

Silverbell Road Task Force Wednesday, January 6, 2010

Summary of Meeting #3

The third meeting of the Silverbell Road Task Force (SRTF) took place from 6:00 to 7:50 pm at the Silverbell Golf Course Clubhouse, 3600 North Silverbell Road. In attendance were the following member representatives of the Task Force:

Wain Cooper, Regional Transportation Authority
Kendall Elmer, Pima County Neighborhoods
Barbara Whitaker, City of Tucson Neighborhoods
Sandy Fagan, City of Tucson Neighborhoods
Frank Stryker, City of Tucson Businesses
Bradley Lang, City of Tucson Businesses
Michael Mencinger, Regional Transportation Authority
Angela Wagner-Gabbard, Town of Marana Neighborhoods
Julie Prince, City of Tucson-Pima County Bicycle Advisory Committee
Gale Marsland, Pima County Businesses
Josh Wright, Town of Marana Businesses

SRTF members Hurvie Davis, Robert De La Cerda, Midge Hardy and Judith Meyer were absent.

Also present were Project Team members:

Andy Dinauer, Project Manager, City of Tucson
Jim Schoen, Project Manager, Kittelson & Associates
Jason Simmers, Lead Engineer, Kittelson & Associates
Rick Ellis, Pima County Transportation
Scott Leska, Town of Marana
Jose Ortiz, City of Tucson Traffic Engineering
Freda Johnson, Meeting Moderator, Rillito Consulting Group
Nanette Pageau, Community Outreach, Kaneen Advertising & Public Relations
Evelyn Urrea, Community Outreach, Kaneen Advertising & Public Relations

1. Call Meeting to Order – Confirm Quorum

Freda Johnson, meeting moderator, welcomed everyone and announced that a quorum was present.

2. Introductions of SRTF Members and Project Team

Members of the Task Force introduced themselves as did Project Team members. All jurisdictions were represented.

3. Announcements

Freda Johnson reviewed the Task Force meeting ground rules.

4. Review of Open Meeting Laws – Representatives from City Clerk’s and City Attorney’s Offices

Deborah Rainone, City Clerk’s Office, summarized requirements for record keeping, meeting protocol, and voting. She said that a legal action report is required following the meeting. She reminded the group that a quorum is required for a meeting to take place and that minutes of meetings should be approved and posted. Dennis McLaughlin, City Attorney’s Office, reminded the group that discussion could take place only on items on the agenda. Members of the Task Force may not talk to one other about the project outside of the committee meeting, but may talk with the designated staff member between meetings. Andy Dinauer is the staff contact. Dennis advised that e-mails can be a problem and that one member should not e-mail all the other members at one time because this constitutes a quorum. He said that there is a handbook provided to Task Force members in their membership packet as a reference. Subcommittees are permitted but they must also follow all Open Meeting Laws.

5. Staff Reports, Presentations and Discussion

a. Cross Section Follow Up

Before going over the proposed Cross Section alternatives, Jim Schoen of Kittelson & Associates acknowledged questions asked by Task Force members at the December meeting as follows:

Regarding the type of vehicles that may be used on a multi-use path, any non-gas motorized vehicle within a certain weight, which includes segways, may use the multi-use path.

Regarding the problem of horse trails designated on private property by Pima Trails, they do not have an answer on that yet, but as soon as they do, they will get that information to the TF members.

Regarding street lighting between Grant and Goret recommended in the Traffic Report, continuous roadway lighting from Grant Road to Goret Road is included in the City of Tucson Illumination Program, but they will follow up with the City to be sure that lighting will be required to be installed during the initial construction, or if it can be installed at a later date.

Jim presented information regarding the proposed cross sections. A handout was provided to the members with cross sections from Grant to Goret, from Goret to Sunset and Sunset to Ina Road. From Goret to Grant, Jim said that a 6-foot bike lane is specified with a vertical curb and no gutter. He said that the west side of the roadway could go uncurbed from Goret to Sunset. From Ina to Sunset, Jim said that there is no change from the proposed bike lane of 5 feet of pavement plus 1 foot for the gutter and curbs on both sides. Julie Prince said that she prefers bike lanes to be 6 feet of pavement for safety reasons and because Tucson is seeking Platinum certification from the League of American Bicyclists. She said that she appreciates that the Town of Marana reduced the gutter pan area to 1 foot.

Brad Lang commented that Tucson is supposed to be a bicycle friendly city. He urged that wildlife considerations be addressed as well as scenic aspects of the roadway. Jason Simmers, also from Kittelson, commented that there needs to be flexibility in terms of how shoulders are treated. Brad asked if there would be a HAWK pedestrian crossing south of Introspect since students need to cross there. Jim Schoen said that certain warrants need to be met to install a HAWK crossing and that the evaluation of a HAWK signal at this location has been recommended in the traffic report and would occur as part of the final design effort. Barbara Whitaker asked if there would be two lanes on either side of the median. The response was yes and that there would be turn lanes at medians. Wain Cooper said that in other cities, the median width is 16 feet and that value engineering needs to be done to challenge criteria. Staff said that the wider median is needed to accommodate u-turns by a variety of vehicles including vehicles with horse trailers.

Frank Stryker addressed the situation in the section from Grant to Goret where there is a 6-foot sidewalk immediately behind the curb. He feels that this presents a safety problem. Jim noted that the team would look at possibly moving the sidewalk further away from the roadway if there is sufficient room. Mr. Stryker also inquired about where the new roadway would tie into the existing elevation. Staff noted that within the 20-foot clear zone from the roadway travel lane, the slopes had to be relatively flat, however, beyond that the slopes could be steeper to tie into the adjacent property. Once the roadway profile has been determined, the project team will be able to determine where the new roadway will tie in.

Kendall Elmer acknowledged the need for the 20-foot median for turnarounds but asked if there is an opportunity of exceptions in long areas where there are significant distances between median breaks. Staff indicated that they would look into this design option and confer with each agency. Angela Wagner-Gabbard asked if there would be cost savings by narrowing the median in some areas. Staff said that savings would not be significant if the median is only narrowed a few feet.

Brad Lang said he is concerned that restrictions against tractor trailers be kept and there be no short cuts by these vehicles through residential areas. Andy Dinauer said agencies can consider truck restrictions, however businesses along Silverbell do require deliveries from large trucks. Gale Marsland commented that some businesses along Silverbell take deliveries by 18-wheel trucks. Wain said that it would be helpful to illustrate turning movements for different vehicles. Jim indicated that staff would provide the CTF with U-turn paths of pedestrian and truck-trailer combinations to illustrate the need for the wider median.

Julie asked about the rationale for having 5-foot bike lanes from Sunset to Ina. Scott Leska, Town of Marana, said it was a compromise with Pima County to keep the roadway consistent with 6-foot bike lanes and also include gutter. Kendall and Barbara agreed with the need for a wider bike lane in the Marana stretch. Kendall asked about the treatment on the west side of the roadway between Goret and Sunset. Staff said that that area could be curbed or not. Frank Stryker commented that with the consensus process for the Task Force, a quick decision doesn't seem possible and he asked if consensus could be taken at the next meeting. Kendall said he agrees with Frank.

Angela asked if the bike lane is expanded, where would the extra feet come from. Staff said it would come out of the shoulder. Kendall asked if the proposed cross-sections come out of existing right-of-way (ROW). Staff said that additional right-of-way would be required in some areas.

Andy Dinauer asked the Task Force to reflect on the cross sections and come back to the next meeting to talk more about them. In the meantime, the jurisdictions will confer with each other about what is possible regarding bike lane width and median width.

b. Corridor Alignment Alternatives

Jim Schoen reviewed the alignment criteria presented at the December meeting. He clarified the difference between the floodway (no intrusion permitted) and the flood plain (building allowed as long as it is constructed at least 1 foot above the flood plain and does not negatively impact the flood plain area.). In response to a question about who defines the flood plain, Jim said that it is FEMA based on studies done by Pima County Flood Control District. Pima County is performing a study of the Santa Cruz River to remap the flood plain.

Wain asked if there would be mitigation measures announced or published with regard to archaeology. Andy Dinauer said that the archaeological process drives this project. Most of the CTF members present were in agreement with the proposed prioritized alignment criteria.

Jason Simmers reviewed characteristics of the alignments by segment using a Power Point presentation. The exhibit's colors were explained with red showing the center line and outside curb lanes, yellow signifies the back edges of sidewalks, thinner purple shows existing ROW, and orange indicates new ROW needed.

From Grant to Goret, the new roadway will remain on the existing centerline in order to eliminate impacts on adjacent residential and commercial properties. Jason said that from Goret to the golf course, a 10-foot shift to the east is possible, however, drainage issues limit some opportunities. In response to questions, he said that there would not be right turn lanes into subdivisions and that bus pullouts have not yet been identified except at Grant Road. Jim noted that the project team has talked with Sun Tran about potential locations for future bus pullouts and none are currently planned. However, room will be preserved for bus pullouts at signalized intersections.

From the golf course up to Sweetwater, the 10-foot shift to the east continues. This shift is intended to reduce/eliminate impacts on properties and hillsides to the west. From Sweetwater to Camino del Cerro, the project team is proposing a shift to the east of approximately 35 feet to avoid private property and hill sides.

Andy Dinauer said that maps showing the proposed alignment will be provided to the TF members to study prior to the next meeting. A series of 11 x 17 sheets will be provided. He indicated that the project team will take extra time at the next meeting so that the CTF clearly understands the proposed alignment. Jim Schoen said that electronic copies would be provided to everyone on the Task Force and hard copies could be provided to those that requested them. Several people commented that they did not receive minutes

of the December meeting via e-mail and that they wished to approve the minutes at future meetings.

Because of the lack of time, the second half of the roadway alignment presentation on Agenda item 5.b. will be continued at the next meeting along with item 5.c. Signalized Intersection Alternatives.

6. Next Steps

a. Future Meeting Dates

By general agreement, the next meeting was announced for February 3, 2010.

7. Call to the Audience

Julian Hadland spoke on behalf of the elderly in the Silverbell corridor. He expressed concern about loss of property, u-turns and said that he prefers a center turn lane instead of the raised curbed median. He encouraged limiting vehicle weight limits on the roadway.

Brad Argue commented on a new development south of the golf course regarding aesthetics and turn lanes. He said he hopes new developments will honor the aesthetics being considered in the roadway project.

Lisa White said that she is an impacted homeowner and asked if the 4-lane roadway has already been decided and asked if so, when it was set in stone. She asked why there is no center turn lane. She said there should be a subcommittee and that she wants to get the same information that the Task Force gets.

8. Adjournment

By general agreement, the meeting was adjourned at 7:50 pm.