



Minutes City Council's Transportation, Housing and Environment Committee January 22, 2008

Minutes of the meeting of the City Council's Transportation, Housing and Environment Committee held on Tuesday, January 22, 2008, 3:00 p.m., in the 3rd Floor Conference Room, Tempe City Hall, 31 E. 5th Street, Tempe, Arizona.

Committee Members Present:

Councilmember Shana Ellis, Chair
Vice Mayor Hut Hutson

City Staff Present:

Chris Anaradian, Dev Svcs Mgr
Angel Carbajal, Asst. Chief of Police
Dawn Coomer, Sr. LRT Planner
Carlos de Leon, Dep Public Wrks Mgr
Kathy Gasperich, Council Aide
Mary Helen Giustizia, Sanitation Superintendent
Craig Hittie, Affordable Hsg Coor
Greg Jordan, Transit Administrator
Gregg Kent, Light Rail Engineer
Glenn Kephart, Public Wrks Mgr
Amanda Nelson, Comm Outreach Mktg Supervisor
John Osgood, Dep Pub Works Mgr
Bonnie Richardson, Trans. Principal Planner
Chris Salomone, Comm Dev Manager
Shelly Seyler, Traffic Engineer
Jay Taylor, Fleet Director
Shauna Warner, Neighborhood Svcs Dir
Don Yennie, PD

Guests Present:

Emily Ryan, AZ Multihousing Association

Councilmember Shana Ellis called the meeting to order at 3:06 p.m.

Agenda Item 1 – Public Appearances

None.

Agenda Item 2 – Green Fleet

Jay Taylor presented an overview of Fleet's plan and progress in creating a green fleet to address the universal concerns for better fuel economy, environmentally responsible fuel

sources, and renewable and sustainable fuel sources. He outlined several ways to address these concerns:

Ethanol compatible vehicles

- Viable alternative for the City.
- E85 vehicles run on either complete unleaded or a blend of up to 85% ethanol and 15% unleaded.
- Ethanol can be manufactured from perennial crops. Major emphasis has been on corn, but there are other economical sources.
- A large ethanol production plant opened in Maricopa primarily to supply California blends, but their emphasis is turning to Arizona.
- All of the major manufacturers are doubling their line-up of ethanol-compatible vehicles.
- Initial capital outlay is cost neutral.

Electric vehicles

- Technology has been explored over the last two decades.
- City emphasis for electric vehicles would be for very local vehicles for the downtown area or in-plant use.
- There are environmental concerns regarding the production and disposal of batteries.

Hybrid vehicles

- A hybrid vehicle operates on electric power at some times and on internal combustion power at other times.
- Vehicles attain higher miles per gallon by shutting the unleaded fuel powered engine off at idle and using electric power at low speeds.
- Fleet has four hybrid vehicles.
- They are 30% greater in cost.

Biodiesel

- In heavier equipment, such as commercial refuse, it is the coming technology.
- Biodiesel is fuel generated from fats, generally blended at 20%, and known as B20.
- This is a developing technology.

Liquid Natural Gas

- "LNG" (liquid natural gas) is used extensively by the City bus fleet.
- Developing technology for solid waste vehicles as well.
- Staff has been speaking with suppliers of this fuel who are vested in incentives for LNG-run heavy equipment, and they are working hard to create incentives that would warrant spending the additional money (\$30K to \$40K).
- There are some liability concerns.
- It would require a maintenance facility to maintain those vehicles.

Hydrogen

- Emerging technology.
- Vehicles emit only water vapor and heat into the atmosphere.
- Issues are being addressed.

Mr. Taylor also outlined a list of major-manufacturer vehicles that are E85 compatible with a cost-per-mile comparison. He noted that although ethanol is cheaper per gallon at the pump, it does not produce as much energy per gallon.

There was discussion about complementing the City's fleet with "zip cars."

Mr. Taylor added that staff has looked at the major manufacturers and large engineering efforts.

Mr. Kephart added that the concept is a "joint use car" and staff hasn't explored replacing the fleet concept with a private contractor shared-use company such as zip car.

Councilmember Ellis asked what other crops are used besides corn for ethanol.

Mr. Taylor responded that saw grass, which is a perennial, is a hopeful option.

Councilmember Ellis asked about the possibility of an E85 fuel facility.

Mr. Taylor responded that the easiest solution would be to convert one of the unleaded tanks to E85, and that would cost about \$4K or \$5K. Peoria entered into an agreement with the Salt River Pima Maricopa Indian Community for a grant of \$80K to build their own facility. The cost of building a facility is approximately \$100K.

Councilmember Ellis noted that having a few of these vehicles would recoup the \$4K to \$5K quite quickly.

Mr. Taylor added that the City's fleet has approximately 1180 pieces of equipment. One quarter of that fleet includes light trucks, sedans, police cars, and up to three-quarter ton trucks, and those vehicles are now available in E85. It would be costly to replace all of those vehicles, so staff would suggest that as these vehicles are retired, they be replaced with E85 vehicles.

Councilmember Ellis asked how that would work without our own fuel facility,

Mr. Taylor responded that they are running on unleaded at this point. When the fuel is available, they can be switched over.

Councilmember Ellis asked at what point would the City have enough E85 vehicles to warrant applying for a grant to build our own facility.

Mr. Taylor responded that a facility would begin to pay for itself within four or five years. A smaller tank could be converted very economically.

Greg Jordan added that the Orbit buses currently use unleaded gasoline, but consideration could be given to converting them in the future.

Agenda Item 3 – Pedicab Regulations

Carlos de Leon summarized that Mayor and Council looked at this issue previously in 2000 and the consensus was not to regulate pedicabs because there didn't appear to be a problem.

Vice Mayor Hutson stated that he had one run into the side of his truck. There is no regulation and a ticket couldn't be issued to the operator. If someone were hit while walking, the City would be liable.

Angel Carbajal stated that from a Police Department standpoint, they are considered bicycles so there are some laws that can be applied, but a bicycle doesn't need insurance. He suggested having the City Attorney look into the liability issue.

Vice Mayor Hutson agreed with having the City Attorney look at the liability issue. There needs to be some regulation.

Councilmember Ellis asked if other communities have existing ordinances.

Mr. de Leon responded that staff would look at that.

Councilmember Ellis noted that most pedicabs are used around events and there might be danger around the light rail lines.

Ellis: Next meeting have City Attorney send a memo with research.

Officer Carbajal added that for police department purposes during special events, the motor officers are informed of concerns with pedicabs. Staff has met with the downtown pedicab owners and put them on notice in terms of operation. They have to follow the traffic rules.

Councilmember Ellis asked about citations.

Officer Carbajal responded that they have been cited for lack of required equipment or riding on the wrong side of the street. They are subject to the same rules as bicycles. Depending on circumstances, they have been issued citations, but it has not been extensive.

Vice Mayor Hutson suggested that it might be as simple as requiring the owners have some liability coverage.

Staff was directed to get advice from the City Attorney and, if necessary, discuss the issue at the next meeting.

Agenda Item 4 – Orbit Data Collection and Reporting

Greg Jordan summarized that last June when the Orbit routes were authorized, the College Avenue segment (Jupiter route) was authorized for six months. That route started this past week. The segment runs from Apache Boulevard to US60. Direction was given to return to Council six months after implementation and provide a report. He outlined a brief evaluation plan.

- System and Route Level Performance, including total ridership, passengers-per-mile/hour, cost per passenger and origin and destination activity. Comparative data from historical Neighborhood Flash performance will also be used.
- Operational Performance, including on-time performance, missed service, on-board evaluations measuring service quality, accidents and incidents, and mechanical breakdowns.

- Passenger and Resident Experience will follow the same program used in the planning process, including comments from various sources. A meeting will be held on April 8th for feedback from residents. A telephone survey will be done, as well as a mail-out alerting residents to the telephone survey. A web survey will also be available.
- External Impacts, such as traffic volume, traffic speed, and parking volumes.

Councilmember Ellis clarified that staff would come back to the committee on May 27, 2008, with a report and then go to Council on June 12, 2008.

Glenn Kephart cautioned that six months of traffic/accident data is not an appropriate timeframe to measure true impact.

Mr. Jordan responded that staff will note in their report that the short horizon makes detecting impacts difficult.

Carlos de Leon added that in order to get the report to Council in June, the survey will take place in March, so it will not even be a full six months.

Agenda Item 5 – Neighborhood Traffic Calming (STEP) Policy Evaluation

Carlos de Leon summarized that last April Council approved the Neighborhood Traffic Management Program Manual which provides policies, procedures, tools and forms necessary for residents to work with staff on traffic calming. Since that time, staff has been asked by residents to evaluate a number of issues regarding specific policies and practices in the program. The Transportation Commission reviewed these issues and recommended approval of staff recommendations to the program.

He outlined the basic changes:

Policy Change #1 - What is the definition of a resident?

The outreach program is based on who resides in the house. It didn't include an absentee property owner. The process should be as inclusive as possible, and only listening to property owners would be detrimental. If there was a conflict between a renter and the property owner, the property owner would override the renter.

Staff recommendation: Both property owners and the person who lives in the home are stakeholders. In addition, replace the word "resident" with the word "stakeholder" in the manual.

Policy Change #2 – Where is the project boundary?

It is not clear in the manual how the project area is defined.

Staff recommendation: Project area boundaries in which input will be sought will be determined by City staff based on the Traffic Engineer's assessment of how the proposed traffic calming measure will impact the surrounding area.

Policy Change #3 – Who is notified of public meetings?

Staff recommendation: A reasonable effort will be made to notify both the property owner (through obtaining a list of property owners from the Maricopa County Assessor's web site)

and the person who lives at the address of the property in the project area, including multi-family housing.

Councilmember Ellis clarified that the City requires renters to register with the City.

Shauna Warner responded that Tax and License is working on a database, but it is not available yet. She added that it will be accessible to staff and it will be more accurate.

Councilmember Ellis stated that people might be slow to register, but if that list is used, it might be a way to incentivize people to register.

Mr. de Leon suggested adding to the policy that the City's database will be used.

Policy Change #4: How will comments be compiled prior to determining support for a testing phase?

Staff will consider many options, such as online, email, telephone, mail, public meetings, mail-in ballot, and signatures on a petition. Any comments will be included in the database.

Staff recommendations: Stakeholders will be notified about the meeting and comment opportunities via mailing/doorhangers. Stakeholders will have the opportunity to provide written comments at a public meeting. In addition, an online comment form will be available for a one-month period to determine the level of support for testing. Emails, letters and telephone calls will also be included. The stakeholders must provide their name and address in order for the comment to be included.

Policy Change #5: In order to determine the level of support in the project area, how are multiple comments from one household counted?

Current policy is that each single-family household gets one vote.

Staff recommendation: For the testing and implementation phase, each single-family household in the project area gets one vote. Should two individuals from the same household have conflicting votes, their votes will cancel each other out. It is up to each household to agree on their position.

Policy Change #6 – What happens if the property owner and the renter both comment and disagree on testing or implementing the proposed traffic calming measure?

Staff recommendation: Both comments will be taken, but ultimately if the property owner disagrees on the proposed traffic calming measure, the property owner's vote will override the renter's vote.

Policy Change #7 – What is the threshold for implementing a test phase?

In the past, a threshold has not been designated. Staff has been asked how consensus to move forward is determined.

Staff recommendation: 51% or more of those households in the project area that comment on the proposed traffic calming measure must be in favor of the test phase. It is up to the discretion of City staff to determine if there is a sufficient level of voter participation.

Policy Change #8 – What is the threshold for implementing the traffic calming measure?

Current policy is 100% of the stakeholders adjacent to the measure must agree (for example, speed bump in front of their houses); 75% on the street where the measure is implemented; and a majority (51% or more) whose access is affected by the traffic management measure must support.

Staff recommendation is to continue that policy.

Policy Change #9 – In order to determine the level of support in the project area for the implementation of the traffic calming measure, how is consensus determined?

Current policy is that the neighborhood must take out a petition with signatures, 100%, 75% and 51% (as stated in #8). When there is a large neighborhood, and they have the 100% and 75%, the City could mail out a ballot to assist with the 51%. They can also continue to take out petitions.

Practice Change 1 – How are stakeholders notified of public meetings?

Staff recommendation: Notification of public meetings will be sent via US mail and/or via doorhangers as determined by staff. Additional methods could be used as determined by staff.

Practice Change 2: What is the forum for STEP meetings?

Recommendation: STEP meetings will be held independently of other neighborhood meetings and the agenda will be set by the City, unless there is a neighborhood meeting in which staff can facilitate the discussion.

Practice Change 3: Once the test phase has begun, when will follow-up neighborhood meetings occur?

Recommendation: Staff will attempt to hold follow-up neighborhood meetings during the middle to end states of the test phase.

Councilmember Ellis asked how multi-family dwellings within the area would be treated. Would each person in the complex have a vote in addition to the property owner having one vote?

Mr. de Leon responded that these recommendations are only for single family households at this point. Staff has not yet formulated a plan for multi-family yet, but plans to address that.

Mr. Kephart suggested basing it on the number of driveways to the property. Multi-family would have multiple drives. For an apartment complex, we would look to the manager for a vote.

Vice Mayor Hutson suggested that the owner gets one vote, and if there are ten renters, each gets 1/10 of a vote.

DIRECTION: Revisions would go to the next Formal Council meeting with a resolution.

Agenda Item 6 – Mobile Home Relocation Draft Policy Update

Neil Calfee summarized that staff brought this policy to the last Issue Review Session for direction. The City Attorney has drafted the interim ordinance which would give a minimum of 180 days before displacement. It will come to Council on February 7th.

Councilmember Ellis stated that she recalled it was to be 90 days.

Mr. Calfee responded that to be consistent with state law, it was set at 180 days. The next step will be to draft the relocation policy based on other models and input from the public and non-profits, and work with Development Services on how to implement it through their process. It should be ready in the spring.

Councilmember Ellis recalled that there was discussion about enacting number of days with an emergency clause.

Mr. Calfee agreed that it would go into effect upon approval. This will be change to City Code, and the next aspect will be working between the Zoning Code and the City Code.

Chris Anaradian added that by going to the City Code, it won't be necessary to have a hearing before the Development Review Commission.

Agenda Item 7 – Housing Forum Update

Craig Hittie announced that the next Affordable Housing Forum is scheduled for Friday, February 8th, from 8:30 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. at the Tempe Center for the Arts. It will be open to the public, but will be targeting local developers. They will review the current affordable housing programs and concepts for future programs, then break into discussion groups so developers might come up with their own solutions, regroup and bring to discussion.

Councilmember Ellis added that they are seeking sponsors for the breakfast portion of the forum.

Mr. Hittie added that they are expecting about 50 attendees.

Agenda Item 8 – Future Agenda Items

- Affordable Housing Forum wrap-up and next steps
- 2008 Green Summit (ASU student/Don Hawkes)
- Orbit (May)
- Pedicab Regulations (if necessary)

Meeting adjourned at 4:30 p.m.

Prepared by: Connie Krosschell
Reviewed by: Carlos de Leon

Jan Hort
City Clerk