

**Summary Minutes
City Of Sedona
Citizens Steering Committee Meeting
Sedona Community Plan Update
Community Plan Room, 1725 West S.R. 89A, Suite D, Sedona, AZ
Tuesday, March 19, 2013 – 3:00 p.m.**

1. Verification of Notice, Call to Order, and Roll Call.

Chairman Thompson called the meeting to order at 3:02 p.m. and roll call was taken.

Committee Members: Chairman Jon Thompson, Vice Chairman Rio Robson (excused) and Committee Members Mike Bower, Jim Eaton, Angela LeFevre, Barbara Litrell (excused), Marty Losoff, Elemer Magaziner, Gerhard Mayer, Judy Reddington (excused) and John Sather

Staff: Cynthia Lovely, Charles Mosely and Mike Raber

2. Announcements from staff and committee.

Mike Raber stated that he, Judy, Cynthia and Marty met with Jennifer Wesselhof from the Chamber and with Mitch Nichols of Nichols Tourism Group. Tourism is a topic that, along with economic development, should be included in the discussions this spring.

Marty stated that this was a good and encouraging meeting; the Chamber would like to be involved and integrated in the long-range planning process. Mr. Nichols summarized his presentation with three points of view. First, there should be a change in the concept of "visitor". Right now visitors are of an older age and have over \$100,000, which is high when compared to national statistics. The Chamber would like to attract younger tourists by means of fun activities. Second, the Chamber needs to be more proactive rather than reactive and be a catalyst for things, rather than sit back and let things happen. The third point was that Sedona needs to change its mindset as a city, specifically embracing tourism more and balancing it with what the city needs. Sedona should recognize that tourism is not a given. Mr. Nichols felt strongly that what is taken for granted in terms of tourism could erode, as other towns have become more aggressive in appealing to tourists. In the long term, we could possibly lose our tourism opportunity. They asked the Council for additional money for the Chamber's budget to be used for aggressive and focused marketing; they stated that the Chamber's budget is about half what other cities offer. The Chamber presented an option of increasing the bed tax or sales tax. The 1% state tax will be going away in a month or two; it was suggested that Sedona keep half of this percent and use it for the Chamber. The Council suggested that the City increase both taxes and asked Staff to figure out how much they need to fund the Chamber's budget. They are looking at what they can do with both taxes. Initially, the mayor was not interested in increasing taxes, but after the presentation, he felt it was necessary.

Mike Raber pointed out that this report should be available within a week or so. Additionally, he stated that the Chamber has a visitor survey online that can be accessed; that may be interesting for this Committee. Marty added that he was surprised that approximately 70% of the visitors to Sedona return. The ones that don't return have indicated that Sedona is too touristy or that congestion is an issue. Gerhard asked if the Committee could get a copy of this report. Mike Raber stated that a PowerPoint may be available, and this report would be an expansion on that.

Gerhard referenced a newspaper article that indicated this committee is "rudderless".

Mike Raber stated that they will be providing the Chamber with their topical list in order to have them provide some input on that list.

Elemer stated that there was an interesting article about Mesa's city plan in the Arizona Republic last week. Mesa's philosophy is "allow living to happen", and their strategy is that their land use map is not based on zoning but on neighborhood character.

Chairman Thompson added that in that same issue of the Republic is an interesting article about a very successful land trust. Gerhard added that Mesa also wants to apply as much green technology as possible to their public buildings. Elemer stated that it was interesting that he could find nothing about the plan on the City of Mesa's website.

3. Public forum for items not listed on the agenda.

Chairman Thompson opened the public forum.

Having no requests to speak, the Chairman closed the public forum.

4. Discussion and possible action on traffic circulation issues

Mike Raber outlined the details of the handout that the Committee was given. This handout contains a large amount of background and information on transportation issues, including the 179 improvements, Uptown improvements, a transportation study, a list of sidewalks that were constructed, road connections, new traffic systems, and information about the Lynx system. The handout also includes information on traffic volumes, the highest being around Coffeepot and lowest around the Canyon. Over the last several years there hasn't been a large increase in traffic volume. There was an increase around 2001-2002, but nothing since. The handout also lists discussion about level of service, describing how easily traffic flows. There are also alternate route studies and a history on 89A and the 179 link. Information about Ranger Road, the Y extension, the 89A corridor and West Sedona are also included. There is a study about median placement on 89A. There is a parking study and information about making the most efficient use of existing parking before constructing new parking. There is also information on an alternative transportation system. The Uptown concept plan hasn't started yet, but it will look at potential improvements and potential for median placement to control vehicular and pedestrian movements. Public comments are also included in this packet as a reference point. There are also current Plan recommendations that need to be discussed by the Committee.

Gerhard commented that he attended Monday's special session of the Council and the Uptown parking committee. There are quite a few spaces that are possible parking areas. There will possibly be a parking study done. They also discussed more unified signage for the Uptown area.

Charles Mosley, Public Works Director, indicated that he hopes the Committee is aware of what is in the Capital Improvement Plan, as there are several transportation-related items include. One of note is a city-wide transportation study that is put off until 2014 or 2015. This will be a fairly comprehensive study and will include trails, walkability and vehicles. Different departments have seen a need to do some kind of update for the transportation plan for the City. It might be a good idea to take a comprehensive master planning look at transportation. He proposed that they look at it from a motor vehicle standpoint, looking at areas of potential problems that can be identified in order to plan, rather than react to problems. They also proposed a walkability analysis of the City, focusing on how we can make people aware of this and make the City more walkable. Parks and Rec also proposed a study of trails. When these all came up in the capital improvement planning process, the recommendation came back to make one large study; this is on hold until the city Plan is drawn up.

There are some old ideas that are still shown as separate capital improvement projects. One has to do with sidewalk projects in West Sedona, namely, developing a sidewalk along Sanborn and connecting Rodeo and the Coffeepot corridor. There also is a proposal to put a sidewalk in on Chapel. However, when 179 went in, this made that corridor walkable.

One of the other concepts is regarding walkability and bikes; they have focused on these as being coincident with traffic. This is not a necessity for a community or maybe even desirable. They might study this concept, namely that there should be a different walking network that may diverge from the vehicular network. Many of these ideas are a number of years off and are awaiting affirmation from the Community Plan in addition to funding.

Jim Eaton asked if it is known why people prefer to walk on the streets rather than on the paths, Soldier Pass being an example. Charles stated that perhaps this is an awareness issue. Jim replied that this tells him that something is wrong. We need more walkability, but what are the specifics and what is the purpose. Charles stated that from a public works standpoint, people say the cars are going too fast. The sense of the pedestrian being adjacent to the motor vehicle makes them feel unsafe. A sidewalk would remedy that. Additionally, there are ditches along the roadways; some people feel trapped when in the shoulder and next to a ditch and would feel safer on a sidewalk.

Chairman Thompson suggested that the walkability issue comments be saved until we discuss that later. Mike Bower asked if the studies themselves were millions of dollars or if the results of implementing the study findings were millions of dollars. Charles stated that the results, not the studies themselves, were in the millions.

Angela stated that she was at a community plan meeting in the Harmony neighborhood; there was an overwhelming support for no sidewalks. They want a rural look and are not interested in sidewalks. Charles responded that the neighborhood there is divided as to their thoughts on the sidewalk issue.

Elemer has talked to people on the Sunrise trail. They walk on the streets because they don't like dogs. Some of the women felt safer walking on the streets. There are many reasons why people choose to walk on the streets rather than the trails.

Marty stated that there is a lot of research on the walkability and pedestrian issues; he would like to look at the big picture of walkability, rather than the individual opinions.

John Sather asked Charles what he thinks the most beneficial acts have been regarding policy or strategy affecting circulation. Charles stated that the connection between Sanborn and Coffeepot made a large impact in getting traffic off 89A. They have attempted other such connections but haven't been successful. Mike Raber replied that the White Bear connection was successful.

Charles stated that from the standpoint of moving people and giving them alternatives, the bike route on Sanborn will prove to be a good project in the long run on a recreational or school level. John asked Charles about his thoughts on bold moves in terms of circulation. John stated that the Committee needs to be focused on a strategy of little things or a large bold move. He asked if the group wants to look at backing a singular bold move or should they be focusing on a lot of little things.

At this point Cynthia directed the Committee to the charts on the wall and explained that they would look at circulation in smaller pieces, those pieces being walking/bicycling, access control, transit, parking, road connections, alternate routes, and circulation goals.

Marty stated that he favors the concept of the bold idea, like the idea of a bypass of Uptown. He suggested eliminating Main Street and having a thoroughfare through to the canyon. The shops could be moved to the Cultural Park. He also suggested buying some property to parallel main street or 89A. He feels these are the bold things that the Committee should be thinking about.

Mike Bower stated with these issues there is a "Y in the road" discussion to be had. He stated that you cannot solve traffic problems with more roads and asphalt. He commented that the entirety of the traffic engineering community states that you can't keep building your way out of traffic problems. The "Y in the Road" discussion is that these things are not all equal. He stated that we do lots of little thing, like build sidewalks. However, on the big things, we need to talk about the "Y in the Road"; there is a decision to be made. If we try to do a bunch of bypasses, transit will fail. If we don't think

we can pull off all of the road work, we really have to spend time on how we prioritize the steps to get to a viable transportation solution.

John clarified that they are listing things that have been around town for a while. He stated that the "Y in the road" is that we either just go on dealing with cars as normal and call it quits and provide more and wider and faster roads. Or, we do everything we can now to cut down traffic. Highway 89A is a sea of cars, and he feels it doesn't have to be that way. He stated that we have to analyze everything to cut down on traffic. The Committee needs to look at biking and walking and whether it is recreational, or if it is cutting down on traffic. He is not willing to give up on transit and commented that it is unfortunate that the Council did away with this. There may be unique transit options that have not been considered, and perhaps there should be an international call for ideas for this. He feels we need to do something bold as a town because this town is worth it.

Chairman Thompson stated that this doesn't seem to be about alternate routes or more asphalt, but about making it harder to use cars.

Gerhard stated that there is a lot of traffic that is neighborhood traffic; most of the 89A traffic is local. He would like to see a driving-free day. He would like to see an agreement with the City of Cottonwood to have Park and Ride in Cottonwood and have transit drop the riders off at their workplace. He would like to see locals riding transit. He proposed feeders in the neighborhoods for the Lynx line. He stated that you have to incent the public to use public transportation.

Mike Bower stated that if you are coming here from a Park and Ride, you need to have a viable system in town to make that commute workable. You need an in-town system for this; there is a regional aspect to transit. He would also like to see incentives for ridership. He stated that a lot of the comments from the public are misguided. We are not saying that you can't drive your car. We are saying that an easier choice will be to take public transit. Placing restrictions on people just gets their emotions involved. We would need to look carefully at any restrictions. Additionally, the tie between circulation and parking is a big one.

Jim stated that he can't object strenuously enough to ideas about making it harder to use a car; he believes that is the wrong approach. He would like it stated that, instead, we make it easier to use public transportation. Chairman Thompson agreed with that statement.

Marty suggested pedestrian overpasses in Uptown and the west corridor, with a nice parking structure available. He envisions people navigating from overpass to overpass.

Gerhard stated that a multilevel parking garage would be nixed by the neighbors. He also believes that people should be educated on the advantages of public transportation, such as saving gas and reducing car wear and tear. He also mentioned giving awards for carpooling.

John stated they need to work toward a civic ethic regarding traffic. It should be impressed on people that if we don't take care of this issue, we are doing destruction to our environment. If we can't control the car, the alternative is horrific. Sedona is a small town dealing with an urban problem that will only get bigger. He would like to strategize an idea of credits given for traffic reduction. He also asked if there are pieces of land where something can be gained by doing density transfers.

Angela suggested medians and a widening of 89A in West Sedona. She agrees with Marty regarding a system of overpass walkways and is interested in an Uptown parking lot and transit system or electric bus through the canyon.

Elemer stated that in reading the public comments, there were three categories of transportation issues. One was goals for people that don't feel safe driving at night but still want to do things at night. Secondly, there were solutions, like parking lots and a transit system. This third category was problems like ditches alongside the road. He feels the public is guiding us to where we should be going. He stated that a lot of the circulation topics are problems (like traffic congestion) and others

are solutions (like ways to cut through or parking lots). He suggested putting some of the public desires on the list of circulation goals.

Charles stated that an idea kicked around is to make the community favor walkability. There is a connection between the friction on a roadway versus congestion on a roadway. If you have shoppers go to a major parking lot, this cuts back on the friction. That type of zoning change would be a fairly large one. Another big idea would be to use a valet service or ferries. We would tell people to park one place, and the cars would get ferried to a different lot. This is something that you don't see a lot, but is an idea that is out there. This would change the look and feel of the community.

Mike Raber observed that perhaps the group needs to talk more about the dynamic between alternate routes and transit, as well as some of the constraints and opportunities. The current Plan doesn't reference alternate routes, because historically the Plan has taken a strong environmental stance. Red Rock Crossing has been studied quite a bit. Paving Schnebly Hill road has come up, as well as an Uptown bypass and the Ranger Road extension (which is still in the Plan as a recommendation). The Plan has not been a big advocate of these changes because these routes go over National Forest area. He stated that the group may need to clarify how they prioritize these considerations.

Gerhard stated that he would like to see the hospitality industry chip in for a shuttle system for restaurants and trailheads. This system would keep the cars in the hotel parking lots for the duration of the tourist's stay. He would also like to see parking meters in Uptown and perhaps having Uptown street parking be handicapped parking only. Mike Raber stated that the issue of parking meters has been discussed by Council.

John Sather stated this is the discussion of the "Y in the road". Do we talk about the same things regarding alternate routes, or do we take a "Y" and say no more roads; we are taking roads back. He would like the Plan to address this. His hope is that there is an alternate route for I-17, sending people to Phoenix if Sedona is full. This could be accomplished with electronic reader boards diverting traffic.

Jim stated that for years Red Rock Crossing was viral. He is surprised about how little he has heard about it in the last couple years. The second biggest idea that caused problems was the Cy Birch bypass of Uptown. Chavez Crossing is another thing that had been discussed. If we pave Schnebly Hill Road, there will be accidents because of cars driving too fast.

Mike Raber stated that what he is hearing is that alternate routes are not something that we want to promote in the Plan because it is counterproductive to preserving the environment.

Jim Eaton thinks the roundabouts have solved some traffic problems. He also believes bypasses are burdensome.

Marty stated that there should be a major educational program regarding this issue. Currently merchants feel that unless customers park in front of their store, they are not going to get their business. Marty feels that parking structures away from the stores are ok. There was an opportunity a few years ago when a landowner was interested in trading Uptown land for parking. One citizen in particular made a ruckus about this, and they voted to not go ahead with this project. If they had moved forward, this could have solved a parking issue and would have improved the looks of the community. He would like to start working to change the mentality in terms of what we want as a community; that would go a long way in solving some of these problems. It would be beneficial to spend time on the civic ethic aspect of reducing traffic.

Mike Bower stated that we are going to have a challenge with the citizenry regarding public transit. They don't know that without public transit, they are looking at more traffic and bigger highways. It might be time for the speaker's bureau idea to address this. He suggesting finding one or two great thinkers on the issue and pay for them to come here and give a lecture. This would help deflect some

of the idea that there is a hidden agenda regarding public transportation. There also should not be any restrictions on driving, because that would be an area where the Committee would take some public flak.

Gerhard suggested that the Canyon could have a time-related one-way direction, essentially one-way traffic.

John Sather suggested taking the public out of transit, and calling it private transit. There are examples around the world (Mazatlan and Mumbai, for example) of unique transit vehicles. If we look into the economic development side of this, there may be a business opportunity here for someone. He also sees a society where you can't hitchhike anymore; he would like to see that as an option for citizens. Sedona is a small town with urban problems; those problems need unique ideas. It would be interesting to have a little Sedona transit vehicle that is unique to Sedona.

Angela liked the idea of public transit and suggested a transit system for residents and a system for visitors. She stated the idea of zip cars for the residents. She suggested that the Forest Service offer shuttles to certain areas, like along the airport trailhead.

Chairman Thompson restated Mike Raber's comment that alternate routes are not a viable option because they impact the environment. He also stated that there is a need to educate the public in that alternate routes do not lessen traffic. We are starting to get a flavor from the public that we are environmentalists pushing environmental issues. It's important for the public to not write us off; we need to educate the public, or maybe first the Council. Regarding some of the Uptown issues, we perhaps need to identify a place where we have a pedestrian zone. Perhaps what we need to do is not take back streets, but take back parking. An idea would be to ask the Chamber what they would think if we gave them the right to build on their parking. Then we could do what Marty is saying regarding specific places to park. We would not have to do this city-wide, but in a focused area.

Jim stated that the public has directed the Committee to address the environment. The Committee needs to consider that technology will run faster than we can. An example is getting into a Smart car, telling it to go to Bashas', and then sitting back. This is something that will be on the market in 10 years.

Marty stated that he likes the idea of little cars that would be unique to Sedona, available to tourists and residents, and available in central locations. This is something that makes it easier to not drive. He also likes the idea of a few major parking structures for the city. He personally does not mind parking and walking when visiting a city, and doesn't know why in Sedona we think we need to park right in front of a shop or destination.

Gerhard stated that he has experience with electric cars that you access with a group membership card and are located in strategic locations. Additionally, rather than putting up 2 and 3 story parking garages, perhaps these structure could be dug into the hills, cutting down on heat and pollution.

Mike Bower stated the we really are not just rejecting alternate routes for strictly environmental reasons. The main reason to reject alternate routes is because it is not a viable solution. Mike Raber stated that this may be a viable solution but not an accepted solution. Mike Bower replied that if you implement alternate routes and overcome environmental and cost problems, it may look like you are solving a problem. However, when you start implementing alternate routes, you have to look at the next route and then the next. Examples of this are the cities of Phoenix or Denver that went with alternate routes and are now scrambling. He believes that alternate routes are not the big picture solution. The only way we are going to tackle the problem of traffic is to try and do the little things and also move toward private transit. The little things include hitchhiking, small vehicle transportation, and personal transportation with electric vehicles. The big thing is crafting a system that is regional, includes the canyon and trailhead shuttles and is crafted big and aggressive. Studies have also shown that you have to take a big bite out of this issue to make an impact. If you just do

the circular in Uptown as a solution, it doesn't work. Sedona is unique in that any transit we have will also involve touring. For example, there could be a transit system for tourists in the Chapel area.

John stated that a bold move would be a policy that there are no new roads. Instead, we use the roads we have in a more efficient manner. He further stated that zip cars are there to reduce parking, not to reduce traffic. The efficiency is not one person per car; we need to answer the question of how we keep the cars full. In Mexico, for example, they use a van to get across town; this van leaves when it's full of passengers.

Angela commented that Boulder formerly prided itself on clean air, and then they started building roads. As a result the traffic problems remained the same; they just had more cars.

Jim stated that there are little ideas that work to reduce traffic. One such idea is changing zoning restrictions to allow someone to have a small store in his house. John Sather replied by stating that is an example of changing land use.

Mike Raber commented that there should be future conversation regarding transit. The Committee needs to provide clear and focused steps regarding looking at transit a certain way. Traffic, road connections, parking, access control – all of these things together will be a package that the Plan will address. The public will have the biggest problem with the transit issue.

Chairman Thompson suggested picking up on transit at the next meeting. He also commented that the summary handout and methodology provided by Staff were beneficial.

5. Discussion regarding future meeting dates and future agenda items.

Next meeting: Tuesday, April 2, 2013.

Mike Bower stated that on the future agenda we need more discussion on transit. We should consider trying to outline a holistic system. He also thinks the Committee should do some diagrams regarding transit. For example, how does reducing traffic interrelate to other things. He drew a diagram with vehicular reduction in the center of the diagram with linkages to other elements, such as housing, arts & culture and open space.

Chairman Thompson asked if someone would be someone willing to write about a community or civic ethic regarding reducing traffic in order to have an overall statement that we can get behind. Jim Eaton asked how this differs from a vision.

John asked if we are writing specific visions or a holistic vision. He stated that the idea of no new pavement would be a guiding principle to the Council to not spend money on roads or studies. Chairman Thompson suggested that could be a policy statement; we don't want mini-visions. John suggested that we not define the ethic right now.

Marty commented that rather than stating no new roads, the Plan could say something that is flexible for the future, like minimizing or limiting roads.

Mike Raber stated that the next meeting will be about the walkability and bicycle piece of circulation. He stated that they may want to insert some additional meetings into the schedule, rather than to lengthen meetings.

Chairman Thompson suggested that the Committee be informed of the upcoming main topics that will be discussed at future meetings.

John stated that he would like the issue of walkability tied in to land use. Mike Raber replied that the walkability and biking discussion will also encompass land use.

John went on to say that he feels the town is divided into those that need sidewalks as a walkability solution and those that don't need sidewalks but still need land uses that allow them to walk. His neighborhood walks recreationally; he would like them to walk to take their car off the road. Cynthia replied by saying that is why they will wrap land use into the discussions the next few weeks. John would like to see a land use map blown up, but not an aerial or zoning map.

Mike Bower stated that another way to take notes is to let the Committee talk about everything all together. Staff would discern the main points and write them on the boards. If we are linear in our discussions, we won't get to the ideas of, for example, what is a neighborhood center and what are the ingredients. Chairman Thompson suggested that at the following meeting we discuss the holistic idea, and as we have further meetings, we fill in any gaps that remain. There are two ways to approach this - a deductive or inductive process. Mike Bower volunteered to also take notes on the boards, and Staff agreed to this.

6. Adjournment

Chairman Thompson called for adjournment at 5:12 p.m., without objection.

I certify that the above is a true and correct summary of the meeting of the Citizens Steering Committee held on March 19, 2013.

Johannah M. Rutschow

Date