



Town of Paradise Valley

6401 E Lincoln Dr
Paradise Valley, AZ 85253

Minutes – Draft

Planning Commission

Chair Karen Liepmann
Commissioner Charles Covington
Commissioner Timothy Dickman
Commissioner Pamela Georgelos
Commissioner Kristina Locke
Commissioner William Nassikas
Commissioner James Rose

Tuesday, April 18, 2023

6:00 PM

Council Chambers

1. CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL

Chair Liepmann called the meeting to order at 6:02 PM.

Present 7 – Chair Karen Liepmann
Commissioner Charles Covington
Commissioner Timothy Dickman
Commissioner Pamela Georgelos
Commissioner Kristina Locke
Commissioner William Nassikas
Commissioner James Rose

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT

Senior Planner George Burton
Community Development Director Lisa Collins
Planning Manager Paul Michaud

2. EXECUTIVE SESSION

3. APPROVAL OR AMENDMENT OF MINUTES

A. 23-130 Approval of the April 4, 2023 Planning Commission Meeting Minutes

A motion was made by Commissioner Locke, seconded by Commissioner Covington, to approve the minutes. The motion carried with the following vote:

Aye: 7 – Chair Liepmann, Commissioner Covington, Commissioner Dickman, Commissioner Georgelos, Commissioner Locke, Commissioner Nassikas, Commissioner Rose

4. PRESENTATIONS

A. 23-124 Discussion Presentation by Scottsdale Plaza Resort Representatives & Discussion with Planning Commission on Scottsdale Plaza Resort Intermediate Special Use Permit, 7200 N Scottsdale Road

Mr. Michaud provided an overview of the item. He mentioned that the Commission requested the presentation on parking and architecture, and the applicant would be leading the discussion. Although a parking and traffic study are not required by the Zoning Ordinance, these are generally submitted and reviewed with an intermediate amendment. The Statement of Direction from the Council states that the Planning Commission has the traffic and parking studies as a resource to understand the scope of the project and if applicable provide general input should parking and circulation affect the design or impact to nearby residents. In terms of architecture, there were no specific directives, but the General Plan policies attached to the staff report highlighted the need for context-appropriate, high-quality design. The Commission was only required to request what was necessary in terms of plans and documents.

Paul Basha, a consulting traffic engineer, presented the findings of the traffic and parking studies for the Plaza Resort renovations. He introduced several people representing Highgate Hotels, including Dina Winder, the property owner; Michael Stromer, the architect with HKS in Los Angeles; and Tom Galvin, an attorney with Rose Law Group. Mr. Basha presented an aerial photograph of the existing property and noted the substantial difference between the available parking and the needed parking. He then focused on the details of the parking occupancy count and presented the parking rates needed for hotel guests and conference room users. He listed the assumptions made about how many parking spaces were needed for each property use and subtracted the parking spaces needed for people who were not hotel guests. The initial calculation was that the property needed 488 parking spaces, but after examining shared parking models, the recommendation was 571 parking spaces. The proposed renovation would remove 255 parking spaces, leaving 483 remaining parking spaces. To reach the required 571 parking spaces, they proposed adding 88 underground parking spaces and 85 additional valet parking.

Commissioner Nassikas asked about how the parking places for staff were calculated, given that the new restaurants could have more employees than the hotel.

Mr. Basha explained that the employee-parked vehicles were included in the parking occupancy count and that the same rate for future analysis included the employees. He also mentioned that there were no designated parking areas for employee parking, but there was sufficient parking for all users of the property, and the on-site manager would designate where employees should park.

Commissioner Georgelos asked about the expectation of staff and traffic with the redevelopment.

Mr. Basha explained that the parking rate for the three new restaurants was 121 spaces, which was sufficient for diners and employees. The number of seats for the restaurants was not yet known, but they were high-end restaurants with spacious seats and tables designed for leisurely dining.

Commissioner Dickman expressed concern about the low number of parking spaces allocated for the restaurants. Mr. Basha clarified that this was in addition to the number of parking spaces occupied by hotel guests who were also using the restaurants.

Commissioner Locke asked about the percentage of conference room users who are hotel guests and expressed concern about the parking availability for local conference attendees who drive their own cars.

Mr. Basha explained that the plaza resort was intended for hotel guests to use the conference rooms and that the 20% of conference room users that they were suggesting as needing parking spaces was already a high number. He also clarified that the ballroom would still be used regularly, but the diners would be hotel guests.

Commissioner Rose questioned this reasoning and suggested that banquets could have outside attendees.

Mr. Basha reiterated that each hotel had its own intended audience, and the plaza resort was designed for hotel guests to stay in hotel rooms and use conference rooms.

Commissioner Rose asked if the resort would only book the banquet into their conference room if guests stayed at the resort.

Dina Winder, representing Highgate Hotel, explained that preference went to groups bringing in guest room and banquet revenue, but they would book non-hotel guests if the ballroom was available. However, this was rare since the business that was booked into the room was generally associated with a group staying at the resort.

Commissioner Rose suggested that 59 more parking spaces might not be enough for larger banquets with up to 500 people.

Mr. Basha clarified that the resort had agreements with two other properties for extra parking, and parking would be accommodated weeks and months in advance.

Commissioner Nassikas questioned if valet parking at other locations was the planned practice for big events, and Mr. Basha confirmed.

Ms. Winder explained that they would staff accordingly and had enough people going back and forth for these types of events.

Mr. Basha explained that events at the resort are planned in advance and that the resort has arrangements with nearby locations for extra parking. Commissioner Rose requested a breakdown of parking spaces needed for guests, restaurants, ballrooms, and the spa and also wanted to know how the number of employees.

Mr. Basha responded that offsite parking was not needed but was provided in response to a request from the Town of Paradise Valley. He also showed a slide that indicated 62% of parking spaces on the property were unused.

Commissioner Dickman asked if the yellow stacked bar showing parking for meeting rooms in the shared parking model was sufficient for Friday night events, and Ms. Basha confirmed it was for the meeting rooms.

Chair Liepmann asked if the green spaces showing parking for the spa in the shared parking model would be available in the evening, and Mr. Basha explained they would be because the spa would be closed.

Mr. Michaud reminded the Commissioners to keep in mind that space usage was not always straightforward, as someone in a restaurant or meeting room might use parking spaces designated for other areas.

Commissioner Georgelos understood that the resort's standard practice was to have most of its guests use the accommodations as guests of the hotel, with deviations for ballroom events. The Commission was looking at parking lot models and not exact usage. Commissioner Georgelos noted that the resort had a lot of unused parking spaces in the past.

Chair Liepmann asked about the restaurants and whether they would serve lunch or breakfast.

Ms. Winder responded that they had not yet identified the operators but anticipated one would serve both lunch and dinner while the other two would only serve dinner.

Michael Stromer, an architect for the project, introduced his firm to the Commissioners, highlighting their international presence and sector-based practices. He presented some of their past projects, which included five-star resorts and urban projects worldwide, emphasizing their quality of work. Mr. Stromer then focused on specific areas of the project they were asked to provide. He showcased the proposed scale and size of the restaurants and how they would stand out to serve both the hotel guests and the local community. He also presented the 'Big Sister' lobby building, a new building that would provide a welcoming approach to guests. The building was inspired by mid-century modern architecture

and intended to have a different character to provide clear wayfinding. Lastly, Mr. Stromer talked about the new guest room building, which was replacing the surface parking area. It was influenced by the existing architecture and used related materiality and architectural vocabulary to blend in but not replicate.

Commissioner Nassikas thanked Mr. Stromer for his presentation and asked about the red tile roofing materials on the existing buildings.

Mr. Stromer confirmed that the clay tile roofs on the guest room buildings would remain, except for the 'Little Sister' porte-cochere, which would be redesigned to provide a better welcome experience.

Commissioner Dickman asked for clarification on whether the old buildings would be painted to match the new ones.

Mr. Stromer replied that the plan was to freshen them up and bring in more natural light.

Commissioner Nassikas asked about the possibility of the restaurant operators adding their feel to the architecture.

Ms. Winder responded that each restaurant would have its own feel but would stay in the same style.

Commissioner Georgelos asked how the old buildings would blend with the new buildings in a resort renovation project.

Mr. Stromer explained that while some areas would have a more midcentury feel, there would be no major face-lifts of existing buildings to get them to match. Instead, different architectural styles would allow for unique guest experiences.

Commissioner Georgelos wanted a cohesive theme running through the resort.

Mr. Stromer suggested that materiality and wayfinding would tie everything together visually.

Commissioner Dickman asked if the resort would have one or two brands.

Ms. Winder explained that there would be two separate brands, but the same team would operate both.

Commissioner Rose asked if the three restaurants in the resort renovation project would be built at the same time or as they were leased.

Ms. Winder explained that they were still working through the phasing of the project, which was complicated and would be done in phases.

Because of the underground garage, all three restaurants were expected to be built at the same time.

Commissioner Nassikas welcomed the team to Paradise Valley and thanked them for taking the time to answer questions.

5. STUDY SESSION ITEMS

6. PUBLIC HEARINGS – LEGISLATIVE ACTIONS

7. ACTION ITEMS

A. 23-131 Discussion and Possible Action of Club Estates 7 Lot Split (LS-21-02). 5639 E Joshua Tree Lane (APN: 169-32-932)

Mr. Burton provided an overview of the item. This was a lot split proposal to the Commission for review and action. The applicant wanted to subdivide a two-acre parcel into two lots but was requesting two deviations from the Town Code. The Commission is acting as a recommending body and will forward a recommendation to the Town Council for review and action. Lot one maintained the existing home, but the Ramada must be removed to comply with the floor ratio requirements. New lot two will be one net acres and will be required the removal of part of the existing fence wall to comply with the code. The applicant requested two deviations of unorthodox shaped lots and the new lot line not perpendicular to the right-of-way, which staff did not support. The Commission expressed concerns about the modifications and the applicant provided two options in response. However, neither option eliminated the requested deviations. The Commission was given three potential actions: a recommendation of denial, recommendation of approval subject to stipulations, or continuation of the application for further review.

Commissioner Dickman asked if the stipulations in the recommendation for approval were compliant with one of the options.

Mr. Burton explained that the stipulations meant everything would be in compliance with the submitted plans and documents.

Ms. Collins added that the stipulations would mean recommending in favor of the deviation.

Commissioner Nassikas asked if the demolition of the house was part of the deviation, but Mr. Burton clarified that it was not and only the Ramada will be demolished to comply with the lot coverage requirements.

Commissioner Dickman clarified that the Commission was only asked to respond to the applicant's request and not evaluate alternatives.

Ms. Collins explained that the only thing the Commission was looking at was whether to support the deviation or not.

Chair Liepmann asked if the Town Council could overrule the Commission's recommendation of denial and Mr. Burton confirmed this. They also discussed the possibility of the applicant coming back with other options if the recommendation was denied.

Mr. Prodanov explained that the project had been in the making for two years and they had exhausted many options to come up with a solution for the owner to keep the house and make the necessary site improvements for the Town to dedicate the drainage. The owner did not plan on building anything on the lot soon but wanted the option for his family to build in the future. He explained that the two options were typical in the Town of Paradise Valley, acknowledging that lot lines did not strictly follow the code. He suggested that if the Commission considered the options, they would have the appearance of a straight line with the site wall, legal access to meet the intent of the code (even though it might not be visually apparent to other homeowners in the neighborhood).

A motion was made by Commissioner Dickman, seconded by Commissioner Covington, to have the applicant work with staff and come up with a proposal that will be supported by the staff. The motion carried with the following vote:

Aye: 7 – Chair Liepmann, Commissioner Covington, Commissioner Dickman, Commissioner Georgelos, Commissioner Locke, Commissioner Nassikas, Commissioner Rose

8. STAFF REPORTS

9. PUBLIC BODY REPORTS

10. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Mr. Michaud stated that the next meeting would be held on May 2 and that one item would be discussed.

11. ADJOURNMENT

Motion for Adjournment made at 7:25 PM.

A motion was made by Commissioner Nassikas, seconded by Commissioner Georgelos, to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried with the following vote:

Aye: 7 – Chair Liepmann, Commissioner Covington, Commissioner Dickman, Commissioner Georgelos, Commissioner Locke, Commissioner Nassikas, Commissioner Rose

Paradise Valley Planning Commission

By: _____
Cherise Fullbright, Secretary