



**Minutes
City Council's
Central City District Committee of the Whole
November 16, 2006**

Minutes of the Tempe City Council's Central City District Committee of the Whole, held on November 16, 2006, 3:30 p.m., in the City Council Chambers, Tempe City Hall, 31 E. Fifth Street, Tempe, Arizona.

Committee Members Present:

Mayor Hugh Hallman
Vice Mayor Hut Hutson
Councilmember P Ben Arredondo
Councilmember Barbara J. Carter
Councilmember Shana Ellis
Councilmember Mark W. Mitchell
Councilmember Onnie Shekerjian

Mayor Hallman called the meeting to order at 3:30 p.m.

City of Tempe RFP Process and Procedures

Mayor Hallman summarized that two referrals were made for this topic: (1) the visioning issue after the process failed on the property on the west side of the Tempe Center for the Arts, and (2) the RFP processing and procedure development to Vice Mayor Hutson's Finance, Economy and Veterans Affairs Committee. This is the beginning of a discussion on how to create public processes as well as to reexamine our vision to be sure we are on course.

Chris Salomone, Community Development Manager, summarized that the RFP process being discussed is about significant city-owned real estate, not about all the other things done by RFP for consultants and materials, etc. A number of these have been done in the past, i.e. Fifth and Farmer, Pier 202. Staff is seeking direction to revisit the vision for the property west of the Center for the Arts, create policy options around the land use in advance of issuing RFPs in the future, get the appropriate input from committees and commissions, and return to Council in, perhaps, a joint session for discussion.

Mayor Hallman suggested that this group, the Central City District Committee of the Whole, talk about the vision and policy options. He summarized that in 1999, a consultant developed a map of the Rio Salado park system and there were a number of public meetings and working group options. Once the Arts Center was placed on the lakeshore, it was on property that had previously been designated for outdoor/recreational types of activities. Council didn't go back and change

that vision or make sure the community vision fit. This committee should participate in a process that would ensure that we are on the right track and get a broad consensus that the property west of the Center for the Arts be properly visioned as arts-related. That's one-third of the property. The second one-third consists of the Priest Yard and the connecting property and we need to determine what options are available. The other one-third is the property on the west side of Priest which still has the vision of being youth and amateur sports. He suggested convening a joint Council, Rio Salado Commission, Parks Board, and Municipal Arts Commission meeting to begin a process to transition that vision, to make sure the community is on board with that, to make sure our boards and commission feel part of that, and to make sure the vision is an element of developing the policy.

Mayor Hallman continued that Vice Mayor Hutson's committee could concurrently develop the actual processes, i.e. putting that together in an RFP, whether or not to include boards and commission input in the specific RFP with respect to a piece of property that has been visioned, and whether or not to include public input. Once an RFP has gone out, what level of public participation should be developed in deciding which proposals are the right ones to consider? Finally, once the developer is selected, what role should the community play?

City Manager Will Manley felt that the problem from the beginning was a time constraint. We were told that these leases were up for grabs and that we were being played against one city for another. We have been in that situation before and one of our strengths as city staff is that we respond quickly in competition for economic development opportunities. In this instance, we were played unfairly by the entities involved.

Councilmember Carter added that in 2000-2002, Council was still meeting with the Rio Salado Commission and maybe that's where we start now.

Mayor Hallman added that because the Arts Center is there, the Municipal Arts Commission and the Park Board also have a role.

Councilmember Arredondo questioned having staff go back and pull out old maps. It doesn't make a difference what the old Council did, but it makes a difference what this Council wants. The site may have changed. He felt the DTC, the Chamber of Commerce, and the TCVB also need to be involved.

Mayor Hallman responded that staff doesn't need to reinvent the wheel, but we all need to refresh our memories.

Councilmember Shekerjian added that she would like to see what has been done. We also need to be clear about what the public's input means. There's nothing worse than being asked to give input and having an idea that the input will make the decision, when the reality is that it simply might be advisory.

Mayor Hallman clarified that it's important to understand that the community input helps Council craft that vision, but there are constraints Council has to deal with that ultimately may require moving in a different direction. His goal would be to have staff, over the next 30 days or so, detail the processes from the past to whatever has been done with timelines and match it up with whatever the visioning elements were.

Councilmember Carter agreed that the needs of the community change and Council makes decisions based on input.

Councilmember Arredondo stated that staff could also look at the options for the Priest Yard and the Priest corridor is where the money will be generated. Staff should also see what we can do with SRP on the 20 acres.

There was discussion of the proposed meeting, on-site or off-site in December or January, on a Council meeting day or a Saturday, at the Library or the Pyle Center.

Councilmember Shekerjian stated that she heard from commissioners who had believed they would be the ones making the decision as to the developer. Their input is very important. Unfortunately, they didn't have all the information that Council used in order to make a decision. It is respectful to make sure they clearly understand who's going to make the decision and their part in the process. They are there in an advisory capacity. In preparation for the meeting, she also asked that staff provide to the commission members whatever materials will be used.

GOAL: Mayor Hallman summarized that the goal is to confirm or change the vision. The property from the railroad bridge to the Center for the Arts is designated as an arts event park. That is done. We are now looking at the property from the west side of the Center for the Arts all the way to the end of the property south of Rio Salado. The Municipal Arts Commission, Rio Salado Commission, Parks Board, and the DTC, TCVB and Chamber will be included in this process, as well as a general call to the public for anyone who wants to participate. With the community's help, we will develop a renewed confidence in the vision and use that vision to develop an RFP ultimately to move forward on any of these uses.

CONSENSUS: Staff was directed to detail the processes from the past to whatever has been done with timelines and match it up with whatever the visioning elements were. Staff will organize this joint meeting with the Council, Municipal Arts Commission, Rio Salado Commission, Parks Board, DTC, Chamber of Commerce, TCVB, and the public for a Saturday in mid to late January.

Public Appearances

Gary Goran, Tempe. He stated he was confused about this. If the group presents what has been done, isn't that going to imply that the Council is just asking the community and commissions to make little changes to what has already been decided, rather than coming up with a new idea? It would be important to encourage new ideas and not to feel restricted.

Mayor Hallman responded that things change and that's why this is being opened up. There may be elements of it that still work, however.

Margaret Stout, Tempe. She provided an alternative interpretation for the disconnect. She didn't think there is anyone who serves on a board or commission that thinks they have some kind of decision-making power. They instead anticipate having the opportunity to deliberate together, think about specific issues under their charge, and give a consolidated consensus recommendation to Council. The disconnect in the last process was that the Arts Commission

and Rio Salado Commission were not given the opportunity to present that consensus opinion to Council.

Mayor Hallman responded that he had plenty of people telling him who should be chosen.

Councilmember Shekerjian added that she had over a half dozen commissioners say they would resign if a certain developer wasn't chosen, and pressure for her to back their choice. Part of the problem was that it wasn't fully explained that Council valued the brainstorming and the input, but ultimately there was a lot of information that commissioners were not be privy to.

Councilmember Ellis added that because the RFP was on the street, Council did not attend that meeting and have interaction, but they were all given the DVD and watched it multiple times. The way this is being structured now with the Council and the boards and commissions being in the same room should alleviate a lot of that. People thought they weren't heard and Council didn't listen, but Council did watch the DVD repeatedly.

Mayor Hallman added that it was the debate and discussion of the elements that Council was looking for and Council failed to convey that. People were instead trying to give Council their decision. He added that there was also a disconnect about how staff was directed to consider this and so the direction staff gave to the boards and commissions got in the way of the process.

Scott Burge, Tempe. He thought everything Council was doing was fine. He wondered about the scope, however. The commissions really have no input as to the selection of consultants for doing studies. He would be surprised to find two things in that study that were worth bringing forward. When an RFP goes out for a study, it would be nice to have the commission at least identify things that should be in the study.

Mayor Hallman added that it should be helpful not to bring someone in to develop the vision. We know enough to craft the vision into an RFP now.

The public appearance session was closed.

Councilmember Carter thanked Chris Salomone for bringing this idea forward, staff for their work, citizens for their input, and Council for stopping the process and backing up to re-look at it and do it right.

Mayor Hallman added that getting this right is critically important. We have a very large investment. He is convinced that when developers respond to an RFP, they ought to have done enough research about the piece of property to understand that, for example in this instance, it was not an RFP for a gigantic residential project, and yet we got responses that looked like that. Nobody considered the noise impact and our relationship with Sky Harbor and the DNL contours across this property, and that spoke volumes to him about the particular respondents.

Councilmember Shekerjian added that Tempe is at the epicenter of the valley. The property next to the Arts Center is a very special piece of property and she is confident that once we have clear definition we will have plenty of people coming forward wanting to implement the community's vision as we articulate it.

Meeting adjourned at 4:33 p.m.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Connie Krosschell", written over a horizontal line.

Connie Krosschell
Acting City Clerk