



Notes of the first meeting of the Midtown Museum District Neighborhood Association held on Wednesday 24th September 2008 at the Fairfield Inn and Suites, 2520 N. Central Avenue, Phoenix Arizona from 7.00pm to 9.00pm.

1. Introduction and welcome to the event

Margaret Dietrich welcomed everyone to the inaugural meeting of the Midtown Museum District Neighborhood Association (MMDNA). She thanked the Fairfield Inn and Suites for allowing the Association to use the facility free of charge and thanked Erick and Karen Baer for their generosity in providing all the refreshments for the evening.

The aims of the evening was to explain why the MMDNA had been formed, to give a flavor of a number of important things in the community, and to start looking at how the Association can influence, and be a part of developing the neighborhood.

2. Overview of the neighborhood and purpose

Why did we start the MMDNA?

We have lived in other parts of Phoenix in which neighborhood associations were active. The good feeling of being part of a community was important to us. Now we live in Central Phoenix and want that same sense of community. We want to live in an area where people know one another *and can be bothered about one another*.

MMDNA is a long thin district from McDowell to Indian School, 3rd Street on the east, 1st Avenue from McDowell to Thomas and 3rd Avenue from Thomas to Indian School on the west.

These boundaries were chosen because this is a cohesive area.

Most residents live in high-rise condominiums but at least six hundred homes are single family or two to three story low-rise apartments and condos.

Most workers are in high rise office buildings but there are many businesses in small strip malls, free standing buildings and homes that have been converted to businesses.

We have a rich cultural community:

The Art Museum at McDowell, the Heard Museum at Encanto, the Girl Scout Museum at 3rd Street north of Osborn and the Steele Indian School Park Museum at the north end. We have two theaters as well.

The Light Rail runs right through the middle tying us together. We have three stations in our area.

We are very grateful for the support from the various departments in the City of Phoenix especially Neighborhood Services' Olga Soto and Lisa Hubbard who have provided so much advice and support.

The MMDNA is in two City Council Districts: Councilman Michael Nowakowski's District 7 in the south half and Councilman Tom Simplot's District 4 in the north half - which means we will have two voices on the City Council if we need them.

The MMDNA is in two Police Precincts also: Central City from McDowell to Osborn and Squaw Peak from Osborn to Indian School.

We have met with Mark Patel at the Phoenix Art Museum and there were two representatives from the Heard Museum at the meeting. Both museums have offered help and advice.

Light Rail is encouraged by the citizenry taking ownership and pride in the system and especially our stations. Amy Bratt has worked with the community along this section of Light Rail over the past couple of years and we were pleased she could attend the meeting.

Julia Tourville and Margaret have visited as many businesses as possible and spoken with as many residents as possible. We have been encouraged by the expressions of support and the recognition that a **common voice** will be heard much louder by the “Powers-That-Be” than just an individual speaking.

Let’s work together for the common good of our neighborhood.

3. City of Phoenix Police Department Community Safety Programs Officer Scott Melander and Officer Doreena Wiegert

Officer Melander was introduced to the meeting and gave a brief overview of his extensive experience with the Phoenix Police Department. He is the Community Action Officer for the West Area Central City Police Precinct, which includes the MMDNA neighborhood. His role is to work with local residents to create and sustain safe neighborhoods, to help people be aware of the actions they can take to prevent crime and maintain their personal safety, and to be available to residents to discuss matters relating to the Police service

Officer Melander encouraged residents to contact him with concerns relating to crime prevention, and/or safety concerns in the neighborhood, and he welcomes feedback about the services provided by the Police. He can be contacted on his voice mail at (602) 534-0718, or by email on scott.melander@phoenix.gov .

Residents can also contact the Police Department at Crimestop (602) 262-6151 to report suspicious activity.

Officer Wiegert described her work, which focuses on the education aspects of crime prevention, including education for groups wanting to set up Block Watch programs in their neighborhood. She is also able to bring in speakers from other agencies to address specialist areas. Officer Wiegert can be contacted on doreena.wiegert@phoenix.gov Telephone: (602) 495-5005

4. Neighborhood Associations and community involvement

Megan Schmitz, City of Phoenix Council District 4. Council Aide to Councilman Tom Simplot

Joseph Murphy, City of Phoenix Council District 7: Council Aide to Councilman Michael Nowakowski

The City of Phoenix supports the formation of Neighborhood Associations and regards them as a great opportunity to give a collective voice to influence what happens in neighborhoods, including

re-zoning, liquor licenses, and crime prevention such as Block Watch. They can be the “eyes and ears” of the community and raise concerns about blight issues, graffiti and traffic management.

Megan outlined the recent issue about ending reversible lanes on 7th Street, and the support given to this from both Councilman Simplot and Councilman Nowakowski.

MMDNA members were invited to attend the regular monthly breakfast meeting of the District 4 Central Area, held every 4th Thursday of the month at 7.30 am at the Hometown Buffet Restaurant, 1501 W Bethany Home Road. The next meeting would be held on October 23rd 2008.

MMDNA members were also advised of the Moonlight Movies in the Park at Steele Indian School Park, 3rd Street and Indian School Road on October 25th at sundown.

Megan can be contacted on: megan.Schmitz@phoenix.gov, telephone (602) 262-7447

Joseph can be contacted on joseph.Murphy@phoenix.gov, telephone (602) 534-5438

**5. Working with Neighborhoods on planning new developments
Joshua Bednareck Planning officer for Encanto Village**

Joshua gave an overview of the MMDNA district and outlined the main planning requirements in the area. He described the Encanto Village Planning area, with the Park Central Shopping Center at the core, surrounded by a mid-density area. The core also contains a portion of the Central Avenue Corridor where commercial, high-rise offices and high-rise residential developments co-exist.

There were lots of re-zoning issues in the MMDNA neighborhood, and residents were strongly encouraged to go to the Encanto Village Planning Committee. The membership of the Committee comprises 21 residents. The meetings are held on the first Monday of each Month at 6:15 pm at Phoenix College, Willo Conference Room, 3310 North 10th Avenue.

Planning approval had been granted for two high-rise towers at McDowell and Central (Phoenix One), but the project had not moved forward as yet. An Urban Development change application at Los Olivos on 3rd Street would be considered at the next Encanto Village Planning Committee meeting on 6th October 2008.

Joshua can be contacted on: joshua.bednarek@phoenix.gov, telephone (602) 262-6823

**6. Local First Arizona: Strengthening communities and local economies
Kimber Lanning**

Local First Arizona (LFA) is a non-profit organization working to strengthen communities and local economies through supporting, maintaining, and celebrating locally owned businesses throughout the state of Arizona. They educate citizens, stakeholders, business leaders, and legislators about the significant environmental, economic, and cultural benefits of strong local economies. Local First Arizona represents locally owned, independent businesses that are the backbone of the Arizona economy.

Kimber informed the MMDNA:

- When people shop at a locally owned business, 45 cents of every dollar stays in Arizona - versus only 13 cents of every dollar spent at a national chain;
- When people shop locally-owned businesses, the money is re-circulated over and over and creates up to 75% more tax revenue to our community and state;
- For every two jobs national retailers bring to a community, three jobs are lost as a result of local businesses closing down;
- Independent businesses raise the standard of living in your community because they take their profits and buy products and services from other local businesses, thus creating more and more tax revenues needed for the community to thrive.

On Saturday 1st November Local First Arizona are holding their fourth annual festival at the Duck and Decanter on 16th Street and Camelback Road from 10am to 4pm. The event will include free food, live music, and unique shopping.

Local First Arizona will publish their updated leaflet “Small Wonders” in November 2008. Last year over 75,000 leaflets were printed and distributed.

Kimber can be contacted on: kimber@localfirstaz.com Telephone (602) 956-0909 The offices are located on 12 W. Camelback Rd., Phoenix, AZ 85013.

**7. 3rd Street Promenade Project, an exciting new development in the neighborhood
Dorina Bustamante Project Leader**

The aims and objectives of the streetscape project on 3rd Street are to develop an environment that is pedestrian and bicycle friendly and to give a unique identity to 3rd Street. The 3rd Street Promenade could have public benches, pedestrian lighting, tree planters, and street banners.

An outline design had been prepared free of charge to the community by Hoskin Ryan and Ellerman Schick and Bruno.

The outline plans had been developed in conjunction with the Third Street Business Alliance, and Dorina encouraged MMDNA members to get involved in the development of the plans to the next stage. Details of future discussions will be circulated to MMDNA members.

Dorina can be contacted on dbustamante@tread-lite.com Telephone (602) 770-5977

**8. Communicating for Neighborhoods
David Tell Editor and Publisher**

David was congratulated by the meeting on celebrating the 7th Anniversary of the Midtown Messenger. David started the paper to be a voice for historic districts and adjacent neighborhoods and the paper prides itself on the quality of its journalism. The paper is published on a monthly basis and is delivered to homes and businesses free of charge. The paper is funded from advertising revenue from local enterprises, all of which have a vested interest in the community. He felt it was important to encourage bringing businesses back to the area, to avoid blight and suppress crime in addition to contributing to the overall well being of the neighborhood.

David can be contacted at editor@midtownmessenger.com or (602) 462-5675

**9. Neighborhood Services
Lisa Huggins Hubbard and Olga Soto**

The Neighborhood Services Department was created to preserve and revitalize Phoenix neighborhoods and to help residents access city services. The mission of the department is:

“To preserve and improve the physical, social and economic health of Phoenix neighborhoods, support neighborhood self-reliance, and enhance the quality of life for residents through community-based problem solving, neighborhood-oriented services and public/private cooperation”.

Lisa and Olga are the Neighborhood Specialists working in the Council Districts 4 and 7 in the City of Phoenix Neighborhood Services Department. They have provided advice and help in establishing the MMDNA.

Lisa is based at 1950 W Heatherbrae Drive #6, Phoenix 85015.
Telephone (602) 266-7681, email: lisa.huggins-hubbard@phoenix.gov

Olga is based at 200 W Washington St 4th floor Phoenix 85003
(602) 256-3493, email: olga.soto@phoenix.gov

10. BRAINSTORMING SESSION AND PRIORITY SETTING

The group was asked to brainstorm the following question:

“In five years time, what words would you like to see used to describe the MMDNA businesses, safety and transportation, and arts and culture”

The group was then asked to give their top priority areas for action, and the results are summarized below:

10.1 BUSINESS

Key words

24 hour	Creative	Pedestrian friendly	Thriving
Accessible	Diverse	Profitable	Vibrant
Appropriate	Exciting	Supportive	
Artsy	Grocery (would like one!)	Sustainable	

Top Priorities

- Creating Partnerships
- Cooperative marketing (Common advertising)
- Common Bathrooms
- Museum interactive
- Sufficient parking
- Bicycle parking
- Green spaces and shade
- Resident incentives

10.2 SAFETY AND TRANSPORTATION ISSUES

Key words

No visibly-abandoned properties	Good street lighting	Safe U turns, especially at Light Rail
Reduced Congestion	Good personal safety at Light Rail stations and in parking garages at night	Speed enforcement
Homeless/Transient management	Red Light enforcement	Sufficient Parking
Clean streets (no trash)	No reversible lanes	

Top Priorities

- Tackle graffiti and keep it out of the neighborhood;
- Use cameras to control traffic speeds, reduce red light running and improve personal safety;
- Consider using mirrors especially on Light Rail cars to improve security.

10.3 ARTS AND CULTURE

Key words

Authentic	Free arts and culture	Live local music
Classy	Fun	Outdoor cafes
Diverse	Good restaurants and bars	Public art festivals
Food Destination	Indigenous	Year round

Top Priorities

- Work with ASU on a “40% free” arts program
- Support local restaurants and culture
- Work with Light Rail on launch parties (27th and 28th December)

11. Closing remarks and vote of thanks

Margaret and Julia thanked everyone for attending, and for making the evening a success. A special thanks was extended to the guest speakers, to the Fairfield Inn and Suites for their hospitality and to Erick and Karen Baer for their generosity in providing the refreshments.

12 Date of next meeting

The next meeting will be on Wednesday 22nd October 2008 at 6.30 pm. Details of venue to follow.

Future meetings will be held on 4th Wednesday of the month (except December date of meeting planned for 17th December)

Post meeting note

Read about the meeting and other interesting stories on [www. RailLife.com](http://www.RailLife.com) or click the link <http://www.raillife.com/blog/post/2008/09/25/For-Midtown-Museum-District-First-Times-a-Charm.aspx>