



Westside Creeks Restoration Oversight Committee (WCROC) Meeting March 10, 2009 – 6:00 PM

Meeting Notes

Attendees: **Members and Alternates** – Robert Ramirez, WCROC Co-Chair; Olga Lizcano, WCROC Co-Chair; Santiago Garcia, Jr., Westside Development Corporation; Ashley Hernandez, Student Representative; Barbara Witte-Howell, San Antonio Conservation Society; Abigail Kinnison, Beacon Hill Neighborhood Association; George Martinez, Woodlawn Lake Neighborhood Association; Pam Martinez, Woodlawn Lake Neighborhood Association; Theodore Ozuna, Donaldson Terrace Neighborhood Association; Dr. Catherine Rainwater, Our Lady of the Lake University; and Gloria Jean Treviño, Avenida Guadalupe Neighborhood Association. **Staff and Consultants** – Roberto Rodriguez, SARA Board Member; Rudy Farias, SARA; Jim Boenig, SARA; Ed Garza, AECOM; Andy Rooke, AECOM; Rudy Rivera, RJ RIVERA Associates, Inc., and Linda Vela RJ RIVERA Associates, Inc. **Members of the Public** – Narciso Cano, Robert Rodriguez, Jr., Henry Rodriguez, and Lydia Kelly.

1.0 Welcome & Introductions

Robert Ramirez opened the oversight committee and welcomed members of the oversight committee and the public. He also introduced SARA Board member Roberto Rodriguez.

2.0 Approval of Meeting Minutes (3/10/2009)

Mr. Ramirez then called for approval of the March meeting minutes. There were no objections and the January meeting minutes were approved.

3.0 City of San Antonio TIRZ Presentation

Next, the committee heard a presentation by Adrian Lopez, Economic Development Manager for the City of San Antonio on the Tax Increment Reinvestment Zones (TIRZ) in the city. He began by talking about the Westside TIRZ and said it is primarily looking at economic development.

Mr. Ramirez asked Mr. Lopez to first explain how tax increment financing (TIF) works. Mr. Lopez said that when the city designates the zone they take the existing value of all the properties in the zone – which for the Westside TIRZ is \$600 million. The city will continue to benefit from taxes on that amount, but any added value above that amount would be taxed and put into a special fund or a TIRZ fund. He said those funds can be utilized for a designated period of time – Westside TIRZ is 25 years – to be reinvested back into the geographic area identified for the TIRZ.

He said the city utilizes a score card to determine TIRZ eligibility that includes poverty rates, educational attainment, unemployment, CRAG, and empowerment zone/enterprise zone data. The Westside TIRZ scored 96 pts out of 110 pts which demonstrates there is a lot of need for reinvestment in this area.

Some of the basic facts of the Westside TIRZ he listed included:

- Zone is 1531 acre zone
- Captured value – additional \$517,057,086 value added in this zone
- Estimated total revenue of TIF is \$35, 276,044

Mr. Lopez said that once the board is set up they will start talking about what public and private investments can be made in this area – so that we can increase that captured value and increase revenue. A committee member then asked if there is a master board for all TIRZ boards to which Mr. Lopez said there was.

For the Westside TIRZ the term of the zone is up to 25 years and the city's participation is yet to be determined. He said the city can choose their level of participation for every dollar they receive. He also said that after the zone is designated the board is appointed and that board can identify what projects they want to fund. He said this is a critical step as once the projects are identified they have a dedicated source of funding through the TIRZ.

A committee member asked how the city's participation would be determined. Mr. Lopez said the board in conjunction with the staff will determine the city's participation. This would then need to be approved by city council. The city would mitigate for cost of additional services such as police, EMS, fire, etc. and deduct their participation based on that cost. Mr. Lopez also said that participation by other taxing entities is yet to be determined. These include Bexar County, ACCD, and SARA.

A question was asked if a participating agency can fund specific projects. Mr. Lopez said he thought that was possible. He further said the city would be open to having other agencies participate in the TIRZ meetings.

Another question was asked as to how board members will be appointed. He said that the statute says you need to have five (5) board members as a minimum. Since this TIRZ affects Districts 1 and 5, mostly 5 – each councilperson can appoint a certain percentage of board members. He said they had received 8 different applications and that the board would be appointed May 7, 2009 with the first meeting tentatively set for June 2009. Mr. Lopez further said that Councilwoman Galvan wants to appoint 5 board members.

It was asked what would happen to those individuals once her term expired. Mr. Lopez said that they are appointed to serve for 2 years and can be reappointed four times.

Another participant asked how the geographic boundaries of the TIRZ were determined. Following is Mr. Lopez's response.

- Where other TIRZs are located was one factor
- All properties in this area can not exceed 10% residential. The city wants to minimize the displacement of people living in residential places.
- The city also looks for pockets where there might be redevelopment or specific areas such as Avenida Guadalupe. The city also included most of downtown to take advantage of that money and to spread the wealth.

Following are additional questions and responses that occurred during this agenda item:

- It was asked what creeks are included in the TIRZ. Mr. Lopez said it would touch San Pedro, Apache, and Alazán Creeks.
- It was asked who designated the items paid for by the TIRZ. Mr. Lopez said the board, the other taxing entities, and the city then approves.
- It was asked how many city initiated TIRZs existed. Mr. Lopez said about 5.
- Mr. Lopez was asked to give examples of projects that have been funded. He said an example project is the improvements project along Houston Street.
- A member asked what CRAG stands for. Mr. Lopez said it stands for the Community Revitalization Action Group which was an initiative by the city and many partners and formulated revitalization goals for the city. He said the TIF program did not exist prior to then.
- Mr. Lopez was asked what the implications would be for the oversight committee. He encouraged them to send a representative once the TIRZ board meetings started and the San Antonio River Authority could decide if they would like to participate in the TIRZ. He also suggested that the committee submit projects if and when the board releases a request for proposals.

Mr. Lopez went on to say that the city council actually has formal approval of the plan. He further said that the TIRZ would produce \$35 million or roughly \$2 million per year that would be spread out over several projects. He told the committee that it was going to be very competitive. He urged the committee to open the lines of communication with the council person.

Rod Radle with the San Antonio Alternative Housing said the Rosedale TIRS was the second TIRZ formed and it went to public improvements and a housing unit and added construction of an apartment complex in order to generate revenue. He reiterated that it takes a while to add up money to have capital.

A member of the committee suggested that for the creeks that are not covered, they could look into TIRZ areas that are smaller and more specific.

Santiago Garcia with the Westside Development Corporation said that out of the 8 applicants – two of them have representation on the oversight committee including WDC and the Avenida Guadalupe Association.

4.0 Workshop #1

After Mr. Lopez's presentation, Ed Garza, AECOM Project Manager, addressed the committee regarding the first public workshop. He handed out a packet containing the exhibits that would be presented at the workshop. He told the committee that these exhibits would be displayed throughout the room on large boards in an open house format. Mr. Garza reviewed the date, time, and location and the various stations that would be present the day of the event. He then asked Linda Vela, RJRA Public Involvement Manager, to review the outreach efforts for the workshop. Ms. Vela listed the organizations that had helped with outreach through the distribution of flyers, emails, or by posting information on their websites.

The following comments were collected during this portion:

- On Transportation & Floodplain Exhibit need to add bus stops and floodplains
- Martínez Creek Map – please note location of community of garden

- El Progreso is booked for the Apache Creek Subcommittee meeting on May 5th so the group will need to find an alternate meeting place or date
- Mr. Narciso Cano is interested in participating on the San Pedro Creek Subcommittee (9800 Airport Blvd, Suite 188; San Antonio, TX 78216; ncano@dcci.com; 389-6612)

5.0 Miscellaneous Items

The following comments were collected during this portion:

- El Progreso is booked for the Apache Creek Subcommittee meeting on May 5th so the group will need to find an alternate meeting place or date
- Mr. Narciso Cano is interested in participating on the San Pedro Creek Subcommittee (9800 Airport Blvd, Suite 188; San Antonio, TX 78216; ncano@dcci.com; 389-6612)

6.0 Public Comments

Once all committee members had an opportunity to speak during the Miscellaneous Items agenda item, the co-chairs called for public comments. No public comments were made at this meeting.

10.0 Adjourn

After this, the meeting was adjourned and no further business was discussed.

Attachments

- Sign-in Sheets
- TIRZ Presentation
- Workshop Exhibits

Distribution

- WCROC
- SARA Staff
- Consultant Team