



## Village Planning Committee Meeting Summary

**Z-TA-5-20-7**

### INFORMATION ONLY

<b>Date of VPC Meeting</b>	October 12, 2020
<b>Request</b>	Amend Section 1202.C. (Regulating Maps, Height Map) of the Phoenix Zoning Ordinance to replace the Downtown Code Height Map to amend height provisions from a maximum height of 80 to 140 feet to a maximum height of 285 feet at the southwest corner of 1st Street and Jackson Street.

#### VPC DISCUSSION:

*Eight speaker cards were submitted in favor wishing to speak.*

**Nick Wood**, representing the applicant with Snell & Wilmer, introduced himself and his client, Arizona Opportunities Industrialization Center (“OIC”). Mr. Wood shared that OIC has made significant contributions to the community for the past several decades, and the only solution to keep the organization alive is to find a sustainable and continuous source of income. Mr. Wood showed an aerial map of the subject site and context map, as well as historical photos of the warehouse building on the subject site. Mr. Wood shared renderings of the proposed project, stating that they are proposing to preserve the façade of the building and showed examples of similar projects in Philadelphia and Austin. Mr. Wood concluded his presentation by reviewing the design standards table and the conceptual site plan.

**Vice Chair Janey Pearl Starks** inquired about parking and how this proposal will impact the clients of OIC. **Mr. Wood** replied that there will be under and above-ground parking, OIC offices and training in the grocery store and restaurant will be on site, and students of OIC will have free parking.

**Eva Olivas** asked to hear from Gene Blue, CEO of OIC. **Gene Blue** shared that this proposal is an answer to prayers for funding and providing services to those in the community. Mr. Blue continued that the organization has previously relied on federal and state dollars which have diminished, and this project will enable the organization to generate funds themselves. Mr. Blue continued that the OIC mission is “Helping others to help themselves”, and this project will fulfill that mission and allow the organization to serve for many more generations to come.

**Public Comment:**

**Ron Williams** stated that he has served on the Arizona MLK Committee overseen by OIC, he has sent staff to development training at OIC, and Gene Blue and the OIC has brought hope to the community and through programs at OIC has allowed community members to learn skills to earn a living wage to support themselves and their families.

**Gregory Torrez** shared that this proposal is a unique partnership between a nonprofit that has done incredible work in the community and a developer, which will sustain the organization to continue their work for many years to come. Mr. Torrez added that OIC has aided those in the community who didn't have a voice and that this project is unique in the Warehouse District. Mr. Torrez concluded that he supports the project.

**Reginald Walton** stated that the OIC is a pillar of the community and this project has the potential to carry the OIC for another 50-100 years. Mr. Walton continued that while he understands the concerns of the Historic Preservation community, the building is in need of repair and the OIC is asking to take off the overlay and perhaps the designation can be restored, and asked the Village Planning Committee to support the proposal.

**Pastor Warren Stewart** stated that the African American Christian Clergy Coalition represents over 100 African American churches and clergy in Phoenix. Pastor Stewart shared that the proposed project provides OIC a way to continue to serve the community for decades to come. Pastor Stewart added that this project will be one of the few projects established by people of color in the overall development of Downtown Phoenix. Pastor Stewart added that he served on the OIC board for several years and knows the type of impactful work that they do and asked for the support of the committee on this proposal.

**Dr. Ann Hart** stated that she has been an educator in the city for over 35 years, and the work OIC has done, and hopefully will continue to do, will prepare workers for the 21st century. Dr. Hart continued that this project will help OIC prepare workers who face a skills shortage, and OIC uses best practices in instruction and provides GED courses for individuals who did not get the opportunity to attend school and who can ultimately be productive citizens.

**Timothy Wright** shared that he received training from OIC 17 years ago, and as a result had a successful career as a truck driver who now owns his own company. Mr. Wright concluded that OIC is a great resource to provide training to people to prepare them to enter the workforce.

**Damien Brewer** stated that he is also a product of OIC, and that friends and family have smiles on their faces when they leave OIC.

**Kennieth Wright** shared that he was basically raised in OIC, received his GED and truck driver certification through OIC and now owns his own business. Mr. Wright continued that he got his first job through OIC and thanked Mr. Blue and Ms. Wright.

**Mr. Wood** concluded that OIC is critically important to the fabric of the community. Mr. Wood continued that he has been a big champion of historic preservation, yet he is asking to remove a Historic Preservation designation and a conservation easement because the proposal to help sustain OIC generates a large beneficial impact to the community.