



Village Planning Committee Meeting Summary

Z-15-20-8

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| Date of VPC Meeting | December 14, 2020 |
| Request From | R1-6 (1.44 acres) and C-2 (1.42 acres) |
| Request To | PUD (2.86 acres) |
| Proposed Use | PUD to allow for a mix of commercial and multifamily residential development |
| Location | Approximately 370 feet west of the southwest corner of 18th Street and McDowell Road |
| VPC Recommendation | Approval, per the staff recommendation |
| VPC Vote | 11-3 |

VPC DISCUSSION:

1 speaker card was submitted in favor, wishing to speak.

Sarah Stockham, staff, displayed an aerial map and reviewed the history of the site, the surrounding land uses and zoning, the proposed narrative and staff's recommendation and proposed stipulations.

Michael Zimmerman, representing the applicant with Berry Riddell, introduced himself and reviewed the request, displaying aerial photographs and discussing the surrounding zoning and unique site features such as frontages along McDowell and the pop-up retail space.

Shannon Dubasik asked if the units will be affordable at the proposed 100-120% AMI (Area Median Income) level and what the price point would be at that AMI level. **Mr. Zimmerman** responded that this product, through design and by keeping costs down, is meant to appeal to most people and while this project is in early stages of development the price range for units would be around \$1,150-1,700 with most being around \$1,200.

Chris Colyer shared that he liked the project and asked where the HAWK would be located. **Mr. Zimmerman** responded that the Street Transportation Department is currently working on the specific location near 18th Street.

Will Gaona shared that he was not familiar with the term “achievable housing” used by the applicant and asked if it is defined in the law. **Mr. Zimmerman** replied that the term is used by his client, it is not defined by law, but the goal is to provide the units at a price point that is affordable for those at the 100%-120% AMI level.

Darlene Martinez asked if the parking will be self-contained. **David Dewar**, with Moderne Apartments, replied that the parking is self-contained on site with parking spaces available for residents, guests and those visiting the site for the retail locations. Mr. Dewar added that the term achievable housing is a classification of workforce housing mean to cover units between the affordable and market-rate range.

Wayne Rainey asked the applicant to elaborate on the retail component of the proposal. **Mr. Dewar** replied that the container space is meant to provide a temporary space for an art venue, they have spoken with ASU to try to create art that the neighbors will want that will be unique to the neighborhood, and that their office is right next to the project site so they will be sure to implement the art venue. **Mr. Rainey** shared that every developer makes claims to provide an art space and these claims are not based in fact and are without planning, and it comes across as dishonest. Mr. Rainey advised the applicant to come up with a real plan for the site in relation to the art space.

Nate Sonoskey asked the applicant to elaborate on the stipulations from the Historic Preservation Office regarding the grant funds. **Mr. Zimmerman** responded that in collaboration with the Historic Preservation Office, the funding for the grant program would help preserve other eligible buildings in the Miracle Mile Historic District and that the City will provide matching funding for the program. **Michelle Dodds**, Historic Preservation Officer with the City of Phoenix, added that the proposed changes to the building on site will not make it a contributing property to the Historic District, the grants will go towards improvements for other contributing sites in the Miracle Mile District and it is not unusual to have trade-offs in relation to historic buildings.

Ash Uss shared that generally workforce housing is between 60-120% AMI, this proposal is on the higher end of that spectrum and asked if the applicant was referring to the AMI of the city, county, or neighborhood, as those numbers vary. **Mr. Zimmerman** replied that they are using the city AMI level, and they have been working with Banner Hospital that needs workforce housing for the staff employed there.

Eva Olivas asked if the grant funding would be restricted to properties in the Miracle Mile Historic District. **Michelle Dodds** replied affirmatively.

Chris Colyer asked what the neighbors are saying about the project. **Mr. Zimmerman** replied that they have lots of support from neighbors to the north and south of the project.

Dana Johnson commented that sometimes developers have extra space on site and decide to use it as art space, yet most artists cannot afford to the rent the space and wished the applicant good luck with their proposed First Fridays along McDowell Road. **Mr. Dewar** replied that they are looking to activate Miracle Mile and they will subsidize the artists' rent.

Wayne Rainey added that Mr. Johnson has tried to create an arts district for many years, and that developers use artists as tools to magically transform an area but don't have a plan to develop and support artists, and asked the applicant to not just use the art space as a buzz word to garner support for the project. **Mr. Dewar** replied that the proposal for the art space wasn't meant to cause offense and the goals is to engage and invite artists, and they have talked and been approached by the arts community regarding the site and they do need a process to choose the right art for the site.

Chair Rachel Frazier Johnson shared that there are a number of arts organizations in downtown Phoenix such as Roosevelt Row and the City of Phoenix Arts and Culture Department, but it takes planning to make the art come to fruition and it comes across as disingenuous when there has not been real planning for the art in the proposal. Chair Johnson asked the applicant to address three aspects of the proposal that were mentioned in a letter of concern submitted for the case:

1. How parking was designed to mitigate impacts to Brill Street
2. Address changes in character to the area and walkability
3. Address the height of the building, as it will be the tallest structure in the area

Kaelee Wilson, with Berry Riddell, answered that the community member who wrote the letter of concern also wrote a letter of support, the stoop and doorwell frontage is meant to integrate with the historic neighborhood, they are providing 75% shade on the sidewalks with 3-inch caliper trees, they have an excess of 30 parking spaces and no vehicular entry on Brill Street, and the stoop and doorwell frontage is only two-stories and the taller portion on the building is farther back on site.

Eva Olivas asked for clarification on the rents and how many total units will be offered at that rate. **Mr. Dewar** replied that the units will be at the 100-120% AMI level and that around 75% of the units will be offered at that level, and 25% of the units will be market rate. Mr. Dewar added that most of the units for the site will be studios and one-bedrooms.

Patrick Panetta shared that the request is to rezone the site and to consider if this is an appropriate zoning request for the site, rather than a design review board for the proposal.

Public Comment:

Austin Burmer shared that he lives nearby and is looking forward to the project as the site has been vacant for a while, and that while concerns with height was discussed, Banner Hospital nearby is very tall, and there is an artist movement in Miracle Mile.

Motion:

Nate Sonoskey motioned to recommend approval of Z-15-20, per the staff recommendation. **Michael Langley** seconded the motion.

Discussion:

Will Gaona expressed concern with the lack of affordable housing on site and that he will not support proposals that do not offer some affordable housing. **Wayne Rainey** shared he will be giving the motion an “achievable no” as his vote, in reference to the achievable housing proposed for the site. **Eva Olivas** shared concern with the achievable vs. market rate units in the proposal. **Chair Rachel Frazier Johnson** shared concern with how the applicant addressed the art proposed on site.

Vote

11-3, Motion to approve Z-15-20 per the staff recommendation passed, with Committee Members R. Johnson, Burns, Colyer, Dubasik, Johnson, Langley, Lockhart, Martinez, Olivas, Panetta and Sonoskey in favor with committee members Gaona, Rainey and Uss opposed.

STAFF COMMENTS REGARDING VPC RECOMMENDATION & STIPULATIONS:

None.