

DOWNTOWN LINKS CITIZEN ADVISORY COMMITTEE (DLCAC)
DECK PARK REVIEW SUBCOMMITTEE

MEETING MINUTES

Monday, April 29, 2013

*Accepted and Approved by the Downtown Links CAC
Deck Park Review Subcommittee on July 2, 2014*

FROM: TDOT Project Manager Tom Fisher

DECK PARK SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Chair, Daniela Diamente, Dunbar Spring Neighborhood Association
Kylie Walzak, Tucson-Pima Bicycle Advisory Committee
Susan Gamble, Warehouse Arts Management Association

DECK PARK SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT:

Chris Carroll, El Presidio Neighborhood Association

PROJECT TEAM PRESENT:

Michael Bertram, HDR Engineering, Inc.
Kathy Jirschele, Kaneen Advertising and Public Relations
Laura Mielcarek, Wheat Scharf and Associates
Chelsea Marshall, Wheat Scharf and Associates
Heidi Flugstad, Wheat Scharf and Associates
Sam Credio, City of Tucson Department of Transportation
Tom Fisher, City of Tucson Department of Transportation

DOWNTOWN LINKS CAC MEMBERS PRESENT

1. Meeting Called to Order

Meeting called to order at 10:10 a.m. at Wheat Scharf and Associates, 442 N. 6th Avenue, Tucson, AZ
Quorum confirmed

2. Introduction of Committee Members and Staff

Downtown Links CAC Deck Park Review Subcommittee and Project Team Members introduced themselves.

3. Approval of Meeting Minutes from April 15, 2013

Motion to approve the minutes of April 15, 2013, was passed by a voice vote of 3 to 0.

4. Announcements

Sam Credio gave a very brief update of the ST. Mary's construction project.

5. Staff Reports and Presentations to DLCAC

Laura Mielcarek briefly recapped the two concepts from the last meeting. One of which was referred to as the 'civic concept' which had art in many display cases and had more of a grid-like pattern, no turf, a large shade structure and the ability to fix seating. The other concept was referred to as a 'neighborhood backyard' which felt like more of an organic concept and incorporated a dog park, turf, terrace seating, and a play wall. Laura reminded the members that at the last meeting, this, the neighborhood backyard feel, was the concept the

subcommittee tended to gravitate toward. **Daniela Diamente** took both concepts to the Dunbar Spring neighborhood meeting and they said they would not need the dog park, but are open to the grass area, also organic mulch for the play area. They would like to look into a shade structure, but would like to explore the option of solar. They liked the idea of vines, and perhaps a desert hedge along the east side of the bridge (the subcommittee asked what that would look like). **Daniela D.** said the neighborhood asked if they could also consider a performance place on the east side. The neighborhood said that with the water flowing in the culvert, they wanted to know how to artistically show the flow on the deck park. **Laura M.** asked Heidi to present the deck park concept based on the neighborhood and subcommittee input.

Heidi Flugstad explained that the turf that they were considering is referred to as “buffalo grass.” It is a variety called UC Verde and it was designed especially for low desert areas. One of the reasons why this particular turf was being considered was because of its low water requirements. **Heidi F.** talked a little bit about maintaining the turf in regards to water, mowing, and installation. It also helps mitigate the urban heat island and since there will be a lot of hard scape within the deck park, and it would be a natural way to mitigate the heat element. There was additional conversation regarding care and maintenance of the buffalo grass. There is no turf on the deck, it will all be placed on the north side of the park.

Chelsea Marshall reviewed several different shade structure options. She also mentioned that in the slides they could determine the size of the shade structure, relative to other descriptive elements from the diagram. There was conversation regarding structural loads of the different shade structures. **Chelsea M.** talked about materials of the deck park and noted that the surface would be concrete and that they were still looking into whether or not they could put concrete pavers on top of it. They are looking at options that bring color and interest into the area. She reviewed possible types of plant materials and where they could be planted. **Chelsea M.** discussed options of salvaged materials that could be used on top of the deck park surface. Pedestrian safety fencing was addressed, **Chelsea M.** said they don’t know yet if it has to be fully enclosed, but it does need to be a tighter mesh. There are fun and interesting things that can be done, it does not have to be chain link fencing. She also noted that vegetation could be used to soften the look. She also pointed out the area on the design that would be used for emergency access which could also be shared with bicyclists. Play areas, an amphitheater and water harvesting were discussed, especially where there are areas with basins and trees. **Chelsea M.** showed the members a couple different views of the concept. There was additional conversation regarding the different elements and interaction of/with the public.

Susan Gamble said she thinks that the concept looks very good and that they addressed most of the requests of the subcommittee.

Audience member asked if the concept takes into account the previous water shed management, funded by the Bureau of Reclamation that is already in place? **Chelsea M.** explained that she does not have a survey of the path from that plan, but she plans to utilize it in the design of the deck park and said that the trees shown on the design concept are existing trees. She also reminded the members that this is just a concept. Not the final design.

Daniela D. asked the team to explain how the different areas are planned to interact with each other. **Chelsea M.** explained that smaller areas feel more welcoming, but since we have a pretty large area, breaking it up into different “rooms” by using different materials and surfacing types creates a more inviting space. There was discussion regarding the railroad easement and how the park would integrate up to the RR right-of-way.

Chelsea M. explained that they don’t have all the informational requirements from the Union Pacific Rail Road in addition to exact property boundary lines that eventually dictate some of the design elements.

Michael Bertram said that once they get clear direction on what is required from the ACC and the railroad that that would become integrated into this design. **Susan G.** asked about reclaimed brick. **Laura M.** said there are a couple issues with the brick. Maintenance and timing. Who will maintain them and will they be available when this project is being constructed. There was additional conversation about what type of pavers, and possible drainage concerns. **Daniela D.** reiterated that what the subcommittee members and neighborhoods wanted was for this area to be seamless so that you would want to cross back and forth between the sides, and utilizing the space around the Steinfeld and engaging with it, as much as you’re engaging on the other side. And it needs to be a comfortable crossing.

Michael B. also pointed out an area that would be gated on both ends for emergency vehicles.

Michael B. talked about *the island*, with pedestrians having access through and up to the right of way. He said there is an area that needs further vetting with UPRR. There is also an area north and south of the RR right of way, where there may need to be crash gates so that emergency vehicles can pass through. That area is a 20 foot access right-of-way. There was additional discussion regarding the emergency access and possible gates. The gates will not be open for pedestrians or bicyclists. **Sam Credio** said that Tucson Fire would be fine with something as simple as two pieces of steel that would swing open and closed. There was clarification on the breakaway gate and the fencing.

Michael B. said he would prefer not to show the island on the concept until it could be vetted further with the fire department and UPRR.

Daniela D. asked the team to explain their vision of how the area would work. For example what if they wanted to have a little performance or show a movie. How does the space function? How do you set up? Where do people sit? There was conversation about whether or not people really wanted to have a permanent movie “screen”. **Susan G.** mentioned some possible ways to remedy downsides of a permanent screen and also said she thought a bike-in movie area was a good thing. **Laura M.** explained some of the design difficulties they ran into while trying to plan for the space. Placing the performance area on the east side of the park area was difficult because of the emergency vehicle and bike circulation. Placing it where they eventually did makes it a little more enclosed and off the main route where food trucks may be parked.

An audience member asked if anything could be hung off the shade structure. The members and team talked about possible attachment systems for the structure. It could also include special lighting and banners. **Susan G.** asked about lighting and how it could tie into solar panels – not just for lighting but for electricity. **Chelsea M.** said that lighting was incorporated into the design.

There was discussion about soil depth requirements for planting areas. Different greenery options were discussed, like vines hanging from the pedestrian bridge.

Daniela D. said they like the concept and asked if there was anything they were missing. Was there any question they hadn’t asked that the full CAC may ask? **Daniela D.** said she wanted to make sure they had addressed everything.

In response to a question from an audience member, there was discussion about an unrelated project.

Further discussion went on about what this particular project has control over and recommendations were made by the project team about how to make decisions between the two projects within this area.

6. Next Steps

Items for Future Meetings

Daniela Diamente will work with Wheat Scharf on a joint presentation to be made to the full CAC. The concept plans will be emailed to the full CAC prior to next meeting. **Daniela D.** will prepare a statement. Looking for a 75% submittal by September.

Confirm Future Meeting Dates

None

7. Call to the Audience

None

8. Adjournment at 11:17 a.m.

