

Minutes Neighborhood Advisory Commission September 7, 2011

Minutes of the Neighborhood Advisory Commission (NAC) held on September 7, 2011, 5:35 – 6:35 p.m., at City Hall, 31 E. 5th Street, 3rd Floor Conference Room, Tempe, Arizona.

(MEMBERS) Present: Karen Adams, Maureen Decindis, Ann Lynn DiDomenico, Pete DeMott, Gary Johnson, Ira King, Angela Lopez, Robert Miller, Leonard Montenegro, Joe Pospicil, Lisa Roach, Scott Smas, Bill Wagner, Michael Wasko

(MEMBERS) Excused Absences: Nancy Buell, Britney Scott Kaufmann, Joochul Kim, John Sanborn

(MEMBERS) Unexcused Absences: Ira King, Josephine McNamara, Michael Pickett,

City Staff Present: Shauna Warner, Neighborhood Services, Director; Elizabeth Thomas, Neighborhood Services Specialist

Agenda Item 1 – Call to Order

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

Agenda Item 2 – Public Comment

None.

Agenda Item 3 – Consideration of Minutes: August 3, 2011

Commissioner Decindis made a motion to accept the minutes, Commissioner Johnson seconded the motion and it passed with three abstentions due to absence from the August meeting.

Agenda Item 4 – Discussion of Survey Results

Citizen Satisfaction Survey – Several commissioners inquired about the random sampling as they have not ever been contacted to complete the survey. A couple of commissioners stated they or family members have been surveyed. The survey report format was complimented for the simplicity of the provided statistics.

Commissioners noted the high satisfaction level of various neighborhood amenities. They then focused on looking at which areas residents polled had identified as needing attention in order to more closely consider these items over the next year. Neighborhoods in disrepair often relating to the numbers of foreclosures or rentals were highlighted as the tipping point for many other related concerns including overall neighborhood appearance and maintenance, neighborhood safety and resale values.

The suggestion was made to explore ways in which the Commission might be able to network with other groups and find ways to encourage all residents to take care of and improve their landscaping,

their homes and their overall neighborhoods. This might be an opportunity for the expansion of the Tempe Leadership Tempe Cares concept. Commissioner Roach shared that sometimes when Tempe Neighbors Helping Neighbors volunteers are leaving a job site, they notice that just by their presence visibly helping a resident to address a landscaping or home repair issue, adjacent residents are motivated to clean up their landscape or property. Helping to aid seniors living in place, improving overall quality of life, getting to better know your neighbors and providing good eyes on the street were other noted benefits of various clean up and spruce up efforts.

A few commissioners requested additional clarification regarding how the monies received from recent water meter increased are being allocated and utilized? Does the additional revenue simply cover overhead? What, if any improvements, is the customer seeing? Are there any plans to use any of this funding for alley improvements, city street improvements or greater bus connectivity?

One of the challenges to Commissioners needing to look at things holistically is that different zip codes and different neighborhoods can have different concerns and challenges. Some commissioners found it hard to access/locate the maps in the full report online.

There was some discussion about possible holes in the Zoning and Development Code and if Commissioners should be researching changes to address them. For example, what can be done to address violations that follow commercial properties as they get sold repeatedly and never seem to get handled?

Neighborhood Advisory Commission Survey – Commissioners spent time looking at the answers provided for the, “If you could ask the Mayor and Council to make ONE improvement for your neighborhood in the next year, what would that improvement be?” question. Commissioner Lopez noted her concerns about old buildings being demolished for new development, particularly the proliferation of apartment complexes and high density housing and its impacts on established, adjacent neighborhoods.

After some continued discussion, Chair Wasko encouraged each commission member to walk their neighborhood and to come to the October meeting with suggestions and ideas for possible items to take action on.

Agenda Item 5 – Review of Committee Structure, Membership and Goals

A memo regarding committees provided through City Clerk’s office on behalf of City Attorney’s office was distributed. The memo emphasized the need to refrain from forming and/or keeping committees and to conduct the business of all commissions at the commission level.

There was significant commission discussion regarding how this might impact commission business and how best to handle tasks previously done through a committee, such as Outreach Committee. The following questions and comments were noted:

- Can the Chair ask for volunteers to follow up on a specific item and report back to the Commission as a whole?
- What if two commissioners volunteer to do something together? (i.e. work on the Neighbor of the Year Awards application, scout possible locations for the Neighborhood Awards?)
- Is it permissible for two commission members to meet and talk about their Neighborhood concerns if it’s prior to the commission as a whole meeting to identify particular items as follow up items? (i.e. two commissioners live in the same neighborhood and take a walk together)
- Is it ok for a commission member or members to meet with staff from Code Compliance or Solid Waste to ask questions and get information to share with the entire commission or must all of these meetings take place on the commission level?

Staff will provide the goals set from previously existing committees for Commissioners to review at the October meeting. Commissioners requested that City Attorney Andrew Ching prepare a memo to clarify some of the provided questions and/or be asked to come speak at a Commission meeting to do so.

Agenda Item 6 – Proposed Agenda Items for October 5, 2011 and/or future agendas

- Graffiti Workflow
- Commission Goal Setting
- Board and Commission Recruitment
- Neighborhood Awards and Workshop Planning

Agenda Item 10 – Adjournment

Meeting was adjourned at 6:35 p.m.

Prepared by: Elizabeth Thomas, Neighborhood Services Specialist

Reviewed by: Shauna Warner, Neighborhood Services Director