

Eastridge Neighborhood Plan Advisory Committee Meeting

Meeting Minutes

Date: Tuesday, June 1st, 2021
Time: 5:30 – 7:30 P.M.
Location: Simms Municipal Building, Room 203

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| Committee | Timothy Ballejo | City of Amarillo: | Emily Koller |
| Attendees: | Tommie T Knox Jr | | Annemarie Rossato |
| | Russell Pennington | | |
| | Ryan Pennington | Potter County: | Commissioner Alphonso |
| | Georgia Estrada | | Vaughn |
| | Tyler Trinh | | |

Agenda Items

- I. **Welcome, Call to Order and Introductions.** Emily Koller welcomed everyone to the first in-person meeting for the Eastridge Planning process. She explained the agenda which included 1) a short best practices presentation during dinner; 2) solutions brainstorming; and 3) next meeting date. She also reviewed the Focus Areas draft with the Committee and explained the process of brainstorming solutions.
- II. **Best Practices Mini Presentation.** Neighborhood Planner Annemarie Rossato reviewed the Best Practices and Case Study Guide shared with the Committee before the meeting. She explained some of the different case studies, examples and ideas that could potentially be implemented as part of the Eastridge Plan.
 - Some of the committee members asked questions about whether the plan is for Amarillo's refugee community or the Eastridge neighborhood. They expressed concern about duplicative efforts with ongoing initiatives for a community center.
 - Emily explained that this is a plan to improve the conditions within the physical area of the Eastridge neighborhood and that some strategies may overlap with larger efforts. We are looking for implementable actions, so it may be that the plan states the importance of a community center to Eastridge residents but recognizes the main facility will be located beyond the boundaries. The action step in the plan may be a satellite location or program. Either way, the plan serves as a policy guide and will be a tool for advocacy, fundraising and generating support for public and private investment.
- III. **Solutions Brainstorming.** The committee worked through Focus Areas and each committee member expressed different solutions. After much discussion and debate, the group arrived at the Transformative Projects for Eastridge:
 - Community Pride - Reestablishing community pride through the housing. Comments: "Put the pride back in – start with the homes." Need code enforcement. Like the idea of rental

registration. Look at condemned homes list and partner with Potter County on tax foreclosures. Consider Tradewinds in a case study for Future Development. Families want to stay, but cannot find homes to buy. Also, a reputable business that can offer payment plans or other kind of special lending needs to be established to help with barriers to home financing. Cultural challenges with borrowing money.

- Economic Opportunity – Create a new path for upward mobility for families locating to this area for the meatpacking jobs. Comments: “Break out of set expectations” “Change the cycle of low level education, secondary migration and home life that is not stable for families” “Appeal to second income owner” “children can access better jobs” “high school talent wants to stay in Amarillo”

The Committee discussed next steps in the process and agreed to meet once more to work on the list of projects to prepare to present back to the community. The best approach will be to follow-up specifically with the groups that took place in Dr. Ryan’s initial project as well as scheduling some additional ones based on the survey responses. The goal will be to show, “here’s what you told us last year, here’s what else we’ve done since then and here are some of the solutions.” Pastor Garman could help facilitate a town hall in different languages and the committee members can help set up individual meetings. The group also discussed the format as “Past, Present, Future” and some neighborhood history is needed.

IV. Next Meeting Date. The committee agreed to meet again on Tuesday, July 20th at 5:30 PM. The agenda will include finalizing the draft project list to present back to the community and plan for the Town Hall meetings.

V. Adjournment. The meeting adjourned at 8:00 pm.

