

TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE MINUTES

February 25, 1997

The Transportation Committee of the City of Mesa met in the lower level meeting room of the City Council Chambers, 57 East 1st Street, on February 25, 1997 at 7 p.m.

COMMITTEE PRESENT

Pat Gilbert, Chairman
John Giles
Dennis Kavanaugh

COMMITTEE ABSENT

None

STAFF PRESENT

C.K. Luster
Cindy Barris
Glenn Gorke
Mike Hutchinson
Barbara Jones
Harry Kent
Peter Knudson
Ron Krosting
Keith Nath
Tom Remes

OTHERS PRESENT

Dan Nowicki

Chairman Gilbert welcomed the citizens to the meeting and stated his appreciation for their attendance.

1. Further discussion and consideration of standards for closing streets adjacent to the proposed Gilbert Road widening project.

Chairman Gilbert provided background information concerning the Gilbert Road widening project and noted that in response to requests from residents, the City is contemplating streetscape changes that typically have not been considered for street projects.

Chairman Gilbert advised that any recommendations proposed by the Committee will be forwarded to the City Council for review. Chairman Gilbert encouraged the citizens to remain involved as the Council considers this issue in the near future.

Chairman Gilbert outlined the anticipated meeting structure and requested cooperation in adhering to speaking procedures.

Public Works Manager Harry Kent explained that staff has developed four criteria for approving the closing of intersecting streets with cul-de-sacs. Mr. Kent stated that staff is recommending that the Transportation Committee affirm the criteria and establish a cutoff date of April 1, 1997 for further requests for street closures.

Senior Civil Engineer Peter Knudson referred to maps and reported that staff has recently received requests for the construction of a cul-de-sac on Dana, Aspen, and 2nd Avenues but said that petitions do not reflect 100 percent agreement from property owners on each particular street (two property owners on each street have not indicated support). Mr. Knudson added that residents along Forest Circle have requested signalized access onto Gilbert Road.

In response to a question from Committeemember Giles, Mr. Knudson and Engineering Design Director Keith Nath outlined the parameters for the installation of traffic signals. Mr. Knudson and Mr. Nath indicated that the Dana/Aspen intersection with Gilbert Road may be an appropriate future location but said that traffic signals were not proposed as components of this project.

Marvin Salen, 2023 East Aspen Avenue, commented regarding the effects of increased traffic should access be provided via Aspen Avenue onto Gilbert Road. Mr. Salen spoke in favor of the construction of a cul-de-sac on Aspen Avenue.

Yvonne Stadler, 2031 East Aspen Avenue, expressed concern that the proposed road widening project may impact the safety of her family and neighbors, increase traffic, and decrease property values. Ms. Stadler stated support for a cul-de-sac on Aspen Avenue.

Wallace Burgess, 1839 East Dana Avenue, indicated opposition to providing access onto Gilbert Road via Dana Avenue. Mr. Burgess advised that a school is located within the area and that access/parking are presently difficult in the vicinity of a neighborhood church. Mr. Burgess requested that a cul-de-sac be constructed on Dana Avenue.

Judy Cullum, 1939 East 2nd Avenue, spoke in favor of a cul-de-sac on 2nd Avenue. Ms. Cullum stated concern pertaining to an anticipated increase in traffic and suggested that Shouse be developed as a through street between Main Street and Broadway Road.

Eva Myers, 2030 East Aspen Avenue, noted the importance of the safety of children and related difficulties currently existing in her neighborhood relative to traffic. Ms. Myers recommended that Chestnut be designated as a through street between Main Street and Broadway Road, commenting that homes along Chestnut are located facing north/south and would not be significantly affected by traffic.

John Braaten, Pastor of St. Peter Lutheran Church, 1844 East Dana Avenue, advised that his facility is utilized by various organizations throughout the week and that it is presently difficult for many individuals to locate the building. Pastor Braaten stated that north/south entry to/from Gilbert Road would improve accessibility and the ability of the church to minister to the community. Pastor Braaten indicated that he additionally favors a traffic signal at Gilbert Road.

Hubert Shackelford, 2009 East Arbor, resident at the intersection of Arbor and Gilbert Road, requested information pertaining to plans to mitigate noise along Gilbert Road and the proposed location of walls. Mr. Shackelford expressed concern regarding effects on traffic should a cul-de-sac be constructed on Aspen Avenue and commented that signals would assist in reducing traffic speeds. Mr. Shackelford suggested that Chestnut be utilized to reduce traffic on neighborhood streets.

Charles Lauer, 1936 East Dana Avenue, indicated that he is one of the residents who opposes the construction of a cul-de-sac on Dana Avenue. Mr. Lauer spoke in favor of a median along Gilbert Road to restrict left-turn access onto Dana Avenue and the placement of a signal/speed limit signs to direct traffic. Mr. Lauer stated support for retaining the character of the neighborhood without the limitations of a cul-de-sac.

Dan Sekol, 2064 East Aspen Avenue, said that he does not support the construction of a cul-de-sac on Aspen Avenue or any other neighborhood street. Mr. Sekol advised that street closures will increase left turns onto Chestnut at both Main Street and Broadway Road.

Shirlene McNair, 2037 East Aspen Avenue, advised that while circulating a petition relative to a cul-de-sac on Aspen Avenue, she received comments from neighbors who expressed concern regarding the effects on traffic, safety, property values, and crime rate as a result of the road widening project. Ms. McNair encouraged the City to construct a cul-de-sac on Aspen Avenue.

Tom Laborde, 2010 East Aspen Avenue, stated that he resides at the intersection of Aspen Avenue and Gilbert Road. Mr. Laborde commented that development of Aspen Avenue as a through street will enhance criminal access and jeopardize the safety of children.

Patty Laborde, 2010 East Aspen Avenue, spouse of the previous speaker, informed the Committee that she and her husband are willing to sell their property to construct a cul-de-sac on Aspen Avenue. Ms. Laborde noted anticipated detrimental effects on traffic, neighborhood safety, and crime rate as a result of the road widening project.

Ben Rodriguez, 1952 East Dana Avenue, resident at the intersection of Dana Avenue and Gilbert Road, expressed the opinion that street improvements should not be dictated by a minority of homeowners. Mr. Rodriguez commented regarding the importance of preserving the character of the neighborhood and urged the construction of a cul-de-sac on Dana Avenue.

Sandy Bailey, 1928 East Dana Avenue, stated concern that the proposed street widening project will have a detrimental effect on safety, traffic, and property values. Ms. Bailey advised that there are no sidewalks along Dana Avenue and noted difficulties currently existing relative to traffic and the church within the neighborhood. Ms. Bailey spoke regarding potential alternative access routes and stated support for a cul-de-sac on Dana Avenue.

Newton Lantron, 1719 East Dana Avenue, requested that a cul-de-sac be constructed on Dana Avenue. Mr. Lantron said that left-turn access onto Gilbert Road would be difficult.

Robin Bush, 1909 East Dana Avenue, resident at the intersection of Shouse and Dana Avenue, noted the number of children in his neighborhood and existing difficulties pertaining to traffic and parking, particularly in relation to the activities at the nearby church. Mr. Bush reported that vehicles often do not observe the existing stop sign near his home. Mr. Bush expressed concern that development of Dana Avenue as a through street may enhance criminal access.

Marietta Stewart, 2036 East Aspen Avenue, a new resident, spoke concerning the importance of maintaining the character of the neighborhood. Ms. Stewart advised that Aspen Avenue is not a lengthy street and that opposition to a cul-de-sac has been expressed by only a minority of homeowners.

Jack Davis, 1912 East Dana Avenue, stated that he does not favor the construction of a cul-de-sac on Dana Avenue, commenting that Dana Avenue is a natural collector street from Stapley Drive to Gilbert Road. Mr. Davis noted the potential for increased traffic but expressed the opinion that development as a through street will better serve the neighborhood and enhance Police/Fire Department access.

Merle McKinnon, 1949 East Dana Avenue, expressed concern relative to the potential increase in traffic speeds and crime as a result of the Gilbert Road widening project. Mr. McKinnon advised that Dana Avenue is presently narrow in width and said that the project may detrimentally affect the quality of the neighborhood. Mr. McKinnon stated the opinion that restricted right-turn access onto Dana Avenue is not a viable option. Mr. McKinnon commented that homes along Dana Avenue are owner occupied and that the majority of residents favor the construction of a cul-de-sac. Mr. McKinnon noted the willingness of an individual to sell property for the cul-de-sac.

Darren Eyring, 1755 East 2nd Avenue, spoke concerning the anticipated increase in neighborhood traffic as a result of the widening project. Mr. Eyring stated the opinion that development of a north/south through street will have less of a detrimental impact on neighborhoods. Mr. Eyring encouraged the City to consider the request of the majority of homeowners and construct a cul-de-sac on Dana, Aspen, and 2nd Avenues.

Gloria Nasuta, 2011 East Aspen Avenue, advised that she resides at the intersection of Aspen Avenue and Gilbert Road. Ms. Nasuta indicated support for a cul-de-sac on Aspen Avenue.

Discussion ensued concerning the request from residents along 2nd Avenue; the possibility of utilizing the raised median along Gilbert Road to restrict traffic to right-turn access to/from Gilbert Road and the option of constructing a median in conjunction with cul-de-sacs, which would eliminate left-turn access onto Gilbert Road from through streets; and the percentage of residents opposed to the construction of the cul-de-sacs.

Committeemember Giles commented regarding the importance of neighborhood safety, particularly for children, and indicated support for the requests to construct a cul-de-sac on Dana, Aspen, and 2nd Avenues. Committeemember Giles stated that it is often difficult to achieve 100 percent agreement on projects and said that he recommends proceeding with the cul-de-sacs despite the lack of unanimous agreement.

Committeemember Kavanaugh concurred with Committeemember Giles relative to the difficulty in obtaining 100 percent agreement. Committeemember Kavanaugh spoke concerning the potential for a project such as the widening of Gilbert Road to disrupt and adversely impact neighborhoods. Committeemember Kavanaugh stated the opinion that the construction of a cul-de-sac on Dana, Aspen, and 2nd Avenues is appropriate, taking into consideration the best interest of the neighborhood/community and safety and environmental issues.

Chairman Gilbert questioned whether an individual is willing to sell property for the construction of a cul-de-sac on 2nd Avenue. Jana Crowe, 1956 East 2nd Avenue, advised that neither she nor the additional homeowner at the intersection of 2nd Avenue and Gilbert Road

are willing to sell their property at this time. Ms. Crowe spoke in favor of right-turn access only onto Gilbert Road.

Chairman Gilbert commented concerning the importance of the requests for cul-de-sacs, noting the precedent that may be set for future projects should approval be recommended.

In response to a question from Committeemember Giles concerning the criteria for closing intersecting streets with cul-de-sacs, Mr. Kent advised that staff included the requirement of a willing seller on a lot adjacent to Gilbert Road in an effort to avoid the use of condemnation to construct a cul-de-sac.

It was moved by Committeemember Giles, seconded by Committeemember Kavanaugh, to recommend to Council approval of the four following criteria for the closing of intersecting streets with cul-de-sacs as part of the Gilbert Road widening project:

- a. 85 percent agreement from the property owners on the streets that want to close their access to Gilbert Road.
- b. The closure of a street will require the construction of a cul-de-sac to City standards.
- c. There must be a willing seller on a lot adjacent to Gilbert Road to construct the cul-de-sac.
- d. The majority of the property owners in the impacted area must agree with the proposed closure(s).

The Committee noted that the proposed criteria could additionally be utilized for future street projects.

Mr. Kent mentioned that those desiring cul-de-sacs may be unable to meet the fourth criteria, thereby eliminating the cul-de-sacs. Chairman Gilbert acknowledged this potential problem and commented that given the proposed criteria, a cul-de-sac may not be constructed in all neighborhoods that have submitted requests.

Carried unanimously.

Mr. Kent requested direction from the Committee relative to a cutoff date for further requests for the closing of intersecting streets with cul-de-sacs.

In response to a question from Committeemember Kavanaugh, Mr. Kent outlined the anticipated time frame for the widening project and stated that staff has recommended April 1, 1997 as a cutoff date for requests for the closing of intersecting streets to accommodate property appraisals and designs necessary to accommodate the cul-de-sacs.

It was moved by Committeemember Kavanaugh, seconded by Committeemember Giles, to recommend to Council that a cutoff date of April 1, 1997 be established for requests to close intersecting streets with cul-de-sacs as part of the Gilbert Road widening project.

Carried unanimously.

Chairman Gilbert thanked each of the citizens for their attendance and comments. Chairman Gilbert advised that City staff will be available to answer specific questions pertaining to the improvement project. Chairman Gilbert encouraged continued interaction among residents, particularly in endeavors such as Neighborhood Block Watch.

At 8:08 p.m. Chairman Gilbert called for a short recess. The meeting reconvened at 8:10 p.m.

2. Hear a report concerning the neighborhood speed watch program.

Transportation Director Ron Krosting outlined the City's speed watch program, which currently involves four radar guns, a radar speed trailer, and Police enforcement.

Mr. Krosting explained that radar guns are loaned to neighborhood residents, who collect vehicle speed information and forward data to City staff. Mr. Krosting advised that staff utilizes the information to send a letter of concern to the registered owner of a vehicle advising that their vehicle was observed speeding and requesting compliance with posted speed limits, particularly in residential neighborhoods.

Mr. Krosting reported that the radar speed trailer houses a radar system that tracks an approaching vehicle's speed and displays the speed on a large digital readout. Mr. Krosting stated that the current waiting time for the speed trailer is six to eight months. Mr. Krosting indicated that additional speed trailers will be requested to substantially reduce the waiting time.

Mr. Krosting noted that Police officers additionally continue to monitor traffic.

3. Hear an update on the installation of speed humps on a trial basis.

Mr. Krosting referred to a map and highlighted three potential sites selected for the installation of speed humps on a trial basis: a) Virginia/Ravine Street, b) Preston Street, and c) Hampton Avenue. Mr. Krosting advised that efforts are underway to explain the program and obtain necessary signatures to proceed with the installation of the speed humps. Mr. Krosting stated that installation may begin at Hampton Avenue this summer and that alternative sites will be selected if staff is unable to proceed with installation at Virginia/Ravine and Preston Streets.

Mr. Krosting added that staff anticipates conducting a 30-day follow-up evaluation to determine the effectiveness of the speed humps, complemented by a 90-day evaluation if necessary. Mr. Krosting stated that a reduction of 5-8 miles per hour is expected based on data received from other communities.

In response to a question from Committeemember Giles, Mr. Krosting stated that because this is a trial program, residents will not be charged for the speed hump installations.

The Committee thanked Mr. Krosting for the information and encouraged cooperative efforts in addressing neighborhood concerns.

4. Adjournment.

It was moved by Committeemember Giles, seconded by Committeemember Kavanaugh, that the Transportation Committee meeting adjourn at 8:20 p.m.

Carried unanimously.

I hereby certify that the foregoing minutes are a true and correct copy of the minutes of the Transportation Committee meeting of the City of Mesa, Arizona, held on the 25th day of February 1997. I further certify that the meeting was duly called and held and that a quorum was present.

Dated this 28th day of February 1997

BARBARA JONES, CITY CLERK