

# COUNCIL MINUTES

December 5, 1996

The City Council of the City of Mesa met in a Policy Session in the lower level meeting room of the Council Chambers, 57 East 1st Street, on December 5, 1996 at 4:00 p.m.

## COUNCIL PRESENT

Mayor Wayne Brown  
Pat Gilbert  
John Giles  
Dennis Kavanaugh  
Joan Payne  
Wayne Pomeroy  
Jim Stapley

## COUNCIL ABSENT

None

## STAFF PRESENT

C.K. Luster  
Tom Albright  
Neal Beets  
Tanya Collins  
Jo Cooper  
Linda Crocker  
Glen Gorke  
Dan Hansing  
Mike Hutchinson  
Barbara Jones  
Harry Kent  
Frank Mizner  
Ruth Ann Norris  
John Oliver  
Ellen Pence  
Bryan Raines  
Tom Remes  
Denise Samuel  
Jamie Warner  
Mindy White  
Others

## OTHERS PRESENT

Debra Duvall  
Bill Jaffa  
Chris Moeser  
David Molina  
Dan Nowicki  
Jerry Petrie  
Ralph Pew  
Joe Shipley  
Chris Zaharis  
Others

Mayor Brown excused Councilmember Stapley from the beginning of the meeting. Councilmember Stapley joined the meeting at 4:18 p.m.

Mayor Brown welcomed the members of the Planning and Zoning Board to the meeting and acknowledged the presence of representatives from the Gilbert School District.

### 1. Discuss and consider development in the citrus areas of Northeast Mesa.

Planning Director Frank Mizner advised the Council that over the past year the members of the Planning and Zoning Board have been concerned with the issue of development, primarily residential, in the citrus areas of Northeast Mesa. Mr. Mizner noted that a majority of the cases brought before the Planning and Zoning Board involve larger lots and added that requirements to retain citrus have been determined on a case-by-case basis. Mr. Mizner reported that over

the last twenty-five years, Mesa has experienced a 40% reduction in citrus and noted that both pro and con arguments exist relative to maintaining the citrus.

Mr. Mizner briefly highlighted the contents of a report submitted to the Council and stated that three alternatives for the Council to consider relative to this issue include: 1) do nothing and allow the rezoning cases to be reviewed on a case-by-case basis; 2) direct staff to develop a citrus policy to be adopted by Council resolution, and 3) the City-purchase of large areas of citrus as a community asset.

Mayor Brown complimented the Planning and Zoning Board on their efforts and indicated that he supports the development of guidelines relative to the citrus issue.

Councilmember Kavanaugh also commended the Board and stated the opinion that a policy should be developed rather than determinations made on a case-by-case basis.

Discussion ensued relative to the importance of addressing specific maintenance issues, staff's intent to contact all concerned parties regarding the proposed guidelines, and the fact that many developers and homeowners voluntarily expend efforts to retain the citrus trees on their properties.

Councilmember Giles recommended that developers be offered incentives to encourage citrus maintenance. Councilmember Giles stated that he recognizes the value of the citrus areas but added that the rights of property owners must also be considered.

Vice Mayor Gilbert requested that additional discussion occur in the future relative to this issue and encouraged the involvement of residents and landowners.

Mayor Brown expressed the opinion that input relative to this matter should be solicited from developers and homeowners.

Councilmember Pomeroy stated the opinion that additional study is required prior to presenting this issue to the developers and homeowners.

In response to a question from Mayor Brown, Debra Duvall, Chairman of the Planning and Zoning Board, discussed the Planning and Zoning Board's willingness to discuss this issue with the development community. Ms. Duvall stressed the importance of consistency when working with developers on projects within the City of Mesa.

(Councilmember Stapley joined the meeting at 4:18 p.m.)

Mayor Brown thanked staff and the members of the Planning and Zoning Board for their input.

## 2. Discuss and consider development in the Southeast Mesa area.

Planning Director Frank Mizner referred to a composite of zoning maps displayed in the Council Chambers and noted that the area south of the Superstition Freeway, east of Power Road to the County line, north of Williams Gateway Airport and General Motors Proving Grounds is the last large, undeveloped area within the City's borders.

Mr. Mizner noted that significant development pressures exist in the area south of the Superstition Freeway and east of Ellsworth Road and stressed the importance of considering the following issues when discussing development trends in this particular area: 1) school impacts; 2) infrastructure; 3) existing land uses; 4) development trends, and 5) regional issues.

Mr. Mizner reported that the Town of Gilbert and the City of Chandler have adopted resolutions to improve single residence development and noted that homes currently being proposed by developers in Southeast Mesa would not have been allowed in Gilbert or Chandler.

Mr. Mizner noted that staff has been working on draft residential guidelines at the direction of the Planning and Zoning Board, but indicated staff's concerns that the guidelines alone may not be sufficient. Mr. Mizner requested Council direction relative to this issue and added that although staff is not recommending a building moratorium in this area, the magnitude of development must be addressed.

Discussion ensued relative to impact fees, limited planning for parks and schools, and a recent letter received from the Town of Gilbert School Governing Board relative to declaring an immediate moratorium and the legal feasibility of such action.

Mayor Brown indicated that additional discussion and analysis is required prior to responding to the letter received from the Town of Gilbert School Governing Board.

Councilmember Giles stated the opinion that City Attorney Neal Beets should provide the Council with guidelines on the legal issues associated with a moratorium.

Vice Mayor Gilbert stressed the importance of long-term planning and ensuring that development in the area under discussion will positively impact the City in the future.

In response to a question from Councilmember Payne relative to the proposed Impact Fee Study, City Manager Charles Luster advised that the Study will be forwarded to the Council in the near future for review and consideration.

Councilmember Kavanaugh commented that although he does not support a moratorium, he would be interested in reviewing the legal basis for declaring a moratorium.

Mayor Brown cautioned staff to proceed cautiously in this area.

### 3. Discuss and consider Residential Development Guidelines.

Planning Director Frank Mizner referred to a report prepared by staff relative to residential development guidelines for single-family projects in Mesa. Mr. Mizner explained that the report was prepared at the request of the Planning and Zoning Board which has expressed concerns relative to the character, quality and amenities of residential development proposals.

Mr. Mizner noted that limited guidelines currently exist to assist in the review of single residence developments and discussed concerns relative to the quality and long-term sustainability of proposed single-residence developments. Mr. Mizner reported that specific concerns include a proliferation of small lots, less than 7,000 square feet; a lack of variety of roofing and home materials, colors and styles; unimaginative street designs; a lack of pedestrian

and open space connections, inadequate open space and recreational amenities, and an overall lack of quality as evidenced in project details such as signage, perimeter walls and landscaping themes.

Mr. Mizner noted that concerns have been addressed on a case-by-case basis and discussed the Board's opinion that a City ordinance or policy should be developed to provide a consistent evaluative and decision-making framework. Mr. Mizner informed the Council that the Town of Gilbert and the City of Chandler have adopted residential guidelines and noted that the process was supported by their Council and citizens.

Mr. Mizner commented that the Planning and Zoning Board supports the draft guidelines prepared by staff and noted that should the Council determine the guidelines are appropriate, staff would solicit input from interested parties and a public hearing would be held by the Board prior to possible Council adoption by resolution.

Councilmembers Kavanaugh and Pomeroy indicated their support of staff's recommendations and commended staff on their efforts.

Vice Mayor Gilbert concurred with Councilmembers Kavanaugh and Pomeroy and stated the opinion that a secondary property tax is essential and would provide municipal compensation for required infrastructure costs.

Councilmember Giles advised that he supports proceeding with the proposed guidelines and added that he also supports the adoption of a housing code for Mesa. Councilmember Giles stated that a wide range of input should be solicited and noted that he prefers the more stringent residential regulations adopted by the City of Chandler.

Mayor Brown directed staff to work closer with the developers and stressed the importance of informing developers of the necessity of submitting creative, quality projects. Mayor Brown expressed the opinion that the homebuilding industry must be more aware of and sensitive to local community issues.

Councilmember Giles clarified that he would not support design review guidelines which dictate issues such as colors, but from a developer's point of view he believes draft guidelines may be too broad. Councilmember Giles stated that a more detailed approach may be necessary.

It was moved by Councilmember Kavanaugh, seconded by Councilmember Stapley, that staff be directed to solicit input and continue research relative to the feasibility of implementing residential development guidelines for the City of Mesa

Carried unanimously.

4. Hear an update and consider the proposed joint resolution concerning neighborhood development and organization in Mesa.

Neighborhood and Community Assistance Director Tanya Collins presented the Council with a draft resolution to adopt as a guideline a joint resolution and community-wide policy proclaiming commitment by the City of Mesa, the Mesa United Way, Mesa Community College,

the Mesa Chamber of Commerce and the Mesa Unified School District to neighborhood-supporting and neighborhood-sustaining actions and activities.

Ms. Collins noted that the proposed joint resolution/policies reflect the roles each entity envisions for itself in the community's united, on-going effort to build on Mesa's many strengths and to aggressively address neighborhood weaknesses. Ms. Collins added that the proposal also affirms the importance each entity attaches to the maintenance of a family-oriented, safe community and confirms the entities' willingness to work together and implement programs within their neighborhoods.

Vice Mayor Gilbert stressed the importance of identifying problems and then resolving to initiate steps to solve the problems. Vice Mayor Gilbert discussed the growing number of blighted buildings in the City of Mesa and noted that substantial public monies would be required to repair the structures.

Councilmember Kavanaugh stated that he supports the proposal and noted that he also supports the development of a housing maintenance code.

Councilmember Giles stated that he serves on the United Way Board and previously voted in favor of this proposal. Councilmember Giles thanked staff for their efforts and noted his strong support.

Mayor Brown discussed his participation in the Community Roundtable and noted that he supports the proposed resolution.

City Manager Charles Luster advised that the resolution will be placed on the agenda of the December 16, 1996 Regular Council Meeting.

5. Further discussion concerning preparation of the FY '97-'98 budget.

Assistant City Manager Mike Hutchinson distributed a list of potential Fiscal Year 1997-98 budget issues and priorities for the Council's review. Mr. Hutchinson stated that input has been received from the Council relative to the budget and added that the purpose of this agenda item is to identify priorities and additional issues. Mr. Hutchinson reported that early revenue forecasts indicate limited new revenue dollars and discussed significant personnel additions that have occurred in the public safety area. Mr. Hutchinson noted that the list contains on-going projects in addition to current and future issues.

Mayor Brown commented that the Council has been directed to submit specific requests for consideration and encouraged those who have not done so as yet to submit a list of priorities. Mayor Brown stated the opinion that funding for projects similar to the McKellips Road widening should be included in next year's budget.

Mayor Brown added that funding should be allocated for Town Center holiday decorations and added that monies should be budgeted towards enhancing the blighted area on Main Street between Hobson and Stapley Drive.

Vice Mayor Gilbert recommended that merchants and owners of properties in the older neighborhoods be contacted in an effort to solicit their participation in improving the area. Vice

Mayor Gilbert added that the Temple Court project should be a budget priority and stated that issues such as transit and libraries should also be seriously considered. Vice Mayor Gilbert commented that the Council should discuss the Northwest Water Treatment Plant and questioned whether the City of Mesa will be involved in the Rio Salado project.

Vice Mayor Gilbert expressed the opinion that the City should view water as an amenity for public purposes and explore whether a river bank could be developed into a valuable amenity over the next fifty years.

Vice Mayor Gilbert also recommended that the City's electric utility service be reviewed to determine whether leasing or privatization should be considered and added that changes in the City's water system should also be studied.

Councilmember Kavanaugh recommended that the feasibility of extending bus service hours to 10:00 p.m. should be considered and added that branch libraries should remain operational seven days a week. Councilmember Kavanaugh stated that in view of recent changes in retention basins, the Council should consider the possibility of upgrading facilities in the retention basins, particularly in the older sections of town.

Councilmember Giles concurred with Councilmember Kavanaugh's recommendations relative to extending bus service and library hours. Councilmember Giles added that the Council should consider purchasing additional buses if the extended hours are not a possibility. Councilmember Giles spoke in support of developing additional public pools at junior high schools and agreed with Mayor Brown's suggestion relative to improving the area of Main Street located between Hobson and Stapley Drive. Councilmember Giles noted that he and Councilmember Kavanaugh attended an orientation at Salt River Project and indicated that staff should pursue a study relative to a utility plan for the future.

City Manager Charles Luster noted that the regulatory process is still evolving and noted that staff is working with the Corporation Commission on changes and will present a report to the Council when available.

Councilmember Stapley discussed the Consumer Price Index (CPI) and stated the opinion that staff should be directed to determine actual figures rather than rely on numbers supplied by Arizona State University (ASU). Mr. Luster noted that ASU does not follow Federal guidelines and performs an independent analysis and computation.

Mayor Brown requested that staff incorporate the input received from the Council into the draft budget proposal.

6. Scheduling of meetings and general information.

City Manager Charles Luster advised that there were no additions to the scheduling of meetings or items of general information.

7. Adjournment.

The Policy Session was adjourned without objection at 6:45 p.m.

Carried unanimously.

WAYNE B BROWN, MAYOR

ATTEST:

BARBARA JONES, CITY CLERK

I hereby certify that the foregoing minutes are a true and correct copy of the minutes of the Policy Session of the City Council of Mesa, Arizona, held on the 5th day of December 1996. I further certify that the meeting was duly called and held and that a quorum was present.

Dated this 20th of December 1996

BARBARA JONES, CITY CLERK