

MEETING MINUTES
CITY OF GLENDALE, ARIZONA
CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMISSION ON NEIGHBORHOODS
GLENDALE CITY HALL, ROOM B-3
5850 W. GLENDALE AVENUE

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 4, 2009
6:00 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mike Nave, Chair
 Derek Fowler
 Donna Duggins
 Sharon Brown
 Vickie Loya
 Mathew Versluis
 Bill Jocewicz
 JoAnn Caufield
 Sharon Sprague
 Lynda Vescio

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

OTHERS: Erik Strunk, Community Partnerships Director
 Matt Cohrs, Neighborhood Partnership Administrator
 Josie Romero, Neighborhood Services Coordinator

I. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Chair Nave called the meeting to order at 6:00 P.M.

II. ROLL CALL

Chair Nave took roll call and announced that Commissioner Del Debbio had to step down from the Commission and position of Vice Chair due to personal reasons. Mr. Cohrs noted that a replacement would be announced soon. Chair Nave also noted that Commissioner Vescio was absent.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – FEBRUARY 4, 2009

Commissioner Brown motioned to approve the February 4, 2009 meeting minutes as written. Commissioner Loya made the second. Motion approved 9 – 0. (Commissioner Vescio was not in attendance yet.)

IV. BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR

None.

V. NEIGHBORHOOD SMALL GRANT APPLICATIONS

Mr. Cohrs stated that at the September 3, 2008 Neighborhood Commission meeting, the commission voted to give the Neighborhood Partnership Administrator administrative authority to approve small grant requests up to \$5,000 for conceptual design of neighborhood improvement projects. Mr. Cohrs explained that such a grant has been approved and wanted to provide the commissioners with the details of the grant. Comments, suggestions or objections were welcomed.

Ms. Romero added that this grant was for the Heart of Glendale neighborhood, which is located at 51st to 57th avenues and from Glendale to Maryland avenues. The neighborhood would like to examine possibilities for improving the rights-of-way with landscaping. Ms. Romero explained that the design work would include trees, historic lighting, gravel in the boulevard areas and options for a neighborhood entry monument. Design meetings will encourage neighbor communication and guide the residents into consensus on a final plan for construction. Ms. Romero explained that this neighborhood is one of the oldest in Glendale and the residents would like to capture and maintain a historic feel.

[Commissioner Vescio entered the meeting.]

As a separate update, Ms. Romero announced that on April 18, 2009, East Catlin Court will host a block party and there will be a neighborhood meeting on Monday to discuss plans for the party. Ms. Romero stated that many of the recent grant projects completed in the neighborhood have greatly improved the look of the neighborhood as well as increased communication between residents.

Commissioner Loya wondered if there were still funds available to continue the small grants program much longer due to the recent budget constraints. Mr. Cohrs replied that there was still more than half of the original \$30,000 available and as far as Mr. Cohrs knew, the program would still continue throughout the fiscal year.

VI. WORKGROUPS AND COMMISSION PLAN

Mr. Cohrs mentioned that because the Spring Grant Cycle is on hold pending budget issues, the Neighborhood Grants Workgroup was on hiatus.

Mr. Cohrs discussed prospective tasks for the following workgroups:

Leadership/Community Events

- A Commissioner Mentoring Program was formulated by Commissioner Duggins and is ready for implementation
- Glendale University, GU Alumni Program and other civic education to be marketed and participation encouraged
- Encourage youth participation
- Participate and market the Legislative Links Program
- Maintain and promote awareness of city and community activities
- Coordinate and plan annual Holiday Event
- Coordinate and plan Leadership Forum
- Participate in GAIN Night activities

Partnerships

- Identify partnership opportunities to support community and neighborhood activities and projects
- Establish relationship with Luke Air Force Base
- Mr. Cohrs will invite Mr. Lopez, Revitalization Administrator, and a member of the Community Development Advisory Committee (CDAC) to do a presentation to the commission

Neighborhood Outreach

- Promote neighborhood registration
- Provide information to businesses, community groups and faith-based organizations regarding grant programs
- Commissioner Vescio suggested contacting group homes as well.
- Commissioner Loya suggested a grandparent outreach.

Mr. Cohrs had already met with the Leadership/Community Events and the Partnership Workgroups. Mr. Cohrs will schedule a meeting with Neighborhood Outreach soon. Mr. Cohrs noted that because the Spring Grant Cycle was on hiatus, the commission could focus on the workgroup tasks to continue to serve the community.

VII. DIRECTOR'S UPDATE

Mr. Strunk discussed the city budget and how the economy has caused staff to review budgets and identify potential service reductions.

- City staff has performed a series of budget reduction exercises

- The impact on neighborhoods has been minimized as much as possible
- There is currently a hiring freeze on city positions (except for critical positions)
- Staff is reviewing ongoing contracts with businesses and temporary personnel
- Volunteer requests for employee furloughs are being accepted
- The lives of computers, vehicles, etc. are being extended
- All expenditures are closely scrutinized

Mr. Strunk stated that the city has been very responsible fiscally and has consistently tried to diversify its economic base; however, the economic crisis has hit everyone and all cities.

Mr. Strunk noted that on March 17, Mayor and Council will tentatively review staff recommendations regarding budget reductions for the rest of this fiscal year and for Fiscal Year (FY) 2009-10. The neighborhood grants may even be on hiatus for FY 2009-10 as well, but this has not been officially determined. However, if this is the case, the commission will need to once again reinvent itself. Mr. Strunk stated that by April, staff should have more concrete information regarding the grants program.

On a positive note, Mr. Strunk announced that approximately \$6.1 million will be received from the federal government for foreclosure resolution. Refinancing opportunities for eligible homeowners will be provided, vacant homes and properties will be purchased and the city will work with banks to leverage the funds received from the government. Income and qualifications will be major considerations in assistance qualification. Furthermore, approximately \$600,000 in additional federal funds will be received via the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program. An additional \$350,000 for the Community Housing Division will be received and an additional \$914,000 for Homeless Prevention will be received. Mr. Strunk explained that overall, approximately \$8.1 million in federal funds will be received that will be funneled back into the neighborhoods.

Mr. Strunk provided the following highlights as well:

- A dedication was recently held for the remodeling of public housing in the Heart of Glendale neighborhood. Commissioner Duggins attended this dedication and mentioned that the remodeling was very impressive.
- Glendale Center Line Project: Last week, a forum was held whereby over 100 property owners attended. The focus of the forum was the area from 43rd to 67th avenues and from Myrtle to Ocotillo.
- The Grand Opening of Camelback Ranch will be held on Sunday. This is the new Dodgers/White Sox Spring Training facility in Glendale.
- On March 24, the Mayor and Council will conduct a public hearing and hopefully approve the FY 2009-10 CDBG recommendations.

VIII. STAFF UPDATES

Ms. Romero provided the following updates:

- East Catlin Court Historic District: Further progress on the eleven projects in the Spring 2008 grant is being made. Four additional homes were painted on February 21, 2009, weed control has begun, all easements have been sprayed and new street signs have been installed. The properties receiving new driveway aprons have been selected and this portion of the project will go out to bid shortly.
- Emerald Point: The Fall 2008 grant agreement was signed. The neighborhood provided sweat equity on Serve Day, Saturday, February 21, whereby they joined with the Church of Joy to paint the wall along 83rd avenue. A total of 45 volunteers assisted with the project. This weekend painting of the rest of the wall will be completed.

Mr. Cohrs provided the following update:

- Thunderbird Palms Neighborhood: This project was completed in February and consisted of removal and replacement of driveway aprons located in the undedicated right-of-way area in

their neighborhood. Sweat equity was completed via volunteering in various Glendale volunteer projects.

- East Catlin Court Historic District: The Fall 2008 grant agreement was signed. The project will include design of new pedestrian lighting as well as electrical, irrigation and new trees.
- Sands West: This Fall 2008 grant includes adding several amenities to Mission Park, such as a shade structure trees and a picnic table. Parks staff met with the neighborhood on February 10 to discuss the changes and a final plan was agreed upon.
- Thunderbird Palms/Hickory Shadows: This Fall 2008 grant includes the installation of new park equipment, such as a playground shade structure, drinking fountain, resurfacing the basketball court and a ramada with picnic tables all within Sunset Palms Park. This project is out for bid.
- Arrowhead Ranch Phase II: This Fall 2008 grant includes improving the existing landscaping along the west side of 75th Avenue from Union Hills Road to just south of Utopia Road. ELS Construction has been selected as the most qualified bidder.
- Arrowhead Lakes: This Fall 2008 grant includes improving the landscaping along the east side of 59th Avenue from Melinda Lane to just south of the Thunderbird Conservation Park. Gothic Landscaping Inc. has been selected as the most qualified bidder.
- Maryland Heights II: This Fall 2008 grant includes various internal street drainage enhancements. Staff is working through some engineering challenges prior to putting out to bid.

Mr. Cohrs announced that over 600 volunteers participated in the annual Serve Day on Saturday, February 21. Volunteers and city staff worked on a variety of projects, including:

- Painting four homes in East Catlin Court
- Fruit gleaning in Sahuaro Ranch Park
- Painting the wall at Sierra Verde Park
- Picking up trash at Thunderbird Paseo Park and Skunk Creek
- Delivering food to needy families
- And much, much more.

Mr. Cohrs noted that the volunteer groups came from the Community Church of Joy, Vineyard Church, Mayor's Youth Advisory Commission (MYAC), Target, and various neighborhoods. Mr. Cohrs thanked all who were able to participate.

Mr. Cohrs discussed Community Education Opportunities:

- This evening, approximately 40 residents will attend a foreclosure seminar held by the Ms. Beth Mulcahy Law Firm that was set up by staff
- Glendale University graduates are scheduled to tour the Pyramid Peak Water Treatment Plant on March 25
- Glendale University started on this past Monday. Commissioner Versluis is attending the class which runs for 10 weeks

Ms. Romero is working with the La Fontana Heights neighborhood, which was newly registered as its own neighborhood and consists of 144 homes. Tomorrow evening, a neighborhood meeting will be held at Bicentennial School where residents and neighborhood leaders will mingle with Partnerships staff and representatives from Code Compliance, Sanitation and the Police Department. Ms. Romero was excited about the neighborhood connections possibilities to be derived from this meeting.

IX. COMMISSION COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS

Commissioner Versluis noted that even with the stimulus package, there would be many challenges ahead and the use of volunteers is needed more than ever.

Commissioners Loya and Caufield agreed that the meeting was very informative and educational.

Commissioner Brown enjoyed the meeting.

Commissioner Sprague appreciated the information on the budget.

Commissioner Fowler felt it was important to continue growing relationships with neighborhoods even though the Spring Grant Cycle was on hold.

Commissioner Jocewicz felt the meeting was very good.

Commissioner Vescio stated that even with the economic downturn, Glendale is doing much better than ever and has become a destination city.

Chair Nave agreed and thanked staff and the commissioners for their time this evening.

X. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Duggins motioned to adjourn the meeting at 7:19 p.m. Commissioner Sprague made the second. The motion passed 10 – 0.

Respectfully submitted,

Denise Kazmierczak
Recording Secretary