

**To:** Steve Prokopek, Economic Development Director  
Town of Carefree

**From:** Matt Klyszeiko, AICP, Department Manager – Planning  
Michael Baker International

**Date:** May 26, 2021

**RE:** JOINT WORKSESSION TOWN OF CAREFREE PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION AND THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT TECHNICAL ADVISORY PANEL (EDTAP) – May 20<sup>th</sup>, 2021

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## **MEETING SUMMARY**

Planning & Zoning Chairman Tom Cross formally opened the joint worksession and introduced Steve Prokopek, Town of Carefree Economic Development Director to provide general introductions. Mr. Prokopek gave a brief overview of the current status of revitalization efforts in the Village Center and outlined the focus of the evenings discussion, which was to examine the creation of a redevelopment area, review the necessary findings for a redevelopment area, and receive guidance on establishing the boundaries of this area. Mr. Prokopek then turned the meeting over to Matthew Klyszeiko, AICP with Michael Baker International to assist in facilitation of the joint worksession.

Mr. Klyszeiko began his remarks by reviewing the worksession agenda. The first part of the agenda focused on a Formal Presentation that summarized revitalization efforts within the Village Center, explained what a redevelopment area and plan are, and reviewed the initial assessment of the area. The second part of the agenda consisted of a guided group discussion to examine the assessment findings, recommended boundary and next steps. The following summary details comments made by various meeting participants during the formal discussion period of the worksession.

### **Planning and Zoning Commission and the Economic Development Technical Advisory Panel (EDTAP) - Joint Worksession Discussion Comments:**

An initial inquiry of participants confirmed the preliminary assessment findings and thus overall support for the concept of exploring the establishment of a redevelopment area and subsequent redevelopment plan.

A comment was shared that any further redevelopment efforts need to be accompanied by a formal design review process and guidelines for development in the Village Center. Additional comments expressed such an effort should be extended to the entire Town.

Many participants agreed that there is a need to redefine “what we want this area to be”. This includes considering elements such as slowing speeds on Tom Darlington Drive and Cave Creek Road to provide a sense of arrival and defining catalyst projects that will help to “tell a story”.

Inquiries from the panel asked for clarification about how a redevelopment plan allows for the sale of public property that is different from a traditional outright sale. Mr. Klyszeiko explained in most traditional public property sales, the Town has a fiduciary duty to appraise the land and sell the property to the highest bidder. A redevelopment plan would allow the Town more flexibility to selectively sell to a specific bidder based on their development qualifications, proposed use of the property or other conditions that would help to further the areas redevelopment vision rather than just focusing on sale price.

A comment was shared that more housing should be considered in the Village Center but should focus on senior housing that would generate less vehicle trips, while still help to support businesses in the area. Some expressed concern that residents would be hesitant to more density in the Village Center and suggested that robust community education would be required to gain support.

Multiple panel members agreed that additional hospitality and event space is needed to bring visitors to the Village Center. Similar to housing, some panel members shared that many residents that live near the Village Center will be concerned about noise, traffic and lighting. It was further suggested that the demographics of Carefree are changing so the community may be more open to these types of uses than residents have been in the past.

When asked about the conceptual boundary of the redevelopment area, participants expressed general support for the proposed area.

- Some confirmed that the boundary needs to include the entire right of way along Tom Darlington Drive and Cave Creek Road to allow for sidewalks on both sides of the street. This comment led to a secondary discussion on consideration of limiting Tom Darlington Drive and Cave Creek Road to one lane in each direction to accommodate additional pedestrian amenities and on-street parking.
- There was some debate on the value of including some of the properties, particularly the multi-family properties, on the north side of Cave Creek Road within the redevelopment area.

- Most panel members did agree that any vacant properties should be included, but existing multi-family properties could be excluded based on their ownership status (i.e. condominium vs. apartments).
- An additional comment suggested that consideration should be given to identifying a secondary boundary that would possibly identify “contributing” properties that may not be part of the redevelopment area, but are recognized as a contributing element to the overall vision for the area.
- Multiple participants confirmed that ingress and egress points are important to the boundary identification. This comment then led to a secondary conversation about a need for additional parking in the Village Center.

When asked about necessary next steps and community outreach relative to establishing a redevelopment area, some participants felt the process needs to progress slowly to avoid confusion and premature opposition, while others felt the process just needs to be diligent in how current owners are informed about the potential project and outcomes.

- Some panel members shared that they would be willing to assist in the property owner outreach process based on their existing relationships with some owners. Others suggested that based on the varying availability and number of owners, a single group or multiple small group conversations would be best to coordinate with property owners in a more universally and comprehensive manner.
- Based on the varying level of feedback, Mr. Prokopek confirmed he would draft an outreach plan for further consideration by the Commission and EDTAP

Following discussions on next steps, Chairman Cross adjourned the meeting and thanked everyone for their participation.