Board of Supervisors Memorandum

January 7, 2014

January 8 Foundation Memorial Project

Introduction

On January 8, 2011, engaged citizens gathered at a "Congress on Your Corner" event at a Northwest side grocery store to meet with their Congresswoman. Within minutes of the start of the event, six people had lost their lives and 13 others were wounded, leaving a stunned and sorrowful community to mourn and regroup.

The January 8 Memorial Foundation was formed in subsequent months to find a way to honor those involved in the tragedy and to celebrate the community response that drew people together in a spirit of unity and hope.

One of the group's key concepts has been to create a memorial site that will not only serve as a multipurpose space for reflection, dialogue, respect and celebration, but that will appropriately reflect the context of the tragedy that day and the community's response in the days that followed. The people at that Safeway were gathered to engage in one of the most basic acts of democracy: connecting with their elected officials. Foundation members hoped to secure a memorial site that could represent a "gateway to democracy" with sufficient gathering space for community events.

The three places most readily identified with the event – the Safeway store itself, Congresswoman Giffords' district office and The University of Arizona Medical Center – were important community gathering places immediately following the tragedy, but they do not lend themselves to permanent memorial sites.

Representatives of Pima County and the City of Tucson have been in discussions with Foundation members to provide memorial space at El Presidio Park, west of the Historic Pima County Courthouse, as well as to use a portion of the ground floor of the Courthouse itself to serve as exhibit space to tell the stories associated with January 8.

Given that the County owns Presidio Park, which is operated and maintained by the City of Tucson, I believe Pima County should support these efforts.

El Presidio Park serves as the heart of local government, providing important civic connections to governments across all levels, and also as a regional gathering place that hosts civic and cultural community events. The iconic domed Historic Courthouse represents our tradition and history. There is no more fitting place to celebrate community

involvement and remember the day when we confronted the unimaginable and recognized a broader sense of community.

Once the Foundation receives the commitment of support from Pima County and the City of Tucson for the site, it will pursue a variety of funding options, including seeking public and private sector investment, to construct a physical memorial that will reflect a shared community vision and provide a place of remembrance. The Foundation plans to work with the Tucson Pima Arts Council to identify a design team to construct the permanent memorial.

Recommendation

I recommend the Board of Supervisors approve Resolution 2014-____, committing support for the January 8 Memorial Foundation as they move forward with the next phase of their remembrance project.

Respectfully submitted,

C.H. Huckelberry
County Administrator

CHH/mjk – January 6, 2014

Attachment

RESOLUTION NO. 2014-_____

A RESOLUTION OF THE PIMA COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS IN SUPPORT OF A MEMORIAL IN HONOR OF THOSE KILLED AND INJURED AT THE JANUARY 8, 2011 "CONGRESS ON YOUR CORNER" EVENT

WHEREAS, the tragedy of January 8, 2011 at a "Congress on Your Corner" event resulted in the deaths of six – Christina-Taylor Green, Dorothy Morris, U.S. District Court Judge John Roll, Phyllis Schneck, Dorwan Stoddard and Gabe Zimmerman – and injuries to 13 others – then Congresswoman Gabrielle Giffords, current Congressman Ron Barber, Bill Badger, Kenneth Dorushka, James Eric Fuller, Randy Gardner, Susan Hileman, George Morris, Mary Reed, Pam Simon, Mavanell Stoddard, Jim Tucker and Kenneth Veeder; and

WHEREAS, the loss rocked our community and inflicted terrible suffering on the victims' loved ones, the shooting's survivors, and innocent bystanders, and

WHEREAS, in the aftermath of this horrible tragedy, Pima County residents organized impromptu vigils, memorials and events to remember and celebrate the lives of the victims, who were valuable contributors to our community's welfare, and

WHEREAS, our democratic right to participate in our own governance and our ability to have our elected representatives be accessible to us and willing to listen to our concerns cannot be taken from us by violence or intimidation, and

WHEREAS, these bedrock principles of freedom of speech and right to assemble peaceably deserve to be recognized with a suitable memorial and that led concerned community members to create the January 8 Memorial Foundation, and

WHEREAS, the January 8 Memorial Foundation seeks to commemorate those killed and wounded and to honor the spirit of Tucsonans who embraced unity, humanity and hope, even in the face of the collective suffering and heartbreak, and

WHEREAS, the heart of local government surrounds El Presidio Park downtown, which serves as a gateway where the public can access government services at the city, county, state and federal levels, and

WHEREAS, El Presidio Park already serves as a regional civic and cultural center and community gathering place, and

WHEREAS, Pima County is the administrative and legal hub of the region and its historic and beautiful courthouse flanks El Presidio Park, and the City of Tucson is the largest municipal jurisdiction in the region, the county seat, and operates and maintains El Presidio Park,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Pima County Board of Supervisors supports the January 8 Memorial Foundation's efforts to create a space in El Presidio Park and a portion of the ground floor of the Historic Pima County Courthouse for a memorial that will serve as a place for shared memories, will honor those lost and injured, and will keep alive the spirit that drew the community together after the tragedy of January 8, 2011 with compassion, strength and kindness, and directs County staff to work with the January 8 Memorial Foundation to realize this very worthy goal.

PASSED, ADOPTED AND APPROVED by the Board of Supervisors of Pima County this Seventh day of January, 2014.

Chairman, Pima County Board of Supervisors

ATTEST:

Clerk of the Board

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

Deputy County Attorney
CHRISTOPHER STRAUB