

Minutes of the Fort Lowell Restoration Advisory Committee Meeting
5230 E. Fort Lowell Road, Tucson, Arizona 85712
August 6, 2013, 4:30 P.M.

1. Call to Order

Meeting called to order at 4:30 p.m. A quorum of the Committee was present for the meeting. Those in attendance (and signed in) were:

Larry Hecker (Committee Chair)
Frank McClure (Committee Member), teleconference
Patsy Waterfall (Committee Member)
David Yubeta (Committee Member)
Peggy Sackheim (Committee Member)
Elaine Hill (Committee Member)
Fred Gray (City of Tucson)
Jonathan Mabry (City of Tucson)
Peg Weber (City of Tucson)
Linda Mayro, (Pima County)
Loy Neff (Pima County)
Simon Herbert (Pima County)
Corky Poster (Poster Frost Mirto)
Bill Anderson (OFLNA)

2. (Action) Review of meeting minutes: February 13, 2013 meeting.

David Yubeta moved to approve the minutes of the July 11 meeting. Elaine Hill seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

3. Work Plan: Project Status Reports

a. COT Project Status Update; b. County Project Status Update: JOC contractor selected, contract status, construction start date, and project progress report – Fred Gray outlined the current status of the project and compromises between the City and County on implementing the Preservation Plan for the Adkins Parcel. He summarized recent correspondence between the City Manager and County Administrator concerning the County Bond project and questions about whether it can proceed to construction. Fred confirmed the City position that the County Preservation work can proceed. He also confirmed that the City construction permit includes a required parking lot and approved access to the Officers Quarters to meet City Code requirements and federal requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA); therefore, the permit cannot be closed and a Certificate of Occupancy cannot be issued and public access to the Adkins Parcel cannot be allowed until ADA-compliant parking and access are present. Fred summarized previous discussions between City, County, and Advisory Committee (see the meeting minutes for February 13, 2013, and July 11, 2012), in which limited available Bond funding required assigning priority to the Base Bid and Bid Alternate items focusing on historic preservation tasks at the historic adobe Officers Quarters. After considering bids, the County has selected a contractor for the project, based on available Bond funds, but cost estimates from all bidders were higher than expected and only covered the Base Bid and Bid Alternate 1. There are insufficient funds for the parking lot and other preservation Bid Alternates in this phase of the project, such as the interior rehabilitation of Officers Quarters 3.

Following discussion included questions from the Advisory Committee members to City representatives. Larry Hecker asked Fred to clarify what the City means by not allowing public access to the property and whether this includes no access to the outside of the Officers Quarters to view the exterior preservation work? Fred responded that the City

Code and ADA requirements cover safe access to the Officers Quarters as well as interior access. David Yubeta asked if it was possible for occasional exterior access; perhaps a variance can be allowed for special occasions? Fred could not address this question specifically, but he added that the recent ADA accessibility audit of the City has resulted in a settlement agreement in which the City is required to meet strict accessibility requirements. Jonathan Mabry commented that the ADA settlement requirements resulted in high costs for the City at other facilities and it may be difficult to obtain such a variance. Larry asked again about exterior access, citing past events in which public access was allowed, such as an adobe maintenance and repair workshop led by David Yubeta. Fred acknowledged that past access was allowed but the current construction permit requirements are in effect now. He referred to the Certificate of Occupancy as a requirement for public access, which can only be issued when the construction permit is closed. Jonathan added that the County project can and should proceed.

Elaine Hill asked about the status of the construction permit and whether the HAWK Crossing can include ADA access features. Gary Campbell confirmed that the permit has been “pulled and paid for.” Fred stated the HAWK Crossing will not include ADA-compliant access to the Adkins Parcel. David asked if the public access question was an “all or none” prospect. Jonathan affirmed that the Bond project can proceed but that public access could not be allowed until the construction permit can be closed and a Certificate of Occupancy issued. Corky Poster summarized the situation as too little funding available to build all desired components of the Preservation Plan, pointing out that the lack of funding impacted the historic preservation goals as well as the access issue; for example, the interior rehabilitation of Officers Quarters 3 cannot be done in this project.

Linda Mayro emphasized the County position, that the Bond funding should go to accomplishing preservation objectives and funding limits prevent construction of the parking lot in this phase of the project, but she reminded the group that the Fort Lowell Master Plan incorporated phasing, subject to available funding, with initial priority given to preservation work in the Adkins Parcel as Phase 1 of the overall project. The parking lot was not originally planned until Phase 2, along with other work in Historic Fort Lowell Park. She stated that preservation must be the highest priority of the Bond project, and it is unfortunate that the current bidding climate did not favor lower costs. Larry agreed that preservation should be the project’s highest priority. Fred pointed to the original intent of the Bond, to acquire the Adkins Parcel, which was accomplished through an acquisition agreement that included a land swap, allowing more money to be spent on preservation. He noted that as project planning progressed, different items moved in the priority list to use available funding, with the parking lot being listed higher, then lower, as was the interior rehabilitation of Officers Quarters 3.

Fred affirmed the City position that the County should move forward with the preservation project, but a Certificate of Occupancy cannot be issued without a parking lot and ADA-compliant access. Larry asked again for clarification about the limits to public access; can public enter the property but not the buildings? Fred stated that ADA requires accessible buildings, but also “accessible routes” to buildings to be in compliance. Linda mentioned a request from the County Administrator to the City Manager for a letter clarifying the City position about the County project and the issue of access. She requested a written statement clarifying the City position issues under discussion at this meeting, including the construction permit, the County project proceeding, and the City’s limits on accessibility. She also asked for clarification on the question of permission for public access on special occasions. She mentioned the

County hold on the project is subject to the 60-day lifespan of the contractor bid and asked for a response before that deadline, as requested by the County Administrator.

Corky and Jonathan provided preservation examples similar to Fort Lowell, where exterior preservation work was completed that did not result in public access to the interior. Corky offered comments on the unexpectedly high cost estimates in the contractor bids for the parking lot and suggested alternate strategies for building a parking lot, including the possibility of bidding the parking lot separately, which might result in lower bids. Jonathan agreed that the parking lot could cost less. David brought the discussion back to the immediate preservation status of the Officers Quarters and his concern about their preservation as the most important historical resources on the Adkins Parcel, by asking about the condition of the Officers Quarters. Gary reported a case of an unlocked door, but no vandalism, but other substantive responses were not forthcoming. Jonathan repeated the “good news” that there is Bond money for preservation and that the County project should proceed. Fred agreed. This closed the discussion.

Larry asked Loy Neff if there were any additional County updates. Loy responded with a brief summary of the cultural resources status of the Preservation Project: SHPO consultation complete and contract in place; the archaeological monitoring can proceed with the construction.

c. Ratification of the Preservation Plan for the Adkins Parcel at Fort Lowell Park (action) – Larry asked for a motion from the Committee to show support of the Preservation Project, as currently planned and bid, to ratify the County Preservation Project. Patsy Waterfall made the motion to ratify the Preservation Project. Elaine Hill seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

4. New business: Looking ahead to the completion of the 2004 County Bond Project –

Larry summarized the future funding availability for continued implementation of the Fort Lowell Master Plan. Currently, the Conservation Acquisition Committee (Bond Committee) has tentatively approved a future Fort Lowell Bond project for implementing the Master Plan, at \$5 million. He remarked that the Fort Lowell project is on the future Bond project list, and a possible Bond election in 2014 is being considered. He pointed out that current Bond requests from all jurisdictions total approximately \$1.3 billion, and the County may have a bonding capacity in 2014 of perhaps \$650-700 million. The Bond Committee is currently reviewing all Bond requests and proposed projects. Linda summarized later phases of the Master Plan, which include completing preservation and interpretive work on the core area of the park (east of Craycroft Rd.) and completing circulation and recreation improvement in the park. She mentioned that the parking lot for the Adkins Parcel can be built in a later phase.

Larry encouraged everyone to respond to a public survey on future Bond projects currently online to make their opinions known regarding preservation and the Fort Lowell Master Plan.

The public survey can be reached online at (copy and paste this link in your web browser),

<https://survey.vovici.com/se.ashx?s=0250EC945D8C9C7B>

5. Call to the public – No response from the public in attendance.

6. Schedule for next quarterly meeting at San Pedro Chapel: November 13, 2013 (Action)

After discussion among staff and Advisory Committee, Elaine Hill moved that the next meeting be scheduled for November 13, 2013. Patsy Waterfall seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

7. Meeting adjourned at 5:45 p.m.