



*La Cañada Drive:
River Road to Ina Road and
Ina Road to Calle Concordia
Improvement Project*



Joint CAC Artist Meeting Summary

Community Advisory Committee (CAC) Meeting
Tuesday, March 24, 2009, 5:30 – 7:30 p.m.
Tucson Chinese Cultural Center
1288 W. River Road
Tucson, AZ 85704

CAC Members (South) Present at Meeting:

Dan Bartch
Lori Franz
Jim McElhiney
Joseph O'Hagin
Noel Robinson
Sam Ray
Steve Sedor
Ruben Sibayan
Kirk Strang
Roland Wadsworth

CAC Members (South) Not in Attendance:

Constance Hammond
John Kaur
Linda Kelly
Maria Duarte
Gail Gault
Charles Miller
Ryan Olson

CAC Members (North) Present at Meeting:

Bob Burtch
Fred Heinrichs
Ron Hilwig
Doug Raine

CAC Members (North) Not in Attendance:

Erna Haase Birkle
Linda Fraser

Attending from Project Team:

Pima County Department of Transportation (PCDOT): Jonathan Crowe, Rick Ellis, Julie Simon
Pima County Board of Supervisor Ann Day's office: Jacqui Andrade
HDR Engineering: Mike Bertram, Buddy Evers
Tucson Pima Arts Council (TPAC): Mary Ellen Wooten
Artist: Carolyn Braaksma
Gordley Design Group: Barb Alley, Paki Rico

Materials Distributed:

Agenda
Fact sheet (north and south segments)
Artist Selection chart
Public Art Design, A Collaborative Process chart
Comment form
Regional Transportation Authority (RTA) booklet

Summary:

Mike Bertram, Project Manager, welcomed everyone to the joint CAC artist meeting for the La Cañada Drive: River Road to Ina Road and Ina Road to Calle Concordia segments. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the preliminary art concepts for the corridor; however, before getting started with the meeting, Mike took the opportunity to honor CAC member Jerry Mitchell, who recently passed away, with a moment of silence. Mike then began the meeting by referring everyone to the agenda and the artist selection and art process charts that were handed out to all attendees. Mike stated that Jonathan Crowe, PCDOT, would be going over those handouts prior to the artist's presentation. Mike proceeded to go over the agenda items to inform the group of what would be covered in the meeting. He stated that Carolyn had made some changes to her designs and she would be sharing her revised concepts from the input received at the Jan. 21, 2009, CAC meeting. These revised concepts had been presented to the project team, Tucson Pima Arts Council (TPAC) and CAC members at a meeting held on March 12. After the art presentation, Mike stated he would be going over an update on both the north and south segments of the La Cañada Drive road improvements. After the project update, Mike would then open up questions to the general public. Mike reminded all in attendance that the meeting was for the CAC members, and after the conclusion of the CAC portion of the meeting, the project team would be happy to field questions from the general public. Mike suggested the public note their questions on the comment forms provided. At that time, he turned the floor over to Jonathan.

Jonathan took a few minutes to go over the handout on the art and artist selection chart. He mentioned that the information was self-explanatory and he would not be spending a lot of time going over the material. He stated that Pima County hires TPAC to oversee the selection process, but they do not choose the artist; rather, they help to facilitate the process for the County. Jonathan then referred the audience to turn over the handout for additional information on how the art moves forward once the artist has been chosen. Jonathan encouraged those who had questions about TPAC's role in the artist and art selection process to direct them to Mary Ellen Wooten, TPAC.

Before artist Carolyn Braaksma began her presentation, Mike made a few remarks on how Carolyn's art had evolved from the last concepts that were shown at the January CAC meeting. Mike told the group that Carolyn and the project team had read over all of the comments and developed more detailed concepts based on the feedback received. Mike then turned the floor over to Carolyn, at which time she asked the CAC members to take a few minutes to go around the table and introduce themselves.

Carolyn began her presentation by showing some work she did on other projects to give everyone an idea of how she moves from concept into finished product. She explained the materials used on other projects and her reasons for using those specific colors and materials. She also included a slide of buildings in the vicinity of La Cañada Drive that are painted with very bright and vibrant colors. Carolyn wanted the group to see that bright colors are being used in the area.

Carolyn summarized the comments received from the previous meeting:

- Desert colors
- Nature themes
- Simple
- Low lights

As she progressed through her presentation, she showed the group a metal shade structure that used desert animals within the metal design. This structure could be designed to offer shade and shadows depending on the location of the sun throughout the day. She then went on to show photos of the St. Augustine Cathedral and the beautiful columns constructed along the exterior of the church. Carolyn pointed out intricacies that may not be noticed from afar. She used these columns to help explain the thought behind the preliminary column concepts she designed.

Carolyn is hoping to use an agave plant shape on the textured retaining walls. At this stage she is unsure of how the colors will be used in this pattern. She also showed more stand-alone sculptures and vertical ribs that mimic the ribs of a saguaro cactus.

Carolyn showed an example of the low lights she could use to represent flowers at the top of a cactus. She demonstrated how the light would look by shining a small flashlight through the glass to softly illuminate some of the structures.

Carolyn also showed a brief photo of what a snake would look like as a railing on the culverts across washes. She also showed a photo of a bull-nose median with a carved or cast-in-stone bed taken of an area in Washington, D.C. Since trees will not be placed in the medians, this is a way to add something of interest and low maintenance.

Paki asked for all CAC members to go around the table and give Carolyn additional feedback. Comments made were:

- Subtle colors along the roadway
- Keep everything simple
- Like the sculpture
- Hard to get a feeling for what the area will look like with the art
- Come a long way from initial concepts
- Don't like the Spanish influence from the columns; Mexican heritage
- Graffiti concerns on walls
- Don't care for the sculptures
- Don't care for the shade structure
- Like colors on the wall, but not bright colors
- Concern about the possibility of using colors that are on walls located on North La Cholla Boulevard; not well received by the public
- Like the metal shade structure, but less cut-outs in the structure would be better
- Invert the shade sculpture to maximize the amount of shade the structure will provide
- Where will the metal structures be placed along the project area?
 - Right-of-way and open spaces
- Bright colors ok on the flowers of the structures
- Appropriate use of color; i.e. mosaic like viewed on the prickly pear cactus showed earlier in the presentation
- Less is more – less distractions for those who frequent the area
- Seal metal pieces to help keep them clean
- Liked some of the pillars/columns
- Snake railing is too busy
- Remember this is a major traffic area; reduce distractions
- Don't want all one color; too boring
- Make the shade structure functional
- Bring color to the art through plants
- Don't feel the openness of the shade structure will offer much shade
- Colors on the flowers, etc. is what makes the desert beautiful
- Concerned that any pattern on the sidewalk would be a hazard – even with kids on skateboards
- The bull-nose median is interesting – unique

- Would prefer cast-in-concrete walls rather than block walls
- Like the sunburst; what happened to it?
 - Carolyn stated it was removed because she was trying to keep everything cohesive
- Textured sound walls were beautiful

Carolyn encouraged everyone to come up and see the samples of the block colors she may be using in some of her designs. Carolyn wanted the group to know that the colors on the PowerPoint were not the true colors she would be using.

Mary Ellen Wooten, TPAC, took a moment to thank everyone for sharing their comments and that Carolyn had come a long way with her designs because of the group's input. She stated that Carolyn was halfway through the design and would be moving forward in finalizing her designs.

A CAC member commented that perhaps the lower section of the wall could include a simpler design that could easily be painted or sandblasted if the wall would succumb to graffiti. The texture and brighter colors could be higher up for a more aesthetic look.

Mike reiterated that he heard that graffiti was a common theme among the group. If walls are built, graffiti will come. For each wall, Pima County maintenance has the necessary supplies to remove the graffiti on the walls. Depending on what has been chosen for the wall, there will be a maintenance plan that will cover how to remove graffiti; paint, sandblasting, etc.

Mike introduced Julie Simon, Pima County Community Relations, who gave a quick overview of what happens when a call about graffiti comes into the County. They will dispatch the task force unit of the County to take care of the problem.

Mike stated that he heard that the members also wanted subtle colors. Mike and Mary Ellen invited the CAC members, along the members of the public, to come and view the colored blocks. At that time, attendees got out of their seats and came to the table to view the blocks up close as requested.

As attendees took their seats, Mike asked everyone to make their comments on the comment form and leave it with the team.

Mike stated there would be one more focus group meeting in mid-April with CAC members and members of the selection committee. After that meeting, Carolyn will move into final design and have her designs to the team by mid-May. The artwork will be added to the final construction plans, along with any minor adjustments that are needed.

Mike went on to the project update for the north segment of La Cañada Drive. The pre-final construction drawings are with the Pima County technical review team for their comments. These documents consist of the plans, special provisions and the cost estimate for construction. The review team is expected to return the documents to the project team the beginning of April 2009. Once all the documents have been finalized, the project will be advertised. There will be an approximate 90-day time period between when the project is advertised for construction bid and when a contract is awarded. At that time, construction will begin.

On the south segment of La Cañada Drive, the Draft Concept Report (DCR) and the Environmental Assessment and Mitigation Report (EAMR) are being reviewed by PCDOT. In approximately two weeks, review comments will come back to the project team to review. Once those documents are finalized, there will be a south segment CAC meeting for the team to present the documents to the CAC. This is tentatively scheduled for the beginning of May. Once the documents have been presented to the CAC, there will be a public meeting, tentatively scheduled for mid-May, to present the documents to the general public. The CAC will need to have their recommendation

letter drafted and completed by the end of May in order to present all documents to the Board of Supervisors (BOS) for approval in July.

Mike also touched on the status of the right-of-way acquisitions on the north segment. He stated that there were a total of approximately 108 acquisitions of which 35 still need some type of attention. Mike stated that all the residents who are affected on any right-of-way issues on the north should have already been contacted. They are not at that stage yet on the south segment. Utility work on the north is as follows:

- Tucson Electric Power (TEP) work will be commencing in the first part of April. First they will be doing extensive underground work. They will relocate all overhead facilities as needed upon the completion of the underground work.
- Southwest Gas (SWG) work is still weeks away. They will be laying new equipment that will follow the existing roadway.
- Metro Water is approximately 90-percent complete with design and anticipate work beginning in May.
- Qwest is behind schedule.
- Western Area Power Administration (WAPA) will move their overhead power lines, if necessary, in the spring of 2010. They will move their equipment on the south segment at the same time if it is determined they be moved.
- Pima County Regional Wastewater Reclamation Department (PCRWRD) will be relocating a few lines along the project area.

Q: Is there a way for utilities to work together when doing the work?

A: Mike stated that the utilities are independent but are working together to limit conflicts.

Trees will not be used in the medians. Anything greater than four inches in diameter will no longer be used in the medians.

There were more discussions regarding the integration of plants into the project area by team and CAC members.

Joe O'Hagin, CAC member, asked for his comment to be of public record and it was the following:

- He would like to commend, and thank, Mr. Bertram and his team for their professionalism and candor for the last few years.
- Mike graciously acknowledged and accepted Mr. O'Hagin's praise, then opened up the meeting for questions from the public.

Q: What is the plan for bike lanes along the project area?

A: They are being provided along the entire corridor within the roadway prism.

Q: What about crosswalks at Dawn and Chapala Drives?

A: Neither warrant crosswalk striping at this time. PCDOT will assess again after construction.

Q: What about a crosswalk at Sage Street?

A: There used to be a crosswalk at that location; however, it was found to not be warranted, so it was removed. It will be looked at again after construction is completed.

Q: When will we see the EAMR?

A: We will provide a hard copy to the CAC in early May. Once the EAMR is approved, it will appear on the project Web site.

Q: I was a CAC member on the southern section La Cholla Boulevard Omar Road to River Road project. We worked together with the north segment as a group, and the northern part of the project was done first. When the southern portion of road improvements was done, there was no money left for the art. The art that ended up on the

southern end of the project was not what was done on the northern section. Make sure the County doesn't run out of money for the art on the southern portion of the La Cañada Drive project.

A: Comment noted.

Concern: The original money for this project back in 2001 was from a 1997 bond issue where funds ran out.

Team: We understand the concern about funding; the RTA money is in place for first quarter projects.

Q: Who pays for the utility relocation work?

A: The utility companies pay for their own work unless they have prior rights.

Q: Can they raise rates for doing the work along this project area?

A: They are private franchises and are regulated by the Arizona Corporation Commission (ACC).

Q: What has been decided on the Roller Coaster Wash?

A: We are not sure yet. Pima County Flood Control District will be assessing the wash and making recommendations.

The remaining time was spent on art input from the public. Their comments were as follows:

- Don't like the free standing sculptures
- Don't feel the "shade" structure offers shade
- Don't like the snake railing
- Like the cast-in-place concrete walls; easy to maintain tone on tone
- Want the wall to blend, not stand out
- The art is what the residents will be living with on a daily basis
- The lighting will be distracting to drivers
- No lights on the walls
- Bright colors will be a distraction
- Sunsets are not subtle – beautiful colors
- Sunsets have a large color pallet
- Like designs
- Listen to the CAC members and make modifications accordingly

Mike again encouraged everyone to come and look at the samples that Carolyn brought today and hoped that Carolyn would be able to bring actual samples to show the CAC members at the focus group meeting in April.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:30 p.m.