

*Border Health SI!  
Special Action Group  
October 24 , 2001  
Meeting Minutes*

## **Welcome and Introductions**

Marilynn Johnson, welcomed the group. Everyone introduced themselves. She spoke about the handouts that were given to the group and the benefits of the information given in the handouts.

Marilynn spoke about meetings she's been having with Dr. Barbara Becker from the University of Arizona, the College of Education, College of Psychology, and the College of Public Health. This is in a group of about twenty five faculty members that are coming together from all over the University campus to talk about, what are healthy communities, how to identify healthy communities and developing funding sources to assist communities. There are a variety of programs, for cities, towns and county governments to be involved in to develop healthy communities.

Marilynn then introduced Nadal Arar a Border Health ;SI! partner from the University of Texas, in San Antonio, Texas.

## **Border Health ;SI! update**

Nadal Arar reported that the focus in Texas is not only looking at the hereditary aspect of having diabetes but, also looking at the complication aspect. They have found that there are many people that are not aware of having diabetes and that the major complication of having diabetes is kidney disease.

Marilynn commented that the College of Public Health is working with Mariposa Clinic and developing clinical charting. Procedures to use especially with diabetes. If doctors aren't charting the care and keeping accurate records of the patient's care, then it's difficult for the families & patient's to keep abreast of their care. Gwen Gallegos is also working with patients individually.

Maia Ingram reported that the day before the SAG meeting, they had driven to Yuma for a day. In Yuma Nadal met with the promotoras, who are working in the family component. This is a unique part of Border Health ;SI! that deals with prevention in family as well as care and support for the patient. In Yuma they have finished the first round and they have completed home visits. In Nogales, Mariposa is close to finishing the first round with the families. Again, this is a very unique aspect of Border Health ;SI!.

## **Questions and Comments**

Marilynn asked Marcel Bachelier, if the Parks and Recreation and the City of Nogales were going to be developing a walking trail with the skating park area?

Marcel Bachelier reported that at the moment it is not in the plan. There is not a lot of space that area and there are a lot of thoughts and ideas that are being spoken of in regards to the Growing Smarter, Nogales Plan. There are two areas that are actually going to be water retention basements, that is basically an open land that can be developed into anything. This is where the SAG group can make an impact because, no one has approached anybody regarding anything about this open space.

Marilynn commented that the SAG members are hoping to be involved in the city agenda and becoming part of

the committee that will doing the planning for the Growing Smarter Plan.

Victor Gavilondo reported that the laws and provisions of the Growing Smarter Plan is that the county needs a Capital Improvement Plan. The county at the moment does not have one in affect and is currently in the process of putting one into place. He is not aware of all the Planning & Zoning issues but as the county grows and new subdivisions come in it will definitely have impact on the infrastructure. In order to control that infrastructure they should have a Development of Impact. This is a controversial issue, but in order to adapt the Growing Smarter Plan this needs to be in place. The county is taking steps to develop and adapt this, will hire a consultant to do a county wide comprehensive plan.

In regards to pedestrian parkways the county does have access to the Transportation Enhancement Grants. One was filed for the Rio Rico area and was taken to the Technical Measures Meeting and gave a presentation. The competition for this as heavy. Douglas and the ADOT District were part of the competition. The need or request for pedestrian parkway is out there.

The county is focusing in getting the Capital Improvement Plan in place so that they can begin implementing and getting the impact cooperation for open space areas and infrastructure planning as the city grows.

Marilynn advised Victor Gavilondo that Dr. Barbara Becker, Director of Planning at the University of Arizona might be of great help if they come up against a need for grant writing or helping in developing partnership.

Marilynn commented that as we talk about the bicycle trails and exercise trail in our community, we are going to find that we will need the funding for it and if we can make a connection to the University and the government. We can all get the help in building these plans.

## **Bicycle Patrol Units**

Border Patrol Agent Todd Jwell reported that the bicycle unit was formed in 1994. The agents in the bicycle unit have to complete a forty hour course that specifically deals with riding bikes in traffic. Agent Todd suggested that if the SAG group will be setting up a bike program that a training course be given to the group, not necessarily a forty hour course, but have some training. The Border Patrol, Bike Patrol has been giving bike safety clinics at the schools this week and have been giving different presentations on the Border Patrol Bike Unit. In the last seven years that the Border Patrol, Bike Unit has been in effect, there have been two incidents where two people, while riding bikes, have been hit by a vehicle. There are going to be places in the Nogales area were people will be able to ride bikes and there are places where they won't be able to ride because of traffic.

The bike unit for the Border Patrol was initiated so that they could be able to respond to traffic in town where marked vehicles cannot enter. The Border Patrol Bike Unit participated in the Tour of Tubac. The Border Patrol does not have any information on how the SAG group would go about implementing bike trails.

Border Patrol Agent Ray Rivera spoke about Mountain biking. In his personal experience people who mountain bike are ready to take things to a next level and are fit. If a mountain trail will be established

people who are healthy and fit will be using that trail. In his personal experience when he goes mountain biking in Tucson he has noticed that on the weekends there are mainly families. His concern as a bike instructor

is that a lot of people riding bikes are not trained. In his opinion if there is going to be a bike trail in the Nogales area, it would have to be a designated area for it to be safe to ride. In his opinion, commitment would be another issue. For example: when Agent Rivera lived in New York, there was a beautiful bike trail that was built in Central Park but, it went to waste because it was hardly used.

## **Comments and Questions**

Ana Doan in her opinion would like to have a bike trail through Nogales, because there are people who ride bikes up and down the downtown area. She thinks it would be a safer way of riding.

Agent Rivera commented that Tucson is number three in bike trails in the United States. People in Tucson are committed and use the bike trails. There are a lot of people who ride in the downtown area and they should have a commitment and use the trail.

Marcel Bachelier asked, If the Border Patrol Agents felt that the Nogales community resisted to bike riders or if they are welcoming to riders? He has been in communities who welcome bike riders but, he has been in communities that don't want to deal with bike riders so they raise a lot of safety issues.

Agent Todd Jwell response was that personally he feels people take a different or negative attitude towards them because of the uniform. How people react towards them might not be the way they will react to civilian riding bikes. Agent Jwell, hopes that this is not the way they would act towards civilians.

Rich Polheber reported that in following up from the last meeting, he visited at web site for the Parameter Biking Association that has a bulletin board. He sent them an email explaining what the SAG group is doing in Santa Cruz County. He later received an email response with recommendations that he should contact a group known as Effective Cycling with Matt Zoll. Mr. Zoll works with the City of Tucson to engineer better and safer cycling around Tucson. Rich suggested that we invite him to a future meeting and talk about what they are doing in Tucson. At some point the group will need to identify some resources. Rich also mentioned that the All Tour of Tucson is coming up in three week's and he hopes to see us all there. He also commented that there is going to be a workshop on November 12 and November 13, on walkable communities and it would be a good idea if two or three people from our SAG group to attend.

Ray Rivera reported that in Tucson there are laws that protect bike rider's. The latest law implemented, was that drivers passing have to give riders a space of about four feet to pass them. There have been about six deaths in the Tucson area. This is why Agent Rivera is concerned with safety issues, the riders need to be educated. When he teaches his law enforcement course there is a lot of riding involved. In one week they completed close to two hundred miles and forty of those miles were off road. The only way to ride safely is to know how to ride safely. The Border Patrol Bike Unit will be willing to help us prepare an education course.

## **Breakouts and Group Reporting**

The short term group and the long term group were then divided to continue their action planning.

In the short term group Marcel Bachelier brought a map that shows the Wetlands area. He received a lot of information and help to guide the group. They did a lot of brainstorming about the land area. Marcel is not sure if the City of Nogales owns the land or what kind of plans there are for the land. They

spoke about where they might look to find sources and Mary Helen Maley gave to Marcel a name of a person in Tubac that might be able to guide him. Victor Gavilondo mentioned that there might be some restrictions for

the Wetland area. These restrictions may enable the group to do some of the things they were thinking of doing in the open area. There are a lot of questions that need to be answered before we even get started on this project. For Example: is this one person with a political agenda that wants something done or is this a political wealth. The issue is that the current administration may have an interest in getting this project put into place, but maybe the administration that will follow will put it into a halt. The other concern is looking at a decent property where something can be built.

Ila Tittelbaugh asked, who controls the wetland area.

Victor Gavilondo thinks the federal and Corp of Engineers and when dealing with them, we are looking at about a two year process. In brainstorming, if there is a useless compatible area, then they would have to alter the course to protect the wetlands. Then look at what is a compatible use area and what the public really wants.

Mr. Gavilondo puts in the Calabasas Park as an example. It was originally thought that it was going to be a pristine bird watching park and it turned out the public was gathering for family carne asadas. So they had to adjust their thinking to what the public wants and gear up for retirement parties and pinatas. They never thought how much trash a pinata left after a birthday party or retirement parties. They thought they had a wonderful place. So they had to do some rearranging. These are things that people with certain ideas will come across once the public becomes involved. This is from the experience Mr. Gavilondo had in building a bird watching park that later became a family park.

One other question that needs to be addressed is, who will maintain the area? This is where political will comes in and will they have the financial commitment to keep it going. There is nothing more heart breaking than getting a project through and seeing it deteriorate, because there is no staff to maintain the area.

In the long term group, Rich Polheber will contact Matt Zoll to talk about walking paths and developing walking paths. Marilyn received, from one of the Border Patrol agents a possible source of funding from the State of Arizona. This is for planning, engineering, constructing and maintaining bicycle paths and bicycle lanes. She will also look into the web site to see if there are solutions for our community, to present to the City of Nogales. The Mayor at the last meeting had suggested that we have constructive and specific ideas.

The next SAG meeting will be November 28, 2001 at the United Church Village.