

DOWNTOWN LINKS CITIZEN ADVISORY COMMITTEE (DLCAC)  
DECK PLAZA REVIEW SUBCOMMITTEE  
MEETING MINUTES

Monday, December 8, 2014

*Accepted and Approved by the Downtown Links CAC  
Deck Plaza Review Subcommittee on January 26, 2015*

**FROM: TDOT Project Manager Tom Fisher**

**DECK PLAZA SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:**

**Chair**, Daniela Diamente, Dunbar Spring Neighborhood Association  
Kylie Walzak, Tucson-Pima Bicycle Advisory Committee  
Susan Gamble, Warehouse Arts Management Association

**DECK PLAZA SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT:**

None

**PROJECT TEAM PRESENT:**

Sam Credio, City of Tucson Department of Transportation  
Tom Fisher, City of Tucson Department of Transportation  
Brent Kirkman, HDR Engineering Inc.  
Jason Carlaftes, HDR Engineering  
Laura Mielcarek, Wheat Design Group  
Chelsea Marshall, Wheat Design Group  
Kathy Jirschele, Kaneen Advertising and Public Relations  
Lindsey Normoyle, Kaneen Advertising and Public Relations

**DOWNTOWN LINKS CAC MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Michael Keith, Downtown Tucson Partnership

**1. Meeting Called to Order**

Meeting called to order at 10:08 a.m. at Santa Theresa Tile Works, 440 N. 6th Avenue, Tucson, AZ.  
Quorum confirmed.

**2. Introduction of Committee Members and Staff**

Downtown Links CAC Deck Plaza Review Subcommittee and Project Team Members introduced themselves.

**3. Approval of Meeting Minutes from July 2, 2014**

Motion to approve the minutes of July 2, 2014 was made by Kylie Walzak and seconded by Susan Gamble. The motion passed with a voice vote of 3 to 0.

**4. Announcements**

Sam Credio announced that on December 16, 2014 the project team would be going in front of the Mayor and Council to give a general overview update of the project and get the final authority to acquire on properties. Sam explained that properties which only need a temporary construction easements still need to go through the process of the final authority to acquire.

#### **5. Staff Reports and Presentations to DLCAC Deck Plaza Review Subcommittee**

- **Laura Mielcarek** reviewed a prior rendering of the deck plaza concept that was included within the 90% submittal. She noted that there were very few changes made since the July meeting but one of the changes was that the basins had been enlarged. Additionally, the project team received some concerns from the Dunbar Spring neighborhood before the 90% submittal and those were addressed in the 90% submittal. **Laura M.** also explained that the artists that are selected are free to use their creativity to develop the art for the space, then **Sam Credio** added that the artist that was selected is Gregg Payne, from Prescott, and he's known for his large, interactive musical wind chimes. **Sam C.** updated everyone on what the next steps will be for the art process with Mr. Payne. There was discussion about possibly setting up an open house that would allow people to have a conversation with some of the artists before they draw their final plan for the art. **Sam C.** also shared that the project team would like to have a public open house for the project in early 2015. The artists would be included at the open house, giving the neighborhoods and the general public an opportunity to communicate directly with the artists. **Daniela Diamente** pointed out that the neighborhood has some concerns with the adjacent construction projects. **Sam C.** said before the members moved on to that topic, he wanted to address areas within the Deck Plaza that have been "tweaked". He wants the toolshed to be shown where it is on the plan, along with the water-bottle refill station, however, they are still trying to determine who will be responsible for maintenance. While the maintenance of the tool shed is not a big concern yet, the water-bottle refill station is. He explained that the plans show the water-bottle refill station draining into a gravel sump, but they have been informed that that is no longer acceptable, and that it needs to drain directly into the sewer system. It could be problematic depending on how far they would have to plumb it. Sam said they want to have it included, but they still need to work out the details. **Kylie Walzak** wanted to know if this was something required city-wide. **Sam C.** said that he thought it was. He added that the water that drains through the drinking fountain is technically considered graywater and it would need to go through the sewer system. **Tom Fisher** pointed to an area of land that is currently within city right-of-way which is just south of the gate to the Whistle Stop Depot and wanted to ask the group what they thought should happen with that area. There was discussion about the area. Next, the discussion led into whether the Deck Plaza would have restroom facilities. **Sam** said that restrooms are really more of a Parks and Recreation amenity and that the Deck Plaza isn't really a park. He added that at this time they are not going to propose any restroom facilities. Composting toilets came up within the discussion. **Tom F.** said that there is a lot that goes into maintenance of restrooms in terms of cost, safety, and sanitary issues, it will be challenging to get the police department and Parks and Recreation to maintain them. He also said he thought WAMO and the neighborhoods should take time to think about all the considerations involved with restrooms. **Daniela D.** said that for large special events, port-a-potties could be brought in. There was conversation about making facilities at the Citizen Warehouse available **Sam C.** said that ADOT still owns Citizens Warehouse and there were additional comments about what might happen with the building. **Laura M.** said that she can look into what the cost of a composting toilet would be. **Tom** said that he wasn't sure if the city code would allow for a composting toilet of public

facilities. He thought that the idea of having restrooms attached to Citizen's Warehouse was a great idea. There was additional conversation about the current restroom facilities located inside Citizen Warehouse. **Sam C.** reminded the members that budget is still a concern and they would have to get the cost of operation and maintenance for the facility. Laura mentioned that they would check into the cost of a composting toilet and that they could leave a space (place holder) in the plans to accommodate a one. **Tom** added that he didn't think a composting toilet would meet City codes and said that it would be good to think about putting in a sewer system. **Daniela D.** asked the team to check into the city code to see if it allows for a composting toilet and to look into the price of implementing one. She also wanted to see what can be done to support WAMO in their effort to try to secure the Citizens Warehouse so it could become a part of the Deck Plaza. **Daniela D.** said that it sounds like Sam will be looking into it anyway with the water in-fill station that's in the plans and she believes this is really an essential element to the plans. There was discussion about whether the City would construct a public restroom for the deck plaza, have it maintained for a couple of years, then turn it over to WAMO or one of the neighborhoods for maintenance. **Sam C.** answered and said that that would be a possibility, but the city gets a little nervous about that type of arrangement because, while Dunbar Spring is very active, you never know in perpetuity what will happen. **Laura M.** mentioned looking into how the water-bottle refilling station will be metered. **Daniela D.** confirmed that the plans showed the potential *location* of the water station and not that water-station itself was a potential, because the park needs water. **Laura M.** also pointed out two things that were not fully resolved before the 90% - one was the bollards, and the other was the railroad crossing area which still needs some refinement. **Sam C.** said that they have a solid design for south of the railroad track and thought they could continue that design through to the north end, especially when it comes to landscaping; this would aide in generating cohesiveness along the roadway from the north end to the south end. There was discussion about how to enter the deck plaza, especially for vehicular access. **Sam C.** asked the subcommittee if they want removable bollards and the committee was in favor of this idea. **Daniela D.** wanted to discuss not having the dead space behind the building (pointed to area on map) where Ash Avenue come along the retaining wall to the south of the existing building. Daniela went on to explain what some of the Dunbar Spring Neighborhood concerns were; contrary to what they were told, it's not actually needed for fire access, and there is not more than 150-feet needed, it's actually for the garbage access. **Daniela D.** said that what happens to this area is still unclear to here and she wants to make sure it does not become a dead space. She said there are two main factors – safety and comfort of everyone who wants to use the space. **Daniela D.** emphasized that they do not want another place in the neighborhood where people can camp out. **Sam C.** agreed that this area could become a dead space, and careful consideration needs to be taken with what is done with it. If they completely remove the roadway, then it will become a dead space. Even if they made it a pet path, with the exception of the users moving through, it would be a dead space. Sam added that if there was an access lane at least police could go through and monitor because there's access. If you block it off, then people could hang out. Sam went on to say that they need to find a balance. He also reminded the committee that Environmental Services was adamant about needing that lane in order to provide service to users along 9<sup>th</sup> Street and Ash Avenue. Sam thought they could work through the Fire Department access issues. **Brent K.** reminded Sam that the roadway is more than 200-feet, and they (Fire) won't back-up more than 150-feet, which is part of the national fire code. **Susan Gamble** questioned what happens east of Ash Avenue. **Laura M.** said that the roadway is a nice access point for pedestrians and bicyclists traveling from Stone Avenue that want to access the Deck Plaza. There was discussion about making the roadway a one-way road. **Sam C.** said that if they made the

roadway one-way, then they would likely have to make another one of the roads nearby, for instance 9<sup>th</sup> Street or Ash Avenue one-way as well. He added that 9<sup>th</sup> Street is pretty wide and they would like have it stay two-way and that Ash Avenue is a lot more narrow so that would be a better option for a one-way. He said that Environmental Services needs access from the right side of their vehicles in order to pick up the trash, meaning their vehicles would need to travel northbound on Ash Avenue. He added that Environmental Services would also need some way to turn around on Ash Avenue if they close off the roadway. Putting in a cul-de-sac at the end of Ash Avenue was suggested. An audience member said that the owner of the property on Ash Avenue is willing to take his garbage cans all the way to 5<sup>th</sup> Street for pick-up because he does not want the road to be a through-street. **Daniela D.** addressed the committee saying the needs of everyone need to be considered. She asked how to address the needs of Environmental Service who need access once, maybe twice a week. She talked about continuity with landscaping and maintaining a constant flow through what is now the roadway in the design plans, she mentioned figuring out what could be done with this space to give it a purpose. She suggested lighting options and wanted clarification on where people would be traveling to/from along the roadway. **Kylie W.** said that she couldn't understand why cars would be traveling on the south-end of 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue. She added, there isn't a reason why cars would be traveling that way unless they happen to be one the residents that live in a couple of units off of 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue, she thought that if they were driving there, then they would be driving to go and spend time at the deck park. **Kylie W.** mentioned Davis Street near Davis Elementary School where the roadway was closed off to vehicles. **Laura M.** reminded the committee that the road will provide a place for food trucks to park during larger events. **Daniela D.** asked for clarification – is what we are hearing is that their needs to be through traffic? Daniela again stated that she wants to honor the neighborhood needs. She does not want dead space, it can be used by pedestrians and bicyclist and that we also meet necessary codes as it relates to access, but at the same time not encouraging cars to drive through the area. **Kylie W.** said that currently the individuals who use this space are employees of the City that park nearby and walk to work. **Sam C.** then addressed how parking would be enforced in this area. He added that signing it “one-way” doesn't insure that people will abide by the signs. **Chelsea M** talked about how the MUP comes together and how they could maintain a continuous flow for bicyclists traveling to and from the Deck Plaza. **Sam C.** said our goal needs to be finding the right balance between the MUP path connections but also provide access for the services while still honoring the needs of the neighborhood. Daniela commented that is the compromise that needs to be made with the idea that it needs to be something that is safe and added that to her, south on 9th Street and north on Ash Avenue makes sense, but they need to hear the finite measurements and what the restrictions are. There was discussion about the 20-foot roadway width. **Brent Kirkman** explained that there is massive culvert behind the wall and that if there is no road there, the only thing that can be placed on top of it would be dirt. There was discussion about the total width of the roadway and how much space was needed for right-of-way and what would be left over for landscaping. There was also discussion about how the MUP should continue beyond Ash Avenue to provide better connection for bicyclist and pedestrians, but more importantly that it is safer to be on a MUP rather than a roadway. **Tom F.** said that they will need to keep the roadway whatever distance aligns with the fire code. **Daniela D.** asked the project team to provide confirmation of what the distance needs to be for fire access. There was further discussion about fire access and the roadway. **Sam C.** said that they are going to double check what the distance from 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue south is and confirm with the Fire Department that they can back out. They will then go to Environmental Services to confirm what they need in order to provide service between Ash Avenue and 9<sup>th</sup> Street, at a minimum, and

then look at how the MUP path can be connected from Stone to the Deck Plaza. There was a question from the audience regarding the Ash Avenue property owner's willingness to take his trash to 5<sup>th</sup> Street. Sam said that is fine, but if the property is sold, and the new homeowner is unable to drag his trash all the way to 5<sup>th</sup>, then they have a problem. Sam also said that they will obtain input from Tucson Police Department (TPD) about how best to patrol the area to keep undesirables out. **Tom F.** mentioned a strategy called *Design Prevention through Environmental Design* where the police department participates with the design to make sure it's fairly easy for them to serve the safety needs of communities. Lighting between Ash Avenue and 9<sup>th</sup> Street was discussed by the committee. **Daniel D.** said she is excited to set up a meeting with Mary Ellen Wooten in order to meet with the selected artists. **Laura M.** said that electric outlets were included in the design. She also said that they would look into increasing shade near the amphitheater area and discussed where other shade options were added, but also said they need to consider budget. **Daniela D.** asked a question about the bike racks and wanted to know about location and emphasized that they need to be accessible. **Kylie W.** asked a question about the materials that were being used in the design. The location of the public art was discussed. **Laura M.** discussed larger terrace seating that was added to the design, and brought up a discussion about water harvesting (that was suggested from the Dunbar Spring Neighborhood). **Daniela D.** commented that it would be beneficial if they were in communication with Brad at Watershed Management Group. There was discussion about areas where water was directed with drainage. **Laura M.** also brought up non-Tucson basin plants that were still included in the design, as this was also a concern from the Dunbar Spring Neighborhood. **Chelsea Marshall** talked about reflective heat, restricted root-volume and how they need to pick plants that are incredibly draught-tolerant, hearty and non-invasive. She explained why a couple of the plants that are non-native were selected for use in the planters. **Daniela D.** said she would be happy to meet with Sky and Chelsea to discuss the non-native plants. **Laura M.** mentioned having locks on the electrical outlets and there was more discussion about this topic. There was additional discussion by the group about composting toilets and someone gave an example of one that's within the state of Arizona. There was also discussion regarding production equipment that may be needed for special events. **Tom F.** pointed out an area from the Deck Plaza that will lead to the Whistle Stop Depot and mentioned including a gate in the design plans between the deck plaza and the Whistle Stop Depot. There was discussion about maintaining continuity with landscaping in this area. There was also discussion about events that cater to both venues at the Deck Plaza and the Whistle Stop Depot. There needs to be further discussion regarding both areas needing to be ADA compliant. There was discussion about parking and permitted parking in the area of 9<sup>th</sup> Street and 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue, signage, and parking enforcement. There was also discussion about people working downtown using the area for parking. There does not need to be more permitted parking, rather, there needs to be a 2-hour limit parking restriction. She did question whether Park Tucson would be able to enforce it. **Sam C.** said they are working with Park Tucson as it relates to parking, not just for Downtown Links, but for the whole area. Michael K. suggested a 6-foot path, gated for golf carts in order to accommodate set-up during events. He also questioned the option for access to Citizen Warehouse by coming off Stone and then just turning around and heading back to Stone Avenue. **Sam C.** said that they have a wide access lane for fire, but he wasn't sure if there was enough space to come off of Stone Avenue, turn around, and head back to Stone Avenue. He explained the route that the multi-use path takes and said that there ends up being just a small space between the multi-use path and the Union Pacific Railroad. The committee requested to see a larger corridor map and Sam directed them online.

**6. Next Steps**

**Items for Future Meetings – Sam C.** re-capped for the committee what items the project team would need to look into further. Some of the topics discussed were:

- Restrooms (maintenance and how that impacts the budget)
- Access Lane (measuring and checking with TFD and ES)
- The multi-use path from Stone Ave. to the deck plaza
- Input from TPD, Fire and Environmental Services
- Lighting & Parking
- Bike path locations
- Non-native plants/planters
- Looking for a location for bike racks
- The electrical analysis and how the deck plaza should be equipped for special events
- Discussion with Watershed Management Group
- Looking into making the access lane roadway a cul-de-sac

**Confirm Future Meeting Dates –** The next Downtown Links CAC Deck Plaza Review Subcommittee meeting will be held on Monday, January 26, 2015 at 10:30 a.m. at Santa Theresa Tile Works at 440 N. 6th Avenue, Tucson, AZ.

**7. Adjournment** at 11:40 a.m.