making decisions and requesting changes. Richard noted that because the MUP path was moved to the east side of the road, 7th Street Daniela D asked if there was a specific building or buildings that are being demolished because of the MUP path. **Sam C.** said yes, buildings west of Ferro are impacted. **Tom F.** noted that the design has gone from a line on a map to a design that includes drainage, sidewalks, bike lanes, landscaping and other amenities. **Sam C.** said that he does not think the CAC's requested change of the MUP location along 7th Avenue necessitated a change in property acquisition. **Richard M.** said there are tradeoffs, and the CAC does not know what they are unless they're told. There was additional conversation related to the footprint of the roadway. **Tom F.** said this project is still within the limits of what Mayor and Council approved. **Richard M.** then asked for a definition of the term *limits of the project*. There was also discussion related to project/roadway alignment and at what point a possible change becomes so big that it necessitates a change in the original alignment. **Sam C.** made a clarification to Richards's comments agreeing that the team would make sure the CAC members understood all potential implications that changes to the design might represent. **Gene Caywood** said he would like to meet at HDR to look at the plans of the 7th Street area to see if there might be some way to amend the medians or MUP path to save impacts on some of the property.
- Next Steps – Sam Credio** said he thought Wheat Design Group was far enough along in the design of the Deck Plaza that it would be a good time for the Deck Plaza Review subcommittee to meet again. He also said that TDOT has spent some time internally looking at the intersection of 6th Street and 7th Avenue and he would like input from the Bicycle Pedestrian subcommittee. He would also like an opportunity to get feedback from them regarding 7th Street HAWK crossing at the railroad track and the 9th Avenue MUP near the Deck Plaza. Sam announced that they expect finalized 90% design plans by the end of the summer 2014. He also said that the Real Estate department has begun working with property owners and reminded the members that there are several partial property acquisitions that need to be finalized and included with the 90% design submittal. **Susan G.** said that the area near 7th Avenue/7th Street is lacking infrastructure. **Susan G.** asked what level of responsibility this project has towards that. **Sam C.** responded that the street lighting will be LED, similar to what was installed along St. Mary's for Phase II of the Downtown Links project. The direction they received from their electric shop regarding the MUP and Deck Plaza lighting is that they don't like pedestal style lighting because it gets vandalized. Sam said they are looking at 12 foot – 15 foot tall street lamp style lights. So as not to mislead the public, they cannot use something that replicates history. **Sam C.** has asked Monrad and HDR to suggest some lighting features that can be presented to the CAC for discussion. **Susan G.** then asked about the 6th Avenue overpass and 6th Avenue underpass. She wanted to know what was going to be done about stink abatement and also, said that the 6th Avenue underpass is in bad shape structurally, and she wonders where taking care of that fits in to this project. **Tom F.** said that the underpass was power washed about 3 months ago. The stink is from urine. **Brent Kirkman** added that there is a really old sewer line that runs along that area that could be contributing to the smell. He said they may be able to address some of the problems at the sewer manholes. **Tom F.** added that since the underpass is part of the Warehouse

Arts District, there had been internal conversation about using some of the escrowed \$200,000 to refurbish the underpass by sandblasting, painting and replacing the lights. **Susan G** asked how to recommend additional conversation regarding the underpass. **Tom F.** said it should be included in the letter WAMO is preparing. There was additional conversation regarding the structural stability of the 6th Avenue underpass. **Gene C.** asked if cameras could be installed between the new overpass and the old underpass. **Sam C.** said they had actually already talked about that with the electric department. **Susan G.** said that lights can be caged to keep them from getting vandalized. We need to make the underpass more inviting. **Michael Keith** said he wants to reiterate for the second time that this is the most horrendous bridge he has ever seen. **Sam C.** asked him to keep in mind that these are just lines on paper. The design artist will provide a bridge design.

- **Subcommittee Reports**

Public Art Review subcommittee – Mary Ellen Wooten said they are in the middle of the selection process for the design team artist and the sculpture artist who will go with the Deck Plaza. They have selected three finalists for each of those opportunities. They will interview the design team artist next week. There is a 13-member panel with good representation from the neighborhoods, artists from the Warehouse District and people from this subcommittee. She hopes to take the recommendation for the design team artist to the Public Art Committee in July 2014 and potentially have them under contract in August 2014. The recommendation still needs to run through the Council office and the City Manager’s Office.

Bicycle Pedestrian Review Subcommittee – Kylie Walzak said they have nothing to report. Will meet as a subcommittee as needed.

Deck Park Review – Daniela Diamente said she is waiting on direction from the team about when to meet.

RTA/VA – Brent Kirkman said that they have received the 75% comments from TDOT and the Union Pacific Rail Road. They anticipate being prepared to meet with the subcommittee in the near future.

6. Next Steps

- **Items for future meetings**
 1. **Letter from WAMO**
 2. **Tour of ADOT properties**
 3. **Deck Plaza subcommittee meeting**
 4. **Bicycle/Pedestrian subcommittee meeting**
 5. **Meet to discuss 7th Street/7th Avenue impacts**
- **Future meeting dates**

July 14, 2014

7. Call to the Audience

Karen Green, Dunbar Spring neighborhood, wants to thank Mary Ellen Wooten, her facilitation of the arts panel is astounding. Looking for 3D images on 6th Street and also past meeting minutes which she said she couldn’t find. 3D images of 6th Street facing east is so completely different than anything she could have imagined. Bigger than she thought. 3D images would have helped earlier in the discussion to convey the sense of scale.

Natasha Winnick, Dunbar Spring neighborhood, discussions that happened tonight should have happened months ago. We need to prioritize saving materials from these buildings as part of the history that we are losing for this project. Understands that all that matters to the city is dollars and cents, but it is more than dollars and cents. It will look worse if you spend no money to save any materials out of these buildings and they all get demolished. It will show that the city, TDOT and this committee have a sense of heart in memorializing these buildings in whatever way is possible. So when I hear you say that we can’t save the material because they’re wood and when we take off the plywood they’re going to get

splintery – that's part of what old material is. They are rough, they show the history of the building, they show the history of the time period that these building were presented to the community, and we need to honor that history or we lose it. This is the time to take action. Happy that we're having a tour and happy that we're having a meeting to see what's happening at 7th Street, 7th Avenue and 6th Street because we should not be taking lightly the demolition of these buildings. These are serious, heavy decisions. Once the buildings are gone, you cannot get them back. Nobody will ever build in the same way these buildings were constructed. They are from a time period when labor cost less than materials and now we're totally reversed. Glad these discussions are happening now and she hopes everyone on the CAC takes it very seriously.

8. Adjournment at 7:30 p.m.