



La Cholla Boulevard: Ruthrauff Road to River Road Community Advisory Committee Meeting



Community Advisory Committee (CAC) Meeting
Thursday, Feb. 12, 2009
6 to 7:30 p.m.
Ellie Towne Flowing Wells Community Center

CAC Members Present:

- Fred Bass
- Ann Girvin
- Wayne Metz
- Ellie Towne

CAC Members Not in Attendance:

- Humbert Arce
- Ellen Currey
- Jason Kai
- Andy Hernandez
- Norma Metz
- Robert Schwartz

Attending from Project Team:

- Pima County Department of Transportation (PCDOT): Carol Brichta, Jonathan Crowe, Ali Fermawi, Dean Papajohn
- HDR Engineering: Larry Barela, Mike Barton, Ted Buell, Christine Jacobs-Donoghue, Scott Stapp
- McGann & Associates: Darlene Showalter
- Gordley Design Group: Barb Alley, Arizeder Urreiztieta

Materials Distributed/Presented:

- Agenda
- Comment forms

Dean Papajohn, PCDOT Project Manager, welcomed the group to the CAC meeting, and thanked the members for their commitment to the La Cholla Boulevard project. Dean stated he would be giving the CAC a project update; Darlene Showalter, McGann & Associates would be giving a presentation on the landscape and artist Vicki Scuri, would be giving a presentation on the art concepts.

Project update:

- Environmental Assessment and Mitigation Report (EAMR) – approved by Pima County Board of Supervisors (BOS) in December 2008.
- Design Concept Report (DCR) – approved by the Pima County Director of Transportation in December 2008.
- Begun working on the final construction documents for the project.

Dean stated that there are five stages to a project and this project is currently in stage three, which means that the plans for these improvements are nearing 60 percent complete. At this time, the team is addressing advance storm drain issues, utilities in the right-of-way (ROW), bridge design and roadway design. This roadway was approved for a six-lane road and a six-lane bridge with no frontage roads.

Revised plans were brought for members to view the new design as approved by the BOS. Since there are no longer frontage roads in this design, a turnaround area will be added to allow the user to back into the turnaround and head onto La Cholla Boulevard. This will be safer than backing into the six-lane roadway. Larry Barela, HDR Engineering, Inc., gave a demonstration on how residents would back out using the turnaround. Where there is no pavement, landscaping will be added.

Dean introduced Darlene and gave a brief description of projects that Darlene is and has been involved in. He also introduced Vicki, giving a brief description of the work she is has done and is currently working on. Dean informed the group on how Vicki was chosen and stated that Ellie Towne, CAC member, was a part of the selection committee.

Darlene brought a PowerPoint presentation in order to show the members the concepts she has put together along this corridor. Darlene has been collaborating with Vicki to ensure continuity between the landscaping and the public art. Below is a brief outline of Darlene's plans. Please see www.roadprojects.pima.gov/lachollariver to view the full PowerPoint presentations that Darlene and Vicki showed at the meeting.

- Landscape has a high impact on roadway users
 - When the landscape is visually pleasing, it can positively affect daily lives
 - Environmentally sensitive roadway due to the wash
- Trees along the ROW not in medians
- Preserve as many trees as possible along the ROW
- Riverpark connections for pedestrians
 - Shade on pathways
 - Sea pods and flowers for variation through the seasons
- Landscape roadway
 - Majority of plants to be native to Tucson – reduce the amount of water needed to survive
 - Install dips in medians for water harvesting
 - Continue plants similar to adjacent roadways for continuity
- Work closely with Vicki's agave theme – agaves and similar formed plants can be used in landscaping

Q: Will you be using reclaimed water?

A: We will use reclaimed water when plants are first planted to get them established.

Q: What about maintenance?

A: We will be choosing plants that are virtually maintenance-free or low maintenance.

Dean then turned the floor over to Vicki to present her concepts for public art to the members.

Vicki started her designs about eight or nine months ago with the executive summary that was a part of the EAMR. The following are her thoughts for the preliminary plans she prepared.

- Enhance the bridge over the wash
 - Anyone from out of town would not know there was a wash under the bridge – showed the members what was done with the Alvernon Way bridge
 - Celebrate the wash
- Need to work with our roadway for cohesiveness
- Ideas include:
 - Using agave plants – easy to grow, attractive and charming
 - Using materials that look natural
 - Use local resources

There will be a balcony on the bridge for pedestrians to view the wash. This will be a great asset during monsoon season. Vicki is considering incorporating the sun in her designs by adding “windows” in the wall along the bridge for the sun to shine through. It will be a similar effect to a stain-glassed window. The metal railing with an agave pattern over wire mesh will be used for the center span. An audience member noted that the metal work might be similar to the one on Interstate 10 over 6th Avenue (the César Chávez Bridge). Again, the full PowerPoint presentation can be viewed on the project Web site.

There was a concern about texture on sidewalks for those who have trouble walking or for strollers and wheelchairs. If texture is chosen to be used on sidewalks, it will meet American with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements. The CAC noted that the texture on the sidewalk outside the Ellie Towne Flowing Wells Community Center was acceptable.

Other comments made were:

- Liked the balcony
- Liked the idea of showcasing the bridge
- Discussed where landscaping would go
- Stain will be used on concrete due to sun exposure
- Concern with graffiti – it was suggested that a process called “ribbing” be used to deter graffiti
- Lighting along the bridge – no lighting is planned

Dean gave an outline of the schedule, which consisted of:

- The team will come back to the CAC to present more formal art and landscape plans in approximately two months
- The project team will continue to refine concepts
- The project design plans will continue to move forward

The meeting was adjourned at 7 p.m.