



Village Planning Committee Meeting Summary

GPA-SM-1-25-8

Date of VPC Meeting	June 10, 2025
Request From	Residential 1 to 2 dwelling units per acre, Residential 2 to 3.5 dwelling units per acre, and Residential 3.5 to 5 dwelling units per acre
Request To	Residential 10 to 15 dwelling units per acre
Proposal	Multifamily residential
Location	Approximately 1,130 feet east of the northeast corner of 23rd Avenue and Baseline Road
VPC Recommendation	Approval, per the staff recommendation
VPC Vote	7-4

VPC DISCUSSION & RECOMMENDED STIPULATIONS:

Item Nos. 6 (GPA-SM-1-25-8) and 7 (Z-31-25-8) are companion cases and were heard concurrently.

Five members of the public registered to speak on this item, one in support, and four in opposition.

STAFF PRESENTATION

Samuel Rogers, staff, displayed the location of the subject site and noted the acreage and proposal. Mr. Rogers stated that the applicant was proposing a multifamily development, provided an overview of the proposed General Plan Land Use amendment, summarized the surrounding land uses, and explained the site would act as a transition between the adjacent commercial and single-family developments. Mr. Rogers displayed the site plan and elevations and concluded the staff presentation by summarizing the staff findings and proposed stipulations.

Committee Member George Brooks asked where the subject site is located. **Mr. Rogers** displayed the subject site's location.

APPLICANT PRESENTATION

Brian Greathouse, representing the applicant, introduced the development team, explained that the development would be a transition between commercial and single-family residential, explained the site would be gated, stated that the development would be primarily single-story units, explained access would be from Baseline Road, and

described the amenities, open space, and units. Mr. Greathouse described the request, discussed land use transitions, traffic generation, the traffic study, and the demand for the housing type.

QUESTIONS FROM THE COMMITTEE

Chair Arthur Greathouse III asked the applicant team to speak to the public outreach conducted for the project. **Mr. Greathouse** described the outreach process and efforts made to inform nearby residents.

Committee Member Brooks inquired about the square footage of the proposed homes. **Mr. Greathouse** stated that the homes would range in size from approximately 700 to 1,400 square feet.

Committee Member Kassandra Alvarez asked if the amenities would facilitate a sense of community and expressed concern about the lack of sustainability measures and potential traffic impacts. **Mr. Greathouse** explained that many of the traffic concerns are related to 23rd Avenue and existing half-street conditions and explained that a different rezoning case in the area includes stipulations to expand 23rd Avenue and incorporate traffic mitigation. Mr. Greathouse explained that current conditions do not warrant a traffic signal, stated that Baseline Road's capacity had been studied, and explained that the traffic study had been approved by the City. Mr. Greathouse stated that the project team is evaluating features such as solar panels and stated that the applicant is providing energy-efficient pavement seal and EV charging. Mr. Greathouse explained the rezoning request includes stipulations related to the plant palette, shade, bike parking, and a bike fix-it station. **Chris Williams**, with the applicant team, stated that a right-turn deceleration lane was the only mitigation measure identified in the traffic study, stated that a warrant analysis showed a signal is not currently justified, and explained a signal may be warranted if additional development occurs on 23rd Avenue.

Chair Greathouse stated that a large rezoning case at 19th Avenue and Baseline Road will increase density in the area and may eventually warrant a traffic signal. **Committee Member Mark Beehler** echoed Chair Greathouse's comments and asked whether the applicant team had reviewed the two recent rezonings in the area. **Mr. Williams** stated that the team always considers growth factors when analyzing traffic. Committee Member Beehler commented that the Committee is receiving many development proposals in the area. Mr. Williams responded that the goal is to space signals approximately every half mile and explained that it is a balancing act to avoid excessive signals that slow down traffic while ensuring placement at key intersections.

Committee Member Ralph Thompson II asked for confirmation that the proposed rents would be in the range of \$1,600 to \$2,100. **Mr. Greathouse** confirmed that the projected rents fall within that range.

Committee Member Fred Daniels asked whether the City evaluates nearby developments collectively when reviewing traffic impacts. **Mr. Rogers** stated that the City requires applicants to submit traffic studies and that those studies must be approved by the City. Mr. Rogers explained that the City is aware of other rezonings in the area and considers them during the review process. **Chair Greathouse** asked about the review process by the Street Transportation Department. **Mr. Rogers** stated that he would follow up with more information. **Mr. Williams** stated that there are sometimes unknowns in the process and not all future developments are visible during traffic evaluations.

Committee Member Alvarez asked what solutions are available to address traffic issues on Baseline Road. **Mr. Greathouse** stated that developers will add improvements over time as the area continues to develop.

Committee Member Brooks asked whether fire and water studies had been conducted and requested elaboration on the sustainability measures. **Cholla Susini**, with the applicant team, described planned features including dual-pane windows and high-efficiency materials, stated that the energy efficiency rating of the homes would exceed that of typical new construction, and offered to provide additional information.

Committee Member Beehler asked whether dedicated left-turn and right-turn lanes could be added. **Mr. Greathouse** stated that approximately 60 trips were anticipated during peak hours, averaging about one car per minute. **Mr. Williams** stated that the lane widths should accommodate two cars and offered to follow up with additional detail.

Committee Member Lee Coleman asked whether the community would be gated. **Mark Reddie**, with the applicant team, stated that the entry gate is set back 200 feet to allow for vehicle queuing.

Committee Member Coleman asked whether there was a landscape plan. **Mr. Greathouse** displayed and described the landscape plan for the project.

Committee Member Brooks asked where the fire exit would be located. **Mr. Greathouse** stated that the development is not required to have secondary access. **Mr. Reddie** explained that secondary fire access is not required because all units will be equipped with fire sprinklers.

Committee Member Brooks asked whether applicants are advised to review the South Mountain Village Food Action Plan. **Mr. Rogers** stated that during the pre-application process he informs all applicants of the 2025 Food Action Plan and recommends that they review it. **Mr. Greathouse** stated that the project team had not yet reviewed the Food Action Plan.

Committee Member Alvarez asked how the applicant could guarantee the proposed unit prices. **Mr. Greathouse** stated that the units would be market-rate, explained that pricing would be determined by market conditions, and stated that the development is not intended to be either “attainable” or “luxury” housing.

Committee Member Alvarez asked whether there had been difficulty in attracting tenants or if there was interest in the product. **Ms. Susini** stated that there has been high demand and that people are excited about the project.

Chair Greathouse asked for details regarding parking, including whether garages would be provided and whether the overall parking count meets City requirements. **Mr. Reddie** stated that some of the townhomes would include garages, stated that the project exceeds the minimum parking requirements, and explained that the development model has been successful in 50 similar projects over the past 12 years without parking issues. Mr. Reddie stated that each unit would have one designated space, with additional shared and visitor parking available.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Thomas Kelly stated that he is with Valley Leadership, stated that he is in favor of the request, and explained that Valley Leadership supports promoting quality projects within the community. Mr. Kelly acknowledged that all development places stress on a community but stated that the project represents a good approach. Mr. Kelly stated that the proposed buffers between the single-family neighborhood and commercial areas are appropriate.

Tawee Phattarak expressed concern about cumulative traffic impacts, stated that additional subdivisions in the area will also contribute to congestion, and asked about the traffic generation. **Mr. Williams** stated that the traffic study predicted 31 left turns and 31 right turns out of the development during the morning peak hour, with approximately 600 total trips anticipated over the course of the day. Mr. Williams stated that post-COVID traffic patterns have shifted and that changes in travel behavior were considered in the study. Ms. Phattarak stated that there are already traffic issues in the area and that this development would worsen them.

Joe Melton expressed concern with the proposed density and the target market for the development, stated that he would not have chosen to live in the area if he had not had the opportunity to purchase a home, and stated that while he understands the need for a land use transition this project should offer something different. Mr. Melton expressed doubt that a \$5,000 incentive would make a significant difference for a home buyer and stated that a mix of condominiums and for-sale homes would be more appropriate.

Melissa Campos echoed the comments made by Mr. Melton, stated that she had reviewed other Yardly communities and found that they generally have two to three

points of access and greater spacing between access points, expressed concern about traffic, and stated that a previous rezoning proposal for the site included 50 to 60 fewer units. Ms. Campos stated that her written comments focused more on concerns about water and electricity availability in the area, rather than the energy efficiency of the proposed homes.

Josepha Garcia stated concerns about traffic impacts and that the development would create additional congestion.

APPLICANT RESPONSE

Brian Greathouse stated that the property is going to be developed and that all development generates traffic. Mr. Greathouse stated that the proposed residential project would generate less traffic than a commercial use, stated that the development team has worked with the City to confirm water and sewer availability, and explained that the proposal represents a reasonable compromise for the area.

FLOOR/PUBLIC DISCUSSION CLOSED: MOTION, DISCUSSION, AND VOTE

Committee Member Brooks stated that having only one point of ingress and egress is a concern, expressed concern that the applicant team did not review the 2025 Food Action Plan, and asked for a list of the proposed sustainability features.

Committee Member Beehler asked how the density of the project compares to other Yardly developments. **Mr. Reddie** stated that density depends on the unit mix, explained that the inclusion of four-plex units allows for higher density without creating overcrowding, stated that the average for Yardly developments is 11.5 to 12 units per acre, and explained that the proposal includes 13 units per acre.

Committee Member Beehler asked about the size of typical Yardly developments. **Mr. Reddie** stated that the minimum size is typically 100 to 120 units.

Chair Greathouse stated that he is familiar with Taylor Morrison products and asked for the Committee's thoughts on 700-square-foot attached units. **Committee Member Beehler** stated that there is a good example of a similar development in the area and that he has not seen any issues with the product. Chair Greathouse stated that he has seen similar projects from other developers that did not maintain quality but expressed confidence in Taylor Morrison as a reputable builder.

Committee Member Brooks asked whether the proposed price range would be considered common or affordable. **Chair Greathouse** stated that the units are market rate. **Mr. Greathouse** stated that the homes are intended to be more attainably priced than single-family homes for purchase.

Vice Chair Dr. Emma Viera stated that an individual would need to earn between \$60,000 and \$90,000 annually to afford the proposed rent levels. **Committee Member Brooks** asked what the median income in South Phoenix is. Vice Chair Viera stated that the median household income in South Phoenix is approximately \$45,000. **Committee Member Brooks** stated that the project appears to be targeted toward individuals outside the South Phoenix community.

Chair Greathouse asked about the target demographic. **Mr. Reddie** stated that this is a popular product across the Valley and the state and explained that typical residents include young professionals, divorced women, and older empty nesters who do not want to deal with home maintenance but still value privacy. Mr. Reddie stated that the homes are designed for smaller families, explained the homes are positioned as an alternative to renting apartments or purchasing a home, and stated that the development offers strong amenities.

Chair Greathouse expressed concern that the project may attract residents from outside the community and asked whether current South Mountain renters would be able to afford living in the development. **Mr. Greathouse** stated that the development would likely include both groups and could serve as a transitional step before homeownership.

Committee Member Beehler stated that he supports the project and that the area around 19th Avenue is being considered for future development as a center. Committee Member Beehler stated that apartments are already being built in the vicinity and that this proposal fills a missing housing option.

Committee Member Marcia Busching expressed concern that the staff report did not address the Rio Moñtana Area Plan, explained that she has difficulty supporting a jump to a higher-density land use designation, and stated that the project does not represent a land use transition.

Chair Greathouse asked the applicant team to speak to open space and the single access point. **Mr. Reddie** stated that the entry drive is designed with two travel lanes and a center median, explained that there are two internal loops within the community that allow for circulation in the event of an obstruction, and stated that these loops meet Fire Department access standards. Mr. Reddie stated that the development includes 44 percent open space. **Mr. Greathouse** added that each unit includes a private backyard.

Committee Member Brooks asked about the project's water detention and retention systems. **Mr. Reddie** stated that the project will utilize underground retention, explained that the site plan will need to demonstrate adequate retention, and stated that underground retention tanks will be located beneath the drive aisle.

Motion:

Committee Member Kay Shepard made a motion to recommend approval of GPA-SM-1-25-8. **Committee Member Mark Beehler** seconded the motion.

Vote:

7-4, motion to recommend approval of GPA-SM-1-25-8 passed with Committee Members Alvarez, Beehler, F. Daniels, Falcon, Shepard, Viera, and Greathouse in favor and Committee Member Brooks, Busching, Coleman, and Thompson, opposed.

STAFF COMMENTS REGARDING VPC RECOMMENDATION:

None.