



Town of Paradise Valley

6401 E Lincoln Dr
Paradise Valley, AZ 85253

Minutes – Final

Planning Commission

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

Tuesday, May 2, 2023

6:00 PM

Council Chambers

1. CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL

Chair Liepmann called the meeting to order at 6:00 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

Community Development Director Lisa Collins
Planning Manager Paul Michaud
Administrative Assistant Cherise Fullbright

2. EXECUTIVE SESSION

3. APPROVAL OR AMENDMENT OF MINUTES

4. PRESENTATIONS

5. STUDY SESSION ITEMS

6. PUBLIC HEARINGS – LEGISLATIVE ACTIONS

A. 23-141 Discussion and Possible Action
Scottsdale Plaza Intermediate Special Use Permit (SUP-22-02)
7200 N Scottsdale Road

Mr. Michaud provided an overview of the item. The proposed changes include a refresh of existing buildings and the construction of new ones,

adding 64 guest units for a total of 464 guest units. The plan is in compliance with zoning ordinances, and the lot size is 36.5 acres. The proposed units per acre are 12.8, which is within the range of other resorts in the area. The proposed design features clean lines, natural and artificial materials, graphic shapes, and indoor-outdoor spaces. The proposal includes new restaurants, a lobby pavilion, guest rooms, a spa, a fitness center, and event lawns. The setback guidelines are met for all proposed buildings.

Next, Mr. Michaud discussed the landscaping and perimeter buffers. Most of the buffers would remain unchanged, except for an increase in the buffer for a portion along Indian Bend Road, which would move from 60 feet to 100 feet (the guideline is 50 feet). The buffer would shrink to 16 feet two inches along Indian Bend Road south of the restaurants, but this is mitigated by the large setback of the Some of the landscape buffer area east of the proposed restaurants and north of the driveway on Scottsdale Road would be reduced, but there would be full compliance with the Town's landscape plan for count number and shrubs and a variety of plant materials. The restaurant buildings will be one story and set back 100 feet to Scottsdale Road and 65 feet to Indian Bend Road which is more than the Special Use Permit Guideline of 40 feet. Lastly, Mr. Michaud discussed the lighting for the development.

Commissioner Locke asked for clarification on whether they received the detailed landscape plans, lighting plans, and signage plans from the applicant.

Chair Liepmann stated that the applicant provided everything they asked for, and staff confirmed that the application included all items needed for review and decision-making. Mr. Michaud noted that the signage will be deferred in accordance with Stipulation 55 of the ordinance.

Mr. Michaud then discussed the lighting plan, stating that the applicant provided additional information and is proposing to keep most of the existing lantern-style lighting, with shields required along the perimeter. The new ground-mounted angle light is also within the Special Use Permit Guideline.

Mr. Michaud stated that the noise study meets professional standards, and the resort will operate within the noise provisions. There are many stipulations related to noise, construction-related mechanical equipment, maintenance, and lighting limits. He continued that on parking, the proposal provides for 571 parking spaces, with added capacity for valet that increases the onsite parking to 656 parking spaces in addition to parking agreements with other off-site properties.

Commissioner Georgelos expressed concerns about the parking lot's capacity, given the large seating capacity of the restaurants and the number of employees.

Mr. Michaud reviewed the stipulations in the draft ordinance.

Commissioner Dickman asked about unified management and the estimated completion time for the project.

Jordan Rose, with Rose Law Group on behalf of the applicant, confirmed that the resort would be under one management with a similar name and that the hotel and restaurants would be phased for renovation while portions of the hotel remained open.

Commissioner Nassikas asked if the hotel would be in operation during construction.

Ms. Rose confirmed that the intent is to shut down a portion of the resort and remain operational in another portion, which would be good for the economics of the Town. The project included adding a world-class spa, a competitive workout facility, underground parking to replace unsightly parking, and three new restaurants. There would be no ownership units, and no building would be taller than the current buildings. Highgate had removed a second story viewing deck based on community input. The proposed parking had been more than adequate, and the resort had been focusing on in-house conferences. The survey showed that most hotel guests had used rideshare or taxis during their stay, and only 79% of guests needed one parking space for every 2 to 3 rooms. The project also included enhancing the views of the mountains and providing 60% open space, which is more than the required 40%. Ms. Rose thanked the Commissioners for their time and invited questions.

Commissioner Nassikas thanked Ms. Rose for validating the parking plan.

Ms. Rose appreciated the communication between the staff and Commissioners in clarifying the plan.

Commissioner Georgelos was concerned about the number of parking spaces for the new restaurants, spa, and conference facility. She thought the numbers were significant and raised the question of whether there would be enough parking spaces.

Ms. Rose apologized for the confusing information and offered to have the traffic engineers address the Commissioner's specific concerns.

Commissioner Locke requested the Town's traffic consultant to answer the parking questions.

Cole Smith, a parking expert with Kimley Horn, stated that he was a third-party reviewer for the application. He acknowledged earlier concerns about restaurant parking demand, noting that the ratio of one space per 120 square feet is comparable to national standards. He also pointed out that the restaurant peaks are expected to occur in the evening and that the spa will close at 6 PM, freeing up parking spaces for restaurant

guests. He believed that the applicant had shown due diligence in presenting their analysis with real-time data and industry best practices and recommended approval.

Commissioner Georgelos asked if the pool in the spa will also close at 6 PM.

Ms. Rose confirmed that the whole building, including the spa and pool, will close at 6 PM.

Commissioner Georgelos also raised concerns about parking demand for the restaurants.

Mr. Smith clarified that the analysis was based on 57,000 square feet of restaurant space and a ratio of one parking space per 76 square feet of restaurant space, including employees. The restaurant seating capacity was clarified to be 250 indoors and 50 outdoors, with 45 employees per restaurant.

Commissioner Georgelos expressed concern about the large number of diners and reduced number of parking spaces at the resort and asked for clarification.

Ms. Rose explained that a traffic study had been conducted by a nationally acclaimed traffic engineer consultant, and the numbers had been scrutinized and updated three times.

Paul Basha, the traffic engineer for the applicant, assured Commissioner Georgelos that the numbers were conservative and explained that the assumption of one parking space for every 76 square feet was a highly conservative estimate. He also mentioned that there would be gaps between tables being served, and not all diners would arrive in individual cars. The conference room and spa fitness area also had additional parking spaces that restaurant diners could use.

Commissioner Georgelos agreed that the number of parking spaces per diner was conservative.

Commissioner Rose expressed appreciation to Mr. Basha and Ms. Rose for updating the numbers but also expressed concern that the numbers presented did not match the table in the parking study. He pointed out that the table had included parking requirements for the fitness and spa area, which had been left out of the presentation.

Mr. Basha clarified that the only difference between the numbers presented and those in the table was the number of parking spaces required for resort guests and employees.

Commissioner Rose also expressed concern that the number of parking spaces allotted for restaurant guests seemed low, especially considering the assumption that 60% of guests would be coming from the resort.

Mr. Basha explained that the assumption was that not all 900 seats in the restaurants would be filled back-to-back continuously.

Commissioner Rose requested that the numbers be reexamined before being presented to Council to ensure they were realistic and representative. He also acknowledged that Highgate was a respected hotel owner and management company and that he had no doubts they could handle the parking situation.

Mr. Basha responded that they had been conservative in their calculations and had included a surplus of parking spaces.

Commissioner Locke asked about the percentage of employees who would use parking spaces.

Mr. Basha responded that it was 36% and that it was based on actual numbers for the Scottsdale Plaza Resort.

The Planning Commission discussed the construction of the restaurant superstructures and whether there would be empty shells if the restaurants were not leased.

Ms. Rose stated that Highgate would not build them if they were not leased and that it was their intention to build out the restaurants as early as possible.

No public comment was provided.

A motion was made by Commissioner Dickman, seconded by Commissioner Nassikas, to approve the application with stipulations as discussed. The motion carried with the following vote:

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

7. ACTION ITEMS

8. STAFF REPORTS

9. PUBLIC BODY REPORTS

10. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Mr. Michaud stated that the next meeting would be held on May 16 and that one item was scheduled.

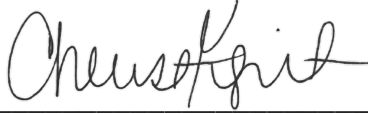
11. ADJOURNMENT

Motion for Adjournment made at 7:37 PM.

A motion was made by Commissioner Locke, 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