



## Minutes of the Development Review Commission REGULAR MEETING February 22, 2022

Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Development Review Commission, of the City of Tempe, was held virtually via Webex

**Present:**

Chair Michael DiDomenico  
Vice Chair Steven Bauer  
Commissioner Scott Summers  
Commissioner Don Cassano  
Commissioner Philip Amorosi  
Commissioner Barbara Lloyd  
Commissioner Michelle Schwartz  
Alt Commissioner Charles Redman (in audience)

**City Staff Present:**

Ryan Levesque, Deputy Director, Community Development  
Suparna Dasgupta, Principal Planner  
Steve Abrahamson, Principal Planner  
Diana Kaminski, Senior Planner  
Lee Jimenez, Senior Planner  
Karen Stovall, Senior Planner  
Joanna Barry, Administrative Assistant II

**Absent:**

Alt Commissioner Linda Spears  
Alt Commissioner Rhiannon Corbett

Hearing convened at 6:02 p.m. and was called to order by Chair DiDomenico

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**Consideration of Meeting Minutes:**

- 1) Development Review Commission – Study Session 01/25/22
- 2) Development Review Commission – Regular Meeting 01/25/22

**Motion:** Motion made by Commissioner Cassano to approve Regular Meeting minutes and Study Session Meeting minutes for January 25, 2022 and seconded by Commissioner Amorosi.

**Ayes:** Chair DiDomenico, Vice Chair Bauer, Commissioners Cassano, Amorosi, Summers, Schwartz, and Lloyd.

**Nays:** None

**Abstain:** None

**Absent:** None

**Vote:** Motion passes 7-0

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The following items were considered for **Consent Agenda:**

- 3) Request a Preliminary Subdivision Plat for **CAR-GRAPH INC.** located at 1535 West Elna Rae Street. The applicant is Cawley Architects. **(PL210136)**
- 4) Request a Use Permit to allow entertainment uses (permanent outdoor) in the RCC zoning district and a Development Plan Review for a new two-story, 15,226 s.f. commercial building for **ELECTRIC PICKLE**, located at 8688 South Emerald Drive. The applicant is Withey Morris, PLC. **(PL210225)**

- 5) Request a Use Permit to allow entertainment (karaoke and dancing) for **AUGUST KARAOKE BOX**, located at 1301 East University Drive, Suite 106. The applicant is Morris Group Architects, LLC. **(PL220007)**  
**MODIFIED CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL**
- 6) Request a Use Permit to allow entertainment (karaoke and dancing) for **TANG GARDEN RESTAURANT**, located at 1320 East Broadway Road, Suite 104. The applicant is Morris Group Architects, LLC. **(PL220018)**  
**MODIFIED CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL**

**Motion:** Motion made by Commissioner Sumners to approve Consent Agenda and seconded by Commissioner Amorosi.

**Ayes:** Chair DiDomenico, Vice Chair Bauer, Commissioners Cassano, Amorosi, Sumners, Schwartz, and Lloyd.

**Nays:** None

**Abstain:** None

**Absent:** None

**Vote:** Motion passes 7-0

The following items were considered for **Public Hearing**:

- 7) Request an amended Planned Area Development Overlay to modify development standards and a Development Plan Review for a new 24-story mixed-use development consisting of 724 units and 26,175 s.f. of commercial uses on Lot 6 for **SOUTH PIER**, located at 1306 East Vista Del Lago Drive. The applicant is Gammage & Burnham, PLC. **(PL210314)**

**PRESENTATION BY APPLICANT:**

Ms. Manjula Vaz, Gammage and Burnham PLC, gave an overview of the request for Phase I of this project, which is Lot 6. This includes three mixed-use towers ranging in height from 236 feet to 259 feet, with 724 multi-family residential units. On the ground level there will be 16,213 square feet of restaurant space, 9,962 square feet of retail space, and 3,968 square feet of outdoor dining / patio space. They plan to have a 21,000 square foot central green / promenade with entertainment spaces, art spaces, etc.

Mr. George Melara, Nelson Partners, advised that two of the three towers are on a podium and the third is freestanding which creates permeability to Tempe Town Lake. All the parking is below deck which will reduce the heat island effect. They will be softening a lot of their decks by creating green spaces. Mr. Melara proceeded to go over the design and features of the buildings.

Chair DiDomenico asked how many individual restaurants are expected to be included in the 16,213-restaurant space. Mr. Melara advised that the restaurants will range from 3,500 square feet to 5,000 square feet, so there will be about 4-5 restaurants.

Commissioner Sumners noted that with the Watermark project it was not evident in the renderings that there were all right angles as it was very subtle, however in reality it is very apparent and is fantastic. He asked if they were going to do the same thing here. Mr. Melara advised that they are playing with the balcony areas as well as some shifts in the façade plane so that there is some variation. They are still working on this.

Commissioner Amorosi noted that the pedestrian bridge is going to happen in a future phase and asked if there was a possibility it could happen before Lot 7 due to all the residential units going into Lot 6. Ms. Vaz clarified that she did not mean that the bridge would not be completed until after Lot 7, but rather it is one of the next steps.

Commissioner Cassano noted he believes the plans for the bridge have already been finalized and there will be a hefty cost to the City. Ms. Vaz advised that the developer will also be contributing to the cost of bridge.

**PRESENTATION BY STAFF:**

Ms. Diana Kaminski, Senior Planner, gave an overview of the other phases of the project so the Commission could see a comparison of the other uses. She advised that the applicant did a parking analysis specific to Lot 6 and are meeting that analysis with a provision for 643 spaces on-site including seven that will be on street parking. They will have to replat along the street right-of-way because of those spaces.

The applicant had a virtual neighborhood meeting on January 19, 2022 that included the applicant team, Economic Development, Planning staff, and approximately four people from the public. The comments were mainly related to workforce housing, affordable housing, and there were no concerns expressed about design. No public input was received after that meeting. Staff recommends approval subject to conditions. There are several unique conditions, and the applicant has reviewed them all and are in agreement. One of the unique conditions refers to removing the existing transit shelter on Lot 1 prior to final Certificate of Occupancy for Phase 1C.

Chair DiDomenico asked why we would not have the applicant replace the transit shelter they will be removing with one of the current shelters as opposed to just removing it entirely. Ms. Kaminski advised that there will be changes coming along Rio Salado Parkway and Dorsey and those changes have not been finalized inclusive of transit easement, dedicated right-of-way, location for future streetcar, or possible realignment of Dorsey Road. That particular location of the shelter may shift, but they will ultimately have a stop, but they do not want to put in any additional infrastructure only to have to relocate or remove it later.

Chair DiDomenico asked if the applicant has requested to have building-mounted, prominent signage at the top of any of the three towers that would either identify the project or any of the individual tenants of the retail components. Ms. Kaminski advised that the signage is handled separately, however she did question why the screening elements on the top of the towers seemed excessively tall, but it is still within the range of their approved building height. They will be submitting a separate sign package for staff to evaluate.

Commissioner Lloyd is aware we are just talking about Lot 6 tonight, but she asked if the Commission could get an overall idea of the density of this planned area and how the overall project will affect the traffic in the area. Ms. Kaminski advised that as new phases of the project come on, they will use current traffic data to analyze them and make changes accordingly.

Ms. Dawn Cartier, CivTech, did the traffic analysis for Lot 6, along with a lot of other areas of Tempe. She advised that they have been working with the City for a while now and have worked on a model for the entire downtown core. That is the information they are using for some of the long-term decision making. This model was created five years ago, updated three years ago and they are putting together another scope to see what other areas have changed. This model has been more of a driving factor than the individual projects. She advised that they do not see any real issues along Rio Salado Parkway in the short-term.

Chair DiDomenico asked Ms. Kaminski what the general timeline is for completion of the construction on Lot 5 and she advised she was not aware of when it will occur.

**RESPONSE FROM APPLICANT:**

Ms. Vaz acknowledged that they have reviewed and approve of all the Conditions of Approval.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** NONE. For the record, Chair DiDomenico stated that he asked staff during Study Session if they had any late comments or anyone who wished to speak and was advised that there were none.

**COMMENTS AND DISCUSSION FROM THE COMMISSION:**

Commissioner Sumners stated that when he first looked at this case, he was concerned about parking because of the requirement for about 500 spaces. He is happy the applicant has increased this and will support the project.

Chair DiDomenico likes what he sees with the project so far. He likes the way the buildings are articulated so that you can see through them.

Commissioner Amorosi stated that he likes the way the set of towers look different yet connected to each other. He also likes the engagement at the ground level and thinks it will be very popular with the public.

**Motion:** Motion made by Commissioner Sumners to approve PL210314 and seconded by Commissioner Cassano.

**Ayes:** Chair DiDomenico, Vice Chair Bauer, Commissioners Cassano, Amorosi, Sumners, Schwartz, and Lloyd.

**Nays:** None

**Abstain:** None

**Absent:** None

**Vote:** Motion passes 7-0

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**Staff Announcements:**

Ms. Suparna Dasgupta, Principal Planner, advised that the next meeting will be on March 22, 2022.

**There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 7:00 p.m.**

Prepared by: Joanna Barry, Administrative Assistant II

Reviewed by: Suparna Dasgupta, Principal Planner

