



## Village Planning Committee Meeting Summary

**Z-SP-2-19-7**

### INFORMATION ONLY

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|----------------------------|---|
| <b>Date of VPC Meeting</b> | July 13, 2020   |
| <b>Request From</b>        | C-3 HP-L CMOD, A-1 HP-L CMOD, A-1 SP CMOD, A-1 CMOD   |
| <b>Request To</b>          | A-1 SP CMOD   |
| <b>Proposed Use</b>        | Modify the Special Permit area of the Human Services Campus to include Andre House and to allow for an increase in the maximum number of beds. The Special Permit is to allow homeless shelter, charitable dining hall and food service uses. |
| <b>Location</b>            | Southeast corner of 13th Avenue and Madison Street  |

### **VPC DISCUSSION & RECOMMENDED STIPULATIONS:**

*Chris Colyer and Ash Uss recused themselves for this item, bringing quorum to 12.*

*Thirty-four speaker cards were submitted wishing to speak. One speaker card was submitted in opposition not wishing to speak.*

- Two speakers donated their time to Angela Ojile.*
- One speaker donated their time to John Westerdale.*
- Two speakers donated their time to Ian Francis.*
- One speaker donated their time to Michael Godbehere.*
- One speaker donated their time to Freddy Brown.*
- Three speakers donated their time to Katherine Roxlo.*

**Paul Gilbert**, representing the applicant, with Beus, Gilbert, PLLC, presented an overview of the request, displaying an aerial map. Mr. Gilbert stated that the request is located in the Capitol Mall Overlay District, which was created to prohibit certain uses that could be deleterious to the area such as pawn shops, liquor stores, and blood banks and permitted other uses that had the potential to ameliorate the slum conditions, such as charitable dining halls and shelters, with a special permit. Mr. Gilbert continued that in the 1980s and 1990s many organizations began to provide services to the homeless population on the site and in 2003, the special permit was approved, which consolidated the area to be known as the Human Services Campus. Mr. Gilbert added that the original special permit was subject to one stipulation, to limit

the number of beds to 425 and that the proposal now is to update the number of beds and to add many more stipulations, which are still in draft form. Mr. Gilbert stated that the proposal is for 1,000 beds to be allocated as follows: 275 beds for CASS for a total of 700 beds to reach the maximum allowed under their certificate of occupancy, 100 beds to the Andre House which is a low-barrier shelter and 200 beds to be used during extreme summer heat and winter. Mr. Gilbert ended his presentation by saying the proposal will use the existing space within the campus, it will not attract more homeless people as they are already there, and that there is room for improvement as they are trying to be good neighbors.

**Michael Langley** asked how the proposal will allow for distancing and hygiene measures in place due to the pandemic. **Mr. Gilbert** responded that the facility will look as it does now, and within the buildings they are social distancing and spacing. **Amy Schwabenlender**, with the Human Services Campus, added that they are following the CDC guidelines, they have spaced things out and stopped communal eating. She continued that the COVID cases have been low at the campus.

**Dana Johnson** stated that the problems exist today when the campus is allowed 400 beds, and the proposal to more than double the amount of beds would make conditions worse. He continued that some people are afraid to come onto the campus. **Mr. Gilbert** responded that they have tried to be good neighbors and he believes with the proposed stipulations (which are not finished), conditions will improve. He added that if people were afraid to come onto the campus, they wouldn't have to turn people away.

**Sean Sweat** asked how the large the CASS shelter is in relation to other shelters area, what is the difference between the Andre House, a low-barrier shelter and how did they get to the allocation for 275 beds for CASS and 100 for Andre House. **Mr. Gilbert** responded that CASS is the largest in the area and they will have more information on that when they return for recommendation, a low-barrier shelter does not have rules on pets or the time of night when they can check in. Mr. Gilbert added that the 275 beds for CASS is the maximum allowed per the Certificate of Occupancy, and the Andre House can only hold some many beds. Mr. Gilbert repeated the bed allocation:

425 beds currently approved. 1,000 beds proposed  
-275 beds to CASS (total: 700)  
-100 beds to Andre House (total: 800)  
-200 beds for extreme weather conditions (total: 1,000)

**Will Gaona** asked how closely the applicant has been working with neighborhood groups and what will the next steps be if the neighbors are unsatisfied with the final stipulations. **Mr. Gilbert** responded that they have held three neighborhood meetings where concerns were raised, and that when the stipulations are finalized, they will circulate them and host another meeting. Mr. Gilbert added they will continue to work with the neighborhood and Neighborhood Services can help too if the neighbors are still unsatisfied.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

**Angela Ojile** shared that she is against the proposal, the applicants have not reached out and the neighborhood has not been included, the cleaning around the area is bad, the neighborhood can't afford any more beds since many businesses have closed down, there were feces and urine in her driveway, and mega shelters do not work.

**John Westerdale** shared that he is opposed to the proposal, there are a lot of schools in the area and there are many sex offenders, the largest shelter in California has 500 beds, and that the City should not congregate uses.

**Ian Frances** shared that he is a business owner and the area is the worst it has ever been, the applicant is not in communication with the community, a low-barrier shelter accepts people who are intoxicated, the Madison Pioneers Coalition has been trying to make the neighborhood better, and that the campus is in violation of the City Code due to the health hazards associated with urination and defecation on the street.

**Jessica Bueno** states that she is concerned with the increase for the number of beds, the community's quality of life is impacted and they don't feel safe, alleys are being used as toilets, and the Capitol Mall Overlay was intended to add economic vitality in the area and have positive impacts on the neighborhood.

**Michael Godbehere** shared that when he worked in the area there was an immediate increase of theft, burglaries and public defecation, he has personally been a victim of robbery and assault, and healthy businesses have closed in the area.

**Freddy Brown** invited everyone to walk the area, shared that at his company they escort the female employees to their cars at the end of the day, the applicant cannot manage the 425 beds they have now and many people have been banned from the shelter, and when people give them goods, they throw the trash on the ground.

**Joanne Lowney** shared that they cannot operate their own business in their building, the streets are used as toilets, and all cities must take part in housing the homeless.

**Katherine Roxlo** shared that in 1984 the shelter was opened with a use permit for 220 beds, in 1990 the facility expanded to 400 beds, the shelter has been a magnet for all other homeless populations in Arizona, nowhere else in the City are so many health and safety violations allowed, there are 138 sex offenders who list their primary residence within a quarter mile of CASS, and asked staff to document the health and safety violations in the area, research the number of fines and the number of people in the area not seeking shelter, and the impacts on zoning and mitigation of negative impacts.

**Joel Coplin** stated that he lives half a block from the campus, there are many people on the street, and that many of them have been kicked out of the campus.

**Lori Thompson** shared that she is opposed to the expansion, everyone should have a seat at the table and the shelter should not be the dominant force in the area.

**Laurel Dianne Langmade** shared that she is against the special permit request, there is an increase in economic hardship for businesses, and a RV company had tires slashed and urination on their property.

**Grace Salinas** shared that governments have failed to address this issue and the community hasn't been invited to provide input.

**Vicki Anderson** shared that she deals with the homeless population daily and an increase in the number of beds will allow for less rehousing.

**Ray Garcia** quoted "if you build it, they will come", shared that there were many people living in the park which recently got cleared out due to a knifing, the community feels the negative effects of the shelter such as human waste on the street.

**Twila Lake** stated that she lived and worked in the Woodland Historic District and participated in street cleanups and late-night street survey, they asked people why they chose to sleep on the street instead of the campus and shared that respondents replied they were fearful of being beat up on the campus.

**Jay Minich** stated he is one of the directors at Andre House, he can see the change in people when they get a bed, that the proposal will help with their overflow capacity, and that there have been 12 deaths in two weeks due to extreme heat.

**Brent Downs** shared that he works on the campus, experienced homelessness 20 years ago, his journey began when he got a bed and he hasn't experienced homelessness since, and this is an opportunity to give people a chance.

**Jonathan Koppell** stated he is president of the HSC Board, agreed that the situation on the street is bad, we need to call on the City and County to do better and this is a social justice issue.

**Raquel Dennis** stated she lived and worked in the neighborhood and supports the proposal, the homeless population are people too, it is their neighborhood too, not just for those who own property.

**Kyle Foxcroft** stated that the campus has not helped with the street cleanup and asked for clarification on the definition of extreme weather conditions for the proposed 200 beds.

**Alex Stratton** shared that he is not supportive of the request, it does not meet the intent of the Capitol Mall Overlay, there are unintended consequences of conglomerating the homeless population and there are other ways to shelter people.

**STAFF COMMENTS REGARDING VPC RECOMMENDATION & STIPULATIONS:**

N/A