



Village Planning Committee Meeting Summary Z-SP-3-18-7

Date of VPC Meeting	September 11, 2018
Request From	C-2 BAOD (10.27 acres)
Request To	C-2 SP BAOD (10.27 acres)
Proposed Use	Special permit to allow self-service storage, household moving center (truck rental) and all underlying C-2 uses
Location	Approximately 300 feet east of the northeast corner of Jesse Owens Parkway and Baseline Road
VPC Recommendation	Approval subject to a modification and an additional stipulation
VPC Vote	12-3

VPC DISCUSSION & RECOMMENDED STIPULATIONS:

1 speaker card was submitted expressing no position on the request.

Adam Stranieri provided an overview of the request including the General Plan Land Use Map, zoning maps, aerial photographs, and the proposed site plan and elevations. He noted that the proposal consists of the adaptive reuse of existing buildings on the subject site, including a former big-box retail establishment and smaller strip retail, with proposed enhancements to the building facades. He provided an overview of staff stipulations addressing design standards in the Baseline Area Overlay District, building elevation enhancements, pedestrian and cyclist amenities along Jesse Owens Parkway and Baseline Road, treatment of the Western Canal, connectivity through the site, and other concerns.

Patrick Brennan asked whether the staff recommendation requires stipulated open spaces and amenities to be dedicated to the City and whether the site would be replatted to reflect these dedications. **Mr. Stranieri** stated that this was not requested by staff and not included in the proposed stipulation language.

Sara Christopherson asked for clarification regarding the proposed cycle track along Jesse Owens Parkway. **Mr. Stranieri** stated that the proposed cycle track was recommended by the Street Transportation Department and would help to implement goals in the City's Comprehensive Bicycle Master Plan. He stated that at this time, the City did not have final designs for the track and the stipulation was written to allow flexibility for the applicant to continue working with the City.

Stephen Glueck asked who would maintain stipulated equestrian amenities along the Western Canal. **Mr. Stranieri** stated that these would be maintained by the property owner.

Gene Holmerud asked if the stipulated multi-use trail along Baseline Road connects to other trails in the surrounding area. **Mr. Stranieri** stated that the Trails Master Plan includes connectivity between trails along the Baseline Road corridor and in the surrounding area. He noted that the trail was also identified in the Baseline Area Master Plan which showed connectivity with other intersecting trails.

Mr. Holmerud expressed concern regarding the proposed cycle track along Jesse Owens Parkway. He stated that research has shown that protected cycle tracks can negatively impact cyclist safety because drivers assume that they do not have to worry about cyclists, and therefore more accidents can occur. He recommended that the cycle track not be developed.

Joseph Larios noted that the site is in close proximity to the proposed South Central Avenue Light Rail Extension. He stated that the City has not integrated any lessons learned from the 19th Avenue Light Rail extension project, which was dehumanizing to the local community. He stated that no community conversations had been held regarding problems with homelessness, drug addiction, and incarceration. He expressed concern that public health and the environment may be impacted by development of the South Central Avenue Light Rail Extension and related development in the surrounding area. He asked staff to clarify how health was considered in evaluating the request. **Mr. Stranieri** responded that the physical design of the site could impact public health by promoting and enhancing opportunities for active uses. He noted that staff stipulations included requirements for enhanced connectivity, open space, and/or amenities along all property lines and traversing the site in accordance with General Plan principles. **Mr. Larios** stated that these stipulations were inadequate. He stated that the City is not prepared to address health impacts of the proposed light rail extension.

Parul Butala, with U-Haul, discussed the history of the U-Haul business. She noted that U-Haul has been looking for a suitable location in the South Mountain Village for 10 years. She noted that U-Haul is interested in locations along high-capacity transit lines and noted existing locations along the Light Rail line. She displayed graphics of proposed site amenities including shaded rest stations, exterior signage, pedestrian pathways, bicycle racks, bicycle repair stations, electric vehicle (EV) charging stations, and a potential location for a GRID bike station. She discussed U-Haul's sustainability program, other adaptive reuse projects U-Haul has developed, security features, and projected traffic impacts. She stated that U-Haul had remaining concerns regarding staff stipulation nos. 3, 4, 8, 10, 11.a, and 13 and would like to continue working with staff regarding these recommendations. She stated that the applicant had completed enhanced outreach within the surrounding community.

Mr. Brennan stated that he had read recent planning studies analysing adaptive reuse concepts for former big-box retail stores. He noted that a recent, successful project in Phoenix had been the conversion of a former Sears into an Angel's Trumpet, a local bar and restaurant. He expressed concern that these projects had been successful elsewhere in the Valley, but for a critical location in south Phoenix, the proposal is for a mini-storage business. He stated that the site is critically important to the South Mountain

Village due to its proximity to the proposed terminus of the South Central Avenue Light Rail Extension at Baseline Road.

Ms. Batala stated that the site would consist of a ‘Smart Mobility Center’, a new design concept for U-Haul that would integrate numerous enhanced features such as vehicle-sharing, EV charging stations, and cyclist amenities.

Mr. Larios stated that he would vote against the project because of the critical importance of the South Central Avenue corridor to the Village. He stated that the City has not completed necessary planning research to control the impacts of proposed development. He stated that existing U-Haul locations reflect the history of white-flight from historic suburbs. He stated that the applicant does not understand the unique, racial aspects of the local history. He stated that U-Haul has benefited from white-homeownership throughout their history. He stated that demographic considerations demand a better land use for the site.

Ms. Batala stated that U-Haul has worked along the Baseline Corridor in the past. She stated that they had strategically chosen the site over a long period of consideration.

Gene Holmerud stated that he has had good experiences as a U-Haul customer. He reiterated his concern regarding the proposed cycle track along Jesse Owens Parkway. He stated that the City needs to promote street designs that encourage drivers and cyclists to acknowledge each other.

Jessica Lopez, with U-Haul, expressed concern that U-Haul would be required to maintain the stipulated cycle track along Jesse Owens Parkway. She stated that this creates legal liability problems for U-Haul.

David Vera asked if any vehicles would be stored inside the larger building and if fire sprinkler systems would be updated. **Ms. Batala** stated that no vehicles would be stored inside the building and that sprinklers would be upgraded to current building code standards.

Stephen Glueck asked for clarification regarding what constitutes a “Smart Mobility Center”. **Michelle Sullivan**, with U-Haul, stated that these centers contain enhanced technology features such as smart lights, motion controlled sensors, controllable thermostats, mobile applications, alternative fuel vehicles, EV charging, and other sustainable amenities. She stated that U-Haul would build five of these centers throughout Arizona.

Tamala Daniels expressed concern that proposed storage buildings along Baseline Road as depicted on the conceptual site plan would negatively impact the streetscape. She stated that she would prefer small retail or commercial uses along Baseline Road, which are oriented towards the street. **Ms. Batala** stated that U-Haul does not intend to construct these storage buildings, but had not submitted revised plans to remove these buildings from the drawings. **Mr. Stranieri** noted staff stipulations do not require any conformance to the building layout and do not require these buildings to be constructed. He noted that there is a stipulation intended to mitigate the visual impact of these buildings if they are constructed.

Ms. Daniels stated that the Village Planning Committee represents the South Mountain Village communities at large and considers a long-range perspective on development in the area. She expressed concern that there is an excessive quantity of self-service storage warehouses on the Baseline Road corridor and identified facilities at 48th Street, 16th Street, 7th Avenue, 19th Avenue, 35th Avenue, and 55th Avenue. She stated that the subject site is a prime location for a community amenity, given its proximity to the proposed South Central Avenue Light Rail Extension. She expressed concern that a U-Haul facility would provide no community benefit and would employ a minimal number of employees. She stated that she had heard from community members that they would prefer to see a skating rink, bowling alley, or other family entertainment venue. She stated that she would vote to recommend denial.

Perry Ealim stated that he would vote to recommend approval. He expressed support for the proposed bicycle and mobility amenities. He stated that the Committee should not base their recommendation in this case on past recommendations for similar businesses.

Rebecca Larios, a member of the public expressing no position on the request, stated that she has a long personal history in the South Mountain Village. She stated that a storage facility is not a desirable use for this location and that the community deserves a better use of this property. She noted that the South Central Avenue corridor has limited community amenities and that she supported **Ms. Daniel's** recommendation for a family entertainment use on the property.

MOTION

Kay Shepard made a motion to recommend approval of the request per the staff recommendation with an additional stipulation to prohibit new storage buildings along Baseline Road as shown on the Overall Site Plan date stamped August 1, 2018. **Perry Ealim** seconded the motion.

Patrick Brennan expressed concern that **Ms. Shepard's** additional stipulation would be impossible for the City to enforce given that the Special Permit application was to permit self-service storage warehouse uses. He proposed a friendly amendment to revise the additional stipulation to state that any new development that contains self-service storage warehouse units maintain a minimum building setback as established by the existing Discount Tire building on the adjacent parcel to the southwest of the subject site. he stated that the minimum building setback would act to protect the streetscape along the Baseline Road scenic corridor.

Ms. Shepard accepted the friendly amendment. **Mr. Ealim** seconded the amended motion.

Sara Christopherson proposed a friendly amendment to modify the staff recommendation to delete staff stipulation #13 regarding provision of a cycle-track along Jesse Owens Parkway.

Ms. Shepard accepted the friendly amendment. **Mr. Ealim** seconded the amended motion.

DISCUSSION

Mr. Brennan stated that he would vote to recommend approval. He stated that he feels the cycle track could be a great community amenity and that there are numerous planning

studies regarding innovative physical barriers such as ‘armadillos’ that can promote cyclist safety and security. However, he noted that the cycle track may be better placed along Baseline Road.

Gene Holmerud stated that he would vote to recommend approval. He stated that he would like information regarding how cycle tracks can ensure cyclist safety. He expressed concern that cycle tracks can introduce myriad traffic conflicts.

Joseph Larios stated that he would vote to recommend denial. He stated that displacement is a horrible and violent process. He stated that the City has not completed any necessary research into the potential impacts of development adjacent to light rail projects. He stated that the City has not adequately researched potential racial and socioeconomic impacts of proposed development in the area surrounding the South Central Avenue corridor.

VOTE

12-3 Motion to recommend approval subject to a modification and additional stipulation passed; with members Busching, Brennan, Castello, Christopherson, Ealim, Glueck, Holmerud, Kotake, Shepard, Smith, Tunning, and Vera in favor, and members Brooks, Daniels, and Larios opposed.

STAFF COMMENTS REGARDING VPC RECOMMENDATION & STIPULATIONS:

Staff recommends that the VPC’s additional stipulation regarding the minimum building setback for buildings containing self-service storage units be revised to make reference to the specific distance from the existing property line to the rear wall of the Discount Tire building. Referencing a specific distance will eliminate potential future confusion regarding the size of this setback if the Discount Tire building is demolished, altered, or redeveloped. Per the final approved site plan for this property (KIVA P87059R) this dimension is 175 feet.

1. A minimum fifty-foot landscaped setback measured from the property line shall be provided adjacent to Baseline Road.
2. Walkways shall be provided between all buildings and between the buildings and the perimeter streets. The walkways shall be of contrasting materials such as brick or concrete pavers where the walkway crosses a vehicular path.
3. Fifteen percent of surface parking lots, exclusive of the required perimeter landscaping and front setbacks, shall be landscaped and maintained. Landscaping shall be dispersed throughout the parking area with the interior width of all planting islands to be no less than eight feet in width and a minimum of one hundred twenty square feet in area.
4. All building elevations, including those facing or visible from the Western Canal, shall contain multiple exterior accent materials, architectural embellishments, and/or detailing such as green screens, textural changes, pilasters, offsets, recesses, variation in window size and location, and/or other overhang canopies, as approved by the Planning and Development Department.

5. Pitched roof elements shall be incorporated in all new buildings and building additions constructed after the date of City Council approval of this case, as approved by the Planning and Development Department.
6. **ALL BUILDINGS CONTAINING SELF-SERVICE STORAGE UNITS SHALL MAINTAIN A MINIMUM BUILDING SETBACK OF 175 FEET FROM THE SOUTH PROPERTY LINE, AS APPROVED BY THE PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT.**
7. No bay or loading doors shall be visible from public rights-of-way, as approved by the Planning and Development Department.
8. The developer shall provide a landscaped entry area along Baseline Road that shall be a minimum of 1,000 square feet in area and be planted and maintained with a variety of at least three plant materials including a series of annuals that will each maintain a constant bloom throughout the year, as approved by the Planning and Development Department.
9. The existing oleander hedge along the Western Canal shall be removed and replaced with plantings in conformance with the Baseline Area Master Plan Plant List with specific regard to maximizing shade and thermal comfort for pedestrians and active users along the canal, as approved by the Planning and Development Department.
10. Any solid portion of a perimeter wall adjacent to the Western Canal shall not exceed a maximum height of three feet, as approved by the Planning and Development Department.
11. The developer shall provide a pedestrian walkway constructed of porous, interlocking, or open-grid pavers or another alternative surface material, which provides connectivity between Baseline Road and the Western Canal, as depicted on the Preliminary Landscape Plan date stamped August 1, 2018 and as approved by the Planning and Development Department.
12. The developer shall provide a minimum 3,000 square feet of public open space, to be located along the northern property line adjacent to the Western Canal, which shall be finished with turf or an alternative surface material and contain the following amenities and open public access to the amenities, as approved by the Planning and Development Department:
 - a. Minimum one amenity for equestrian users. Amenities may include, but are not limited to: corral area and hitching posts.
 - b. Shaded seating area with benches and/or ramada.
 - c. Minimum five bicycle parking spaces consisting of inverted-U bicycle racks and installed per the requirements of Section 1307.H. of the Phoenix Zoning Ordinance.

- d. Bicycle repair station as depicted on the Conceptual Amenities Plan date stamped August 1, 2018 and/or as approved by the Planning and Development Department.
13. The developer shall provide bicycle parking areas containing a minimum of five spaces adjacent to each building on the subject site, consisting of inverted-U bicycle racks and installed per the requirements of Section 1307.H. of the Phoenix Zoning Ordinance, as approved by the Planning and Development Department.
- ~~13. The developer shall provide and maintain a protected one-way, northbound cycle track along the east side of South Jesse Owens Parkway, the location, width, and design shall be approved by the Street Transportation Department.~~
14. The developer shall dedicate a 30-foot wide multi-use trail easement (MUTE) along the north side of Baseline Road and construct a minimum 10-foot wide multi-use trail (MUT) within the easement, in accordance with the MAG supplemental detail or as otherwise approved by the Parks and Recreation and Planning and Development Departments.
15. The property owner shall record documents that disclose the existence, and operational characteristics of Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport (PHX) to future owners or tenants of the property. The form and content of such documents shall be according to the templates and instructions provided which have been reviewed and approved by the City Attorney.
16. In the event archaeological materials are encountered during construction, the developer shall immediately cease all ground-disturbing activities within a 33-foot radius of the discovery, notify the City Archaeologist, and allow time for the Archaeology Office to properly assess the materials.