

Minutes Neighborhood Advisory Commission November 4, 2009

Minutes of the Neighborhood Advisory Commission (NAC) held on November 4, 2009, 5:35 p.m. – 6:40 p.m., at City Hall, 31 E. 5th Street, 3rd Floor Conference Room, Tempe, Arizona.

(MEMBERS) Present: Tom Catlaw, Don Calender, Maureen Decindis, Pete De Mott, Kevin Kaesberg, Joochul Kim, Ira King, Joe Pospicil, Lisa Roach, John Sanborn, Jason Short, Michael Wasko.

(MEMBERS) Excused Absences: Andy Hall, Susan Knudson, William Wagner, Woody Wilson

(MEMBERS) Unexcused Absences: Eric Anthony Aldrete, Jeffrey Sheppard

City Staff Present: Shauna Warner, Neighborhood Services Director; Elizabeth Thomas, Neighborhood Services Specialist, Phil Falcosky, Financial Services - Tax Audit Supervisor, 480-350-8685 or phil_falcosky@tempe.gov.

Agenda Item 1 – Call to Order

Chair Kaesberg called the meeting to order at 5:35 p.m.

Agenda Item 2 – Public Comment

There was none.

Agenda Item 3 – Consideration of Minutes: October 7, 2009

Commissioner Calender moved that the October 7, 2009 minutes be approved. Commissioner Roach seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Agenda Item 4 – Rental Housing License Update

Phil Falcosky noted that the Rental Housing data base was created in December 2006 as a direct result of the efforts and recommendations made by the Ad Hoc Rental Housing Task Force. This is a database of all licensed single family residential properties in the City of Tempe, but includes some multi-family/condominium properties. The database currently includes 4,884 property owners and 7,220 properties. Database information is available to the public through the <http://www.tempe.gov/rentalData/> website, which includes an email link for reporting unlicensed rentals.

The Tax & License Division uses three primary means of identifying unlicensed residential rentals: referrals from citizens and other departments, monitoring of water deposits, and efforts of a recently hired Rental Property Specialist. Based on the results of these efforts, Mr. Falcosky estimated that the compliance rate for licensing of residential rental properties now exceeds 80%.

The hiring of the Rental Property Specialist in July 2009 has allowed Tax & License to increase its follow up on landlords who fail to respond to initial inquiries. Since that time, 281 new licenses have been issued and over \$45,000 of delinquent taxes has been billed with nearly \$20,000 collected to date. Overall, the ordinance change enacted in 2006 requiring the licensing of all rental properties, regardless of the number owned, has resulted in an estimated increase in City tax revenues of \$700,000 annually.

Mr. Falcosky and the Commission members also discussed some of the difficulties encountered in attempting to use property records to identify unlicensed residential rentals.

Agenda Item 5 – 2010 Neighborhood Workshop and Awards Planning

Elizabeth provided a brief update regarding initial public outreach and media timeframes for the workshop and awards. The Neighbor of the Year Awards application deadline (February 2010 date to be determined shortly) will be noted in the December 2009 issue of Tempe Today as well as a Save the Date reminder (Saturday, April 10, 2010 from 7:30-Noon) for the event.

Elizabeth reminded commission members of the four workshop topics agreed to at the October commission meeting. Each event attendee will be encouraged to select two from the following:

- Online neighborhood networking
- Block watch revisited
- Buy Tempe – it all comes back to you
- Friends of Tempe Neighborhoods

Specific titles for each of the workshops will be created by Community Relations and Neighborhood Services staff along with any input from Outreach Committee members. All commission members were encouraged to provide any suggestions for the various workshop speakers to Elizabeth or Shauna for follow up.

In addition to the workshops, the Education Recycling Information Center (ERIC) will be located outside for break time visits and/or immediately before or after the event. To enhance the importance of buying locally theme, Neighborhood Service staff will explore purchasing refreshments from Farmer's Market vendors as well as the possibility of an onsite Farmer's Market. Through tables and booths outside the classrooms, the Police Department Crime Prevention Unit, Fire Department and Transportation will also be represented.

Commissioner DeCindis inquired if any of the workshops are active. Elizabeth noted that all are very interactive with lots of questions and dialogue between both participants and presenters. It was suggested that the Online Neighborhood Networking sessions might especially lend themselves to a more active and hands on approach (step by step how to set up your own neighborhood website today) versus a presentation style. Shauna confirmed that the Pyle Adult Recreation Center is wireless so that possibility will be explored.

Agenda Item 6 – Discussion of Tempe Neighbors Helping Neighbors Concept

Commissioner Roach shared that by this time next week the Tempe Neighbors Helping Neighbor will be an official Arizona corporation. They are working on obtaining non-profit 501(c)3 status. She emphasized that the focus of the group will be minor repairs to assist both elderly and disabled individuals with staying in their own homes. (For example, cleaning up a yard or fixing a faucet.)

The initial response has been highly positive. Fundraising efforts will start shortly in order to raise money to help pay for the required liability insurance allowing volunteers to work both in and outside homes. Those home owners receiving the assistance (for a nominal fee or free if funding is available) will be required to sign a waiver. Program organizers are planning to attract licensed contractors to serve as volunteers to help determine project scopes ensuring they are minor and also to do the repairs. Local businesses such as Lowe's, Home Depot and Ace Hardware will also be approached regarding sponsorship of free or reduced cost materials.

The program is in its early stages so many of the specific details remain to be worked out and Commissioner Roach will share more information as it becomes available.

Agenda Item 7 – Selection of Committee Chair, Members, Reports and Consideration of Minutes

A. Codes Committee – The Codes Committee met on October 20 at the Connections Café. The meeting was not called to order as a quorum was not present. Shauna shared that Commissioner Dubuy has resigned from the commission and will no longer serve as the Chair of this Committee. Commissioner Calender made a motion to add Commissioner's Catlaw and Pospicil as Code Committee members. Commissioner Wasko seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

B. Housing Committee – No meeting was held since the last commission meeting. Commissioner Wasko made a motion to add Commissioner King as a Housing Committee member. Commissioner Calender seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

C. Outreach Committee – No meeting was held since the last commission meeting.

Agenda Item 8 – Proposed Agenda Items for December 2, 2009 Meeting

- 2010 Neighborhood Workshop and Awards Planning
- Eisendrath House and Campus for Sustainability Presentation
- Committee Reports
- Solid Waste Ordinance
- Nomination for Commission officers (Chair and Vice Chair)

Agenda Item 9 – Adjournment

Meeting was adjourned at 6:40 p.m.

Prepared by: Shauna Warner, Neighborhood Services Director
Elizabeth Thomas, Neighborhood Services Specialist