

**Cortaro Farms Road, Camino de Oeste to Thornydale Road  
Community Advisory Committee  
Meeting Summary  
December 12, 2007**

I. WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS

Bob Roggenthen, PCDOT Project Manager, welcomed and thanked everyone for coming to the CAC meeting. Project team members and CAC members introduced themselves. Project team members in attendance included: Bob Roggenthen, PCDOT; Rick Ellis, PCDOT; Dewayne Tripp, PCDOT/Psomas; Carol Brichta, PCDOT; Joe Vaskovic, Psomas; Matt Clark, Psomas; Colby Henley, RECON; Lori Woods, RECON; Karen Furenlid, SAGE Landscaping; Fred Narcaroti, Harris Environmental; Nina Borgia-Aberle, Public Art; and Carol Oaks, Kaneen Advertising & Public Relations.

II. CAC MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE

David G. Philips	Leonard Bike
James V. Barnhart	Sy Lakosky
Maeve O'Brien	Sandra Elliott
David Gittings	Dan Brader
Greg Ogden	Robert S. Crossland

Members Absent:  
none

III. PREVIOUS MEETING SUMMARIES

This was the first meeting of the new Cortaro Farms CAC to update the plans; therefore there were no previous minutes to approve.

IV. CAC Involvement – Carol Brichta

Carol Brichta welcomed the CAC to the meeting and explained that this project was already approved by the previous CAC in 2003. Although the original design of this project was completed back in 2003, PCDOT will be reassessing portions of the overall design to see if any refinements/improvements need to be made. In addition, the project team will be making the necessary adjustments in order to tie in with Camino de Oeste. Cortaro Farms Road from the Union Pacific Railroad to Camino de Oeste was recently reconstructed by the Town of Marana.

The purpose of this CAC is to approve the necessary revisions to the plans and approve the revised Environmental Assessment Mitigation Report (EAMR). Carol emphasized that it is important to attend the meetings and if they couldn't attend to contact Carol at 740-6410.

PCDOT will be providing information in the form of reports and plans to the CAC. This information will also be posted on the website. The website address is <http://roadprojects.pima.gov/Cortaro/> and is written on the pens Carol handed out. Carol encouraged the committee members to share information with the neighborhood and homeowner associations, which they represent.

The committee needs to elect a chairperson to oversee the meetings and supervise the written comments. When it comes time to write a letter for the EAMR it is helpful to have one point of contact. Overseeing the drafting of the comment letter will be the responsibility of the chairperson.

V. Project Overview – Joe Vaskovic

Joe explained to the CAC that the Environmental Assessment Mitigation Report (EAMR) consists of several documents including the biological report, cultural resource study, noise studies, landscaping report, and traffic reports. Addendums to the original reports will be summarized and be put into an addendum of the EAMR. The original EAMR was approved in 2003. This project was designed to 100% in 2003 and approved by the previous CAC. The project was shelved in 2003 due to a funding shortfall.

Since then the Marana section of Cortaro Farms, from the railroad tracks to just east of Camino de Oeste, was built. This design project is from just east of Camino de Oeste to Thornydale Road and design is scheduled to be completed in the Spring of 2008.

Since 2003 there are revised traffic projections for Cortaro Farms Road. The traffic projections are significantly less on Cortaro Road than were previously estimated because of the future Twin Peaks interchange and future improvements on Ina Road that are now being taken into account. Since 2003, a traffic signal has been installed at Oldfather Road, and this design will make some modifications to that intersection. Pima County is also currently designing Cortaro Farms to the east from Thornydale Road to Oracle Road in a separate project.

Work to be done on this project (Cortaro Farms, from Camino de Oeste to Thornydale Road) will include: updating plans, specifications, and construction cost estimates; reviewing landscaping; reviewing the new traffic projections and analyzing noise measurements; initiating right-of-way acquisitions; and coordinating utility relocations. Some of the design changes include: a new tie-in with Camino de Oeste; modify the traffic signal at Oldfather; intersection street lighting at Bayou Drive; review the drainage design; update utilities; and reevaluate noise impacts.

VI. Noise – Colby Henley

Colby Henley, from RECON Environmental Inc., described noise and measuring noise. Noise is simply described as unwanted sound. Colby said that sound is measured logarithmically not mathematically. A doubling of noise “energy” produces a 3 dBA noise increase, which is about what a human ear can perceive. Traffic noise is based on the number of vehicles, the speed of the vehicles, and the mix of cars and trucks.

There are several ways noise levels can be reduced. The first way is at the source; noise generated by tire friction can be reduced by using rubberized asphalt. Rubberized asphalt contains ground rubber from recycling tires. The second method is the placement of physical barriers.

Colby describe the current Pima County Traffic Noise Guidance, which utilizes the Federal Highway Traffic Noise Model. This guidance gives a 3 dBA noise reduction benefit for using rubberized asphalt. Noise mitigation is considered if:

- Predicted noise level at the residence is 66deBA Leq or greater
- Predicted noise level increases 15 dBA or more above pre-project level
- Noise barriers would be effective for two or more adjacent receivers
- The majority of benefited property owners approve
- The cost is reasonable (i.e., not exceeding \$30,00 per benefited resident)
- Noise barriers cannot exceed 6' along an "Environmentally Sensitive Road"

Colby explained that the original analysis for this roadway was done prior to the current Pima County Noise Guidance and prior to the design of the Twin Peaks Interchange. Traffic volumes on Cortaro Farms are now projected to be greatly reduced by the future Twin Peaks Interchange and reducing traffic volumes results in a reduction of noise levels.

The next steps for the noise study will be to complete the traffic noise modeling update, based on the updated roadway design and updated traffic data. The noise study will also focus on areas where future noise levels may be 66 dBA or above and work with Pima County and the project engineers to identify appropriate noise mitigation strategies.

VII. Environmental – Fred Narcaroti

Fred Narcaroti, from Harris Environmental Group, Inc., presented the Environmental portion of the project. Fred said they will be conducting pygmy owl surveys even though the pygmy owl was de-listed as an endangered species. They will do a Biological Evaluation to determine habitat connectivity; a Phase 1 Environmental Assessment to determine any possible contamination; and a Cultural Resource Survey to see if there are any historic structures or artifacts. They are also working with the Army Corps of Engineers to do the Section 404 permit for the Clean Water Act for each of the 11 drainage crossings of the project.

VIII. Landscape – Karen Furenlid

Karen Furenlid, from SAGE Landscape Architecture & Environmental, said they are conducting a native plant inventory and they are doing a visual assessment. Karen said that since 2003, Cortaro Farms Road has been designated an Environmentally Sensitive Roadway and Ecologically Sensitive Scenic Route. This means there are different guidelines for vegetation and visual elements of the roadway. Karen will be evaluating all the various aspects of what the motorist, pedestrian, and residents will see along the roadway. Karen said she will be working with the project artist to integrate the landscaping and the art work.

Karen said that they have completed the initial visual assessment and the first phase of the native plant inventory and have inventoried over 1,000 plants. Approximately 35 % of the plants are saguaros and approximately 16% are ironwood trees. Once the roadway design is established, they will evaluate what can be preserved, transplanted, or mitigated with nursery stock.

IX. Public Art – Nina Borgia-Aberle

Nina Borgia-Aberle said that her and Stephen Grede were the artists on the 2003 project. Nina said that they discovered that the western part of Cortaro Farms Road was inspired by history and the eastern section was inspired by flora and native plants. Artwork can become part of the railing or walls and birms or it could be a stand-alone structure. Nina showed a picture of the railing on Cortaro Farms, west of Camino de Oeste. She said the design of the two birds facing each other was inspired by a Navajo weaving. Nina also showed a small model of a stand-alone structure that has a pedestal and sculpture. The top of the pedestal was in the shape of bird wings or a butterfly. The pedestal can also have a design created by form liner on the sides. The sculpture on top will be in the form of a desert marigold. This artwork will be lighted which will be dramatic at night. The artwork will be repeated throughout the project so that as someone drives by they don't have to stop to look at the one piece. They will see a repeated pattern of color and texture. Nina will be working with the design team and with the landscape architect to identify the best locations to place the artwork and about potential railing designs.

X. CAC Involvement - Joe Vaskovic

Joe Vaskovic summarized the CAC involvement by saying that this project is an update of the 2003 design that was previously approved. Joe said there would be one or two more CAC meetings. The CAC will get a chance to review and comment on the updated EAMR. Subsequently, the amended EAMR will go to the Board of Supervisors with a letter from the CAC for approval.

XI. Questions and Comments – Everyone

1. Someone asked how the general public would know about this.  
*- There will be an open house for the general public to attend.*
2. How will sound mitigation be done for the north side where there are no homes today?  
*- It will be the future developer's responsibility and they will have to work with the Pima County Development Services. It will not be part of the cost for this project; it will be the future homeowner's expense.*
3. What about the homes on the north side that sit on several acres?  
*- The noise modeling and the new Pima County Traffic Noise Guidance for will determine what noise mitigation is needed. Then the County and the project team will work with the property owners.*
4. Were comments from previous CAC addressed?  
*- Yes on the plans.*
5. Are plans on the website?  
*- Not yet, but the team is working on it.*

6. Will there be more than two CAC meetings if they are needed to make decisions?  
*- Yes. If the CAC feels they need another CAC meeting, the team will hold another meeting.*
7. Is rubberized asphalt a cost savings?  
*- No but it has more longevity.*
8. Will there be changes to design because of the delisting of the pygmy owl?  
*- The environmental team will continue to monitor the activity of the pygmy owl. There will be some changes to the landscaping because of Environmentally Sensitive Roadway.*
9. What is the construction phasing?  
*- Construction may be done one side at a time. This will be determined once the plans are final and a construction company is under contract.*
10. How long will construction take?  
*- Approximately 18 months.*
11. Will the roadway require property to be taken  
*- Right now there are approximately 19 properties that will be impacted. Most will only be partially impacted by a few feet. Once the design is established and hard data is acquired, Pima County will be contacting the affected property owners.*
12. Will the electrical lines be put underground, especially since the roadway will be designated as a scenic roadway?  
*- No because of funding constraints. It will still be scenic because of the desert landscaping and the mountain vistas.*

## XII. CLOSING AND ADJOURNMENT

Joe Vaskovic thanked everyone for coming and said this meeting was a preview of things to come in mid-January. The next meeting will have more hard data for the committee.

Dan Brader was unanimously elected as the CAC Chairperson.

The meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m. The team expressed appreciation for everyone's interest and attendance. The next meeting is tentatively schedule for the week of January 14, 2008.

END OF MEETING SUMMARY