Call to Order/Roll Call

The meeting of the Neighborhood Advisory Commission was called to order at 5:00 p.m. A formal roll call was conducted, confirming members present as stated above.

Public Comment

Rachael Pearson, Experience Scottsdale, invited commissioners to attend a behind the scenes of Experience Scottsdale informational event.
1. Approve Draft Summary Meeting Minutes June 26, 2019

Chair Fabiano called for comments and/or corrections. There were none.

VICE CHAIR MIRALDI MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE JUNE 26, 2019 MEETING AS AMENDED. COMMISSIONER JAMES SECONDED THE MOTION, WHICH CARRIED 5-0 WITH CHAIR FABIANO, VICE CHAIR MIRALDI, AND COMMISSIONERS JAMES, NASH AND PUTMAN VOTING IN THE AFFIRMATIVE WITH NO DISSENTING VOTES.

2. G.A.I.N. 2019 Program Overview

Jaime Petermann, Citizen Advisor, said that this program began as National Night Out, which was held on the second Saturday in August. As this was not an ideal time frame for Arizona, Scottsdale created its own program in 1998. This will be the 21st year being separate from National Night Out. Scottsdale includes all city departments in the event. Much of the focus is on crime prevention and safety. NAC was involved during the past two years and its participation was very well received. Mayor and City Council also make visits. This year, the Neighborhood Watch captains thank you dinner will be held separately from G.A.I.N., in order to make G.A.I.N. more of a citywide event. The cost of a party should not prohibit neighborhoods from participating. As such, party hosts will be provided with party supplies such as paper products. At this time, participation includes 13 tables from City departments as well as outside vendors. There are 26 registered parties.

Chair Fabiano commented that Commissioners enjoyed participating in the previous events, putting a face to the NAC and are looking forward to participating again.

Commissioner Putman asked about outreach methods, as her neighborhood does not conduct outreach. She posts the events on the City website or on Next Door. Ms. Petermann stated that based on this great advice, for next year, she will make a post on Next Door around the time of the national night out event, that citizens can expect the Scottsdale G.A.I.N. event in October.

Commissioner Nash asked how Neighborhood Watch captains are recruited. Ms. Petermann stated that those individuals are in a database and receive an informational newsletter. There is also a Facebook group for Neighborhood Watch.

Commissioner Nash commented that in her neighborhood there is an event one street over, however her street receives no notification and is not invited. There does not seem to be an organized group and no captain. Ms. Petermann commented that groups are kept small and have their own boundaries. Adam Yaron, Project Coordination Liaison, stated that prior to Ms. Petermann taking over the leadership role for the event, neighborhood boundaries were self-defined by residents. Residents looking for a group to connect with can contact Ms. Petermann to determine the closest aligned Neighborhood Watch. Ms. Petermann stated that those who contact her are asked for their home address. If they are
not already included in a group area, she sends them a packet on how to get started.

COMMISSIONER NASH MOVED TO HAVE COMMISSIONERS PARTICIPATE IN THIS YEAR’S G.A.I.N. EVENTS. COMMISSIONER JAMES SECONDED THE MOTION, WHICH CARRIED 5-0 WITH CHAIR FABIANO, VICE CHAIR MIRALDI, AND COMMISSIONERS JAMES, NASH AND PUTMAN VOTING IN THE AFFIRMATIVE WITH NO DISSENTING VOTES.

3. Scottsdale’s Historic Preservation Update: Sands North Townhouses Historic District

Steve Venker, Historic Preservation Officer, discussed an ongoing request for the Sands North Townhouses Historic District. Discussion will be held by City Council on October 1st for an action determination. The development is located in the vicinity of McCormick-Stillman Railroad Park, includes 51 townhomes, private drives, and common areas designed in an international style. Current zoning is R4-R, townhouse development. The proposed zoning overlay includes 31 parcels and five tracts. These are full-time residents. Those not identified as district participants are seasonal owners or absentee landlords, who have not responded to any of the public outreach from the HOA over the past two years. The unique design and characteristics of the development were reviewed. Once approved by City Council, the historic preservation plan will go back to the Historic Preservation Commission for final ratification and adoption.

Commissioner Nash asked about the reasoning for having the overlay on top of the HOA. Mr. Venker stated that the HOA will continue to maintain the architectural guidelines. The development seeks another layer of protection for its uniqueness. The Sands North group is feeling pressure from outside influences, because of their proximity to the Ritz Carlton Hotel in Paradise Valley. They are seeing some sale and purchase activity within some units, and some new owners are ignoring HOA rules and regulations.

In response to a question from Chair Fabiano, Mr. Venker stated that the development was built in 1972. Once they pass the 50-year threshold, their goal is to be listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Commissioner Nash asked if any owners are actively opposed to the plan. Mr. Venker stated that staff has not received any such specific information. The HOA said it is aware of opposition, however, and it is expected that there may be owners present in opposition at the City Council meeting.

Chair Fabiano acknowledged that a public comment was received from Robert Enteman. Mr. Enteman stated that he was not opposed to any new historic districts. He owns a summer home in Prescott, a city loaded with historic districts. Most are located on historic streets dating back to the early 1900s. There were no issues until the time that vacation home rentals became popular two to three years ago. Often times, the buyer of a home for sale in an historic district is an out of state investor. The number one reason for buying them are for the tax advantages. After purchase, they often use them as daily rentals. Mr. Yaron noted that the
comments are limited to the scope of the topic and public comments are limited on a time basis. Mr. Enteman said he merely wanted to make the Commission aware of what is happening.

Mr. Venker confirmed that the applicant has had short term-rental activity in their HOA and have been attempting to control it through their own mechanisms.

In response to a question from Chair Fabiano, Mr. Venker said that once a property becomes a rental property, the tax classification reflects that it is a rental on the County Recorder’s records.

Mr. Yaron clarified that staff is not seeking action on this item. However, they wanted to make the Commission aware of the situation.

In response to a question from Commissioner Nash, Mr. Venker stated that the HOA is involved in the sale process and would inform prospective buyers whether they are in or out of the district. Discussion ensued regarding the unusual circumstance whereby some homes in a development would be included in an Historic Neighborhood classification and some would not. Mr. Venker stated that there have been discussions with the County Recorder’s Officer to determine whether the information can be available in a title search. The Arizona Private Property Protection Rights act was passed in 2007, which requires grassroots efforts, including having owners seek out Historic Neighborhood designations.

In response to a question from Commissioner Nash, Mr. Venker confirmed that new owners not included in the district could petition to be added.

4. 3-THE AGENCY-2019 Landscaping Text Amendment Overview

Greg Bloomberg, Senior Planner, stated that the Text Amendment was initiated in May, 2019 by the Planning Commission. One of the goals was to loosen restrictions on the use of synthetic landscape material, specifically in areas visible from the street. Presently, synthetic landscape material is allowed, subject to Development Review Board approval and only in areas not visible from the street. Staff has begun to research the pros and cons of synthetic landscape material, specifically artificial turf. They are also taking the opportunity to focus on reformatting and revising of text in the ordinance to make it more user-friendly. When they have completed a draft, there will be outreach to the community. After the feedback period, the issue will be taken to the Planning Commission for feedback and action, followed by presentation to City Council in mid-2020.

Commissioner Putman asked for clarification that synthetic turf in front yards is not currently permitted. Mr. Yaron said the City’s charter currently does not regulate design in single family homes that do not have an HOA. Those design considerations would be controlled only by an HOA or in the instance of a multifamily development, a singular operator or a condominium with an HOA. Mr. Bloomberg confirmed that the text amendment primarily applies to commercial and multifamily apartment developments.
Commissioner James asked for context in terms of limitation of artificial turf in the past and reasons behind changing this. Mr. Bloomberg stated that a series of design guidelines do not necessarily discourage its use but also do not cater to artificial landscaping. Natural landscaping is encouraged as much as possible. In the past, artificial landscape has been considered tacky. Advancements have been made over the years. Eventually, a case came before the Planning Commission that included a proposal for artificial turf. Discussion on the issue ensued. It was noted that they are low maintenance, require little water, et cetera. What followed was initiation of the amendment.

Commissioner asked whether there has been involvement from the Green Building Program in terms of water conservation. Mr. Bloomberg stated that he could not speak to that program, however, the City’s water conservation division has a rebate program for people who want to change out from natural turf to xeriscape. Some homeowners are expressing a desire to install artificial turf.

5. 2019 Spirit of Scottsdale Award Program Update

Brandon McMahon, Associate Planner, stated that there will be a big October 1st promotion push that will run through 2019. The Commissioner confirmed unanimously that it wanted to continue the program at its February Commission meeting. Commissioners provided suggestions to staff to further develop the program in order to appeal to the broader public. In March, the Commission adopted the 2019 work plan for the program, which included the nomination methodology, to be the same as in 2018. The submission boundary was expanded to include all of Scottsdale.

The award category was modified to be solely the Spirit of Scottsdale award and to be awarded to one individual and one business or organization. The award category was defined to three core considerations: Those with active years of service, involvement and strengthening neighborhood identity; champion community dialogue to produce construction constructive recommendations and solutions that address the dynamic needs of a neighborhood and provide unique contributions of time, effort, skills and/or financial resources to a neighborhood.

Four submissions have been received so far. In June, staff brought forth the additional outreach opportunity of adding the Vice Mayor as an advocate, however, based on internal staff discussions, the decision was ultimately made to have this solely be a commission-first program, in order to better control the message. The Office of Communication will promote the program, as they have in years past, using both print and social media. Nominations will conclude on January 1st. Nominees will be provided to the Commission prior to its January meeting. Winners will be presented prior to the City Council meeting in February, 2020.

In lieu of the additional outreach that the vice mayor might have brought, staff recommends that Commissioners attending G.A.I.N. events on October 19th provide those interested in the program with the printed handout. Staff will make the handout available in other locations and events. The communication plan includes announcements on Next Door, social media, the Independent, the
Progress and in the City water bill. There was discussion regarding having the flyers available at upcoming City events.

6. Neighborhood Enhancement Project - Scottsdale Via Linda Senior Center Pollination and Community Garden

Mr. Yaron said that this is a neighborhood enhancement project opportunity available for the Commission to participate in. Every year, City Council adopts an organizational strategic plan. The last plan was adopted in April of 2019. Each goal and associated priority is assigned to specific staff members. While not assigned to this program, Mr. Yaron stated he is always looking for opportunities to align the Commission with the goals and priorities of City Council. This item seemed appropriate in terms of the goal of enhancing neighborhoods and to work with the community to increase donations for programs that benefit seniors and families in need.

The request will bring visibility to Operation Fix-It, a division of Scottsdale Planning & Development; provide aid to Scottsdale homeowners (predominantly seniors), with exterior improvements to their homes when hardships occur; will improve a community asset, which has access to a variety of multigenerational facilities, all of which serve Scottsdale residents. It will support a strategic priority of City Council. Staff is making a recommendation pursuant to Ordinance 4331 for this Commission to approve the allocation of the request of $10,000 to assist the development of a new pollination and community garden at Via Linda Senior Center. The funds will be allocated towards site preparation, hardscape and installation of a pollination garden and a community garden.

Michelle Holmes, Operation Fix-It, provided an overview of the plan. The area is approximately 17,000 square feet with an existing water source. The plan includes installation of nine trees and 20 hop bushes. The bushes will provide a necessary windbreak for the butterflies. There will be a connection constructed to join both existing paths. Seating will include four benches. There will be a pollination area with specified plantings and water feature. The plan includes installation of six to eight raised beds, which will be ADA compliant. Some unused round tables will also be repurposed, some being ADA compliant.

In response to a question from Chair Fabiano, Ms. Holmes confirmed that the planned partnership is for the Boys and Girls Club to maintain the gardens. There will be 300 new plants installed. Shade covers will potentially be placed as a new element.

In response to a question from Chair Fabiano, Ms. Holmes said that installation will take place just prior to Thanksgiving.

COMMISSIONER PUTMAN MOVED TO ALLOCATE $10,000 TO THE PROJECT. VICE CHAIR MIRALDI SECONDED THE MOTION, WHICH CARRIED 5-0 WITH CHAIR FABIANO, VICE CHAIR MIRALDI, AND COMMISSIONERS JAMES, NASH AND PUTMAN VOTING IN THE AFFIRMATIVE WITH NO DISSENTING VOTES.
Commissioner Nash inquired about the remaining budget. Mr. Yaron said that the City Council approved annual budget is $30,000, for the fiscal year that began on July 1st. There is $20,000 remaining in the budget.

7. Staff Updates

Mr. Yaron stated that Commissioner Meli reached his term limit, completing six years of service to the Commission. He will remain on the Commission until an appointment is made by City Council. Vice Chair Miraldi has completed her first term. Nominations are tentatively set for both seats on November 12th for interviews to take place on December 4th. The Clerk’s Office recently implemented a new online application for boards and commissions.

On October 1st, City Council will be considering an ordinance extending term limits for board and commission members to reflect that once the six consecutive years of service on the same board or commission is reached, there will be a one-year break in service before a member is eligible for reappointment to the same board or commission for one additional three-year term. There will be an ordinance provision added to the City code similar to the absentee provision that any board or commission member having more than a 25 percent annual recusal rate based on total meetings may be removed from that board or commission.

Mr. Yaron stated that he will not be present at the next meeting on October 23rd. He will be presenting at the Planning Commission regarding this year’s major General Plan amendment. Taylor Reynolds will attend in his absence.

The October agenda will include discussion regarding any changes necessary to the November meeting time with regard to the Thanksgiving holiday.

8. Adjournment

With no further business to discuss, being duly moved by Commissioner Putman and seconded by Vice-Chair Miraldi, the meeting adjourned at 6:04 p.m.

AYES: Chair Fabiano, Vice-Chair Miraldi, Commissioners James, Nash and Putman
NAYS: None

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