

City of San Antonio



Minutes Planning and Community Development Committee

2023 – 2025 Council Members

Dr. Adriana Rocha Garcia, Dist. 4
Phyllis Viagran, Dist. 3 | Teri Castillo, Dist. 5
Manny Pelaez, Dist. 8 | John Courage, Dist. 9

Wednesday, February 19, 2025

10:00 AM

Council Briefing Room

The Planning and Community Development Council Committee convened a regular meeting in the City Hall Council Briefing Room beginning at 10:04 a.m. Deputy City Clerk Aurora Perkins took the Roll Call noting a quorum with the following Committee Members present:

Members Present: Dr. Adriana Rocha Garcia, *Chair*
Phyllis Viagran, *Member*
Teri Castillo, *Member*
Manny Pelaez, *Member*

Members Absent: John Courage, *Member*

Approval of Minutes

1. Approval of minutes from the February 7, 2025 Planning and Community Development Committee Meeting

Councilmember Pelaez moved to Approve the minutes of the February 7, 2025 Planning and Community Development Committee meeting. Councilmember Castillo seconded the motion. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: Rocha Garcia, Viagran, Castillo, Pelaez
Absent: Courage

Public Comment

All individuals spoke on Item 2.

Debra Ponce, Metal and Recycling Task Force Member, noted that she had provided information to the Committee of her negative experience on the Task Force. She requested opportunities to better represent the community and stated that the hours were not conducive to the members and suggested

other options for community input. Ponce requested that three City codes be reviewed related to hazardous materials, zoning limitations for residential to commercial properties, and ability for the director to have more power.

Larry Garcia stated that he supported Ms. Ponce's comments and spoke to the Task Force's imbalance of input and requested fairer representation.

Attorney John Powell, who represented Texas Auto Salvaging, stated that his client was one of the positive acting metal recycling companies. He noted that the Council Consideration Request (CCR) was a positive step for recycling restrictions but noted that the current members of the Task Force did not allow for input from good apple companies. He reiterated the need for change of representation on the Task Force and stated that change was needed, especially members with environmental experience or expertise.

Cheyenne Rendon, Council District 5 representative on the Task Force, stated that there were irregularities and lack of participation had caused a detriment for true representation on the Task Force. She stressed the need for equitable representation on the Task Force to include public and community input. She requested the evaluation of current members who did not participate in meetings or participate fully in the Task Force meetings. She noted that stronger enforcement language was needed.

Erica Elvarado expressed her concerns regarding representation on the Task Force and the need for community input on recycling regulations. She noted that many community members had stepped back from the Task Force due to the inability to speak.

Briefing and Possible Action on

- 2. Council Consideration Request by Councilmember Teri Castillo (District 5) to evaluate Chapter 11 Fire Prevention and Chapter 16 Licenses and Business Regulations for Used Automotive Parts Recyclers and Metal Recycling Entities.** [John Peterek, Interim Assistant City Manager; Michael Shannon, Director, Development Services]

Michael Shannon, Development Services Department (DSD) Director, provided an overview of the Council Consideration Request (CCR 2023-0024) submitted by Councilmember Castillo that requested the creation of a stakeholder group to assess and recommend amendments to Chapter 11 (Fire Prevention) and Chapter 16 (Licenses and Business Regulations) of the City Code. He noted that the relevant stakeholders would be from the community, neighborhood associations, and industry representatives.

Shannon reviewed the focus areas of the Task Force to include the timeline and process for issuing and resolving citations, fines for recurring violations, and identifying a threshold for triggering heavier enforcement mechanisms until violations and citations were resolved. He added that resolutions could include temporarily ceasing operations, requirements for fence-line air monitors for a limited time, removal of non-conforming uses, and fines to recoup City services used to address violations and emergencies.

Shannon spoke to the Task Force makeup, which included community representatives and subject

matter experts. He noted that the Committee directed staff on membership requirements with a focus on balanced representation. Shannon stated that community representatives were elected by the PCDC Subcommittee and 10 members were chosen by the City Council. He added that subject matter experts were identified from City Departments and stakeholder organizations such as SAWS and the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TECQ).

Shannon stated that the Task Force had 10 industry representatives selected via an application process seeking five metal recycling entities and five used auto recycling plants. According to Shannon, eight total representatives (four for each category) were selected for balanced representation. He reviewed the selection criteria for selection of the Task Force Members.

Shannon stated that the Task Force had 10 meetings to date and reviewed the topics of discussion which covered definitions, zoning and nonconforming use, licensing and enforcement, hazardous materials, development of a Fire Protection Plan, and fencing.

Shannon mentioned that the Task Force had provided feedback and concerns over attendance and unbalanced Task Force participation. He noted that DSD had paused meetings to reevaluate the process and talk to Task Force Members. He stated that the objective was to look at how to improve balanced discussion and increase attendance. Shannon stated that meetings would resume in March 2025 with possible changes to dates and times of meetings and the addition of more appointments to include alternates for each Task Force Member position.

Shannon spoke to the next steps in the process which included continued discussions with Task Force Members addressing process concerns. He stated that he would meet with City Council to fill member spots and approve alternates. Shannon recommended that the Task Force resume in March 2025 and he stated that recommendations would be brought to the Committee in late spring.

DISCUSSION

Chair Rocha Garcia thanked Task Force Members for their commitment to the process and she supported the March 2025 deadline for the meetings to resume. She noted that community meeting hours adjustments were critical to review to allow for more community involvement. Chair Rocha Garcia supported the addition of alternate members to the Task Force.

Chair Rocha Garcia requested data on attendance of Task Force Members and those who had dropped out of the Task Force. Shannon stated that data would be provided. She asked if Councilmembers had been made aware of their appointees not attending. Shannon stated that he had not reached out to Councilmembers, but he would reach out to them to make them aware.

Chair Rocha Garcia stated that balanced representation on the Task Force was crucial and requested that recommendations for all representatives be brought forward. She stressed that if balanced representation was not obtained for certain Items, it would be expected for Items to come back to the Task Force for later discussion and input.

Councilmember Castillo thanked Task Force Members who had come forward to express their concerns. She thanked Chair Rocha Garcia for bringing forward metal recycler's concerns to the City Council prior to the recent fires that brought concerns forward for this CCR.

Councilmember Castillo stated that she supported the addition of alternate members and review of current Task Force Members' participation and expertise. She asked what the balance for the Task Force was sought and how balance was maintained. Shannon stated that balance was always sought and votes would be taken when balanced representation was maintained. He stated that recommendations would be crucial with balanced representation. Councilmember Castillo reiterated the need for alternates and balanced representation.

Councilmember Castillo asked if there were opportunities for tracking TECQ issues that were not part of DSD oversight but that could be addressed at the State or Federal level. Shannon stated that staff did gather information and educated the Task Force of what DSD could cover but noted that staff could also provide recommendations to State and Federal level.

Councilmember Castillo thanked staff for their work and coordination with the City Council and the State.

Councilmember Viagran stated that she supported the initial creation of the Task Force and the consideration of adding alternate members to the Task Force.

Councilmember Viagran asked if meetings were televised for public access. Shannon confirmed that the meetings were not televised. Councilmember Viagran requested consideration of televising of meetings or at a minimum posting of minutes. She stressed that it was crucial to be transparent and accountable to the public and educate on the alternatives of what had occurred in prior meetings. Councilmember Viagran requested consideration of audio/video recording of meetings for availability to the public.

Councilmember Viagran asked if City Council had the ability to appoint individuals to serve on dual committees. Shannon stated that there were no restrictions for dual service. Deputy City Clerk Aurora Perkins confirmed that individuals had no limitations to serve on multiple boards or committees.

Councilmember Pelaez acknowledged the frustration of the speakers who spoke during public comment. He noted that it was important to have balance and true representation to create consensus on issues. Councilmember Pelaez noted that the three North Side Councilmembers acknowledged that this issue did not impact the parts of the City that they represented but they supported the need for discussions on metal recycling concerns.

Councilmember Pelaez asked Task Force Member Ponce who she felt did not allow them to speak at Task Force meetings. She stated that developers or industry representatives had more say during meetings in cases of adding specifics to the City Code for consideration. She provided examples of when community members had less leverage when providing recommendations and that education/industry members had more say on what was added. Councilmember Pelaez spoke to the collaborative process of Task Force efforts but acknowledged that the process could be frustrating. He asked for continued collaboration and patience in the process from Task Force Members as staff continued with meetings and implemented recommendations.

Chair Rocha Garcia reiterated that one of the solutions to concerns was the addition of alternates to the Task Force. She stated that Ponce, who was her appointee, provided her with great feedback and noted that City Council staff also attended meetings and provided feedback to her.

Chair Rocha Garcia asked for clarification on the timeline for the changes to the Task Force. Shannon

stated that within the next two weeks staff would discuss alternates, meeting time changes, and other recommendations and would report back to the PCDC in April 2025.

Chair Rocha Garcia asked for clarification on the appointment of alternates and whether it needed to go to City Council for approval. Perkins stated that Task Force appointments did not need to get approved by City Council.

No action was taken on this Item.

Adjournment

There being no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 10:57 a.m.

Approved

Adriana Rocha Garcia, Chair

Debbie Racca-Sittre
City Clerk
