

## **RHNA meeting Monday November 13, 2023**

**Present:** Stacey Plassmann (President); Diana Amado (Ward 6), Cathy & Louis Coin, Bill Craig (Sam Hughes), Nancy DeFeo (Sam Hughes), Mark & Barbara Homan, Julie Katsel (UA), Steve Kozachik, (Councilmember, Ward 6), Stacia Reeves, Ryland Plassmann, Evren Sonmez., Laura Tabili, Rose & Tom Veneklasen, Joe Wittbrodt

--TPD - <https://www.tucsonaz.gov/police/tpd-newsletters> no report

--County District 5 - sign up for We Are D5 monthly newsletter at:  
<https://www.adelitasgrijalva.com/newsletters> no report

**TEP Midtown Reliability Project** - Stacia, Stacey (20 minutes)-  
SteveK:

1. TEP appeal to undergrounding ordinance nixed by Board of Adjustment in October 2023: next step Superior Court
2. COT Special Exception process to get a variance to a COT ordinance
3. Midtown Reliability Project extends eastern boundary to Country Club, not a scenic corridor, but still need to move west to Banner Hospital across several residential neighborhoods; identified “constrained” areas including whole UA campus; Next meeting Thurs 6-8 Doubletree
4. Franchise agreement voted down

Stacey attended and spoke at BOJ meeting, which upheld Zoning Administrator’s decision.

Stacia reports: reportback no 25 October meeting: not a decisionmaking body but input.

First meeting pushback against vague survey.

Stacia argued population density in RHNA and WUNA should forestall running lines through them, High School Wash.

Stacia raised Matt’s idea but it was shot down.

Mark pointed out how TEP manipulated the situation; UA wants the service but wants others to bear burden; SteveK and Nancy pointed out TEP will try this throughout the COT; Bill says the Underground Coalition needs more money for lawyers.

Stacia outlined TEP’s agenda for public meetings November-February: will develop routes February-March & submit application in March. Anyone can attend the Advisory Committee meetings, but must sit until the end to comment: January 11, 6-8, Dunbar Spring, Stacia will announce.

Steve says 1.UA tunnels are too small for electric lines; 2. TEP vague about when they will remove household lines; 3. Ongoing debate about cost of undergrounding vs. property value loss.

Nancy: orphan poles around town; opaque timing for installation, etc.

minutes from Matt Somers of the TEP Public Open House of Sept. 21, 2023 (as addendum)- TEP Advisory Group -

Stacia- Reevesstacia@hotmail.com- report on the 1stmeeting of the advisory group- public Open House 11/16/2023 6-8PM @ DoubleTree Reid Park- 2ndmtg of advisory group Thursday. 11/ 09/23-result from Zoning Board of Adjustment hearing of 10/25/23 - Stacey: Tucson Electric Power (TEP) is appealing the Zoning Administrator's Determination, issued on 08/25/21, relating to the City's application of the undergrounding of utilities within a Gateway Corridor Zone. The Zoning Administrator Determination states that the proposed new transition lines to support the proposed UA North Substation next to Banner Health at the University of Arizona must comply with UDC Article 5.5.4.B.1.a which states "New utilities for development on private and on public right-of-way along Gateway Routes shall be underground." The appellants contend that the "replacement and improvement of the 46 kV electrical system with the 138 kV transmission system is an upgrade that is expressly permitted by the UDC to remain overhead" and that "the City is prevented by legal doctrines of preemption and estoppel from requiring TEP to underground the upgraded facilities." TEP is requesting reversal of the August 25, 2021

ZAD.DECISION: UPHOLD THE ZONING ADMINISTRATOR'S DETERMINATION- from

Matt Somers: Sunday Star's article "New TEP power line effort draws ire". - link for those who have a subscription to the Star:

[https://tucson.com/news/local/subscriber/tucson-electric-neighborhood-zoning-university-arizona/article\\_950f7e80-782b-11ee-b70f-8709d5505328.html](https://tucson.com/news/local/subscriber/tucson-electric-neighborhood-zoning-university-arizona/article_950f7e80-782b-11ee-b70f-8709d5505328.html)

-recent brainstorming on this topic has occurred via listserv:

Matt Somers: How about using the existing UA underground venting system used to cool the whole campus to use as a route for the 138K lines for the TEP project? This venting system is literally an underground walkable tunnel that stretches underneath the whole campus from the library to the Central Refrigeration Plant at Mabel and Mountain north of Speedway. Then the underground portion would be much shorter to dig and costs will be considerably less. Plus the UA and TEP could then construct the substation on top of the Highland Garage, not far from the Vine Ave substation, and not use SF4, which is a terrifying greenhouse chemical, in an enclosed substation. Possibly some of Rincon Heights would be dug up for the project, but then the UA could also build a storm water drain to High School Wash instead of using surface streets for excess storm water, causing damage to city roads in Rincon Heights (which the UA does not pay to maintain). If the City of Tucson has a franchise fee for use of its rights of way by TEP for electrical distribution, why can't the UA use some type of franchise right-of-way to charge TEP for the use of their tunnels and the use of the top of the parking garage for its possible substation? Nancy DeFeo (SHNA): One route we had suggested was to go underground on Park from Broadway, past the university, turning that west border of the university and short stretch of university Blvd into an entertainment and restaurant mall. (There is a parking garage right there) Then continue underground to Grant. It would be less upsetting to traffic, etc than tearing up Campbell. TEP took a second look at that idea, but I think the university said no. I think it's a wake up call to the neighborhoods on the east side of Country Club who didn't want to join the coalition to see that Country Club is being considered. The whole of Tucson should realize that no one is safe from TEP marching giant poles through northern neighborhoods up to the foothills, unless an Undergrounding precedent is set now. TEP has said they don't want to underground on this midtown stretch because they will expand north and don't want to set the precedent. Clearly said this at the end of the last

open house when most people were gone.-next

--Public Open House: Thursday, November 16, 2023, 6-8 p.m., DoubleTree - Reid Park, 445 S. Alvernon Way

--**Adoption of Minutes** - (5 minutes)- September 11, 2023. msp

--**City Ward 6** - Diana Amado, Steve K, sign up for Steve K's newsletter at:  
<https://www.tucsonaz.gov/ward-6/latest-news>

Ward office is back in business and plastic recycling ongoing.

--**Treasurer's Report** - Rose (5 minutes)- report- status of funds for attorney  
 current balance: \$13, 944.38; 38 active members currently

--**Nominating Committee**- (5 minutes)- annual meeting is March 11, 2024

--**Newsletter and mailings** (5 minutes)- from Steve K's newsletter: Neighborhood Newsletters

Until recently the city paid for 1 mailing of neighborhood newsletters per year. At the end of last fiscal year I dedicated funds from the ward discretionary allocation so we can provide up to 4 neighborhood newsletters per year. That money is still in place to allow 4 mailings for ward 6 neighborhoods. Last week our Neighborhood Resources team announced that they're increasing their own offering up to 2 mailings each year. Since my funding didn't have a 'use it or lose it' component the effect is that ward 6 neighborhoods will get their next 6 mailed for free. A mailing can be anything from a post card up to a 4-page newsletter. There are guidelines you'll need to follow that relate to when you submit your draft, what can and cannot be included as content, a required disclaimer and that sort of thing. I had it all in a previous newsletter, but if you want a refresher use this link [The fiscal year runs from July 1st through June 30th](#). Your first two mailings in the current fiscal year are now being covered by the city. For ward 6 neighborhoods the next 4 will come from the funds I allocated. These are important ways for neighborhoods to stay connected and share information about meetings and events.

If you've got questions that aren't answered in the link included above you can email to  
[Neighborhood@tucsonaz.gov](mailto:Neighborhood@tucsonaz.gov)

--**6th / Campbell PAD and CBA** - working group (5 minutes)

Mark synopsised our long process, and sent this report:

From Mark: With Mayor and Council voting 7-0 to support our agreement with Cummings, this phase of the saga comes to a welcome close. Yes, we will need to remain vigilant. We have a good foundation now for dealing with issues as they arise. The agreement was the end of a long and winding road. There will be support for affordable housing, ideally in our neighborhood, as well as other improved elements of the PAD. Our neighborhood is not opposed to good development, which can enhance the immediate area, benefit the larger community and begin to reverse the spread of urban sprawl. We will oppose actions that are harmful.

--**NPZ (Neighborhood Preservation Zone)** - Stacey, Laura (10 minutes) The Rincon Heights Neighborhood Association and Pie Allen Neighborhood Association are working jointly to establish a Neighborhood Preservation Zone (NPZ) that will help to protect the integrity of these

unique neighborhoods. The explicit goals of establishing such a zone are:

- Encouraging Diversity
- Designing Safe Space
- Creating Green Space
- Maintain Historic and Cultural Fabric
- Support Space to Encourage Informal Interaction and Walkability

An NPZ is a special type of rezoning, defined in the City of Tucson's development code. Properties within the zone are held to a design standard and undergo an additional design review when seeking building permits. This additional review helps guide public facing changes to the neighborhood. Final Design Manual can be found on RHNA's website.

A Community Meeting was held on Oct. 28, 2023; Diana Lett from Feldman's spoke about her neighborhood's experience. Vigilance is required to enforce it once achieved. SHNA are interested in our experience.

--Next step: writing the proposal for Zoning Examiner meeting

--RHNA/Pie Allen NPZ grant remaining funds is \$632.50.

**--RHNA Event Planning Committee** - Rose (5 minutes)

–another swap gathering

–farewell event for Evren & Paul

–joint meeting with Pie Allen

–volunteer Carol Sobkoviak(sp?)

**--New business:** Evren: 6<sup>th</sup> Street Walkability Project currently accepting comment: street lights are debated as part of project.

Stacey: new ramps on 9<sup>th</sup> Street

**--Adjournment** - (5 minutes)- msp

Next regular meeting is second Monday in January, the 8th, 6:00 - 7:30, via Zoom (zoom link to be sent to listserv closer to meeting date)