

January 13, 2021
MEETING SUMMARY

Meeting Attendees

Community Working Group members present:

Todd Pryor – Town of Superior
Jim Schenck – Rebuild Superior and Legends of Superior Trail
Fred Gaudet – Arizona Trail Association
Arlynn Godinez – Superior Unified School District Board / Maricopa County
Mila Besich – Town of Superior
JoAnn Besich – Superior Optimist Club
Jeff Bunklemann – Central Arizona College
Lynne Nemeth – Boyce Thompson Arboretum
Pam Bennett – Queen Valley Community Liaison
Fernando Shipley – Cobre Valley Regional Medical Center Board
Hank Gutierrez - Superior Copper Alliance
Silvia Werre – Top of the World
Amanda Moors – Arizona Wildlife Federation
Ricardo Provencio – United Superiorites
Rick Cartier – Superior Chamber of Commerce

Community Working Group members not present:

Tweedy Armitage – Superior Historical Society
Pamela Rabago – Superior Chamber of Commerce
Karen Kitchayan Jones – San Carlos Apache Tribe
Tino Flores – Copper Corridor Economic Development Coalition
Anna Flores – Town of Kearny (retired from Town of Kearny and CWG)
Sylvia Kerlock – Town of Winkelman
Richard Matthews – Queen Valley Water Board
Cecil Fendley – Queen Valley Water Board
Tiffany Rowell – Superior community
Lynn Martin – JF, JI Ranch
George Martin – JF, JI Ranch
Cathy Melvin – Gila County
Anthony Huerta – Town of Superior
Mayor Bracamonte – Town of Winkelman
Gloria Ruiz – Town of Winkelman
Bruce Wittig – Queen Valley Water Department, Fire Department

Resolution Copper Company:

Hesston Klenk - Manager – Native American & Regional Government Engagement
Erika Vasquez – Communities & Social Performance

Facilitators – Godec, Randall & Associates (GRA):

John Godec, Debra Duerr

Guests:

Trevor Barger, Arizona Strategies

Public Visitors: The public was not able to attend this online meeting.

Housekeeping

John Godec welcomed everyone and asked that they introduce themselves. We have a new member of the CWG, Amanda Moors from Globe, who is representing the Arizona Wildlife Federation. The group welcomed her.

The Mayor announced that, after a year of very hard work by the staff, Superior has annexed the adjacent area to 12 square miles (from 2 square miles). The wastewater treatment plant will start construction with help from a grant, and the multigenerational center development is under way. The land exchange parcels will soon be available for purchase by the town. The Belmont is being turned into an B&B. Despite the pandemic, Superior has made tremendous progress on many initiatives. Phoenix Magazine added Superior to its list of places to visit, and local media is planning several stories about the town and region. Everyone is excited to see the FEIS released.

Boyce Thompson Arboretum (BTA) is experiencing a big uptick in attendance, 90% above what it was last year. This is very exciting, and may be due to the fact that many people feel more comfortable outside. There is a problem, however, with some folks who are not familiar with outdoor etiquette, stealing rocks and plants, etc. The garden is putting up more information signs to address this. New signage by the Town is also helping BTA.

There is a new restaurant in Superior, the Silver King Smoke House Saloon (where Porters was previously located). The food was recommended by some members.

Update on Planning & Economic Development Studies for Superior Trevor Barger, Espiritu Loci

This presentation was an update of information provided to the CWG in July 2020. It provided more detail on work that's been accomplished since that time. However, it was emphasized by Resolution Copper and the Town of Superior that these studies are only conceptual and have not been reviewed by the public or any potential property owners. No decisions have been made about directions the Town might want to pursue. Therefore, no plans or drawings associated with these concepts are to be distributed or reproduced until they can be presented to the community and the public has an opportunity to provide input.

Trevor Barger thanked those in the community who have been working on this initiative. He noted that folks in Superior have been extremely helpful in introducing and forging partnerships to accomplish economic development goals. He humorously remarked that it's appropriate for the mayor's mother to be the head of the Optimist Club, since Mila is such an optimist and wonderful spokesperson for Superior.

Barger summarized the planning studies undertaken by his company and Arizona Strategies. Some of the economic development components they have evaluated for Superior include:

- Regional context – Local is defined as Superior proper and Regional related to the Copper Triangle. He showed a map of the regional context, illustrating that Superior is equally close to Apache Junction as to Globe and sits between two dynamic communities.
- Comparisons of size, visitor amenities, and outdoor recreation opportunities with other communities including Jerome, Bisbee, downtown Gilbert, Mill Avenue, Kierland Common, and Moab.
- By comparison, Superior’s Main Street is about 6 times longer than downtown Gilbert so would require a huge scale of development. Therefore, it makes sense to concentrate development/redevelopment in a much smaller area. A likely center might be the area around Magma Avenue and Main Street, which has current development, great views of the surrounding area, and easy access from both Globe and Phoenix.
- For Superior to develop a comparable 2-block downtown would require \$30 million income annually in food and drink provision for about 2 million tourists. But Boyce Thompson Arboretum visitation, biking, hiking, climbing are increasing. Other opportunities include jeep tours, camping. They think the population could increase by 3600, causing a need for expansion of the school.
- Opportunities for redevelopment include existing anchor buildings, parking availability, hotel and accommodation opportunities, traffic access, and connections with hiking trails and surrounding recreation.
- Schools and education - They looked at charter schools around the state that might be comparable to what Superior could support (400 to 800 students, expanding to 1200).
- Land ownership – Many properties in downtown Superior are owned by a few entities. There is land available for development including many small parcels with individual owners and along Highway 60 where there are a few larger owners.
- Potential for infill and multi-family housing.
- Some examples were shown of graphic elements like painted streets/sidewalks that could set a theme for the town. “Character” requires that individual businesses do their part to create an attractive look, and this requires economic viability to afford this.

Barger emphasized that this kind of initiative takes significant time to play out. For example, Gilbert has been working on downtown redevelopment since 1998 to get to where they are. He emphasized that good municipal leadership is key, as are partnerships.

This planning evaluation also looked at areas outside of downtown Superior and connections with Boyce Thompson Arboretum for possible tourist, recreation, and business development ideas. Regarding the Arboretum, Lynne Nemeth said they are investing in a master plan that may include an eco-hotel on land they own. They want to make sure they're taking care of the wildlife and wildlife corridors, Queen Creek, and Arnett Canyon. They are really investing in infrastructure and are planning their 100th anniversary in 2024. In support of this, Barger offered BTA Arizona Strategies' mapping and database to support their efforts.

CWG members were very supportive of this dynamic planning study and enthusiastic about many of the ideas discussed. They are excited about opportunities for "a whole new town" that seem more achievable now than in the past. They noted that the Arboretum is a "crown jewel". They complimented Resolution for undertaking to fund these studies, the town for working so hard to forge partnerships, and the branding consultants for generating interest.

Release of Final Environmental Impact Statement 1/15/21

Since this document was just released, the CWG has not had an opportunity to review it. The facilitators will provide information on the Final EIS and draft Record of Decision to the CWG. This will likely be the subject of the CWG meeting in February.

Public Questions & Comments

Due to restrictions for online meetings, the public was not able to attend this meeting.

Godec asked the group if they would like to allow specific requests for public attendees. Members agreed to consider specific requests, with a few conditions, but not broadly advertise meetings.

Next Meeting

Wednesday, February 10, 2021

6:00pm