

**RIO NUEVO MULTIPURPOSE FACILITIES DISTRICT BOARD  
MEETING MINUTES  
WEDNESDAY, MAY 11, 2005 6:00 P.M.  
RIO NUEVO COMMUNITY MEETING ROOM  
52 WEST CONGRESS, 2<sup>ND</sup> FLOOR  
TUCSON, ARIZONA**

**1. Roll Call**

The meeting was called to order at 6:07 p.m. After a roll call, a quorum was determined to be present.

**Board members present:** Ruben Suarez, Arlene Lopez and Margaret Hardy.

**Board member absent:** Olivia Hernandez

**Rio Nuevo staff members present:**

Greg Shelko, Rio Nuevo Director

Randy Emerson, Rio Nuevo Director of Development

Lucy Amparano, Transportation Superintendent

Karen Leone, Project Manager

Virginia Monyak, Staff Assistant

**Attorney for the Board:** Bill Hicks of Snell & Wilmer

**Guest Presenter:** Shellie Ginn, TDOT Project Manager

**2. Call to the Audience**

Brian Corbell, representing the River Park Inn, spoke regarding his opposition to closing the Clark Street tunnel during the I-10 widening project, which will have an adverse affect on downtown and the surrounding businesses. He has been working with Dennis Alvarez, the ADOT District Engineer, on this matter and appears that the tunnel could remain open during construction at a relatively small expense. The item is scheduled before the Mayor & Council Transportation Subcommittee before being forwarded to the full Mayor & Council.

Michael Toney spoke to the Board on the proposed arena, I-10 widening, and the University of Arizona's Science Project.

**3. Approval of April 13, 2005 Meeting Minutes**

***Ms. Hardy moved to approve the minutes as presented. Ms. Lopez seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.***

*It is the intent of these meeting minutes to get the general meaning of the discussion, summarize what happened and record official actions. The minutes are not intended to be a verbatim transcription of all that was said. Audio tapes of the meeting are available for review at the Rio Nuevo Office, located at 52 W. Congress.*

#### 4. Presentation on the Alternative Analysis Project

Ms. Ginn gave the Board a short presentation on the project.

- The goal of the study is to provide major connectivity within the study area. The area includes the University of Arizona; the Arizona Health Sciences Center; the business districts at Main Gate, Fourth Avenue & downtown; the government center which includes the City of Tucson, Pima County & Federal governments; the Río Nuevo District and historic neighborhoods.
- The study will be conducted in two phases. The first phase will identify modes, alignments and environmental impacts through continuous public involvement to identify “new starts/small start” projects and then prepare a Draft Environmental Impact Statement. Phase two will prepare a Final Environmental Impact Statement/PE; record of decision. Right-of-way acquisition will begin. A final design will be completed, as well as, construction and operation of the project.
- The overall philosophy of the study is to keep it simple and inexpensive; connect activity centers; use “off the shelf” equipment; avoid utilities; minimize street capacity impacts; minimize loss of on-street parking; design for ease of construction; blend with urban environment and neighborhoods; provided “user-friendly” service and develop partnerships.
- Technologies removed from consideration include Light Rail Transit; Traditional Bus Rapid Transit; Trolley Bus; Monorail; Dual Mode Bus; Heavy Rail (Subway/Elevated); Automated Guideway Transit; Automated People Mover; and personal Rapid Transit.
- Alternative technologies being considered are the Rapid Bus Circulator; Historic Trolley, and Modern Streetcars.
  - The Rapid Bus Circulator alternative is a rubber tired vehicle; uniquely designed for rapid boarding and alighting; with flexible route design, mixed traffic operation; and low floor with multiple doors; used for short trips; is ADA accessible; and holds approximately 80 passengers / vehicle (30 seated / 50 standees).
  - The Historic Trolley alternative would use historic or vintage vehicles that would be electrically powered, be compatible with existing streets, and operate in mixed traffic. They provide safe operation in pedestrian areas; however, they have limited carrying capacity. They could share tracks with

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modern streetcars. One draw back is that they are difficult to convert to meet ADA accessibility. They carry approximately 80 passengers/vehicle (40 seated/40 standing).

- The Modern Streetcar alternative is an off the shelf technology that is electrically powered. They are articulated for tight radii turns, compatible with on-street parking, operates in mixed traffic, shares lanes and stops with buses, and operate safely in high pedestrian areas. They have a low floor with multiple doors and are ADA accessible. They can share tracks with the historic trolley and carry approximately 157 passengers/vehicle (30 seated/127 standees)
- The study recommends a couple of alignments south and north of the Union Pacific Railroad.

Ms. Lopez asked if the University of Arizona had a position on the electric interference that would be caused by some of these vehicles passing through their area. Ms. Ginn responded that they have not brought that up, but that they are working with the UA on vibration issues. In fact, they are conducting their own studies on the matter as well. Their findings will be included in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

Ms. Hardy inquired what the difference was between the bus and streetcar option. Ms. Ginn said although the bus option is cheaper initially, in the long run the streetcars tend to last longer. However, Ms. Hardy mentioned that the cost of the tracks would also need to be factored in before making a decision.

Mr. Suarez asked if there were any cities that use these alternative vehicles but don't subsidize their public transit system. Ms. Ginn responded that most if not all, public transit systems are subsidized. It is a service that is required and entities realize that it is a normal cost of providing this service.

## **5. Monthly Rio Nuevo Update on Projects and Financial Reports**

Mr. Emerson went through the May project updates. Following are the highlights of his briefing.

Fox Theatre - Is scheduled to be completed December 31, 2005. Staff has made several Arena site visits which have proven to be very helpful in their project.  
The Post at Kolbe Square – The deal between Bank One and Bourn should be completed by the middle of the month. Once that's complete their architect can start final design work to incorporate the parking lot site.

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Pennington Street Garage – Topped off the garage last week. Staff is negotiating a lease with Café Poca Cosa to open their restaurant on the first floor.

Mercado at Menlo Park – Model home construction will start in late 2005 and models will open in early 2006.

Arizona State Museum and Arizona Historical Society – They are working on submitting a joint request to the Rio Nuevo District to request funding for a feasibility study for moving their facilities to the west side of the Santa Cruz River.

Origins Heritage Park – The Presidio Portion of the Origins Heritage Park located at Washington and Church received two RFQ's. The RFP for design and build will be released shortly.

Arena – Team Zocalo is working on the concept design based on the feasibility analysis conducted by Convention Sport & Leisure. Both reports will be submitted at the same time.

Civic Plaza – Hargreaves will be holding their final public meeting on the Master Plan portion of the project on May 18<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 p.m. at the Manning House.

University of Arizona Science Center – Waiting for the UA to decide on their final concept. A major factor in their decision may be cost.

Private Projects – Mr. Emerson mentioned that the private projects continue to stay within the time frames outlined in his report. Ms. Hardy inquired as to what the status was on the parking issues at Academy Lofts. Will they be putting parking in the center area of the project where they wanted to create a courtyard? Ms. Amparano offered that they would be adding angled parking along 6<sup>th</sup> Street and 15<sup>th</sup> Avenue. Mr. Emerson responded that he would find out and get back to her with a response. Mr. Emerson also informed us that another private project was added to the list – The Lofts at 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue. Vantage Point plans to construct 126 loft units for sale at the former YMCA site (currently occupied by the MUSE) on 6<sup>th</sup> Street. Construction is scheduled to begin in late 2005 with a completion date of late of 2006.

There was no discussion on the monthly financial reports.

## **6. Fox Tucson Theatre Foundation Board of Directors hold Harmless Clause**

This item was pulled off the agenda to allow additional review by the Board's legal counsel and Rio Nuevo staff.

## **7. Announcements**

- Hargreaves will be holding their final public meeting on the Master Plan portion of the project on May 18<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 p.m. at the Manning House.
- The Board is legally obligated to hold a public hearing on their budget prior to approving it. This hearing and approval of the FY 2006 budget is being scheduled for the meeting on June 8, 2005. The public hearing will be advised in the local the newspapers.

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- Tuesday morning's Arizona Daily Star ran an article regarding a group of local investors submitting a proposal to the City to give them exclusive no-bid rights to buy the land on the southwest corner of Pennington Street and Church Avenue to build a 27 story high-rise. A copy of the article was distributed. The item will be presented at a joint meeting of the Mayor and Council Downtown & Rio Nuevo AND Economic Development Subcommittees on June 1<sup>st</sup> at 11:30 a.m.

## **8. Discussion of Future Agenda Items**

Mr. Hicks advised that if the district would be spending money prior to the bonds being issued, the Board should adopt a resolution requesting reimbursement for the funds expended prior to the bonds being issued. He advised that he would be preparing a resolution for their approval at the next meeting scheduled for June 8<sup>th</sup>.

Ms. Hardy requested an update on transportation issues related to downtown. She wants to know how everything fits together. Ms. Amparano advised that Jim Glock, Director of Transportation, may not be available to present at the next Board meeting, but she would see if he would be available in July.

## **9. Adjournment**

*Ms. Lopez moved to adjourn the meeting at 6:45 p.m.. Ms. Hardy seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.*