



## **Citizen Advisory Sub-Committee: Green Future**

Thursday, Nov 2nd, 2017

Transportation Training Room, 5:30pm

Meeting Minutes by Erin Romaine, Management Assistant II

### **Sub-Committee Members**

Terry Benelli – Lead

Patrick Kee

Jenny Richardson

### **Green Future Staff Liaisons**

Scott Bouchie, Environmental Management & Sustainability Department Director

Jodi Sorrell, Transit Services Director

### **Staff Presenters**

Beth Huning, City Engineer

Lauren Whittaker, Environmental Programs Specialist

Scott Bouchie, Environmental Management & Sustainability Department Director

### **Attendees:**

Presenting: Dennis McClung, Garden Pool

Gordon Hawes, Transportation

Donna DiFrancesco, Environmental Management & Sustainability

**Patrick Kee called the meeting to order at 5:38pm.**

**Notes from 10/19 meeting approved unanimously.**

### **Next Session: 11/2, Solid Waste Conference Room**

- Staff Presentations
  - Alley Abandonment
  - Solid Waste/Food Waste
  - Citizen with Community Garden idea

## **Staff Presentations:**

### **Alley Abandonment**

**Beth Huning, City Engineer, & Gordon Hawes, Deputy Transportation Director (*handouts*)**

- Alleys have served several functions:
  - Solid waste collection (discontinued)
  - Utility services
    - Wet, city water, wastewater
    - Dry, electric, SRP, gas, telecom, cable

- Mesa utilities will often be joint trenched (water/gas)
- Mesa has a right to the alleys for access to the utilities
- Public utility easements, owner owns the land, City has the right to access them
  - Issues, the utility company must access your backyard to service the utilities, pool or other yard scape was built near or on top of the utilities.
- Some utilities have since moved out of the alleys into the front of the property
  - Parking for driveways, carports, garages (these are public right of ways, legal access to the homes), old planning designs/fads. Cannot be blocked.
  - Maintenance of alleys is challenging
  - Unwelcome activities in alleys
- As of 2007, wet utilities in the street, dry utilities in public easement behind the right of way
- Eastmark is unique in their right of way planning
- In 2007 Legal opinion that if alleys were gated, no fences could be moved, City still needed access to right of way and utilities.
- If the alleys were to be abandoned, the City no longer had any authority to enforce issues between neighbors.
- Homeowners property taxes increased, they were not anticipating it.
- 2012 Legal said that City can maintain the alleys as right of way, can gate the alleys and allow the neighbors to have access to them. Council has implemented policy and procedures.
  - 900 alleys have been gated
  - Neighborhood Services Department identified neighborhoods that were interested in gating.
  - Approximately 90 were not eligible due to access to their driveways
  - Transportation budgets for the gates, installation and repairs to the gates.
  - Homeowners have keys. Police enforced with no trespassing signs.
  - City maintains keys to the gates to allow access for the utility service providers.
  - Seen a reduction in illegal dumping and in crime in the alleys
  - Homeowners maintain the alleys

### **Community Garden**

#### **Dennis McClung – Garden Pool (*presentation handed out*)**

- Refer to handout
- Mesa Green Center, #1 Green Proposal on Imagine Mesa
- Benefits to the community
- Dennis lives in Mesa and has been engaging with the community since 2009
- Grand Opening on Tuesday, November 7<sup>th</sup> for Garden Pool
- Developer asked him “what would you do if I gave you an acre?”; answer “community garden”

- Partnership with MUG, composting station – Starbucks could deposit their coffee grounds
- Community Center 16 kw would power the entire center
  - Currently teach classes in the library 60 people in attendance
  - Looking for a location where everyone can attend that is in a location surrounded by the environment they are learning about
- Diner – to eat at the Community Center, limited menu, visitors can stay a while
- Seating for 100; screening for documentaries, chef demonstrations
- Pavilions, where people can relax, water feature has reclaimed water
- Farmer’s Market, plug in refrigeration, easily go in with shade structures
  - Big events
  - Community garden
  - Nursery
  - Diner
- Partnership with the City for the marketing, a relationship
- Nursery, need to provide what the people want.
  - Grows for A&P nursery, nothing where near downtown Mesa to get plants and trees that are not from big-box stores
- Our Mission: Our goal as a non-profit is to both innovate and provide the public with agriculture and horticulture knowledge and skills. In short, we want to learn, create, educate, and support better ways to grow food!
- Pittsburg, partnering with the City for community center
- Seattle, community center
- Proposal is to bring this to downtown Mesa, an empty lot
- Public-Private partnership
  - Need lots for a minimal budget
  - Solar City
  - Cross-Promotion
  - Green Pool will manage, lease to those who use it (master gardeners)
  - Mesa will be in the national spotlight in the Green Movement
- Garden Pool – founded in Mesa, will be implemented in 35 countries

Question: Do you believe the Mesa market will support this movement? Harper’s Nursery has closed. Yes, it was likely due to their overhead.

Question: Why should this idea be implemented? We don’t have any education center, need more community gardens, no farmers market.

Question: Costs? \$60k for green house, \$200k for community garden. People can own pieces of the center. City would need to provide 1 acre; Garden Pool has the developer to provide the design and build.

PLAN B. Main and Ashland. Already have a composting center, fruit trees, community garden. Can accept EBT cards. Close to the community garden and off the light rail.

**Dennis McClung will email Erin Romaine on the ROI from Pittsburg.**

## **Lauren Whittaker, Environmental Programs Specialist (PowerPoint presentation)**

- Mesa Programs
  - Mesa has eight community gardens centered around west Mesa.
  - Mesa Urban Garden (MUG) is most prominent, rent garden beds.
  - Red Mountain Library has Seed Libraries with Garden Pool.
  - Gene Autry Park has citrus trees, a local farm is paid to maintain and harvest
  - Mesa Community Farmer's Market, started in 1994, ended in 2016. Running in the red, unable to support it.
- Projects around the Valley
  - Tempe Meadows, farmer's market
  - Urban Farm U (University), education on how to grow gardens and citrus
  - PHX Renews, started by the Mayor, community garden
- Roles & Responsibilities
  - Develop, implement and support City sustainability initiatives
  - Improve access to healthy affordable foods in underserved areas
  - Support urban agriculture, food forests, and green infrastructure
- Government Concerns
  - Lack of community support
  - Maintenance
  - Liability
- Community Role
  - Delivery community grassroots vision, imagination and passion
  - Advocate for community and political support
- Community Partnerships are needed
- Community Interest is abundant

## **Recycling, Food Waste, Composting and Anaerobic Digestion**

### **Scott Bouchie, Environmental Management & Sustainability Department Director (PowerPoint Presentation)**

- Current Recycling Programs in Mesa
  - Curbside Blue Barrel, Green Barrel Recycling
  - Backyard composting
  - Curbside appliance pick-up
  - Household Hazardous Waste events
  - Recycling Drop Off Centers
    - Cardboard
    - Commingled items
    - Textile
  - Blue & Green Diversion Rate
    - % of tons that are being diverted from the landfill
    - Trending down from years past
    - Recycling products have changed due to packaging changes
    - China has implemented a "green sword" they are limiting the products that are being accepted into their country, to 0.3% contamination

- Some states are getting mandates to landfill their recyclables because they are not able to find vendors to recycle their items
  - How to increase diversion?
    - Stop landfilling food waste
    - 30-40% is food waste in the black barrel
    - Food Waste Landfill Diversion
      - Reduce It
      - Eat It
      - Co-Digest It
      - Compost It
    - City of Gresham, Oregon, Wastewater Treatment Plan
      - Treats the grease waste from restaurant
      - Creates methane
      - Produces energy
      - Sell the energy to the utility companies
      - Have the potential to be net zero to operate the wastewater treatment plant
    - Challenges
    - Resources
  - City of Phoenix has partnered with Ameresco to clean the gas and pipe/sell it to California.
  - Cross-Departmental, Enterprise Program. Water Resources, Energy Resources and Environmental Management & Sustainability.

### **Free Bulk Item Pick-Up Days**

#### **Scott Bouchie, Environmental Management & Sustainability Department Director**

*(PowerPoint Presentation)*

- Mesa Currently Offers
  - Clean Sweep/Green Sweep per month \$0.43/month
  - Bulk Item Collection \$22.59/load
  - Appliance Collection \$18.69/appliance
  - Homeowner Landfill \$13.00/load
  - Curbside appliance pick-up
  - Household Hazardous Waste events
- Start Up Costs for Monthly Bulk Pick Up
  - Equipment only \$8.6 million
  - Annual ongoing cost \$5.1 million includes fleet, salaries, tipping fees at landfill
  - Monthly rate increase \$3.07 to each customer
- Thoughts/Concerns
  - Clean Sweep/Green Sweep program would be eliminated

- Aesthetics, trash along the sidewalks
- Scavenging
- Location for additional trucks, staff, CNG fueling

**Question: How many Mesa residents do we anticipate will use this program?**

**Question: Cost to increase the existing service? Decrease the wait times? Marketing budget?**

**Discussion of Presentations/ Ideas**

Handouts of the Idea Evaluation Sheet to the Committee

members. Forms will be drafted before the November 9<sup>th</sup> meeting.

Erin will email the list of ideas that were presented on to apply to the worksheets.

**Terry Benelli adjourned the meeting at 7:37pm.**

Meeting notes submitted to sub-committee members and staff liaisons on Monday, November 6, 2017 for review by Erin Romaine.