



22ND STREET CORRIDOR
Citizen Oversight Committee (COC) Meeting #7
July 9, 2009 • 6:00 p.m. • Meeting Summary Draft

The seventh meeting of the Citizen Oversight Committee (COC) for the 22nd Street Corridor project took place from 6-8:50 p.m. at the Santa Rosa Center, 1080 South 10th Avenue.

COC members in attendance were John Carlson, Barbara Cariño, Brett Dumont, Brian Flagg, Claire Fellows, Pedro Gonzales, Jeanne Grant, Peggy Hutchison, Ralph Lares, Sandra Leal, Ernie Lujan, Rick Parlett, Chris Stebe and Lucy Valdez.

Absent COC members were Roy Schoonover, Fred Sowerby and Kathy Sutherland.

Project staff in attendance was Jim Glock, Janice Cuaron, Jay Van Echo, Justin Smith, Nanette Pageau, Priscilla Fernandez, Bob Vint, Leslie Dornfeld, Ximena Zamora, Britton Dornquast, and Abe Marques (Ward V Council Office).

Materials provided to COC members: One-on-one property outreach letter and aerial graphic, COC meeting agenda, July Technical Advisory Committee meeting summary, June COC meeting summary, and the roadway alternatives in large format.

1. Welcome, introductions, announcements, and confirm quorum

Chair Sandra Leal called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone to the meeting, stating that a quorum was present and invited everyone present to introduce themselves.

2. Review ground rules for meetings, meeting summary and agenda order

Chair Sandra Leal reviewed the ground rules established at the first COC meeting by the members. Nanette Pageau, moderator, acknowledged the meeting summary from the June 11, 2009 COC meeting. Nanette Pageau invited those who needed Spanish translation to see Bob Vint, Ximena Zamora, Felipe Ladron de Guevara or Priscilla Fernandez, for assistance.

3. Call to the audience

Chair Sandra Leal invited members of the audience to address the COC. The following people addressed the COC:

- Minnie Almader, Arizona Children's Association, said that many people who were directly impacted by this project cannot attend, and that her main concern was

safety for children crossing the streets, and the public health issues regarding carbon emissions along 22nd Street.

- Richard Salaz, Planner for South Tucson, is concerned about connectivity from 22nd St and its side streets. He was also concerned about the widths of the median (20-ft) and the 7-ft bicycle lanes. He said that the only reason they'd be that wide was because the City of Tucson was planning to increase the roadway to 8 lanes. He said he was a believer of gridlock and that this project was too reliant on the automobile. He said he wanted to be more involved in the project because it could have a negative impact on South Tucson.
- Nicole Gonzales, President of the Santa Rosa Neighborhood Association, said she is the product of urban renewal and she said she'd fight gentrification tooth and nail.
- Arturo Rodriguez, local resident, said that he was glad to hear everyone repeat what he'd said in previous meetings. He said 22nd Street was like a wall blocking north and south movements. He said that graffiti would happen regardless of what design is chosen for the project, just like the newly constructed Interstate 10 (I-10) walls. Tucson is known for its murals and feels that 22nd Street should be representative of Tucson.

No others addressed the Committee at this time.

4. RTA project funding – City of Tucson Department of Transportation

Jim Glock, Director of the City's Department of Transportation, presented to the Committee the project's funding process. The voter-approved RTA plan allocated \$105M for the entire 22nd Street project improvements (from I-10 to Tucson Boulevard). Jim Glock referred to this project as item #19 in the RTA brochure entitled "Our Mobility" that was handed-out at the meeting. This project is to be constructed within the 2nd or 3rd periods of the RTA plan (between years 2012 and 2021).

Jim Glock encouraged the COC to develop a plan for the roadway that addresses their needs and that funding will be located. The region has a variety of funding sources available to help with any additional funds needed. Brian Flagg asked Jim Glock to give the COC specific funding sources available in case the funds for the project run out. Jim Glock named the HURF tax, some State of Arizona funds, impact fees, and general obligation bonds. No federal monies are being used for this project.

John Carlson asked Jim Glock his opinion on the current status of contractors' bids and if he thought they were coming in high or low. Jim Glock responded by saying that bids are coming in 20-25% under costs, and that he really doesn't want to see this committee worry about funding or allowing it to dictate how they plan for this project. Brian Flagg asked if the project can begin with part of the money allocated or if it has to start once all the money is there. Chris Stebe added that there are multiple design pieces on 22nd Street, with multiple phasing under one umbrella--How will that work? Jim Glock said the construction of the road would not be done all at once. It has to be done in "chunks" or pieces, most likely from Interstate 10 working eastbound to Kino Parkway.

Jim Glock said the Kino Parkway/22nd Street intersection improvement will begin first, as it is about three years ahead of this project. Ultimately, Mayor and Council will have the final say in scheduling of projects. Jay Van Echo said what is most likely to occur is the Kino Parkway/22nd Street intersection will begin in late 2010, this project will be next, and then the structure over the Union Pacific Railroad tracks between Cherry Avenue and Tucson Boulevard.

Brett DuMont recommended that Jim Glock come back and present to the COC at the August COC meeting. Ralph Lares asked if it was even realistic to begin construction once all the funds become available. Jim Glock said he was not sure, but optimistic. Brett DuMont pointed out to the COC members that the City of Tucson could not move forward with a plan without the COC recommending an alternative. Pedro Gonzales said he does not trust the City of Tucson, never has, but wants to believe that he can make a difference. He also asked that the funding issue be left on the agenda.

5. Environmental justice – Pedro Gonzales

Pedro Gonzales presented a PowerPoint slide show to the COC entitled Environmental Justice as Applied to the 22nd Street Corridor Project. The main points presented are as follows:

- What is environmental justice?
- Environmental justice background.
- Environmental and health hazards.
- Vulnerability.
- Social costs.
- Goals of environmental justice for 22nd Street Corridor.
- Affected barrios.
- Next steps prior to COC design approval.

During the presentation, several questions were asked of Pedro Gonzales. Ralph Lares asked Pedro Gonzales to define the word *gentrification*, which is a term he used during his presentation. Pedro Gonzales responded by saying it's when rich people move into our barrios and raise property taxes. Peggy Hutchison said she thought the presentation was good, it should be expanded upon, and had a question regarding his use of the word "network". Pedro Gonzales referred to Raul Ramirez to clarify what it meant, and he said it was another term for Pima County. Lucy Valdez asked Pedro Gonzales to clarify "rich people coming to our neighborhoods." He said that in the 1960s, urban renewal meant affluent people coming and taking over our neighborhoods, which meant no more mom and pop shops.

After the presentation, Chair Sandra Leal opened the floor for discussion. Claire Fellows said that her neighborhood, South Park, was not on Pedro Gonzales' list of affected barrios, and asked to include it as a directly affected neighborhood. Pedro Gonzales added that South Park conducted an environmental justice assessment in their neighborhood in the mid 1990s, and they did a good job. Pedro Gonzales added that although there is no federal money funding this project, he still wants to see that

an environmental justice study be conducted by a third party. Ralph Lares asked Pedro Gonzales if this study would be conducted during the planning, design or construction phase, and he responded all of the above.

Ralph Lares asked Jay Van Echo why 22nd Street was chosen for improvement. Ralph Lares added that he knows it can't be because it's poorer, or Mexican or minorities—it had to have been picked for another reason. What was that reason? Jay Van Echo said there are roads all over Pima County, not just on the south side. There are approximately 35 arterial roadway projects that are scattered all over the region, which are included in the RTA plan. These roads were picked by jurisdictions (South Tucson, City of Tucson, Pima County, Sahuarita, Green Valley, Marana, etc) and those jurisdictions chose the arterials with the most needs (safety, capacity and mobility) for improvement. Ralph Lares asked Jay Van Echo what alternatives the COC would have if the COC decides not to make any improvements on 22nd Street. Jay Van Echo responded that because the vote of the RTA passed in 2006, the improvements of this Corridor will have to happen.

Jeanne Grant said that because this plan will go forward, we need to make sure we're going to be treated fairly. Jay Van Echo said that he saw a lot of good points in Pedro Gonzales' presentation, and wanted to remind the committee that the team has not only listened to your concerns, but has brought the community four viable roadway options that don't touch the homes south of Santa Rita Park, and minimizes impacts as much as possible. He hopes to continuously earn the trust of the committee and community as we continue to listen and work together.

Brian Flagg made a motion that there would be an environmental impact study done by an independent entity, not by the City of Tucson, as well as a cultural impact study. A second was made, and Ralph Lares started the discussion by saying that he would like more information regarding the project before he votes on having a study conducted such as an environmental impact study. He said he didn't feel it was necessary to make a motion. Rick Parlett said he was confused about what an environmental impact study would study, because the Committee needs to have a plan set forth before you can study it. He said the Committee first needs to work toward a recommendation, and then an environmental impact study becomes validated. He said a study now would be going about this plan backwards. Chair Sandra Leal agreed with Rick Parlett by stating it would make more sense to have a plan before conducting a study like this.

In concluding the discussion, Brian Flagg amended the motion that there be an environmental and cultural impact study conducted by an independent entity during the life of the project. The vote by a show of hands showed ten members approving the motion, and four not in favor of the motion.

6. Santa Rita Park Neighborhood Association plan – Angie Quiroz

Angie Quiroz gave a PowerPoint presentation on behalf of the Santa Rita Park Neighborhood Association. She and Jeanne Grant handed out the plan to COC members and said this plan is not set in stone. The following are the main topics of her presentation:

- Philosophy of the Santa Rita Park Neighborhood.
- Neighborhood context and overview.
- Preservation of families and homes.
- Historic businesses.
- Neighborhood connectivity.
- Streetscape and neighborhood design.
- Santa Rita Park.

She concluded by asking for the preservation of families and homes, and then invited Albert Elias, Sr. and Annie Laos to say a few words. Albert Elias, Sr. is concerned about the Santa Rita Park swimming pool and if there was any way to replace it.

This agenda item did not allow time for questions as it went past its allotted time of 15 minutes.

7. Roadway corridor concepts - AECOM

Jay Van Echo and Leslie Dornfeld presented to the committee by giving a PowerPoint slideshow with several examples of overpasses, underpasses, retaining walls, pedestrian accesses, and paseos, as Kathy Sutherland had asked for in the previous COC meeting. He showed examples of drainage features along local underpasses and overpasses, and stressed the importance of drainage improvements.

Leslie Dornfeld then presented the four roadway options to review in a program called Sketch-Up. She showed videos and still shots of what the roadway could look like in the three different districts: Neighborhood Commerce, Park, and Commerce/Mixed-Use. She started with the straight alignment going over the Nogales tracks, then the same alignment going under the tracks. Jay Van Echo mentioned drainage being a major problem with the “under” option. He also explained the different cross-sections used in the presentation—medium and large—in the interest of time, and because in some sections of 22nd Street, these cross-sections need to be used. Both levels of bike and pedestrian access were maintained for these options.

The team then showed the committee the newer “curved” option that curves the roadway through the Santa Rita Park and then back to 22nd Street’s existing road. This option, going over the railroad tracks, saves the homes south of the Park, integrates the Park with the south side of 22nd Street, would add a much needed detention basin, saves the project money, increases the park land by 10-15%, and would not impact traffic during construction because the existing 22nd Street could be used as the curved piece is being constructed.

John Carlson asked if the team had an idea of which of these alternatives was least expensive. Jay Van Echo said the order; from least expensive to most expensive, was as follows:

1. Curved alignment going over the Nogales tracks
2. Straight alignment going over the Nogales tracks
3. Curved alignment going under the Nogales tracks
4. Straight alignment going under the Nogales tracks.

Brian Flagg said that the pedestrian crossing should be at 3rd Avenue, not 2nd Avenue. Leslie Dornfeld said she'd make a note of that. Brett DuMont said the team did a tremendous job with this curved alternative, but his main concern is the over or under option at the tracks. His opinion was that the under option was the best. Pedro Gonzales said everything looks fine to him, but he feels the residents south of the Park should decide about the over/under issue, not the COC. He also said he could offer the team his expertise on the roadway design.

Chris Stebe asked if a median on an overpass was necessary, and if the design of the overpass could be a "pillar" style. Jay Van Echo said the median on the structure could be reduced, but the pillar style is not possible because it would then become a viaduct. Chris Stebe asked for preliminary costs, and Jay Van Echo said he only has rough estimates to rank the options, for now. Pedro Gonzales wanted to know the north to south right-of-way measurements on 22nd Street.

Jay Van Echo thanked the COC members for their hard work and asked that they look at these options with open minds, thinking *outside the box*, and bring your ideas to the August meeting so we can work through them together.

8. Discuss future agenda items and meeting dates

Chair Sandra Leal said that the agenda items are too lengthy and asked that the team allow the committee more time per agenda item, and to keep in mind that it's too much information to process at one meeting. She said the next meeting would be on August 13, 2009, at the Santa Rosa Recreation Center.

9. Call to the audience

Chair Sandra Leal invited people in the audience to address the COC.

- Jody Gibbs, a local architect, spoke in length about environmental impacts in the project area, and that one particular group should not suffer. He said this team needs to conduct a study that shows levels of noise pollution, income levels, air quality, cancer rate, housing situations and poverty rate. He said the team should conduct an environmental assessment.
- Albert Elias, Sr., said he concurred with Mr. Gibbs' comment.
- Raul Ramirez has concerns about the families the project is displacing.
- Demion Clinco, Santa Rita Park Neighborhood, believes the roadway is still disconnected and wants the team to look for more examples of other projects around the world with similar issues.

- Minnie Almader said her family is a product of urban renewal and was contaminated with TCE, and that she will survive and not be a victim again. She also feels there should be attorneys present during these meetings.
- Eddie Escalante of Garcia's Cleaners said he didn't like the layout of the COC members' chairs and tables. He said it contributes to the animosity that was shown in the comments about gentrification. There was too much aggression tonight.
- Ivo Ortiz, concerned citizen, said he wants the COC to pay most attention to the Santa Rita Park Plan because they are the neighborhood most affected.
- Richard Salaz believes that people must come first before anything else on this project. He disagrees with Jay Van Echo's comment that the road will be built regardless, due to the RTA vote. He said he doesn't live on 22nd Street but grew up using the Santa Rita Park and pool. He said he wants the road done right. He also said his family was a victim of urban renewal.
- Ivo Ortiz spoke again saying the Santa Rita Park should also be improved, including the swings, and slides.
- Damion Clinco told the COC to ask for cross-sections and measurements, because some of the videos and drawings show 10 lanes.
- Jody Gibbs said that he thinks the project be given more money to do what is necessary on this project. He said that although the project budget is not large enough for the team to gather all the information necessary to conduct a thorough study, he still needs to have more information about the residents in the area.

No others addressed the Committee at this time.

10. Adjournment

A motion was made, seconded and passed unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 8:50 p.m.