

Yakima City Council Committee Minutes
Neighborhood & Community Building Committee (NCBC)
 2nd Floor Conference Room, City Hall
 July 21, 2016

Committee Members	Staff	Others
Dulce Gutiérrez (Chair)	Cliff Moore, City Manager	Jheri Ketchum
Avina Gutiérrez	Joan Davenport, Community Dev Director	Steve Hill
Holly Cousens, alternate	Rosalinda Ibarra	Luz Bazan Gutiérrez
Carmen Méndez (absent)	Scott Schafer	Phil Mattoon
	Jenise Sanders	Robert Strader
	Sara Watkins	Carole Folsom-Hill
	Ken Wilkinson	Maria DJ Rodriguez
	Chip Rognlie	Lynn Buchanan
		Randall Yaeger
		Ben Thompson

Chair Dulce Gutiérrez called the meeting to order at 2:02 p.m.

Tree City USA Presentation – Ben Thompson, Washington State Department of Natural Resources, provided a PowerPoint presentation with information about the benefits and services, risks, and costs of trees. He shared a website created by Dr. Kathleen Wolf that provides an overview of scientific evidence of the benefits to the public health, social, and well-being by the green environment. Recommendations for cities is that they have some type of resource assessment (tree inventory); maintenance program for tree planting and care; incorporating urban forest stewardship into current plans, goals, policies, and adopting ordinance to set expectations; having a professional staff person or tree board; and public outreach and engagement. The Arbor Day Foundation has set standards for a community to achieve recognition as a Tree City USA community. The city must have a tree board or department, a tree care ordinance, an annual budget that comprises of at least \$2 per capita spending, and an Arbor Day Observance and proclamation.

Avina Gutiérrez felt that this would be a good compliment to the recent All-America City designation and would also benefit the City in other ways such as grants. It seems that the City already meets or is in the process of complying with all four standards required to acquire this designation.

Jheri Ketchum added that there is a volunteer tree board in Yakima and offered their services to the City through the Yakima Area Arboretum assuming the city assigns a staff person as a point of contact. Chip Rognlie works for the Parks Department and is the City's certified arborist.

In regards to meeting the monetary spending contribution of \$2 per capita, Mr. Thompson described examples of how a city may fulfill that requirement. He added that on average cities spend approximately \$9 per capita.

A. Gutiérrez made a motion, seconded by Holly Cousens, to move this proposal forward to the full council. Motion carried by unanimous vote.

Equity Assessment Status Update – Joan Davenport shared reportable data information that can be collected for the purposes of showing the growth of the city and its needs. She demonstrated a snapshot example of an animated website that staff is working on where this information will eventually be mapped. Information available through the Census data currently shows population and demographic increase through the years. Data collection will conclude in late August/early September. D. Gutiérrez requested an updated timeline for public dissemination.

The committee was informed of a presentation that will be given by Benita Horn to the City Council regarding equity issues. The presentation is scheduled for Friday July 29th at 4:00 p.m. in the

Council Chambers. Sara Watkins advised the committee that the initial motion made by Council directing staff to perform an equity assessment did not include contracting for third party assistance. If the city wants to contract for assistance with a university or a private firm, she suggested that the full Council be aware and discussion of this topic at a future meeting is necessary to make that amendment. She also recommended that the upcoming presentation be advertised as a City Council study session in the event council members want to take any action. Committee members accepted S. Watkins suggestions. A. Gutiérrez made a motion, seconded by H. Cousens, to hold a formal study session on July 29th at 4:00 p.m. to hear a presentation by Benita Horn and discuss the equity assessment. Motion carried by unanimous vote.

Due to the limited amount of time allowed for the presentation by Benita Horn, D. Gutiérrez indicated that any audience participation will be tabled to the August NCBC meeting. The committee expressed appreciation towards staff's efforts in gathering information related to this matter.

Exploratory Committees - Bike/Pedestrian Committee, Ethics, and Community Integration – J. Davenport noted that the Greenway will have a representative on the Bike/Pedestrian Committee. A. Gutiérrez provided an update on the status of the applications received for these exploratory committees. The Nominating Committee agreed to have a pool of candidates for selection before they start appointing members. The Committee expressed concern about the City's publicizing efforts and directed staff to utilize all resources available for public outreach in the English and Spanish media. City Manager Moore indicated he will include this into his Chamber presentation and radio interviews.

Estimates for the Cost of Equipment at Parks – Ken Wilkinson presented an update on the Cherry Park improvements. A fence was removed and new picnic tables added. Further paperwork processing needs to materialize in order to acquire the adjoining property to expand the park. Due to funding issues in 1999/2000, a major improvement to install a basketball court was dismissed. K. Wilkinson reported that the cost for a full size basketball court is approximately \$50k. He would also like to upgrade the playground equipment. He stated that the park surveys were already mailed out and have begun to receive them back. The responses will help with the Parks Plan update. He noted that the surveys are available online and in hardcopy in English and Spanish. Examples of exercise equipment were included in the packet; however, staff was not able to obtain a pricing list in time for this meeting. Discussion continued on several issues including the potential parks to place exercise equipment; coordination a presentation to the full City Council on the Tree City USA designation; safety issues and complaints related to the slick surface material used at the Kiwanis basketball court; public outreach in English and Spanish on social media and online, specifically the City's website. H. Cousens inquired about the foreclosure status on the property adjacent to Cherry Park.

Board Appointed Reports – Standing Item

Comprehensive Plan Update – The Yakima Planning Commission will hold a study session on Wednesday July 27th at 3:00 p.m. to review land use changes and citizen requests. Another open house will be scheduled for late September. J. Davenport reported that Valerie Smith, Senior Planner, has resigned and recruitment is in process to fill her vacancy.

Homeless Network – C. Mendez was not present to provide an update.

Parks & Recreation Commission – D. Gutiérrez reported that the vacancy for Parks Operation Supervisor will soon be filled. K. Wilkinson addressed D. Gutiérrez's inquiry about turning off the water feature at Millennium Plaza. He will approach the Millennium Foundation and the Block by Block group to see what can be done.

South East Community Center (SECC) – The next quarterly meeting is Tuesday July 26th.

Historic Preservation – J. Davenport reported that a Historic Preservation Element will be included as part of the update to the Comprehensive Plan. Staff has been diligently working with the Historic Preservation Commission and the Department of Historic & Archaeological Preservation to draft that chapter.

TRANS-Action Committee – The Committee agreed to postpone this appointment to the next meeting due to C. Mendez's absence. J. Davenport informed them of the upcoming TRANS-Action meeting; either D. Gutiérrez or A. Gutiérrez will attend.

Other Business/Requests – Maria Rodriguez, Executive Director of Rural Community Development Resources (RCDR), summarized and highlighted survey results conducted by her agency focusing in Districts 1 and 2. Respondents indicated that city government neglected the eastside of Yakima and was not meeting the needs of those communities. She indicated that an action plan is in progress and would like to partner with the City on addressing issues.

Recap of Deliverables – J. Davenport reviewed the list of deliverables for the next meeting:

- Advertise the next meeting as a full Council Study Session
- Maintenance report of the Millennium Plaza water feature
- TRANS-Action appointment
- Promoting the vacancies for the exploratory committees and maximizing the opportunities
- Translate City website link into Spanish
- Updated timeline for the equity assessment study
- Providing audience participation slips
- Report on truck routes and private business responsibilities
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Audience Participation – Luz Bazan Gutiérrez, resident, requested a protocol sheet for the various committees. She suggested press releases be sent to the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce so they can forward on to other medias including Spanish radio stations. Ms. Gutiérrez also commented on proposals for small public works projects.

Steve Hill, resident, commented about lack of citizens on the committee or in the audience. He mentioned that no one in his neighborhood received parks surveys and inquired about the trees that were removed in his neighborhood. A. Gutiérrez and D. Gutiérrez provided clarification about the Committee. S. Schafer explained the process of tree removal in the city right of way. He indicated that the trees removed from the vicinity of Chestnut Ave and 6th Street were going to be replanted.

Carole Folsom-Hill, resident, appreciated the City's efforts in handling the homeless camp issues downtown. After a brief discussion regarding truck routes, A. Gutiérrez requested a report on truck routes and the responsibilities for private businesses for the next Committee meeting.

Randall Yaeger, resident, expressed concern regarding the lack of sidewalks on Powerhouse Road near Robertson Elementary. He will provide pictures of the area.

Rob Strader, resident, pointed out the dangers kids are exposed to when walking to school on routes that do not have sidewalks. He feels prioritization should be done to address areas previously annexed into the City limits. Mr. Strader added a request for a citizen driven advisory board to address transportation issues.

Adjourn – H. Cousens motioned/seconded by A. Gutiérrez to adjourn; motion carried unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 3:47 p.m. The next Neighborhood and Community Building Committee meeting is scheduled for 2:00 p.m. on August 18, 2016.

Approved by: Duke Strader

Date Approved: 08/18/16

Prepared by: Rosalinda Ibarra, Community Development Administrative Assistant