



## Village Planning Committee Meeting Summary

### Z-133-24-3

<b>Date of VPC Meeting</b>	February 19, 2025
<b>Request From</b>	R-O
<b>Request To</b>	PUD
<b>Proposal</b>	Multifamily residential (townhomes)
<b>Location</b>	Northwest corner of Coral Gables Drive and Thunderbird Road
<b>VPC Recommendation</b>	Approval, per the staff recommendation
<b>VPC Vote</b>	14-0

#### **VPC DISCUSSION:**

*No members of the public registered to speak on this request.*

#### **STAFF PRESENTATION**

**Robert Kuhfuss**, staff, summarized the scope of the request and gave a general description of the property, location, and surrounding area. Mr. Kuhfuss summarized the General Plan Land Use Map as it pertains to the site and the surroundings area. Mr. Kuhfuss stated there was one letter of opposition and five letters of support. Mr. Kuhfuss summarized staff findings, stipulations, and staff recommendation.

#### **APPLICATION PRESENTATION**

**Alex Hayes**, representative with Withey Morris Baugh, PLC, stated that the request was for a PUD and that he did not recall any major concerns expressed by the Committee when he presented the project the last time, and that the proposal remains largely unchanged. Mr. Hayes stated they had additional outreach since the previous Village meeting and received positive feedback including letters of support from the Baptist Church to the west and the Moon Valley Neighborhood Association. Mr. Hayes stated that since most of the committee members had already heard the case and there was no opposition present he could either continue with a full presentation or cut it short at the Chair's pleasure. Chair Fogelson asked the Committee if they had any objections with proceeding with questions from the committee. There were no objections from the committee members.

#### **QUESTIONS FROM THE COMMITTEE**

**Committee Member Heather Garbarino** stated that she was aware of a lot of outreach and asked if the applicant had addressed their concerns over queuing, parking,

pedestrian access, and the condition of the wash. **Mr. Hayes** stated they did not change anything with respect to parking and are providing almost double the required parking. Mr. Hayes stated that the primary concern was the risk of spillover parking if people are not using their garages for parking, which can be controlled through the CC&Rs. Mr. Hayes further stated that there would be no access to Coral Gables Drive. Mr. Hayes stated that trip generation would be significantly higher under the current zoning. Mr. Hayes stated that the wash had historically not been well maintained but has been cleared of any trash, debris, and low vegetation.

**Committee Member Joshua Carmona** asked if there would be pedestrian access to Coral Gables Drive. **Mr. Hayes** stated they heard both sides of the argument and were not currently showing pedestrian access at Coral Gables Drive.

**Committee Member Steve Pamperin** stated that he missed the previous presentation, and that Thunderbird Road carries a lot of fast-moving traffic. Committee Member Pamperin stated that having access to Coral Gables Drive would make sense.

**Committee Member Arick O'Hara** stated that during peak times, traffic on Coral Gables Drive backs up to the wash and does not allow enough room to turn into the property and that traffic would back up onto Thunderbird Road. **Mr. Hayes** stated that they had initially proposed access to Coral Gable Drive, but the Street Transportation Department did not want access at that location. Mr. Hayes stated that the Street Transportation Department later said it would be ok but based on input from the Committee they removed it. Mr. Hayes also noted there is an existing turn lane and that complicates the issue.

**Committee Member Massimo Sommacampagna** asked about turning movements along Thunderbird Road. **Mr. Hayes** stated there would be modifications to the median.

**Committee Member Elizabeth Pérez-Pawloski** stated she was concerned over the compactness of the site as well as the eastbound left turning movements from Thunderbird Road into the site. Committee Member Pérez-Pawloski asked where the bus bay is located. **Mr. Hayes** stated that the bus bay is located on Thunderbird Road just west of the intersection of Coral Gables Drive. Mr. Hayes stated that the reason the site is so compact is because of the wash, which limits the ability to develop the site. Committee Member Pérez-Pawloski reiterated her concerns over the compactness of the site stating that the back yards were very small compared to the rest of the Moon Valley neighborhood.

**Committee Member Pamperin** asked if the garages would have the ability to be equipped with EV charging stations. **Mr. Hayes** stated they have included that in their sustainability guidelines.

**Committee Member Pérez-Pawloski** asked staff if this was in an impact fee area. **Mr. Kuhfuss** stated that he did not know if the area was subject to any impact fees.

## PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

**MOTION:**

**Committee Member Mike Krentz** motioned to recommend approval of Z-133-24-3 per the staff recommendation. **Committee Member Arick O'Hara** seconded the motion.

**DISCUSSION:**

**Committee Member O'Hara** stated this was the third project to come forward on this site and that Mr. Hayes reached out to him to discuss his concerns, including the fact that the wash was one of the few privately owned washes on Phoenix and there have been a lot of bad neighbor habits associated with this wash. Committee Member O'Hara stated that within 72 hours, there was a crew on site to clean up the wash and the crew has been out several times since to ensure the wash was properly maintained. Committee Member O'Hara stated that he was very happy to vote in favor of this request.

**Chair Fogelson** stated that she wished to echo Committee Member O'Hara's comments.

**VOTE:**

**14-0**, motion to recommend approval of Z-133-24-3 per the staff recommendation passes with Committee Members Alauria, Barraza, Carmona, Edwards, Garbarino, Harris, Jaramillo, Knapp, Krentz, O'Hara, Pamperin, Pérez-Pawloski, Sommacampagna, and Fogelson in favor and none opposed.

**STAFF COMMENTS REGARDING VPC RECOMMENDATION:**

None.

## Village Planning Committee Meeting Summary

**Z-133-24-3**

### INFORMATION ONLY

<b>Date of VPC Meeting</b>	November 20, 2024
<b>Request From</b>	R-O
<b>Request To</b>	PUD
<b>Proposal</b>	Multifamily residential (townhomes)
<b>Location</b>	Northwest corner of Coral Gables Drive and Thunderbird Road

### **VPC DISCUSSION:**

*Committee Member Massimo Sommacampagna joined the meeting during this item bringing the quorum to 13 members present.*

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

### **STAFF PRESENTATION**

**Mr. Alex Hayes**, representing the applicant with Withey Morris Baugh, PLC, introduced himself and stated the request was for a PUD and that this was their first time presenting this project to the Committee. Mr. Hayes stated they were looking forward to receiving feedback and would work with staff to incorporate changes prior to coming back to the Committee for a recommendation.

Mr. Hayes stated the site is located at the northwest corner of Thunderbird Road and Coral Gables Drive and is one of the few undeveloped parcels remaining in the Moon Valley area. Mr. Hayes stated the site is at the primary entrance to the Moon Valley community and that he understands the community has regarded the site as eyesore due to the existing wash which attracts homeless and other unwanted activity. Mr. Hayes stated the proposed development will be an improvement over the existing condition.

Mr. Hayes stated the site has a General Plan designation of Residential 3.5 to 5 dwelling units per acre and that the proposed project is consistent with that designation. Mr. Hayes also stated the site is currently zoned R-O, or residential office, and that the zoning of site was established about 30 years ago, but has not developed since, which indicates the existing zoning is not consistent with the best use for the site, especially considering the site's context being predominately surrounded by residential. Mr. Hayes stated that residential uses are probably more appropriate and recounted a recent

proposal to develop the site as self-storage which was defeated suggesting that residential is the best use for the site. Mr. Hayes added that the site also has existing challenges including the intersection at Coral Gables Drive, which is a primary entrance to the Moon Valley community and receives considerable traffic as does Thunderbird Road. Mr. Hayes further stated the large wash was located within an 80-foot easement, which further limits the site's developable area. Mr. Hayes stated the proposed development solves all of these challenges and will bring quality development to the area.

Mr. Hayes stated the request involves a rezone from R-O to PUD, with the PUD being largely based on the R-2 development standards, which will allow a 16-unit townhome community at 4.3 dwelling units per acre consistent with the General Plan designation. Mr. Hayes called to mind recent challenges with housing affordability and housing supply, stating the proposed development will bring new housing options to the area at a more attainable price point as a for-sale product. Mr. Hayes stated the proposed development will allow new homeowners to enter the market with a home equity escalator at a more attainable price point and will attract buyers who are down-sizing and looking for a lock-and-leave lifestyle.

Mr. Hayes stated the units will consist of three or four bedrooms at about 2,400 square feet, located within two primary buildings with eight units each. Mr. Hayes stated the maximum building height would be 29-feet 8-inches, which is consistent with R-2 standards of 30-feet and two stories and is the same as R1-10 standards, which is the predominant zoning in the area. Mr. Hayes noted that the City of Phoenix standard of twenty-five feet is measured as the distance between the mean eve height and highest point of the building, as opposed to the 29-feet 8-inch measurement being to the actual top of the structure.

Mr. Hayes indicated that the proposed development will include over 35,000 square feet of common area open space including the wash which acts as a buffer against residences to the north. Mr. Hayes further indicated that additional amenities include a pickleball court to be located on the far west end of site to minimize potential for noise complaints as well as a turf area with seating to be located between the parking lot and the residential area to the north, which will include fair amount of landscaping.

Mr. Hayes stated that on-site parking will be accommodated by each unit having its own two-car garage and stated the City of Phoenix parking ratio is 1.5 spaces per unit plus 0.25 spaces per unit for guest parking. Mr. Hayes stated that with each unit having two parking spaces plus an additional 18 guest parking spaces, there is significant parking on the site. Mr. Hayes recalled a neighbor's concern over the potential for offsite parking in an adjacent neighborhood citing a hypothetical Superbowl party overloading the neighborhood.

Mr. Hayes reiterated the proposed PUD is based on R-2 standards but proposes modified development standards largely due to the wash along the northern edge of the site, which pushes the developable area to the south, closer to Thunderbird Road. Mr.

Hayes stated that the right-of-way for Thunderbird Road adjacent to the site is wider than usual, which is likely in anticipation of a frontage road condition similar to that of the properties to the east of Coral Gables Road. Mr. Hayes stated that since a frontage road is not required with this project, they are able to shift the buildings to the south and propose a fifteen-foot building setback along Thunderbird with patios located in the setback area. Mr. Hayes stated that the patios would be landscaped with trees, with additional landscaping in the right-of-way. Mr. Hayes stated that pedestrians will not experience the reduced setback, but the reduced setback will allow the site to be developed in a manner that will accommodate this type of product. Mr. Hayes also indicated that the other modifications include a partial view fence to be located on the site's west side. Mr. Hayes indicated that a twenty-foot building setback would still exist along Coral Gables Drive but they are requesting a zero-distance landscape setback due to the proximity of the hammer head needed for vehicular turnaround. Mr. Hayes confirmed that landscaping would exist to the north and south of the hammer head and within the adjacent right-of-way.

Mr. Hayes discussed the project's design and presented a series of perspective drawings. Mr. Hayes stated the project is compatible with the neighborhood and that the project will have a modern feel with stucco, stone, and a modulated roofline.

Mr. Hayes summarized their neighborhood outreach stating they had held their neighborhood meeting on October 30th and had sent notices to property owners within 600 feet of the site and to the Moon Valley Neighborhood Association. Mr. Hayes indicated that he was not familiar with Village's desire for notifications to be presented in both English and Spanish but would be sure to do so in the future. Mr. Hayes stated they had worked with the Moon Valley Neighborhood Association to try to address their concerns, explaining that concerns were related to access to Coral Gables Drive, parking, whether the units would be for sale or rent, and the condition of the wash. Mr. Hayes stated they will be presenting the project to the Moon Valley Neighborhood Association at their next Board meeting.

Mr. Hayes stated they were not proposing to take access from Coral Gables Drive due to an existing right-turn lane that runs along Coral Gables Drive for the length of the property. Mr. Hayes stated access would be exclusively from Thunderbird Road, with the driveway meeting city distance requirements. Mr. Hayes stated they would break the median and install three-quarter access at that location. Mr. Hayes stated they would prefer full turning movements at that location but understands that does not meet city standards. Mr. Hayes stated that the trip generation for this project is minimal with AM peak trip generation at eight trips per day opposed to three times that for general office and eight times that for medical office.

Mr. Hayes showed images of the wash which depicted an accumulation of trash and debris. Mr. Hayes indicated this condition was prevalent and had been cleaned up several times only to return to the same condition within a matter of 36 hours. Mr. Hayes stated they were interested in exploring interim solutions and that his impression

was that the City of Phoenix was not interested in taking over maintenance responsibility for the wash; however, development of the site will remedy the issue.

Mr. Hayes stated that the proposed development is a productive use of the site that makes sense as it provides a source for new and attainable housing, and the development will be high quality and compatible with the neighborhood.

### QUESTIONS FROM COMMITTEE

**Committee Member Marcia Viedmark** complimented Ms. Hayes on his presentation and asked for clarification regarding three-quarter entrance/exit versus full. **Mr. Hayes** responded by stating they would not have the ability for an east-bound left-turn out onto Thunderbird Road, however, future residents can turn left-in, right-in or right-out.

**Chair Fogelson** asked where the U-turns would be located. **Mr. Hayes** responded by stating there are four U-turn options between the site and 19th Avenue. Mr. Hayes stated that 19th Avenue allows U-turns and there would be four additional opportunities, with the two closest to the site being the most likely. Chair Fogelson asked if these would be before the high school. Mr. Hayes confirmed that would be the case.

**Committee Member Viedmark** asked for clarification on market rate. **Mr. Hayes** stated it would be market rate and would likely be around \$500,000 depending on construction costs and market conditions, but that it is difficult to say at this point.

**Committee Member Viedmark** asked if Mr. Hayes could clarify why they chose to go with a PUD instead of conventional zoning. **Mr. Hayes** explained that they were rezoning to PUD that is based on R-2 zoning. Mr. Hayes further explained that another option would be to rezone to R-2 and apply for a variance but that entails the risk of being successful at the entitlement process only to be denied the variance. Mr. Hayes stated that technically they would end up at the same place. Committee Member Viedmark stated that it was her understanding that once a PUD is approved, anything can go there and asked for clarification. **Vice Chair Joshua Matthews** stated that the intent of the PUD was to provide flexibility in standards as opposed to a variance, which is tricky to obtain. Mr. Hayes explained that a PUD is essentially custom zoning, but they must build what was approved under the PUD. **Ms. Sarah Stockham**, staff, clarified that a PUD is a tool to allow custom site design, and that the development must comply with the configuration and uses as approved in the project narrative, and if someone proposed a use that was not allowed in the PUD, a Major Amendment would be required.

**Committee Member Jason Barraza** asked if the current R-O zoning allows building heights of thirty feet. **Mr. Hayes** stated that he thought it was either 30 feet or 25 feet but would defer to staff. **Ms. Stockham** indicated 25 feet.

**Committee Member Barraza** asked if there was pedestrian access from the site to Coral Gables Drive. **Mr. Hayes** indicated there was currently no pedestrian access to

Corral Gables Drive and it would only be the detached sidewalk along Coral Gables Drive and Thunderbird Road. Mr. Hayes stated they could look at a gate. Mr. Hayes asked for clarification as to whether he was referring to residents departing the development. Committee Member Barraza confirmed, stating that many people in the Moon Valley neighborhood like to walk and it would be easy access to neighborhood. Conversely, Committee Member Barraza questioned whether having a gate at that location would encourage parking on Coral Gables Drive as opposed to being discouraged by having to walk around. Mr. Hayes stated they were not currently showing a gate at that location, but it would make sense to have pedestrian access onto Coral Gables Drive and that parking was not an issue since they are over-parked by nearly twice as much as required. Mr. Hayes also stated that the HOA could manage the storage of other than vehicles in the unit's garage so that residents are not parking in the guest parking area.

**Committee Member Viedmark** expressed concerns over crossing Coral Gables Drive at that location. **Committee Member Barraza** stated there was an intersection at Coral Gables Drive and Thunderbird Road that could be used. **Mr. Hayes** confirmed there is already a crosswalk at that location.

**Committee Member Barraza** asked for confirmation that the draining easement would remain in private property control and managed by the HOA as common area. **Mr. Hayes** confirmed that is the case and stated there is not much they can do with the area with respect to the removal of vegetation or landscaping, but it does provide passive open space as well as a buffer between the development and the neighboring properties to the north. Committee Member Barraza stated that it appeared from some of the correspondence there was an issue raised regarding construction near the existing homes but noted that there would be an 80-foot buffer between any new construction and the existing houses. Mr. Hayes confirmed that would be the case.

**Committee Member Bill Adams** asked if there was any consideration about extending the fence over to the drainage area while incorporating grates in the fence to allow water to pass through, which would limit access to the area.

**Mr. Hayes** stated there were some limitations and referenced the amount of trash in the area, some of which being due to homeless activity. Mr. Hayes stated the wash runs at a significant rate and to add a grate would act like a strainer and potentially block flows from being able to pass through the fence, creating additional hazard across Coral Gables drive. Committee Member Adams stated that the problem would likely never go away. Mr. Hayes stated that it would be their preference to fence the area off with view fencing but to do so would create additional problems in the area.

**Committee Member Arick O'Hara** stated that the flow comes off the golf course at a depth of four to five feet two to three times a year and causes there to only be one access into the neighborhood at 7th street.

**Vice Chair Matthews** stated his preference would be for the applicant to remove all of the vegetation within the wash and start over but referenced CPTED two/seven and



three/six rules and suggested the trees be trimmed up to a height of six or seven feet while the shrubs be maintained at a maximum two feet. Vice Chair Matthews suggested the fencing along the south side of the wash be view fence to keep eyes on the area. Vice Chair Matthews also recognized the benefit of the area being maintained by the HOA. Vice Chair Matthews acknowledged that the neighbors to the north preferred to keep the existing trees for screening purposes but reiterated that a better solution might be to re-landscape the area and that cleaning out the area will not solve the issue but will help.

**Committee Member Viedmark** stated that she saw the benefit of the site being manage by the HOA and recounted her experience with a similar situation in her community where the HOA owned and maintained the wash. **Vice Chair Matthews** stated that having a landscape service taking care of the area would help.

**Committee Member O'Hara** indicated that he had a concern with east-bound U-turns being the only way out due to high speeds on a blind curve. Committee Member O'Hara stated that he appreciated there being no access to Coral Gables Drive due to traffic back-ups on Coral Gables Drive, and that he does not share same opinion with respect to having a pedestrian gate on Coral Gables Drive as it would encourage parking on Coral Gables Drive as opposed to the interior of the site. Committee Member O'Hara also expressed appreciation to the applicant for attempting to solve the issues associated with the site but is concerned about having received more neighborhood input than normal regarding views. Committee Member O'Hara referred to a comment regarding a doctors office blocking the view at 25 feet in height but wants to hear more from the adjacent neighbors directly behind due to the project potentially blocking the views of the south facing mountains. Committee Member O'Hara stated that he looks forward to next Village Planning Committee meeting to address concerns.

**Committee Member Massimo Sommacampagna** asked how the development would be platted. **Mr. Hayes** indicated the project would be platted as a condominium.

**Committee Member Sommacampagna** asked if it had been contemplated to do emergency access only along Coral Gables Drive near where the hammerhead is located. **Mr. Hayes** stated they would be open to emergency access in that area but did not do so in deference to the neighbors and the City of Phoenix.

**Committee Member Sommacampagna** asked if the parking on Coral Gables Drive would be in the right-turn lane. **Vice Chair Matthews** stated the plan shows no parking on Coral Gables Drive from where the bike lane ends to the corner. Vice Chair Matthews stated that people can park on east side of Coral Gables Drive or on the west side further to the north. Vice Chair Matthews characterized the parking issue as a Superbowl Sunday issue, not ongoing. Vice Chair Matthews stated he would be ok with pedestrian access to Coral Gables Drive, but parking concerns would be mitigated by the length of the walk. Vice Chair Matthews reiterated this would not be a day-to-day problem.

**Committee Member Sommacampagna** stated that unwanted pedestrian access in the wash has always been a problem and asked if the applicant had considered adding floodlights, taking the neighbors to the north into consideration. **Mr. Hayes** stated they were currently proposing a view fence and would look at trimming trees along the south side of the wash but the neighbors to the north want the trees on the north side of the wash. **Vice Chair Matthews** stated the trees could be trimmed up to the height of the existing six-foot cinder block wall, which would prevent hiding in those areas, there are better canopy trees than Palo Verde as the latter is low and wide if not trimmed up. Vice Chair Matthews stated that having an open view maintained area that is well-lit with activity will reduce the impact.

#### PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.