



## Village Planning Committee Meeting Summary

**PHO-10-25--Z-287-85-8**

<b>Date of VPC Meeting</b>	July 8, 2025
<b>Date of Planning Hearing Officer Hearing</b>	July 16, 2025
<b>Request</b>	1) Request to modify stipulation number 1 regarding general conformance to the site plan date stamped July 6, 2007  2) Request to modify stipulation number 7 regarding general conformance to the elevations date stamped July 6, 2007
<b>Location</b>	Southwest corner of Hohokam Expressway (48th Street) and University Drive
<b>VPC Recommendation</b>	Approval
<b>VPC Vote</b>	14-0

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

*Darlene Jackson and Ralph Thompson II joined the meeting during this item bringing quorum to 14 members (11 needed for a quorum).*

### **STAFF PRESENTATION**

**Samuel Rogers**, staff, provided an introduction and overview of the proposal, identifying the location, zoning, adjacent land uses, and General Plan Land Use Map designation. Mr. Rogers discussed the PHO (Planning Hearing Officer) process, history

### **APPLICANT PRESENTATION**

**Vanessa MacDonald**, representing the applicant, introduced the applicant team, described the subject site, presented the surrounding zoning and land uses, explained the development process and timeline, and described the proposed request.

### **QUESTIONS FROM THE COMMITTEE**

**Chair Arthur Greathouse III** asked the applicant to display the proposed building elevations.

**Committee Member Mark Beehler** referenced the site's previous plan and noted that the new conference center location had been shown as parking on earlier iterations and asked if the applicant foresaw any issues with parking. **Ms. MacDonald** stated that the hotel component has been reduced in size, which lowered the overall parking demand. Ms. MacDonald explained that there are parking reductions available because many conference attendees generally arrive via rideshare rather than personal vehicles.

**Committee Member Greg Brownell** asked what roofing materials were proposed. **Mr. Gerald Kessler**, with the applicant team, stated that this is the fifth hotel he has designed for the subject site and explained that spray foam roofs would be used. Committee Member Brownell asked if alternatives for the parking lot had been considered to mitigate the urban heat island effect. Mr. Kessler noted that the site features a significant amount of mature landscaping, stated that the existing hotel on site has been in place for 17 years, and explained that the proposed development would be an extended stay hotel.

**Committee Member Brownell** asked about water retention. **Mr. Kessler** stated that the former location of the conference center had been moved and had required relocation of the underground retention tanks. Mr. Kessler explained that new retention tanks are located under the parking lot and stated that the site drains toward the southwest.

**Committee Member Trent Marchuk** stated that the landscaping depicted in the renderings was very attractive and asked whether a landscape plan was included with the case. **Mr. Kessler** confirmed that a new landscape plan was included and had already been reviewed and approved by the City. Committee Member Marchuk asked whether the Village Planning Committee (VPC) would have an opportunity to review the landscaping plan. **Mr. Rogers** explained that landscaping plans are reviewed during the site plan process and do not return to the VPC unless stipulated as part of the zoning case.

**Committee Member Fred Daniels** asked what the seating capacity of the proposed conference center would be. **Mr. Kessler** described the layout and stated that the conference center would be approximately 6,900 square feet, with a capacity of roughly 500 people.

**Committee Member Darlene Jackson** expressed support for the proposal, stated that she was pleased to see new business development on the south side of the airport, and explained that the area needs places for visitors to stay.

**Chair Greathouse** asked about the proposed color scheme. **Mr. Kessler** described the elevations and renderings provided with the application.

**Committee Member Marchuk** asked staff whether a stipulation could be added to require the landscape plan to return to the Committee for review and comment. **Mr. Rogers** stated that the Committee could add such a stipulation if desired.

**Committee Member Kay Shepard** asked for clarification regarding whether the landscape plan had already been approved by the City. **Mr. Kessler** explained that the plan had been reviewed by the City's landscape reviewer, stated no further comments were issued, and explained that final development approval is contingent on completion of the Planning Hearing Officer (PHO) process.

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

##### **MOTION**

**Committee Member Trent Marchuck** made a motion to recommend approval of PHO-10-25--Z-287-85-8, with an additional stipulation to require that the landscape plan be presented to the South Mountain Village Planning Committee for review and comment prior to final site plan approval. **Committee Member Kay Shepard** seconded the motion.

**Ms. MacDonald** asked for confirmation that the applicant team would be required to return to the VPC to present the landscape plan. **Mr. Rogers** confirmed that the current stipulation would require the applicant team to return.

**Mr. Kessler** stated that the site is lush and heavily landscaped, emphasized that a significant amount of time had been spent with the landscape architect, and expressed concern about introducing delays to the project at this stage.

**Committee Member Marchuk** stated that he believes it is good practice to review landscape plans and asked whether requiring the applicant to return could potentially slow the project timeline. **Mr. Rogers** explained that requiring the applicant team to return to the VPC could potentially delay the project depending on the applicant's schedule.

**Mr. Kessler** explained that the project had already gone through two rounds of site plan review.

**Committee Member Marchuk** asked the applicant team whether requiring a return to the VPC to present the landscape plan would delay the project. **Ms. MacDonald** explained where the project currently stands in the permitting process and confirmed that such a requirement has the potential to delay the project. **Mr. Kessler** added that the project's financing is already secured, explained concerns that a delay could jeopardize the financing, and stated that the goal is to have the hotel open prior to the busy season from November through May.

**Committee Member Marchuk** explained that he was open to removing the stipulation requiring the applicant to return to the VPC for review and comment on the landscape plan and stated that he would still like to see the landscape plan shared with the VPC.

**Committee Member Marcia Busching** suggested that the applicant could send the landscape plan to staff, and that staff could distribute the plan to VPC members along with the applicant's contact information.

**Committee Member Busching** introduced a friendly amendment to remove the stipulation requiring the applicant to return to VPC for review and comment of the landscape plan. **Committee Member Marchuk** stated that he accepts the friendly amendment. **Committee Member Kay Shepard** stated that she accepts the friendly amendment.

**Committee Member Mark Beehler** stated that he respects the intent behind wanting the landscape plan to return to the VPC, explained that the VPC does not need to have the landscape plan return to the VPC in this case due to the project's unique circumstances, and stated that as a general practice the VPC values the opportunity to review landscape plans.

**Chair Arthur Greathouse** noted that the request is being considered at a relatively advanced stage of the process.

**Committee Member Busching** asked whether the landscape architect could attend a future meeting and stated that the landscape architect had presented to the Planning Commission.

**Committee Member Shepard** called for the question.

#### **VOTE**

**14-0**, motion to recommend approval of PHO-10-25--Z-287-85-8 passed with Committee Members Aldama, Alvarez, Beehler, Brooks, Brownell, Busching, F. Daniels, Falcon, Jackson, Marchuk, Shepard, Thompson, Viera, and Greathouse in favor.

#### **STAFF COMMENTS REGARDING VPC RECOMMENDATION:**

None.