

Winchester-Homeland Municipal Advisory Council

MEETING MINUTES

Date: September 12, 2019

Place: Winchester Community Center, 32655 Haddock Street, Winchester

Attendees:

Winchester MAC:

Andy Domenigoni, Chairman; Dirk Meredith, Vice-Chairman; James Horecka, Secretary; Jeff Logan; Jimmy Sheldrake.

Ex Officio:

Opal Hellweg, 3rd District Legislative Assistant

Members of the Public

Call to Order: Call to Order by Andy Domenigoni at 6:30 PM.

Approval of Agenda:

Motion to approve agenda: Motion by Meredith; second by Sheldrake. Approved unanimously.

Approval of Meeting Minutes:

Motion to approve June Meeting Minutes: Motion by Logan; 2nd by Meredith. Approved U.

Guest Speaker: Robert Flores, Urban and Regional Planner IV, Riverside County Planning Department.

- Topic: Environmental Justice.
- Robert Flores gave a PowerPoint presentation on Environmental Justice (EJ). This EJ Workshop presentation is being given to Municipal Advisory Councils (MACs) in western Riverside County. The presentation was also printed, for attendees to have. See also General Plan Amendment 190004.
- EJ is defined as “the fair treatment of people of all races cultures, and incomes with respect to development, adoption, implementation, and enforcement of environmental law, regulations and policies.”
- Senate Bill 1000: Environmental Justice policy in General Plan: Reduction of health risks, promotion of civic engagement, prioritization of improvements and programs. County must identify environmentally “disadvantaged communities,” & address environmental constraints; req’d by state law.
- How is the County addressing EJ? Existing General Plan elements. Policy categories such as civic engagement, health risk reduction, less pollution exposure, better food access, safe & sanitary homes, physical activity. They are working on maps showing affected areas.
- Goals include: Enhancing community participation, enhance quality of life, & establishing priorities & agency partnering opportunities.
- Potential implications: Delay of projects. Project changes. Project feasibility. Increased project costs.
- Policy: “Encourage civic engagement in the local planning process, in furtherance of environmental justice planning.” Example: Developers would engage the community in the entitlement process. Process: The EJ Implementation Program requires developers to meet with the community and collect input as part of projects. This would also include review by a Municipal Advisory Council and/or other community entities (the Town Association, e.g., and its Land Use Committee).
- What is an EJ Community (a.k.a. Disadvantaged Communities)? A community that is environmentally disadvantaged/challenged. Examples: Poor air quality (including agricultural dust, pesticides), poor water quality (including ground water contamination), etc.
- The County is mapping EJ Communities: Using state and regional sources (existing), with local adjustments. These maps are ‘living’ documents, being revised as new information becomes available.
- Portions of Winchester & Homeland are considered so. Although the data used appears to have yielded sketchy results, as the boundaries don’t make much sense (southern limit, e.g.). This may be

due to the data sets used, with French Valley data (from census tracts, 75th percentile) skewing properties well into our 'poorer' areas.

- Our Winchester Town Plan is partly in an EJ Community area. This will subject development to certain additional processes. But there may also be some benefits (perhaps even grants?). But it is the County that would apply for grant funding. Also note: Grants often come with many strings attached.
- Projects may get hit with additional mitigations being required, in categories listed above and more.
- Q: So Planners must apply for grants? A: Well, the AIM is Environmental Justice: NOT grants. There may be some grants available, or NOT.
- Per state law: As of January 21, 2018, all cities and counties must adopt an Environmental Justice Policy, by the time two or more amendments to the General Plan are made. (Citizens expressed concern that this went down in 2018, nearly two years ago, and many are just now hearing of EJ, etc.)
- C, Jim H.: We used to have Redevelopment Funds, which WE as a community had local control over (mostly). The STATE stole it all, robbing local control. EJ seems like massive 'green tape.'
- This state law is an "unfunded mandate." Citizens expressed concern that all new projects will face unknown new hurdles with will impact or even kill their projects. It also seems unclear how "equitable" is to be achieved or even measured, and how the County would 'prioritize' investment. How with the County "reallocate" moneys? From where? To where? 'Partnering' with other agencies?
- Q: So all projects will face more hurdles? A: TTMs that have not yet been approved will be subject. Yes, EJ 'adds another layer,' but the intent is to do so in an orderly fashion.
- Citizens expressed fear that this will drive UP the cost of developing new housing. Hurting most.
- Gregg C. and others questioned the methodology used, as what appears to be EJ boundaries make little sense to those who actually know our community.

Old Business:

- A. General County update; Opal Hellweg, 3rd District Legislative Assistant:
 - Opal Hellweg not present. In her place, reporting: Olivia Barnes, Legislative Assistant.
 - No significant news to report.
- B. Sheriff Department update; Deputy Andrew Showalter:
 - Crime stats: July: 235 calls; 6 arrests; August: 238 calls, 5 arrests. (Figures include Homeland.)
 - Q: Does the sheriff have a program to address obnoxious dirt-bikes? A: Yes, the ROVE team.
- C. EMWD Updates; Kevin Pearson:
 - Left fliers for the upcoming Water Fest, on October 5th, 8-12, at EMWD HQ in Perris
 - Noted that a contractor hit a 24" diameter recycled water line recently (not good)
 - Q, Angela L.: Relating to Environmental Justice: When will sewer come to town? A: Infrastructure is 'development-driven,' paid for and constructed, mostly. Some grants may help, but following that route, as they did in Quail Valley, can take time. Two decades in that case. EMWD also got a grant for groundwater cleanup in Moreno Valley: \$36M. State funds can take 10 to 20 years to actually see the funding for a grant.
 - Q: Is the 'Water Tax' dead? A: Yes.
- D. Code Enforcement; Marr Christian, with cohort Nicole Wapner:
 - The dispensary that was on 9th St. is in admin., heading for a hearing.
 - Several mobiles in Highland Palms: Going into administrative action.
 - Q: Homeless camps in the Groves: A: Send Marr a reminder; he no longer handles the Groves.
 - As part of the Sheriff's Eradication program, they were able to clear out 13 sites of cannabis.
 - The dispensary on Hwy 74 is now closed.
 - Marr reminded citizens that reporting is important, but to not put yourself in harm's way.
 - Marr reminded all that outdoor cultivation of cannabis is still illegal in unincorporated Riv. Co.
 - Limited cultivation of hemp is now legal in Riverside Co.; some is being grown in our area.
- E. Assemblywoman Melissa Melendez' Office; Casey Deaver, Field Representative:
 - Casey mentioned various bills, some of which have died in process (water tax, soda labels...).

- SB 310: Would allow convicted felons to serve on juries (unless in jail).
- Next Town Hall Meeting: at “The Links at Summerly” in Lake Elsinore, Sept. 20th 10-11 AM.
- F. Senator Stone District Director, Darrell Connerton:
 - Senator Stone put forth 15 bills: Two died, 4 in suspense, 7 have become a 2-year bill, & 2 are awaiting the Governor’s signature: SB-393 (boat impound) & SB-569 (controlled substance).
 - Due to the storms, etc., there is a nationwide shortage of blood. Blood Drive coming up; fliers.
 - SB-276; exemption from immunizations: This could be a real problem for public health.
- G. Highway 79: No news.
- H. Land Use update; Cindy Domenigoni, et al.:
 1. Winchester Community Planning update:
 - a. Winchester-Homeland General Plan Amendment #1207: Awaiting the Draft EIR.
 2. Stone Creek (TR 36365): Pending TPC hearings. Held up due to the Highway 79 Policy Area.
 3. Domenigoni Plaza – Commercial development at Winchester Rd & Domenigoni Parkway. Update: TPC approved July 17th 2019, by the Riverside County Planning Department.
 4. Intersection of Scott Road & Leon Road. Letter sent to Supervisor Chuck Washington.
 5. Menifee North Specific Plan, TTM 37533 & TTM 29322 (Homeland) – Postponed TPC hearing, pending further discussions about the park.

Cindy Domenigoni reinforced that community involvement in the MAC and Town Association is very important. Due to input from citizens, the proponents of the Menifee North SP are now discussing the park with Valley Wide Parks & Recreation. They are considering a larger park, perhaps in a different location. Citizen involvement makes a difference!
- I. City of Hemet update; Jeff Logan
 - Hemet is rewiring traffic signals to coordinate them; in relation to the CalTrans Median efforts.
 - The bridge on Stetson has been completed, and Stetson Road is now open to traffic again!
- J. City of Menifee update: Doug Darnell, Senior Planner in the City of Menifee.
 - Recruiting for the new Police Department is underway; Chiefs first, then others.
 - Rockport Ranch is now in the Draft EIR stage. 80 acres, S of Newport Rd, near Briggs Rd. There will be 35 residential lots. The review period will end on October 21st.
- K. Other Old Business:
 - None.

Open Forum:

- Jim Horecka suggested that the WHMAC and the Town Association consider rebalancing some of the agenda items between the two public meetings. Keeping in mind that the purpose of the WHMAC is intended to be geared more toward guiding our growth into a future city. Some agenda items, of ‘general interest,’ may be better presented at the Town Association.
- Gregg Cowdery said that he mentioned the lack of “School Zone” signs to the crew painting the stripes on newly-repaved Haddock Street by the school. Within a week, “School Zone” signs with 25 mph speed limit signs went up. He expressed gratitude from our community for their good work.
- It was noted that “Environmental Justice” may bring opportunities, and perhaps some relief.

Next WHMAC Meeting:

The next WHMAC meeting is scheduled for Thursday, October 10, 2019 6:30 PM, at the Community Center.

Adjournment:

The WHMAC adjourned at 7:54 PM DM/JS/Un).