



**Armory Park Historic Zone Advisory Board
LEGAL ACTION REPORT/Meeting Minutes-*AMENDED
Tuesday, *October 15, 2024**

This was a hybrid meeting. The meeting was accessible at the provided link to allow for participating in-person, virtually, and/or calling in.

1. Call to Order/Roll Call

The Meeting was called to order at 6:32 pm when a quorum was established with all six members (virtually) present: Mr. John Burr, Mr. Maurice Roberts, Ms. Helen Erickson, Mr. Pat O'Brien, Mr. Stan Schuman, Ms. Lyn Sotherland.

Members absent: None

COT staff (virtual): Mr. Michael Taku & Maria Gayosso (joined the meeting at 7:15), PDSD. Mr. T

2. Approval of LAR/ Minutes— September 17, 2024

Motion to approve the LAR/ Minutes as presented was made by Mr. Schuman, seconded by Ms. Erickson. Motion approved by roll-call vote: 6 in favor, 0 opposed.

3. Call to the Audience None: No one spoke, and no written comments were received prior to the meeting.

4. Reviews

a. SD-0924-00098, 222 S. 5th Avenue

Removal of the existing stage, plaza area, games area; restroom renovation for ADA compliance; addition of a new central plaza with overhead shade structure; addition/alteration of trees/plantings, park lighting; parking improvements; addition of dog park. Full Review/ Contributing Resource.

Note: Please refer to the video recording of the meeting for complete reference/ discussion.

Mr. Matt Smith, began the presentation, noting that Elliot Welch is the project Manager for the COT, but was not available for this meeting. The site plan with proposed demolitions came first. The existing, building- adjacent sidewalk, plaza area, band shell structure and parking access lane will be removed, as will all the game area concrete/fixtures. Plantings to be removed are the nine ash trees that are around/ within the existing plaza area, or non-salvageable ash/ mulberry trees on the north and south edge lines. The oleanders near the bathrooms, and a non-salvageable sahuaro will also go. New ash trees will be planted along the N,W,S perimeter, and the new 10' wide north-south axis line that will serve as an access route for special event vehicles will be lined with Pistache trees. Other new plantings will be ironwood and hackberry trees in the desert areas to the east and palo Blanco trees on the sheltered west side of the building. Re-striping and new bump-outs at perimeter corners /access routes, plus eight new spaces in the empty 5th avenue desert

planter, will provide 6 net spaces to the plan. A new semi-circle area with turf and a new, centered plaza area (overall about 30' x 50') with a shade structure, will recreate the original central axis design of the park. New ramps, stairs, planters will provide proper access to the building. The existing scoreline patterns will be retained on the diagonal sidewalk extensions, with a broom finish on the concrete, while the plaza area will have exposed aggregate concrete.

The Board were generally agreed on recommending these aspects, as they were not substantially different than previous iterations. The neighborhood association has recently requested an additional large tree (Pistache?), on the south side (for balance) to serve as a neighborhood memorial tree, possibly with a plaque. Recent storm damage to the cypress trees (they will be replaced) led to the question of long-term outlook for the climate challenged trees (ash, cypress). Interplanting is the preferred response but creates problems of visibility through the park. The Board recommended the designers consult the Landscape Subcommittee for guidance.

Mr. Michael Becherer, next presented the proposed bathroom remodeling. The version shown during the meeting was the latest iteration, which was significantly different than the plans presented for board review. The existing two-bathroom concept, each with two stalls and a sink have been re-envisioned as a single room, two stall, one sink option, with a plumb chase/storage area, two large openings on north and west walls for policing visibility. Discussion took place, with the Board favoring interior roll-down gates rather than anything on the exterior. Concerns were for the reduction, by half, of the number of fixtures. Unfortunately, portable toilets will be required for most events. The plans may change again due to City reviews.

Next up was a completely new idea for the shade structure, finished just before the meeting. Mr. Becherer showed the previously presented 3 options, a 4th (shell/dome option seen by PRS but not APHZAB), and that in the project packet pre-reviewed by the Board. Unfortunately, the shell concept was outside the budget. Showing new historic photos from 1862 (tents-then Camp Lowell), 1891(open space), 1901 (original Washington Park), 1911 (the free-standing original bandstand, predating the 1914 Armory), and a 1950s view, conceptual context was developed for the new plans. Since an arched bandshell, like the original, is not possible, for many reasons, the "Tent" option was used as the basis for more recent iterations. The one shown in the provided plans, has again been entirely refined and redesigned. It still features a 38' x 38' roof outline, set on a diagonal to the plaza, with a long axis ridge projecting outward (west) at a pitched angle. The rest is new. The now 6 smaller columns create a scaled set of three arched frames (steel), now anchored in ovoid planter bases, with a semitransparent masonry screen, creating a backdrop to the now quarter circle stage set in turf.

Generally, the Board favored this latest iteration, although it is still conceptual, and which will require further refinements/plans for a recommendation. Discussion was lengthy, noting corrugated metal profiles, stage size and access, etc. One point of discussion was to ensure both SHPO and the NPS would interpret changes as "compatible", since the Park is in the process for a possible individual listing. Most felt the geometry of the design for the structure was compatible. Mr. Smith next provided the proposed changes to the "Dog Park" concept. The angled points have been removed but the cut-corner square form of the conjoined two dog parks (small and large dogs) appears to intrude more into the performance space. New (15') gates will be required for access to a 1940's water main. The turf is planned to be retained.

The Board discussion was again lengthy, and heated. Generally, the small (non-)functional space/large intrusion into the park situation again came up. Points made were that it intrudes into the public performance space, compromises the national memorial aspect of the park, privatizes public space and may create a health hazard. The impact to the geometry of the historical design of the park was of serious concern; again, the Board requested SHPO/ NPS comment. Noting the various stakeholders in the overall discussion, it was asked that a possibly re-envisioned design, that might be more compacted and pushed to the north and northwestern edge, might impact the

park less, overall. It was also asked if the City might alternately consider the option of relief stations for an open leash-only plan. Although it may provide a relief station to area apartment dwellers, it may be too small to function as a play area for animals. Generally, the Board would prefer an alternate site for a dog park.

Next discussed was the proposed lighting and fixtures. Further information was requested. Apparently, the specified (but not shown) benches and tables may be concrete rather than proposed metal fixtures specified, with an unknown design. The proposed fencing, and colors for fixtures will need further discussion.

Due to the disparities from the pre-presented plans, and ongoing flux in designs/plans, both the design team and the board felt a continuance was in order, noting the discussion was helpful towards a final design plan. Mr. Taku clarified that although consensus was achieved on parts of the plans, a completed design plan (including revisions) was best for a recommendation, as PRS will require a final plan.

Action Taken: Mr. Roberts made a motion to continue the case to review a completed design package, as soon- as- possible in a Special Meeting (to allow PRS timely review), seconded by Ms. Southerland. Motion passed by roll-call vote: 6 in favor, 0 opposed.

5. Meeting date and Time Discussion possible options 1st, 2nd, 4th Tuesdays.

WUHZAB had voted to reschedule its meeting date from the 3rd to the 2nd Tuesday, allowing APHZAB to retain its regularly 3rd Tuesday, 6:30pm schedule for regular meetings. Special Meetings for specific cases, on alternate dates may likely be virtual. The November Special Meeting for Elections will be in-person only on 11-12-24 but will require a quorum.

6. Potential New Board members Discussion

Mr. Burr and Ms. Erickson are hoping to have a few candidates lined up for recommendation for the November 12 Special (Election) Meeting. No names were discussed during the meeting.

7. Design Guidelines Project

- a. Update on the design guidelines

Mr. Burr did not provide an update due to time constraints.

8. Minor Reviews

Mr. Taku mentioned pending minor reviews in AHPZ. A request was made for volunteers to participate in early morning reviews. It was determined that staff will send out review meeting times and request availability of board members.

9. Call to the Board

- Mr. Burr noted that TEP will hold a public meeting for comment at Safford School on Wednesday 10-16 for the proposed Midtown route.
 - Ms. Erickson will notify the board when Plan Tucson public meetings may be rescheduled, noting that the sub-committee was working well with city staff.

10. Staff Updates and Future Agenda Items— Information Only

Staff provided a list of projects that are ready for review by the board and pending minor reviews. Staff will request availability from board members.

- Chair Burr noted that the Special Meeting for the Armory Park review will likely be the end of the first week in November, and by Zoom.
- The Special Meeting on November 12 is in person only, will require a quorum, but not staff, and the Chair will provide the agenda (to staff for posting).
- The November 19 scheduled meeting will likely have a continued case, probably by Zoom.
- The December meeting (scheduled 12-17) may be hybrid and is TBD.

11. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:51 pm. The next regularly scheduled meeting is November 19, 2024.