

**DOWNTOWN LINKS CITIZEN ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MEETING SUMMARY**

Monday, February 9, 2015

Accepted and Approved by the Downtown Links CAC members on May 18, 2015

FROM: TDOT Project Manager Tom Fisher

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Chair, Eugene W. Caywood, Old Pueblo Trolley
Vice Chair, John Burr, Armory Park Neighborhood Association
Carlos Lozano, Tucson - Pima County Historical Commission
Daniela Diamente, Dunbar Spring Neighborhood Association
Daniel Matlick, Fourth Avenue Merchants Association
Korey Kruckmeyer, Pie Allen Neighborhood Association
Kylie Walzak, Tucson-Pima Bicycle Advisory Committee
Mary Ellen Wooten, Tucson-Pima Arts Council
Michael Keith, Downtown Tucson Partnership
Susan Gamble, Warehouse Arts Management Association

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT:

VACANT, Iron Horse Neighborhood Association
Gail Ryser, Barrio Anita Neighborhood Association
Kristi Frank, El Presidio Neighborhood Association
Richard Mayers, West University Neighborhood Association
Susan Marshall, Citizen Transportation Advisory Committee

PROJECT TEAM PRESENT:

Brent Kirkman, HDR Engineering, Inc.
Joan Beckim, Kaneen Advertising & Public Relations
Kathy Jirschele, Kaneen Advertising & Public Relations
Laura Mielcarek, Wheat Design Group
Sam Credio, City of Tucson Department of Transportation (TDOT)
Tom Fisher, City of Tucson Department of Transportation (TDOT)

1. Meeting Called to Order

Quorum confirmed. **Gene Caywood** called the meeting to order at 5:32 p.m.

2. Introduction of Committee Members and Staff

CAC and Project Team Members introduced themselves.

3. Approval of Meeting Minutes

The minutes of Monday, January 12, 2015, were unanimously approved as written.

4. Announcements

Daniel Matlick introduced Fred Ronstadt as the new executive director of the Fourth Avenue Merchants Association.

Carlos Lozano said he checked with Jonathan Mabry about the city's guidelines on historic lighting, which are in draft form but appear to address issues raised by the committee.

5. Reports and Presentations

Staff Reports and Presentations to DLCAC: (All presentation material can be viewed here: www.downtownlinks.info)

- **Deck Plaza – Laura Mielcarek** provided handouts that featured a 3D perspective of the Deck Plaza, shade structure options, paint and acrylic color palette, examples of possible site furnishings which included options for benches, bollards, bike racks and a water bottle filling/pet station unit. **Laura M.** said the color pallet was chosen based on butterfly pollinators indigenous to the area and provided a handout showing potential plant material and color pallet based on that. The possibility of restroom type and location, along with whether it was feasible, based on cost, was discussed. The design does not yet include restrooms. **Tom Fisher** said that a fairly standard park restroom would cost \$200,000-\$300,000 **Tom F.** also noted that The Audubon Society has a Pima County approved composting toilet, and that the project team would continue investigating the possibility of having a composting toilet. However, because the project is on a tight budget and the Regional Transportation Authority probably won't fund a restroom as part of a transportation project, **Tom F.** suggested that a place for a restroom or composting toilet be identified on the Deck Plaza plans but that that feature be put on a list of future additions. **Laura M.** said there is room for a small composting toilet and a small shed on the northeast corner of the Deck Plaza. **Daniela Diamante** said that the restroom/composting toilet could be an opportunity to partner with Watershed Management Group or neighborhood groups, and added that there is still discussion about who will maintain the facility. **Daniela** also said that since this is a deck, there is only one logical space for the toilets and that a typical parks and rec toilet is not appropriate for this space. **Gene Caywood** suggested stubbing out the sewer and water lines now. Brent responded that the project would still incur the cost. **Laura M.** said her team would next be getting together with structural engineers about water harvesting, including from the shade structure; meeting with the Deck Plaza public artist; color schemes, form liners and figuring out lighting options. **Daniela D.** asked about plans to reconfigure the access lane/alley north of the Deck Plaza. **Laura M.** asked where food trucks servicing the Deck Plaza would park. **Sam Credio** presented the group with two design concept plan illustrations for 9th Avenue and Ash Avenue. One design concept provides through access between 9th Avenue and Ash Avenue. The second design concept illustrates a dead-end at both 9th Avenue and Ash Avenue with vehicle turn-around area provided for both. The members participated in extensive conversation related to elements of both concepts. **Sam C.** told the committee that the area needed drainage structures (grates) and that the plan includes a box culvert. **Daniela D.** asked whether curb cuts and rain gardens along 9th Avenue could divert some of the runoff and lessen the need for grates. **Brent Kirkman** said the grates were needed for massive storms. **Sam C.** said food trucks could park along the west side of 9th Ave. **Kylie Walzak** asked how cyclists traveling on 9th Avenue would get to the Deck Plaza. **Brent K.** said there would be an access ramp that had yet to be designed. **Tom F.** said parking on 5th Street was an issue that needed to be resolved because it is occupied all day by people who work downtown and the concerns of the neighborhood and area businesses needed to be addressed. **Sam C.** asked the committee for its recommendation on the configuration of 9th Avenue and Ash Avenue because he said uncertainty

was holding the project back. **Daniela D.** said she was concerned about making a recommendation because the Deck Plaza subcommittee had not considered the drainage issue. **Sam C.** assured the committee that with either option, the project team could make the drainage work and that any changes to the Deck Plaza would be minimal. **Kylie Walzak motioned to eliminate the “through access” concept plan and move forward with fine-tuning the concept for the 9th Avenue and Ash Avenue dead-end option. Daniela Diamente seconded the motion. The motion was passed by a unanimous voice vote.**

- **Bicycle/Pedestrian – Sam Credio** showed the committee the concept plan for the **6th Avenue and 7th Street intersection.** 7th Street will no longer be a through street, but motorists will be able to turn north onto Ferro Ave. The plan includes making the intersection of 6th Avenue/7th Street smaller and the 13-foot-wide landscape area on the west side of 6th Avenue, south of 7th Street, split in order to have landscaping on both sides of the sidewalk. Pedestrian and bicycle travel options from the HAWK crossing; sidewalk widths, landscape areas and; round-a-bout cycle travel movement options were all discussed. The walkway on the west side of 6th Avenue will not be changed and although biking on sidewalks is not permitted in the city, **Sam C.** said there was a possibility that that could be changed for this particular area. He also said the project team was working with the TDOT Bike and Pedestrian Program to improve the design, including spacing bollards at the west end of 7th Street farther apart than 5-feet. **Brent K.** said that HDR is working with a cycling specialist out of their Denver office, who is guiding them on the best infrastructure for cyclists. **Sam C.** said EXO Roast Coffee had expressed interest in creating a parklet on the northwest corner of the intersection. **Kylie W.** praised the plan as a “really collaborative effort.” John B asked about stamped concrete crosswalks which would help signify the bike/ped path and also asked what the cost difference was between the two concepts. Brent said he thought the cost difference would only be a couple thousand dollars. **Kylie Walzak motioned to approve the design concept with the discussed changes added to the plan. Daniela Diamente seconded the motion. The motion was passed by a unanimous voice vote.**
- **Sam Credio** showed the committee the concept plan for **7th Avenue/ Union Pacific Railroad/Maclovio Barraza Parkway intersection.** 7th Avenue will be closed to vehicles north of the railroad tracks. A HAWK signal will allow pedestrians and bicyclists to safely cross the parkway. A 12-foot-wide multi-use path crosses the railroad tracks and extends along the west side of 7th Avenue southwest of the tracks. **Brent K.** noted that any traffic on that southern segment of 7th Avenue will probably cross over onto the multi-use path when turning around, but traffic is expected to be minimal because 7th Avenue is closed at the railroad tracks. **Sam C.** indicated where the train gates will be located and added that there won’t be a lot of improvements to 7th Street south of the railroad, however, they do plan to channelize bicycle and pedestrian traffic as much as possible taking in to consideration dumpster and loading dock location. **Sam C.** also noted that the “zig-zag” crossing of the HAWK was purposeful and used as a means to slow down pedestrians and bicyclists. **Gene Caywood** expressed concern about first responders not being able to access emergency situations if the underpasses are flooded and 7th Avenue is closed at the railroad tracks. **Sam C.** said in extreme emergencies, it will be possible for first responders to cross the tracks at 7th Avenue. **Daniela Diamente made a motion to approve the plans with minor changes discussed/requested by the members. Michael Keith seconded the motion. The motion was passed by a unanimous voice vote.**
- **Sam Credio** reviewed the design concept plan for **9th Avenue and Franklin Street,** detailing the location of the MUP, landscaping areas, raised curb and access ramps. There was extensive discussion among the members related to the pork-chop located at the Church Avenue/Franklin Street/9th Avenue intersection. There will be two-way traffic on 9th Avenue between 6th Street and Franklin Street. The city will need to reclaim some of the right of way on the east side of 9th Avenue for a multi-use path and parking. The most undefined area is the “pork chop” island at

9th Avenue/Franklin Street and Church Avenue. **Michael Keith** said he wanted the project team to consider the traffic impact of expected development near the intersection and adjust the project design to accommodate more traffic. **Sam C.** said traffic impact studies would be done when the new developments required them. **Tom F.** said the project design was a relatively short-term undertaking that could not accommodate future developments’ “too many unknowns.” He said he would work with property owners, developers and the neighborhood to ensure circulation and minimize conflict. **Sam C.** said he would also talk to the city traffic experts about area traffic projections. In a response to a question about signalization of this intersection, Brent said the intersection will remain a four-way stop. **Kylie W.** said the plan for the “pork chop” preserved safe options for more confident and less confident cyclists. **Kylie Walzak motioned to approve the plans with the points discussed, keeping the functionality the committee wants for the ultimate pork-chop movement and keeping in mind future development in the area. John Burr seconded the motion. The outcome was unclear after the voice vote. The chair asked for a show of hands, which indicated a tie vote – 4 “aye” and 4 “no”. The chair used his vote to break the tie and voted “aye” for the motion. The motion passed 5-4 in favor.**

- **Brent Kirkman** showed the committee the plans for the **Maclovio Barraza Parkway and the 5th Avenue** link to explain why the intersection sight distance makes left turns from the link onto the parkway unsafe and not feasible. The speed limit on the parkway will be 30 mph, which means it must be designed for 35 mph. A motorist attempting to turn left from the link onto the parkway needs to be able to make eye contact with southbound motorists 412 feet away, and the parkway bridge over 6th Avenue obstructs that sight line. Left-turning truck drivers have an even longer sight line – 628 feet, which the bridge obstructs even more. **Brent K.** said that allowing left turns from the link to the parkway would require a left-turn lane. However, space requirements coupled with limited right-of-way because of the MSF building, the MUP path and the rail road, means the only way to provide a left-turn lane would be to remove a bike lane. There was substantial discussion regarding sight distance and left turn movements at the intersection. **Carlos Lozano** asked if left turns could be accommodated if the speed limit was reduced to 25 mph. **Brent K.** said trucks would still need a 529-foot sight line, which is not possible with the bridge over 6th Avenue. There was a question about the height of the bridge structure over 6th Avenue, and whether it could be lowered. **Sam C.** said the bridge could not be lowered because it already was the minimum required height above 6th Avenue and the multi-use path. **Carlos L.** asked if the elevation of the 5th Avenue link could be higher, but **Brent K.** said that could not be done with the funds available because part of the roadway was already there. **John Burr** asked whether cones, signs and safety personnel could be used during special events to allow left turns from and onto the 5th Avenue link. **Brent K.** said that might be possible on a temporary basis. **Tom Fisher** said the city could do a better job of providing way-finding signage to direct motorists to the 4th Avenue shopping district. **Gene Caywood** asked whether anyone wanted to make a motion regarding the plan for the parkway and 5th Avenue link. **John Burr made a motion to continue in the direction of finding a way that a temporary median could be used for individual events, but that it is more important to have bike lanes and pedestrian access than it is to put in left turn lanes. No-one seconded the motion. The design will move forward as planned.**

- **Subcommittee Reports**

- **Public Art Review – Mary Ellen Wooten** said the panel liked Simon Donovan and Ben Olmstead’s proposal for the retaining walls, elements of the bridge structure over Stone Avenue and fencing. The committee suggested native flowers and the rodeo as subject matter for the form liners. She said the committee also suggested depicting different transportation modalities in the fencing on the pedestrian bridge over Stone Avenue. She said she expected Donovan and Olmstead to have a more detailed proposal in about four

weeks. **Mary Ellen W.** also said the committee wanted to have a meeting for neighborhoods about the public art. She said she would be getting the Deck Plaza artists on contract and will be working with Joe O’Connell on the location for his piece. She said that she had met with the Barraza family in December and that the public art honoring Maclovio Barraza would incorporate mining but that it is too early to issue a call to artists for that. **Sam C.** said the project team is still looking at redesigning the Broadway/Barraza Parkway intersection, which could affect the Barraza public art, and that he hoped to have funding for constructing the intersection identified this month.

- **Deck Plaza Review** – already discussed.
- **Bicycle Pedestrian Review** – already discussed.
- **RTA/VA Review** – **John Burr** said he expected the committee to meet soon.

6. Next Steps

- **Sam C.** said he expected the 100% design in late March or early April. All comments would need to be addressed and all the utilities would need to sign off on the design before it could be biddable.
- Public open house should be scheduled in April or May.
- Property acquisition, utility work and coordination with UPRR is ongoing.
- Lighting
- Design of “pork chop” island at 9th Ave. and Franklin St.
- Design of Broadway/Barraza Parkway intersection.
- **Next meeting in April at a location to be announced.**

7. Call to the Audience

- No one spoke.

8. Adjournment at 7:45 p.m.