



Legislation Text

File #: 20-450, **Version:** 1

TO: Mayor Bien-Willner and Town Council Members

FROM: Jill Keimach, Town Manager
Paul Michaud, Planning Manager

DATE: December 3, 2020

CONTACT:

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AGENDA TITLE:

Discussion of a Major Special Use Permit Amendment (SUP-18-05)
7101 E Lincoln Drive - Smoke Tree Resort

PLANNING COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION:

The Planning Commission forwarded a recommendation of denial of the Smoke Tree development application (SUP-18-05) at their public hearing held on November 17, 2020. This vote was 4 to 3 for denial (Chairman Wainwright, Commissioner Wastchak, and Commissioner Lewis in support of SUP-18-05 with the added changes related to reducing the total hotel keys from 122 to 115 by combining third floor units and requiring a basement dining area). Reasons stated for denial included that the density (at twice the Special Use Permit Guideline and higher than other Town resorts) was out of character and drove the site plan design in not meeting other guidelines (such as more impervious coverage, less perimeter landscape buffers than typically approved, and more impact on parking and traffic). Other reasons for those recommending denial included the assumption in the traffic study that 65% of trips would occur from Scottsdale Road, that the proposed amenities lacked the high quality design of a world-class resort as envisioned in the General Plan (referencing no spa, golf course, or similar amenities), that the 4,000 square feet of event space is too large for the size of the site, and that the pool is small. For those Planning Commission Members in support, they noted that the density is appropriate for its location adjoining the City of Scottsdale and mostly non-residential uses and the proposed uses fill a niche that will create resort variety for the Town.

REQUEST

Gentree LLC, the property owner of the Smoke Tree Resort, is seeking redevelopment of the property located at 7101 East Lincoln Drive (APN 174-64-003A) via a major amendment to the site's existing Special Use Permit - Resort zoning (SUP-18-05). The application is attached as Attachment A. The proposed redevelopment of this property will be a complete demolition of all existing structures and construction of a resort.

MEETING PURPOSE:

Discuss the Planning Commission recommendation on SUP-18-05 and provide direction on future

work session and a public hearing date for Council action.

CHANGES FROM JUNE 2020 STATEMENT OF DIRECTION (SOD):

The Town Council last reviewed SUP-18-05 on September 10, 2020 when the Council extended the Planning Commission review from no later than September 30, 2020 to no later than November 17, 2020. Prior to this meeting, the Council discussed and issued the SOD in June 2020. The major changes from the proposed project presented with the June 2020 SOD and the proposed project attached with this staff report are the following:

- The applicant agreed to combine the 15 guest rooms on the third level into larger family suites reducing the plan from 122 units to 115 units;
- The project includes a below grade dining experience of not less than 400 square feet (similar to Hermosa Inn) within the allowable 3,200 square feet for restaurant use;
- The Third Floor Communal Area changed from a rooftop lounge to a guest-only fitness area and lounge with kitchenette (with stipulations to prohibit alcohol from being served on and importation of alcohol from off property, along with restricting use of the outdoor area between 10:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m.);
- Addition of a reliever exit-only driveway south of the proposed main driveway along Quail Run Road;
- The landscape plan changed to stagger trees along the shared property line with Andaz resort to create a denser visual screen of the proposed buildings (with verification that the existing oleanders along the Andaz resort site will remain); and
- The light fixtures within the rights-of-way were removed, along with removing some fixtures illuminating architectural features of the buildings.

As reviewed by Council previously, the applicant filed the original application for SUP-18-05 in May 2018. Council issued the first SOD in October 2018 based on a different site plan. The Planning Commission discussed the first proposed plan and forwarded a recommendation of denial in March 2019. The Council discussed the first plan in May 2019, with the applicant later modifying this plan. The modifications made include reducing the total guest keys from 165 to 122, removing the for-sale product, reducing the total floor area from 145,000 square feet to 128,150 square feet, modifying the on-site circulation to a full 360-degrees around the site, removing the underground parking garage, removing balconies facing the residential uses to the west and Andaz resort to the south, and reducing the 3rd-story massing and height.

DISCUSSION:

Draft Ordinance - Stipulations.

Attachment L includes the latest revised draft ordinance (with stipulations) which reflects the proposed changes noted in the November 17, 2020 public hearing. The track changes made in this draft ordinance show the proposed edits suggested at the public hearing. There may be other edits, including edits to already discussed items, as the draft ordinance moves forward.

Compliance. Compliance for a Major Special Use Permit amendment looks at many different aspects of the proposed project (such as density, use, height, parking, architecture, and related items), impact to the Town as a whole (such as revenue/cost and fitting in with the Town's vision), and impact to the immediate neighborhood (such as traffic, noise, and similar items). The Planning Commission reviewed aspects of the revised proposed project over ten meetings since July 7, 2020. For a

detailed review of how the requested application (SUP-18-05) complies refer to the Compliance Detail (Attachment J) and the SOD Comparative Analysis Table (Attachment K, being a summarized version of the Compliance Detail).

PUBLIC COMMENTS AND NOTICING:

There have been several residents who provided comment throughout the application process. This includes two adjacent residential owners who support the application request, but are asking for a stipulation to install a private gate on the private portion of the Quail Run Road alignment and to provide them resort access that would run with their land. Comment from the owners of the adjoining Andaz Resort, support from the adjoining Lincoln Plaza Medical Center, and support from the nearby Applewood Pet Resort. The owner of the Andaz Resort expressed a desire to retain the 12' to 15' tall oleander hedge along the south property line (which the applicant agreed to maintain in addition to planting a sour orange hedge and staggered parking lot trees) and earlier expressed concerns on height and density.

The comments since June 2020, including from the applicant's neighborhood meetings on October 21st and August 20th, relate to concerns about density and traffic, a question on the Town's property tax model, request for Quail Run Road improvements to mitigate vehicle stacking and traffic south of the resort entry, questions on the operation at the resort, comments on the hotel versus resort feel of the project, questions regarding the operation at the Third Floor Communal Area (i.e. views into the residential parcels west of the site, use for events), recommendation in combining the coffee shop and restaurant, and operation of the pool (i.e. food/drink service, pool size). Please reference Attachments G.1, G.2, and G.3 for more information.

NEXT STEPS:

The Council action date has not been set and will require mailing, newspaper, and property mailing notice to land owners within 1,500 feet of the site. Council action is not expected to occur until at least the second Council meeting in January 2021. Council action is dependent upon any further work sessions and direction.

ATTACHMENT(S):

- A Application
- B Vicinity Map & Related Maps
- C.1 Narrative & Plans (Revised 10-01-20 & 10-27-20 & 11-01-20)
- C.2 Parking Studies and Associated Documents (Revised 09-28-20)
- C.3 Traffic Impact Analysis (Dated October 2020)
- C.4 Preliminary Drainage Report (Revised 10-15-20)
- C.5 Wastewater Capacity Study (Revised 10-16-20)
- C.6 Water Service Impact Study (Revised 10-16-20)
- C.7 Acoustical Study (Revised 10-22-20)
- D SUP Guidelines
- E General Plan Policies
- F General & SUP History
- G.1 Public Comments (Updated 10-28-20)
- G.2 Notifications (Updated 10-28-20)
- G.3 Minutes (Updated 11-10-20)
- H Statement of Direction (Revised 09-10-20)
- I Tentative Timeline (Revised 11-10-20)
- J Compliance Detail (Dated 11-10-20)
- K SOD Comparative Analysis Table (Revised 11-10-20)
- L Draft Ordinance (Revised 11-10-20)

M Presentation