

MINUTES OF THE DEVELOPMENT REVIEW COMMISSION SEPTEMBER 13, 2011

Harry E. Mitchell Government Center
Tempe City Hall - City Council Chambers
31 E. 5th Street, Tempe, AZ 85281
6:00 PM

Commission Present:

Mike DiDomenico, Chair
Dennis Webb, Vice Chair
Monica Attridge
Tom Oteri
Peggy Tinsley
Jim Delton
Nick Miner

Commission Absent:

Paul Kent
Kolby Granville
Mario Torregrossa

City Staff Present:

Chris Anaradian, Director Community Development
Lisa Collins, Deputy Director Community Development
Steve Abrahamson, Planning & Zoning Coordinator
Ryan Levesque, Senior Planner
Lisa Novia, Administrative Assistant II

Chair DiDomenico called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m., which included the introduction of the Commission and City staff. It had been determined at Study Session that Item No. 2 would be heard.

1. **CONSIDERATION OF MEETING MINUTES: 08/23/11**

Minutes to be taken to the September 27th meeting due to an inadequate vote.

REGULAR AGENDA

2. Request for **323 VETERANS WAY (PL100181)** (Core Campus Communities Tempe I LLC, property owner; Gammage & Burnham, applicant) consisting of an 18-story and 16-story mixed-use building with two towers, including 423 dwelling units, 23,400 square feet of commercial/retail/restaurant space, 6,171 square feet of amenity space, and two levels of structured parking. Total gross floor building area of approximately 500,000 square feet. The site is 1.62 acres in size and is located at 323 East Veterans Way, in the MU-4, Mixed-Use High Density District with a Planned Area Development Overlay and within the Transportation Overlay. The request includes the following:

PAD11009 (ORDINANCE NO. 2011.45) – Amended Planned Area Development Overlay modifying the development standards for Phase I and II, for, an increase in the maximum allowed density from 364 to 423 units, an increase in the maximum allowed height for Phase II, Tower II from 170 feet to 183 feet, a reduction in required parking from 820 to 166 spaces, and deletion of previous conditions #5, #6, #9 and modification to condition #7 for PAD06005, located on 1.62 acres.

DPR11133 – Development Plan Review including site plan, building elevations and landscape for Phase I, consisting of the first three levels and the 195'-0" tower with 291 units (606 bedrooms).

STAFF REPORT: [DRCr_323VeteransWay_091311.pdf](#)

This case was presented by Chris Anaradian and Ryan Levesque and represented by Manjula Vaz of Gammage and Burnham (applicant).

Mr. Anaradian addressed the Commission with a presentation on the history of the site. Mr. Levesque then gave an overview of the current application which included proposed modifications to the recommended conditions of approval.

Manjula Vaz from Gammage & Burnham (applicant) made a brief presentation which was mainly centered around parking and height. Ms. Vaz indicated that this development is in the perfect location due to its proximity to the campus and Transit Center and residents living in this development will pay for parking. Ms. Vaz also showed several images of this building envelope from various locations near the downtown and how it will affect the view of A-mountain.

Ms. Vaz also indicated that they have worked with ASU in reference to the landscape design along College Avenue and have agreed to landscape ASU's small parcel just south of this site so that it will blend with this development.

Jim Plunkard, Hartshorne-Plunkard Architecture, gave a presentation on the site plan, landscaping, floor plans and building elevations.

Ms. Vaz spoke to the Commission in regards to student housing issues and concerns that have arisen with other recently built student housing developments and how those will be addressed with this newer development.

Marc Lifshin and Mr. Brian Neiswender (applicants) spoke to address Commissioner's concerns with regards to safety and security as it related to building layout and balconies.

Commissioner Miner questioned the applicants in regards to the retail being proposed and the lack of demand at this time for retail in this market.

Marc Lifshin indicated that they took this development to ICSC, a real estate conference, and had a tremendous response to this project in terms of possible interested tenants.

Commissioner Miner asked what the possible adaptive reuse of phase II could be if the housing market changes and how the parking would be affected.

Mr. Lifshin indicated that the planned use for phase II is the same as phase I.

Ms. Vaz also indicated that they have considered that 10 or 15 years down the line, it would be possible to convert these apartments to condos for a "for sale" product, but it will most likely always be residential. She also stated that she doesn't feel that parking would be negatively affected due to bed reduction lowering the number of residents, therefore parking numbers would also re-adjust.

Commissioner Tinsley questioned Mr. Lifshin as to what they based their assumption on that there would always be a need for student housing downtown as ASU is moving many colleges away from the downtown area.

Mr Lifshin stated that they do a great deal of market research and with the proximity of this development to the Transportation Center, makes it an ideal location for all students whether they go to this campus or commute to one outside of this area.

Mr. Lifshin and Mr. Neiswender also indicated that should there be a need for more parking, it is possible to adjust phase II and increase parking areas and reduce beds.

Commissioner Delton questioned the traffic report and how 2000 trips a day can be generated if people are not driving and parking onsite.

Paul Basha, traffic engineer indicated that they were conservative in their estimate and that the purpose of the parking study is different than the purpose of the traffic study. The purpose of the traffic study is to determine if traffic signals, turn arrows or other traffic control devices might be necessary. The study doesn't necessarily predict there will be 2000 trips per day, but the intent is to show what the current infrastructure can handle and what mitigation, if any, might be necessary.

Chair DiDomenico opened the hearing for public input.

Mr. Bruce Genzburg, resident/business owner, spoke to his concerns regarding parking, daily traffic as well as traffic due to special events.

Chair DiDomenico closed the hearing to public input.

Ms. Vaz returned to address the issues raised by Mr. Genzburg. She indicated that they are well aware of the traffic obstacles in this area and feel that this development will not bring more cars into the area.

Chair DiDomenico stated that he would like to see more projects like this in the downtown area so that adults and non-students can capture the downtown experience.

Chris Anaradian addressed concerns regarding the types and mix of developments planned for the downtown, parking. He indicated that although the economy is not what it once was, it's not the City's intent to change the vision for the downtown area which includes the lake and the areas surrounding ASU. The City is completely comfortable with having student housing in this location for the next thirty years.

Mr. Anaradian spoke to the future reconstruction of ASU Stadium and indicated that although it is not certain, the City is working and cooperating with ASU to make that a reality. ASU is considering some type of shade covering over the stadium, so views from the balconies of this development will most likely not be possible.

Mr. Anaradian also spoke to the concerns regarding parking and special event traffic. He indicated that it's his philosophy that if you make more parking you will bring more cars. This site is unique and the developer is willing to take the risk with this location that they will fill the rooms with people that don't want cars. It is also the City's philosophy that design is not built around special events, we design the special event around our existing infrastructure.

Chair DiDomenico questioned Mr. Lifshin as to the current leasing and parking situation at The Vue.

Mr. Lifshin indicated that rooms are 100% leased but they have never been 100% leased in parking.

Commissioner Delton indicated he felt it is a good project but has concerns regarding the proposed parking for phase I and designing this project strictly for ASU students.

Vice Chair Webb stated he is also concerned with the building of student housing downtown.

Commissioner Oteri is concerned with parking.

Commissioner Tinsley indicated she liked the design and although she understood Chair DiDomenico's point in reference to building housing downtown that is centered around the student population, she felt this is a great location for housing due to its proximity to transit and the campus. She also stated that it will important to have retail that people living in this building, as well as neighboring buildings, will be using; such as, a grocery store or drycleaner.

Commissioner Attridge stated she liked the design but is concerned about the parking and can't support the project without additional parking.

Commissioner Miner indicated his concern with the student geared housing in downtown.

Chair DiDomenico stated he liked the design and had no problem with the use, height or density but again is concerned with parking. He also indicated to Ms. Vaz that it would appear the Commission has little concerns with the Development Plan Review, so if they would so desire, the vote could be split and they would have the option to bring the PAD back to the Commission to answer the concerns in regards to parking.

Ms. Vaz indicated that this project is on a very tight time-frame and they are comfortable with the parking ratios, even though the applicant understands the Commission is not. Ms. Vaz stated that in the interest of keeping this case moving forward, the applicant would find it acceptable for them to approve the Development Plan Review and deny the PAD. She also indicated that the second phase will be back before the Commission and if at that time the parking is not working, they will modify the parking ratios.

Chair DiDomenico asked staff if a condition could be put in place to specify that the footprint for phase II could be used solely for parking for the retail customers and the residents in phase I until phase II is built. The applicant agreed to the condition.

Ms. Collins clarified that should that vacant area be used for parking, the site plan must be approved and meet the requirements of the Zoning and Development Code.

On a motion by Commissioner Tinsley and seconded by Commissioner Delton, the Commission with a vote of 4-3 (Vice Chair Webb and Commissioners Attridge and Oteri dissented) approved the Development Plan Review as recommended in the staff report.

On a motion by Commissioner Tinsley and seconded by Commissioner Delton, the Commission voted to approve the Planned Area the Commission with a vote of 3-4, the motion failed with dissenting votes from Chair DiDomenico, Vice Chair Webb and Commissioners Attridge and Oteri.

3. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chris Anaradian stated that the City Council will be going on a retreat in October and he would like to schedule a future Study Session to report back as to the vision of the City and the outcome of that retreat.

The hearing adjourned at 8:40 p.m.

Prepared by: Lisa Novia, Administrative Assistant II
Reviewed by: Lisa Collins, Deputy Director Community Development Department



Lisa Collins, Deputy Director Community Development Department

APPROVED