



Village Planning Committee Meeting Summary

Z-68-24-8

Date of VPC Meeting	October 20, 2025
Request From	C-3
Request To	PUD
Proposal	PUD to allow event venue and uses permitted in WU Code T5:5
Location	Approximately 220 feet west of the northwest corner of 16th Street and Washington Street
VPC Recommendation	Approval, per the staff recommendation
VPC Vote	12-0-1

VPC DISCUSSION:

Committee Member Elaine Becherer joined during this item bringing quorum to 13 members present (eight needed for quorum).

No members of the public registered to speak on this item.

STAFF PRESENTATION

Samuel Rogers, staff, provided a presentation regarding the proposal, reviewing the surrounding context, policy background, existing and proposed zoning, the proposed development, and the staff recommendation.

APPLICANT PRESENTATION

Wendy Riddell, representing the applicant, introduced the case and displayed before-and-after photos of the subject site, described the request, explained the differences between the currently allowed C-3 uses and the proposed PUD uses, provided details regarding landscaping, parking, valet circulation, and building elevations, and summarized the applicant's community outreach efforts.

QUESTIONS FROM COMMITTEE

Chair Cyndy Gaughan asked about the location of the four proposed bicycle racks. **Ms. Riddell** described potential locations for the bicycle racks and stated that the bicycle spaces were not depicted on the site plan. **Michael Marlowe**, with the applicant

team, identified a potential location for the bicycle racks. Chair Gaughan suggested that the bicycle racks and lighting be located inside the gate and inquired whether 75 parking spaces would be required through parking agreements. Mr. Marlowe stated that the bicycle parking would be located inside the gate and confirmed that lighting would be provided. Ms. Riddell confirmed that 75 parking spaces would be required through parking agreements.

Committee Member Rachel Frazier Johnson asked whether the venue had previously been operating and inquired about current uses. **Ms. Riddell** stated that the property had operated as an event venue and was currently being used as office space. Ms. Riddell stated that there were no active code violations.

Committee Member Frazier Johnson asked whether the property would continue to operate as both an office and event venue. **Ms. Riddell** stated that site may potentially operate with office and event venue uses.

Vice Chair Faith Burton asked about community outreach efforts and whether they had been conducted in both English and Spanish. **Ms. Riddell** stated that a neighborhood meeting was held on site and that mailers were distributed in English and Spanish.

Committee Member Jordan Greeman stated support for reduced parking due to the site's walkable, transit-oriented location and asked whether an event venue use was permitted in WU Code T5:5. **Ms. Riddell** stated that an event venue is not an allowed use in WU Code T5:5.

Committee Member Janie Pearl Starks asked for clarification regarding parking. **Ms. Riddell** stated that the applicant was coordinating with multiple entities to secure parking agreements. Committee Member Starks asked whether parking would occur off-street. Ms. Riddell confirmed that all parking would be off-street, with no parking on public streets.

Committee Member Ali Nervis asked about the capacity of the venue. **Mr. Marlowe** stated that the building contained approximately 6,200 square feet under roof. **Ms. Riddell** explained that capacity is determined by the building code.

Committee Member Nervis asked whether vehicle queuing would occur off-street. **Ms. Riddell** stated that the site was designed to accommodate up to ten queued vehicles, which would be the maximum allowed.

Committee Member Zach Burns asked how many parking spaces were required by the PUD. **Ms. Riddell** stated that 75 spaces are required.

Committee Member Burns asked about the event space square footage and parking count. **Ms. Riddell** stated that the applicant was not requesting a reduction in the parking count, only that some spaces be located off-site.

Committee Member Frazier Johnson stated that she had previously attended an event at the location with approximately 350 attendees and explained there was adequate event space at that time. **Ms. Riddell** stated that the valet queuing configuration had since changed.

Committee Member Frazier Johnson asked what recourse would be available if parking proved insufficient. **Mr. Rogers** explained that the Committee could offer a stipulation requiring to increase the minimum number of required parking spaces in the PUD narrative. Committee Member Frazier Johnson expressed concern that the capacity of the venue was unknown, making it difficult to determine an appropriate parking requirement. **Chair Gaughan** noted that the venue would be unable to operate if the parking agreement were terminated.

Committee Member Nervis asked about any phone calls from the public regarding the case. **Mr. Rogers** stated that he had received one call seeking general information about parking and event types.

Ms. Riddell clarified that the venue capacity would be limited to 150 guests, requiring 70 parking spaces by code, and that 75 spaces would be provided.

Committee Member Dana Johnson asked whether events would ever exceed 150 attendees. **Ms. Riddell** confirmed that events would not exceed that capacity.

Committee Member Burns asked how the capacity figure was determined. **Ms. Riddell** stated that the number was based on square footage.

Committee Member Greeman asked whether the required parking calculation was based on City of Phoenix requirements. **Staff Member Rogers** confirmed that it was.

Committee Member Nate Sonosky requested that the stipulations be displayed. **Mr. Rogers** displayed the stipulations for review.

Committee Member Burns asked what types of events would be hosted. **Mr. Marlowe** stated that the venue would host weddings, corporate events, and similar gatherings. Committee Member Burns asked whether concerts would be held. Mr. Marlowe stated that concerts would not be held.

Committee Member Elaine Becherer stated that the PUD narrative identified 3,500 square feet of event space and 2,600 square feet for office and accessory uses.

Committee Member Dana Johnson expressed concern that the 150-person capacity might be unrealistic, given that wedding venues often host larger events.

Committee Member Starks referenced that catering by Chris Bianco could increase event popularity and reiterated concerns regarding the venue size and parking

adequacy.

Vice Chair Burton stated that the proposal seemed more thoughtfully planned than other downtown event spaces and expressed interest in observing how alley circulation functioned once the venue opened.

Committee Member Starks reiterated concerns regarding potential recourse if larger events were hosted.

Committee Member Greeman stated that the parking calculation derived from City standards for Walkable Urban Code developments.

Committee Member Dana Johnson asked whether the parking standard applied to indoor space only.

Committee Member Burns stated that the standard applied to both indoor and outdoor areas.

Vice Chair Burton stated that valet operations would require security personnel.

Chair Gaughan stated that many attendees would likely use rideshare or alternative transportation options, adding that she would personally take a Waymo to the venue.

Vice Chair Burton referenced a prior event she attended that required only limited parking validations.

Committee Member Burns emphasized that the intent of the Walkable Urban Code was to promote walkability and stated support for relying on staff's parking recommendation.

Committee Member Sonosky suggested adding a stipulation requiring the case to return to the Committee in one year for review of the parking and use.

Staff Member Rogers stated that the Planning and Development Department no longer uses time-based stipulations of that nature.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

APPLICANT RESPONSE

None.

FLOOR/PUBLIC DISCUSSION CLOSED: MOTION, DISCUSSION, AND VOTE

MOTION

Vice Chair Nate Sonoskey made a motion to recommend approval of Z-68-24-8, per the staff recommendation. **Committee Member Faith Burton** seconded the motion.

VOTE

12-0-1; Motion to recommend approval of Z-68-24-8, per the staff recommendation passed, with Committee Members Ban, Becherer, Burns, Burton, Greenman, Johnson, Nervis, Sonoskey, Starks, Vargas, Martinez, and Gaughan in favor and Committee Member Frazier Johnson abstained.

Committee Member Frazier Johnson stated that the facility is beautiful.

Committee Member Becherer stated that the site plan is thorough and includes the location of the bicycle parking.

STAFF COMMENTS REGARDING VPC RECOMMENDATION:

None.



Village Planning Committee Meeting Summary

Z-68-24-8

INFORMATION ONLY

Date of VPC Meeting	October 21, 2024
Request From	C-3
Request To	PUD
Proposal	PUD to allow event venue and uses permitted in WU Code T5:5
Location	Approximately 220 feet west of the northwest corner of 16th Street and Washington Street

VPC DISCUSSION:

One member of the public registered to speak on this item, in support.

APPLICANT PRESENTATION

Wendy Riddell representing the applicant with Berry Riddell, LLC provided a presentation regarding the proposed PUD, highlighting the improvements done on the property in recent years, the requested use list, the proposed parking, and the outreach efforts.

QUESTIONS FROM COMMITTEE

Committee Member Olivas asked about outreach to neighborhood organizations. **Ms. Riddell** stated that they used the City's registered neighborhood list.

Committee Member Burns asked the reason for pursuing a PUD. **Ms. Riddell** noted that the parking is an issue that is best addressed with a PUD.

Committee Member Starks asked about outreach in Spanish and to the building directly behind the site. **Ms. Riddell** stated that outreach was done in Spanish and that the building behind the site was included in the mailing list.

Committee Member Martinez asked for clarification on the proposed parking. **Ms. Riddell** described the proposal to use nearby parking lots for off-site parking.

Ms. Olivas asked about street parking. **Ms. Riddell** replied that the goal is to use off-street parking in nearby parking lots, rather than on-street parking.

Committee Member Nervis asked how long the event center was previously operating. **Ms. Riddell** replied that it was approximately a year and a half.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Michael Nielsen introduced himself and spoke in support of the proposal, stating that the proposal will enhance the area and that it is difficult to use the property when you have parking constraints.

APPLICANT RESPONSE

Ms. Riddell stated that they reached out to the nearby church but have not received a response.

COMMITTEE DISCUSSION

Ms. Starks stated it would be better if more than one person is engaged in the process.

Ms. Olivas agreed, adding that it is nice to see improvements since the light rail has been built, but the outreach needs to be more thorough.