



## Village Planning Committee Meeting Summary

Z-1-21-7

### DOBBINS INDUSTRIAL AND TECH PARK PUD INFORMATION ONLY

<b>Date of VPC Meeting</b>	March 15, 2021
<b>Request From</b>	S-1 (Approved R1-8 PCD), S-1 (Approved R-2 PCD), and S-1 (Approved C-1 PCD)
<b>Request To</b>	PUD
<b>Proposed Use</b>	PUD to allow industrial and technology business park that will allow warehouse and office uses
<b>Location</b>	Southwest corner of 63rd Avenue and the South Mountain Avenue alignment

#### VPC DISCUSSION:

**Mr. Adam Baugh**, representative, provided an overview of the request, including the location, size, current zoning and General Plan Land Use Map designations, and surrounding conditions. He explained that the completion of the Loop 202 freeway has created new opportunities in the area that did not exist before, one of which being major employment options. He stated that the intent of the proposed PUD is to generally follow CP/GCP (Commerce Park District – General Commerce Park Option) standards to create a campus-like setting, with limited outdoor storage uses and considerable pedestrian improvements, open space areas, and amenities. The PUD proposes to establish entitlement flexibility to attract industrial uses and major employment generators, encourage future development to southwest Phoenix, and establish development and performance standards to ensure high quality design and land use compatibility.

**Mr. Robert Branscomb** expressed concern with warehousing uses, as there is an oversupply of warehousing to the north along the freeway that is still struggling to secure tenants. He stressed that warehousing is not the right type of business in terms of creating jobs in the area. He asked if this development is depending on warehousing, or if it just a part of the PUD to allow users some flexibility. **Mr. Baugh** replied that, yes, warehousing is proposed as a part of the potential uses in this PUD. He explained that a warehouse will not be a standalone business but is usually tied to a manufacturer or other type of business to support their operations. He added that they will creating enhanced development standards and design expectations to integrate warehousing uses appropriately. He further explained that employers have a variety of needs, and the developer can either build a site with a warehousing component to attract users that

need it or wait for a business to construct a build-to-suit structure – either way, they can't attract employers without the zoning already in place.

**Mr. Carlos Ortega** echoed concerns regarding warehousing and emphasized that he is not supportive of warehouses anywhere in Laveen.

**Ms. Sharifa Rowe** expressed her concern with the conversation being centered on the hypothetical creation of jobs, with little to no regard to how this development will impact the community. She explained that the community has already experienced environmental injustices such as industrial dumping and vast warehousing spaces, and that more thought needs to be given to how this proposal will benefit the community other than just potentially creating jobs.

**Ms. Jennifer Rouse** stated that very rarely do developers deliver on projects that they claim will benefit the community, so the committee should evaluate these types of requests very carefully.

**Vice Chair Linda Abegg** echoed the other committee members' concerns, adding that she'd like to see a revised development narrative, since the only available version is the first draft. She suggested that special attention be paid to the language included in the development narrative to ensure that the uses permitted are something that the community would like to see in the area. She is supportive of attracting quality employers to the area but is concerned with allowing warehousing by right. She added that, due to its proximity to residential neighborhoods, the PUD should incorporate enhanced standards for screening, roofline shapes to blend with the mountains to the south, and the overall architectural style to ensure that buildings look like they are a part of the community. All the uses should be compatible with Laveen.

**Ms. Rowe** asked what the community input plan for this development is. **Mr. Baugh** replied that their team had sent out all required notification letters, held a neighborhood meeting which had a dozen people in attendance, created a public website where all application documents are available, and met with the Laveen Citizens for Responsible Development group. He also explained that a PUD rezoning request requires more neighborhood meetings than a standard rezoning process.

**Mr. Branscomb** stated that he looks forward to bringing businesses to that area, and that he would love to participate in attracting businesses to Laveen. He reiterated his concern with being stuck with vacant buildings in the community, and that they need to make sure that the right types of businesses are being brought in.

**Chair Tonya Glass** stressed the importance of community outreach for this project and pointed out that the required outreach is very minimal, considering the notification radius is 600 feet. This site is surrounded by vacant land, so the standard notification process would likely only reach a handful of property owners. She stated that it's very important for community members to help spread the word so that all nearby residents are informed of this development as well as others. She also agreed with the concerns regarding warehousing uses and stated that the site should not be built entirely with warehouses, so that there is plenty of room left for build-to-suit opportunities. She added that warehousing and light industrial uses are not what the community expects for this area.

**Mr. Ortega** requested that the Community and Economic Development Department come present their business strategies along the Loop 202 freeway at a future meeting. **Chair Glass** agreed and added a request for the Planning and Development Department Director to come to discuss this area too. **Mr. Ortega** then addressed the members of the public in attendance, encouraging them to actively participate in cases that affect them, either by speaking up during public hearings or submitting emails and letters of the city, so that they can help hold developers accountable.

**Ms. Cinthia Estela** agreed with the other committee members' comments, stating that the community does not need another warehouse, but rather a place where all can live, work, and play. Writing a blank check for this PUD is not something she would agree with,

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

**Mr. Phil Hertel** stated that it is good to start the public input process early, and that he was pleased to see so many people wanting to participate. He stated that this project would be a huge asset to the community, reducing the number of homes planned for the area, therefore reducing emissions, reducing the need for police services, and so on. The community doesn't need warehouses, but he understands that the applicant is trying to create something with enough flexibility to attract several different users. One large warehouse can be converted into several uses if needed. He emphasized that investors don't want empty buildings but rather spaces that will generate revenue, so they are not likely to leave vacant buildings on the site. He explained that the 600 plus homes that were planned for this area would be a much worse alternative to this opportunity, which will create a job center for those who live in Laveen, reducing commuting needs. He pushed for this process to be completed so that these employment opportunities can start coming to Laveen.

**Mr. Dan Penton** suggested that there be a focus on attracting "Agri-Tech" businesses, as they are part of the high technology industry with high paying jobs, while still having a link to Laveen's farming heritage. He expressed his concern with setting a bad precedent for this type of use if this PUD isn't given thoughtful and thorough attention. He pointed out that the Planned Community Districts (PCD) in this area took several years to develop and approve, and that a proposal of this scale should take a similar approach in pursuing considerable community input before proceeding. He further added that there are two residential communities that will be landlocked due to South Mountain Avenue and 67th Avenue not going all the way through, so these residents will need to drive through this development to get to the freeway. Given this, this development should not look and feel like an industrial development, and safe and attractive routes should be provided throughout the development in a sustainable manner. He reiterated that this project will set the tone for future developments along the tech corridor, so they have to get it right.

**Mr. Baugh** thanked the committee and the members of the public for their feedback, stating that this is just the beginning of a long development process, and that they have a lot of work ahead of them. He explained that they wanted to receive the committee's feedback before revising the development narrative and submitting a second draft to the city, so that all community and staff comments could be incorporated at once.

**Ms. Stephanie Hurd** stated that the community needs less residential uses and more commercial uses and agreed with Mr. Branscomb's idea of having community involvement in attracting businesses that the community wants to see.

**Ms. Rouse** expressed her concern with industrial uses being prioritized over commercial, as warehouses are not wanted in Laveen. She stressed that the community needs to come together to discuss this project throughout the entire process, and not just at the Village Planning Committee meetings.