



**Sustainability Commission
Online Meeting via Zoom**

Wednesday, October 26, 2022, at 6:30 P.M.

Minutes

1. Call to Order at 6:32 PM

2. Roll Call by Staff Liaison

Members Present: Chair Paul Lemmon; Vice Chair Daniel Schuh, Commissioners Litzy Hernandez Cota, Billy Vaughan (joined 6:54 pm), Bernadette Barba (joined 6:34 pm), and Shaun Grimm

Members Absent: Commissioners Thomas Albrigo (excused) Alejandro Arreguin (unexcused)

Municipal Staff Present: Danae Presler, Sustainability Officer; Jennifer Davidson, Water Resources Manager; Jodie Novak Development Services Director; Nancy Wallace, Administrative Assistant

3. Unscheduled Public Appearances

None.

4. Approval of August 31, 2022, Minutes (For Action)

Motion was made by Vice Chair Daniel Schuh, seconded by Commissioner Hernandez Cota, to approve the August 31, 2022, Meeting Minutes. The motion carried unanimously.

5. Presentation on Development Plan for South of the Estrella Mountains

Chair Lemmon invited staff to present on development plans for south of the Estrella Mountains. Jodie Novak, Development Services Director, provided the presentation to the Commission.

The area south of the Estrella Mountains is within the South Avondale Planning Area. This area encompasses 38,400 acres, not all of which can be developed. The purpose of the master plan is to develop a mix of land uses and densities that aligns with the General Plan. The Council is interested in seeing a resort in this area.

The build out population for this area is estimated to be 87,000. Development constraints include rough terrain, drainage, a future freeway corridor, and land owned by multiple public agencies, including Maricopa County Parks, Bureau of Land Management (BLM), State Land, and the Gila River Indian Community (GRIC). There is no water or sewer infrastructure currently serving this area. At this time the only way to reach the area is to utilize Estrella Mountain Ranch Parkway through Goodyear. Additional studies will be needed for water and wastewater infrastructure.

Chair Lemmon asked to clarify how the properties would be accessed south of the Estrella Mountains, inquiring if it was dependent upon construction of the Loop 303.

Ms. Novak affirmed that the Loop 303 would be essential, as well as arterial streets. The City is also looking into access from Litchfield Road alignment.

Chair Lemmon noted the complexity and high cost of the vision and asked if developers would need to be interested in order for it to come to fruition.

Ms. Novak responded that it was reliant on developer interest, as well as partnership with other government agencies if they want to get involved.

Vice Chair Schuh asked if there has been any serious interest shown by developers.

Ms. Novak stated that this plan provides a long-term land use vision if it comes to a point where someone did really have an interest.

Chair Lemmon asked if the resort could be developed without anything else being constructed?

Ms. Novak replied that it would involve a lot of complications because they would still need roadway and public access, as well as water and sewer services.

Commissioner Barba asked if the City of Avondale received any monies from a particular lawsuit earlier in the year, and if so, could it be used for sustainable housing in the area discussed.

Ms. Novak was not familiar with the lawsuit, but the City Attorney's Office might have information on it.

Ms. Presler introduced Jennifer Davidson, Water Resources Manager, and asked her to speak on the water piece of this development planning.

Ms. Davidson advised that the city is in the beginning stages of investigating water availability South of the Estrella Mountains. This will be a long process, and the Water Resources team will engage with internal partners during the process and will provide updates to the Sustainability Commission.

6. Sustainability Update

Danae Presler, Sustainability Officer, provided the Commission with several updates on Avondale's sustainability efforts, including City Council adopting the Community Sustainability Plan in September and Drought Preparedness Plan in October of this year.

Ms. Presler thanked the Commission for participating in public outreach efforts to raise awareness for sustainability issues and practices. She noted that Commissioner Hernandez Cota assisted with the Sustainability table at the Alamar Grand Opening and Chair Lemmon and Commissioner Vaughan volunteered at the Sustainability and Water Conservation booth for Billy Moore Days Festival.

City Council renewed its annual recycling contract with the city of Phoenix. Residential recycling materials collected by the City of Avondale are taken to City of Phoenix Materials Recovery Facility. Recycling costs increased from \$82 per ton to \$98 per ton this year, however, the City partially recovers costs in revenue received from the recycled materials, bringing the average rate down to \$11.29 per ton which is cheaper than having it landfilled.

The city has been expanding its electric vehicle charging network, and seeing good usage at the stations. The City currently has 25 charging stations that are publicly owned, compared to just three stations three years ago. The City has leveraged rebates and incentives from utility providers, Salt River Project, and Arizona Public Service to avoid or offset costs of installation. Avondale has also set standards for installing electric vehicle charging stations in new developments.

City of Avondale is exploring participation in a regional effort to create a model building code focused on creating energy efficient and resilient buildings. This would be voluntary for cities to adopt. There are currently eight cities across the state that are considering a joint grant application for this endeavor.

Avondale's Sustainability Division added a staff member focused on stormwater. This is an important position to ensure the City is able to meet the additional regulations that the state has required of cities when it comes to preventing pollution from entering our stormwater system.

7. Discussion of Commission Goals for 2023

Chair Lemmon recognized Commissioner Hernandez Cota, Commissioner Vaughn, and Commissioner Arreguin for their service on the Sustainability Commission and encouraged them to renew their terms.

Chair Lemmon asked Ms. Presler to provide an overview of the Commission's accomplishments in 2022 to set the stage for discussion of annual goals for 2023.

Ms. Presler reported that the Commission accomplished 10 out of 11 goals for the year. The Commission guided development of the Community Sustainability Plan, provided education and outreach to high schools and at city events, supported the Green Business Program, and launched the City's first Plastic Free July Campaign.

Commissioner Hernandez Cota asked if there is a vacancy in the youth member position on the Commission.

Ms. Presler replied that instead of a dedicated youth member position, the new Commission bylaws removed the age restriction. The Commission does not currently have any vacancies, unless anyone chooses not to renew their term this year.

Chair Lemmon encouraged Commissioners to have anyone interested in serving on the Sustainability Commission apply online.

Regarding goals for 2023, Commissioner Hernandez Cota recommended continuing outreach and education programs such as the recycling campaign. She also suggested the City provide incentives for businesses to join the Green Business Program.

Ms. Presler shared that she is working with the Economic Development and Tourism Department to explore incentives, such as reimbursements for businesses that install sustainable equipment and appliances.

Commissioner Grimm asked how success will be measured and how initiatives will be tracked.

Ms. Presler will include reviewing progress towards the sustainability goals and targets as a Commission goal for 2023.

Commissioner Grimm stated that education is a big part of the Commission's goal, and asked how more information can get out to the general public to make plans successful.

Chair Lemmon agreed with Commissioner Grimm and Commissioner Hernandez Cota about importance of education and outreach. He would like to see a focus on water conservation. He also noted interest in the Coldwater Coffeehouse and Bakery and how they got started.

Commissioner Vaughan thanked Chair Lemmon for his work and leadership this year and Ms. Presler's commitment and contributions.

Vice Chair Schuh echoed Commissioner Vaughan's sentiments about the leadership and the professionalism of Ms. Presler and Chair Lemmon. He thanked them for a very successful year.

8. Adjournment

The next Sustainability Commission Regular Meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, January 25, 2022, at 6:30 PM.

Motion by Vice Chair Daniel Schuh, seconded by Commissioner Bernadette Barba, to adjourn the meeting. There being no further business, meeting adjourned at 7:49 PM.

Paul Lemmon, Chair

Danae Presler
Sustainability Officer as Staff Liaison

CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that the foregoing minutes are a true and correct copy of the minutes of the meeting held on the 26th day of October 2022. I further certify that the meeting was duly called and held, and that a quorum was present.

Danae Presler
Sustainability Officer as Staff Liaison