



**TOWN OF CAREFREE
PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
PUBLIC HEARING
MINUTES**

WHEN: MONDAY, NOVEMBER 08, 2021
WHERE: ZOOM WEB*
TIME: 5:00 P.M.

Members of the Planning and Zoning Commission participated by technological means or methods pursuant to A.R.S. §38-431(4).

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT VIA ZOOM:

Chairperson Tom Cross
Vice Chairperson Lyn Hitchon
Commissioner Heather Burgett
Commissioner Peter Burns
Commissioner Dan Davee
Commissioner Ralph Ferro

ABSENT:

Commissioner Phil Corso

STAFF PRESENT VIA ZOOM:

Planning Director, Stacey Bridge-Denzak; Town Administrator, Gary Neiss, Economic Development Director, Steve Prokopek; and Planning Clerk, Samantha Gesell

Chairperson Tom Cross called the meeting to order at 5:05 p.m.

ITEM #1 **APPROVAL** of the **PLANNING AND ZONING MEETING MINUTES** dated **JUNE 21, 2021**.

Vice Chairperson Hitchon **MOVED** to approve the Planning and Zoning meeting minutes dated May 10, 2021, as presented. **SECONDED** by Commissioner Ferro. **PASSED** unanimously.

ITEM #2 **CASE NUMBER:** 21-03-GPA
APPLICANT: Economic Development Division
 Town of Carefree
 8 Sundial Circle

Carefree AZ 85377

- CASE LOCATION:** Generally located at the Northwest Corner of Carefree Highway and Tom Darlington Drive
Tax Parcel Numbers: 216-32-056, 216-32-008J, 216-32-046, 216-32-045, 216-32-044
- ZONING:** Rural-70, Single Family Residential Zoning District / All Parcels
- REQUEST:** **AMEND** the General Plan 2030 Land Use Map and add a new Special Planning Area Land Use Category for the subject properties totaling approximately 21 acres located at and adjacent to the Northwest corner of Carefree Highway and Tom Darlington Drive.

Clerks note: Commissioner Phil Corso joined the meeting at 5:14 p.m., immediately recused himself and left the meeting due to a conflict of interest.

Planning Director Stacey Bridge-Denzak provided an overview of the proposed Major General Plan Amendment via PowerPoint as it relates to properties generally located at the Northwest corner of Carefree Highway and Tom Darlington Road.

Ms. Bridge-Denzak defined for the group, the difference between a “Major” and a “Minor” General Plan Amendment. Explaining, what makes the proposed subject amendment “Major” is that the land use is going from a *residential* to a *nonresidential* land use, as well as creating a new Special Planning Area (SPA) land use designation. Outlining the hearing process, Ms. Bridge-Denzak explained the first, being this meeting, is heard by Planning and Zoning, and the second meeting is with Town Council, to either approve or deny, and requires 2/3 majority vote by Town Council. The public hearing with Town Council is scheduled for December 07, 2021.

Director Bridge-Denzak displayed an aerial view, outlining the five subject parcels, approximately 21 acres total and described the importance of the surrounding land uses.

Ms. Bridge-Denzak listed important planning and development criteria as it relates to a Special Planning Area land use designation:

- Establishes an adequate buffer to the very low-density residential neighborhood to the west.
- Provides for the continues preservation of the natural wash.
- Supports the Town’s fiscal and economic development goals and aligns with the evolving commercial nature and resort lifestyle found if the area.
- Utilizes high quality architectural character and is sited uniquely into the existing landforms complimenting the existing adjacent and nearby uses.
- Utilizes massing, height, and density to minimize site disturbance and is thoughtful of adjacent homeowner views.
- Focuses retail components east and south of the existing wash or where not to have an impact on existing residential.
- Incorporates the natural Sonoran Desert landscape.

Director Bridge-Denzak presented the General Plan Goals that the proposed amendment meets. Explaining that these goals are in place for a check and balance measure as to whether the proposed change is appropriate. These goals include:

- **Land Use Element Goal 1:** Encourage the transition from less intense to more intense land uses.

- **Land Use Element Goal 2:** Maintain and enhance the unique character of the community.
- **Open Space Element, Goal 1:** Preserve property with environmentally sensitive features; and Objectives/Policies.
- **Growth Element,** The Northwest Corner is identified as a “Future Growth Area”.

Planning Director Bridge-Denzak stated that all Citizen Participation and Public Hearing notification procedures were properly followed and legally executed according to State and Town requirements.

In summary, the Major General Plan Amendment constitutes an overall improvement to the Town’s General Plan and benefits the community with no intended adverse impacts.

Town of Carefree Economic Development Director, Steve Prokopek presented via PowerPoint. Mr. Prokopek provided an overview of the outcomes from discussions held at each neighborhood meeting. Conversations addressed building heights, adequate buffers to the adjacent neighborhood, architectural context and quality, view sheds, access nuisances such as light and noise, and limited commercial uses in association with the overall development. From these discussions, Mr. Prokopek explained that he revised the proposed land use to accommodate to the extent possible the neighbors’ concerns without compromising the Town’s goals. Adding, that it comes down to the idea of execution at this point and making sure that when we go through the zoning process that we follow through on the items discussed.

Commissioner Burgett asked for the definition of *commercially branded architecture*? Mr. Prokopek responded that in this area, the Town wanted to make sure that we didn’t have something that felt commercially branded and want to utilize the term “unique architecture and design”. If there is going to be any ancillary type of commercial, there may be a sign noting that, but it will not be the typical commercially branded sign or architecture.

Commissioner Burgett asked, what are some of the things that can be done to minimize the impact to neighbors? Mr. Prokopek explained that one of the key factors on the proposed property is the existing dense foliage. The goal will be to maintain that existing foliage in and around the wash specifically. Mr. Prokopek added, when the time comes to look at setbacks and buffering, assuring that through site planning, the uses that could be along the outskirts of the wash, both north and west, whether it be a casita or villa, look and feel like a residential component.

Commissioner Burgett inquired on the long-term implications of the Town’s resource usage and management. Carefree Water Company General Manager, Greg Crossman responded, that any type of intensification or more intense land use is going to have an impact on our water resources. What has been done is we have planned and focused on the Town’s water resources to have some buffer for economic development and economic revitalization. Mr. Crossman explained the current annual C.A.P. water allocation is approximately 1300-acre feet, utilizing 1000-acre feet per year. This provides 300-acre feet per year of buffer earmarked for future development of undeveloped lots in Carefree, which will use approximately 150 acre-feet of that buffer. Leaving 150-acre feet for utilization toward economic development and revitalization. Noting, in addition to the CAP allocation, the Town also has ground water resources available.

Mr. Greg Crossman expressed the importance of utilizing our water resources wisely and putting our water resources toward developments and uses that will benefit the community of Carefree.

Chairperson Cross opened the public hearing asking for comments from the public.

Rocky Benedito questioned if Tom Darlington Drive and Scottsdale Road are Scottsdale’s right of way and who pays for the road construction costs of developing the access to the proposed project? Economic Development Director Steve Prokopek responded that typically the developer pays for offsite improvements related to the specific development.

Mo Benedito asked when the voters will have the opportunity to vote on this proposal? Planning Director Stacey Bridge-Denzak responded that it does not go to a public vote, it goes to Town Council for consideration.

Janet Veves asked if the 150-175 number of beds being discussed was for this proposal or the entire Town? Mr. Prokopek responded that it is for the subject site and taking into consideration the density and size of the site, an estimated 150 rooms is feasible for this location, but could be less.

Ms. Veves expressed concern regarding safety of ingress and egress at Languid Lane meeting the entrance to The Boulders onto Tom Darlington Drive and asked what more can be done to make this safer? Mr. Prokopek explained safety is a concern and this will be a priority as this area gets evaluated.

Sue Hardie provided comments regarding the potential number of beds and the ingress and egress of traffic.

Ms. Hardie asked for clarification of the \$800,000 potential tax revenue. Mr. Prokopek explained that the \$800,000 is looking at the direct revenue that the Town can generate from this type of use.

Chairperson Cross closed the public hearing.

Commissioner Burgett asked, as we evaluate the need to generate revenue streams to the Town, we need to be conscious of density and the potential impact on the natural environment. As the Planning Commission, we need to address the value of the natural desert environment and not diminish this value proposition.

Vice Chairperson Hitchon **MOVED TO RECOMMEND** to Town Council approval/denial for Case Number 21-03-GPA, a Major General Plan Amendment including the additional permitted and prohibited uses as discussed with the Special Planning Area designation. **SECONDED** by Commissioner Ferro. **PASSED** 4-2, with Commissioners Burgett and Davee dissenting.

ITEM #3 ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no announcements.

ITEM #4 ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned by unanimous consent at 6:34 p.m.


PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION

Tom Cross, Chairperson


ATTEST

Samantha Gesell, Planning Clerk