

Hillside Preservation Discussion and Options

I. PRESERVING PARADISE VALLEY'S MOUNTAINS

A. PV's Mountains Are Critical Elements of Paradise Valley's Identity, Quality of Life, and Fiscal Health.

1. PV is known as a low-density, high-quality residential community in a beautiful desert setting with mountain views.
2. Virtually all residents of Paradise Valley have views of Camelback, Mummy Mountain and/or the North Phoenix Mountain Preserve.
3. Preservation of PV's mountains is central to the Town's General Plan.
4. Preservation of Mountains from development is a core value, enshrined in the preamble of the Town's Hillside Zoning Ordinance.
5. Preservation of Camelback was a priority for the legacy of Barry Goldwater.
6. Current residents and Town officials are stewards of that legacy. It is our responsibility to preserve it and pass it on to future residents.
7. Paradise Valley's mountain views and ambiance are important assets that attracted many of us to call Paradise Valley home.
8. Preservation of PV's mountain views are important to maintaining property values of the large investments that PV residents have made in their homes and of open space in our community, as evidenced by the many real estate advertisements that highlight the mountain views from property in PV.
9. Mountain views are critical to Paradise Valley's resorts that are essential to the Town's finances and enable Paradise Valley to operate without a municipal property tax and to provide essential services such as police protection.
10. 40% of the Town's revenue comes from Paradise Valley resorts.
11. Paradise Valley's resorts feature Paradise Valley's mountains in their marketing materials, in their design, orientation, and view scapes, and some of them even in their names, e.g. Camelback Inn, Mountain Shadows, etc.
12. Visitors from the Midwest, Northwest, Canada or East Coast do not have anything that compares to Paradise Valley's ambiance created by our mountains.
13. Paradise Valley's proximity to and views of our mountains are our defining feature. They are what make Paradise Valley unique and should be protected.

14. Residents have repeatedly spoken out with frustration and concern about the potential threats to the Mountains. Thousands have voiced support, shown up at meetings and written support for the mountains.

B. Paradise Valley Mountain Views and Ambiance Are Currently Threatened.

1. There are a small number of hillside lots that have never been built upon because their locations made their development economically infeasible, are challenging lots and because of safety considerations.
2. Some of them are located high on Camelback and many are on Mummy Mountain. Some of them are on steep terrain. They have not been built upon previously because of the high cost of construction on steep, high terrain, drainage, and safety challenges presented by construction on existing residents below.
3. Many people, including Town staff and officials, in the past assumed that the difficult hillside lots would never be developed.
4. The current economic climate and appreciation of property values now makes attractive the concept of developing the remaining hillside lots, despite safety, drainage and other aesthetic considerations.
5. Due to the high cost of grading for driveways and building pad sites, the type of development plans emerging for some of the few remaining high hillside properties are for large projects that Paradise Valley residents find offensive and antithetical to Paradise Valley's views, ambiance and values. Some would directly diminish the quality of life in Paradise Valley.

For example, some recent projects proposed for lots high on Camelback have included the following:

- a. a 100-yard long structure to be erected on concrete buttresses built on a 53-degree boulder field high up in the middle of Camelback Mountain, above and just west of the Sanctuary Resort.
 - b. a 600-foot long cantilevered driveway blasted or jack-hammered high up on the middle of Camelback Mountain to reach the 100-yard long house described above.
 - c. a large house on Mummy Mountain that would over 20% disturbance of the Mountain and it was twice the variation from hillside ordinance.
 - d. a residential structure 64-feet high (the height of a six-story office building) with two cantilevered decks and a concrete retaining wall nearly 20-feet high in the middle of the north slope of Camelback.
6. Many of the remaining lots are owned by speculators or investors, some located out of state. They do not plan to live in PV. They seek to push through construction designs

to maximize the development potential and then sell the property with an approved construction design at a profit, often seeking variances to the Hillside Zoning Ordinance to maximize size and profit.

II. PROPOSALS

A. TRAINING AND ENSURING COMPLIANCE WITH HILLSIDE CODE, VALUES OF PARADISE VALUE AND TOWN'S GENERAL PLAN

- a. The Town's Board of Adjustment and Staff continue to hold strong on compliance with Hillside Zoning Ordinance and safety considerations and appropriately restrict variances on new hillside construction within parameters of the law and ordinances.
- b. Implement Training

B. REINVIGORATE MUMMY MOUNTAIN PRESERVE TRUST

- a. Expand from five to seven trustees
- b. Evaluate and Update Mission of Trust as needed
- c. Connection with Camelback Hillside Properties?

C. A PROPOSAL FOR A SOLUTION: CITIZEN'S COMMITTEE

1. Tap Paradise Valley's human resources to formulate a solution. Paradise Valley's natural beauty is complemented by the talent of its residents. Paradise Valley residents include distinguished people from all walks of life, with a wealth of experience and a fountain of ideas, including people with experience in:

- architecture and design;
- construction;
- public and private finances;
- conservation;
- fundraising;
- business;
- law and government affairs;
- media, public relations, and public policy.

Our Town is full of active business and financial professionals and retirees with lifelong experiences who have lots of ideas we may have never thought of. We should tap into it and use the talent.

The Town has residents who have expertise to assist in this discussion to determine proposals that could work and that residents would support.

2. Form a Committee or Task Force of Paradise Valley residents to examine the challenges to PV's mountains, the resources available for solutions, and to make recommendations regarding preservation of Paradise Valley's mountain views and ambiance.

- a. The Committee would not be permanent, but would be given a limited time period through May 2018 to make its recommendations. They would need to be appointed and start quickly.
- b. There are many, many alternatives for funding sources.
- c. Let citizen committee figure out and recommend proposals that have been vetted and would be supported. This may or may not include a ballot initiative to residents.
- d. A strong and facilitative Chair is essential to the success of the Committee.

III. BACKGROUND REGARDING EXAMPLES OF CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT PROCESS TO ADDRESS COMMUNITY CONCERNS

IF one of the recommendations involves a ballot initiative, here are some concepts involving those efforts. When a city/town initiates a process to send an issue to the voters for approval, it is important to conduct a public process to fully vet the issue and obtain citizen buy-in.

An example of two specific efforts to accomplish this—a capital projects and public safety sales tax in Avondale and a transportation tax in Peoria.

In each case, a Citizens Committee was appointed to review issues and make a recommendation to the Council as to what, if anything, should be referred to the voters for approval. The committee activities were coordinated by city staff and supported by their retained consultant who assisted with the committee process and community outreach.

A. STEPS IN ONE TYPE OF CITIZEN INVOLVEMENT PROCESS: AVONDALE.

1. Mayor and Council decide to move forward to appoint a Citizens Committee to address a particular issue
2. Mayor appoints the Committee Chair
3. Councilmembers appoint 2-3 constituents to serve on the Committee
4. Mayor, Council and Manager determine which staff member will head the effort and which ones will participate
5. Mayor, Manager, Chair (and perhaps a Councilmember or two) determine agenda and schedule. Committee will meet 4-6 times (organizational meeting, policy discussions (2-3 meetings), funding options (1-2 meetings) and a wrap up meeting. All meetings are open to the public to observe.
6. After a recommendation is made, the staff and Committee will conduct 3-4 public meetings (in different locations) to present their plan to the public, answer questions and obtain feedback.
7. The Committee will meet again to review the public meetings and determine if any changes need to be made in their recommendation.
8. Staff and City Attorney draft ballot language to be presented to Mayor and Council.

**B. STEPS USED IN PEORIA CITIZEN PROCESS INVOLVED A FOCUS GROUP ON
BALLOT LANGUAGE AND PLAN**

1. Mayor and Council refer recommendation to the ballot.
2. The Committee members will become advocates and participate on the campaign committee. The Chair of the Citizens Committee will serve as the chair of the campaign
3. The Town will continue to provide non-advocacy material to the public and answer inquiries from the public. Materials will be posted on social media.