



PLANNING COMMISSION

Department of Planning • P.O. Box 27210 • Tucson, AZ 85726-7210

DATE: June 4, 2003

TO: Planning Commission
Albert F. Elias

FROM: Albert F. Elias, Executive Secretary

SUBJECT: *University Area Plan Amendment & Sam Hughes Neighborhood Plan Amendment – Southeast Corner of Campbell and Sixth Street – Mixed-Use Office, Commercial, and Residential Public Hearing*

Issue: This is a request by Lewis and Roca LLP, on behalf of the property owner to amend the *Sam Hughes Neighborhood Plan (SHNP)* to allow a mixed-use office/commercial/residential development on the southeast corner of Campbell Avenue and Sixth Street (See Attachment A - Location/Existing Zoning and Land Use Map).

Recommendation: The Comprehensive Planning Task Force recommends the Planning Commission forward this item to Mayor and Council with a recommendation to amend the *Sam Hughes Neighborhood Plan* to allow a mixed-use office/commercial and residential development with a maximum height of three stories at Campbell Avenue and Sixth Street, transitioning downward to the south and east, with a maximum height of two stories along Norris Avenue.

Applicant's Request: The applicant has withdrawn the request to amend the *University Area Plan* to designate the intersection of Campbell Avenue and Sixth Street as a Pedestrian Commercial District (See Attachment B – Withdrawal of UAP Amendment Request). As a result of ongoing meetings with the neighborhood the applicant has also modified the proposed development plan, and is currently discussing changes in the proposed text with the Sam Hughes Neighborhood Association.

The applicant is still requesting to amend the *Sam Hughes Neighborhood Plan* to allow a mixed-use office/commercial/residential development on the southeast corner of Campbell Avenue and Sixth Street. As filed in the application, the *SHNP* amendment would include expanding the office/commercial designation on Map 4 - Office/Commercial Development Concept Map to include the entire block between Sixth and Seventh Street, and Campbell and Norris Avenue. Additional text outlining conditions specific to the development would also be included (See Attachment C - Amendment Application).

Alternate Development Proposals: At the May 15, 2003 neighborhood meeting the applicant presented three alternatives to the initial three and four story mixed-use proposal in the original application. One alternative features a scaled back version of the initial proposal. The two other alternatives consist of separate residential and commercial or mixed-use buildings, rather than one consolidated structure, and significantly reduce the amount of commercial space and number of residential units. Of these alternatives, there appeared to be a degree of support for Development Proposal 2 or Alternative 2 (See Attachment D - Modified Conceptual Development Plan).

Public Contact: The applicant has held a number of neighborhood meetings regarding the development of this site, including four meetings since the April 2, 2003 Planning Commission Study Session (See Attachment E - Documentation of Neighborhood Meetings and Communications). Staff has met with area residents and citizen groups to discuss the proposed amendments. Staff has received copies of written communications from the Sam Hughes Neighborhood Association and the Sam Hughes Zoning Committee expressing both conceptual support for the project as well as concern about the scale, architectural style, building orientation, and tenant mix. Concern has also been expressed about any amendments to both the *Sam Hughes Neighborhood Plan* and the *University Area Plan*. Staff has received three letters expressing opposition, two petitions opposing the project (See Attachment F - Letters and Petitions), as well as two telephone calls opposing the development. Notification for this public hearing was extended to include all neighborhood associations within the University Area Plan boundary. This included four neighborhood associations outside the required one-mile radius of notification for a plan amendment.

There are varying amounts of support and opposition among community residents to the project as proposed in the amendment application. There appears to be a degree of agreement that a mixed-use project on the amendment site could be beneficial to the neighborhood, however, there is significant concern about the size, scale, and intensity of the project.

On May 23, 2003 staff received an e-mail on behalf of the Sam Hughes Neighborhood Association and the Sam Hughes Zoning Committee withdrawing “any and all support for amendments to the University Area Plan (UAP)” and expressing the belief that “the subject property should be dealt with in complete isolation of other corners at the intersection (Campbell and 6th).”

Planning Commission Study Session: On April 2, 2003, the Planning Commission held a study session for the proposed plan amendment request. At this study session the Planning Commission requested additional information regarding the 5th/6th Street Corridor Study, the University of Arizona Draft Comprehensive Campus Plan, and the Pedestrian Commercial District designation in the University Area Plan. The Commission also inquired about traffic impacts of the proposed development, transitioning, buffering, and compatibility with adjacent residential areas.

Planning Considerations

Background: The UAP and the *SHNP* provide policy direction for the proposed amendment site. Mayor and Council adopted the *SHNP* on September 16, 1985. The *SHNP* was amended once in February of 2001. Mayor and Council adopted the *UAP* on May 8, 1989. The *UAP* has been amended twice, in June of 1991 and in February of 2003. The February 2003 amendment dealt with parking for the commercial uses on the southwest corner of Campbell and Sixth Street. This amendment was, in part, an acknowledgement of the commercial character of this intersection.

The development proposals are the result of a collaborative effort between the developer, the Sam Hughes Neighborhood Association, and the Ward VI Council Office. Extensive discussions between the developer, the Neighborhood Association, and area residents have contributed to the development proposals under consideration. These discussions are ongoing and continue to influence the proposal.

Existing Conditions: The amendment site is currently vacant, as all the buildings on the site have been razed in anticipation of development. The northwest corner of the site, at Campbell and Sixth, is zoned C-1 (See Attachment A - Location/Existing Zoning and Land Use Map). The remainder of the site is zoned R-2. To the north, across Sixth Street, there is a recently closed gas station and a two-story office building that houses the University's Office of Arid Lands Studies. These parcels are zoned C-1. To the east and southeast there is a mix of one-story multi-family and single-family residential units zoned R-2. Due south of the amendment site, across Seventh Street, is the University's Water Resources Research Center, also zoned R-2 and one-story. West of the site, across Campbell, there are single-family residences and one multi-family residential building, both one-story, in addition to a small University-owned parking lot. These parcels are all zoned R-2. Just north of these parcels, on the southwest corner of Campbell and Sixth Street, there are five parcels zoned C-1. All of the buildings in this area are one story, and three of these are occupied with businesses at this time.

Adopted Policy Direction: The *University Area Plan* and the *Sam Hughes Neighborhood Plan* contain policy direction relevant to the proposed development. Both plans address commercial development in the University area. *SHNP* Land Use Goal 1, Policy 1 of the *SHNP* acknowledges the intersection of Sixth Street and Campbell Avenue as a commercial node. Policy 6 states that high-density development is appropriate in areas identified for commercial use. Goal 3 of the *UAP* recognizes the University and its surroundings as a "relatively compact, pedestrian-oriented regional activity center." Section 3.C.2 supports the development of "concentrated centers of pedestrian-oriented commercial/office activity" that include a well-defined pedestrian system, and transit and bicycle facilities.

Both plans also contain policies that address compatible and sensitive design. *SHNP* Policy 1.3 recommends new development be "designed sensitively to existing residential areas." Policy 2.1 encourages compatible and complimentary architectural design. Policy 3

encourages new development along major streets be designed sensitively to existing residential areas. *UAP* Section 1, Goal 1 supports changes that "protect and enhance the character, identity, and residential quality of life...." Section 3.A.3 supports "new development on the perimeter of residential areas that serves to protect and enhance the quality of life for neighborhood residents." Sections 3.A and 3.C contain policies that encourage new development to be sensitive and compatible with, and complimentary to surrounding uses. Section 8 - General Design Guidelines includes strategies that address these design issues.

The UAP also contains specific language addressing mixed-use development. Section 3.13 supports pedestrian-oriented mixed-use development that is carefully designed and located. This development should include vehicular access from an arterial or collector, traffic circulation directed away from the interiors of residential areas, commercial activities located at street level, retail and services oriented towards local residents, a well defined pedestrian system, and transit and bicycle facilities.

Pedestrian Commercial Districts in the *University Area Plan*: Though the applicant has withdrawn the initial amendment request included a proposal to designate the intersection of Campbell and Sixth Street as a Pedestrian Commercial District, staff has included the following discussion of Pedestrian Commercial Districts in response to the Planning Commission's request for additional information.

The *University Area Plan* identifies five areas of concentrated commercial activity in the periphery of the university. These areas include Fourth Avenue, the intersection of Speedway and Campbell, the intersection of Speedway and Park, University Boulevard adjacent to campus, and along Sixth Street between Park and Santa Rita. Being near the campus and catering to the university population, these areas experience relatively high levels of pedestrian activity. In recognition of the pedestrian character of these areas, the *University Area Plan* contains two policies that support the maintenance and intensification of these areas, referred to as "Pedestrian Commercial Districts." These policies discourage strip commercial development, drive-through facilities, and additional curb cuts along streets. The policies encourage integrated circulation, well-defined pedestrian systems, and convenient access to transit facilities. The *Plan* also contains a map depicting these districts.

Based on discussions and input from the neighborhood, an amendment to the *University Area Plan* Pedestrian Commercial District policies and map could possibly be premature at this time. It may be appropriate to see whether some of the projects in this area come to fruition before the area is identified in the *University Area Plan* as a Pedestrian Commercial District. It has been suggested that the *University Area Plan* could be more holistically evaluated and updated once the University's Comprehensive Campus Plan has been finalized and adopted.

University of Arizona Comprehensive Campus Plan: The Comprehensive Campus Plan is presently in the process of being updated. This update has yet to be adopted, and will go

before the Board of Regents for a second reading in June. It is possible that the Board will adopt the Plan at that time.

The latest draft of the Campus Plan update is arranged into three phases. The first phase consists of projects through 2004. Many of these projects are currently under construction, such as the parking garage on 6th Street and the student housing on the northwest corner of Highland Avenue and Sixth Street. The second phase of the Campus Plan includes all projects necessary to meet anticipated requirements through 2010. These projects are based on the projected needs of the campus community and do not take funding into consideration. The third phase of the Campus Plan consists of the remaining projects necessary to achieve full campus build out. This phase is conceptual, and the associated projects could be decades from fruition, depending on the availability of funding.

The southwest corner of Campbell and Sixth, due west of the amendment site, is included in the third phase of the draft Campus Plan. The Plan conceptually identifies this corner as a mixed-use gateway to campus. The Plan depicts two three-story buildings with office and retail uses, as well as a landscape buffer along the southern boundary (See Attachment G - Draft Comprehensive Campus Plan Detail). It is worth noting that the Plan calls for a parking structure on the block west of the intersection. The parking would likely serve the office/retail buildings on the corner. Because the two buildings on the corner are a part of the third phase, they are conceptual at this point, but the Plan is clearly identifying future intensification on this corner.

The Plan identifies the northwest corner of Campbell and Sixth as being a campus gateway with an academic/outreach building along Sixth Street (See Attachment G - Draft Comprehensive Campus Plan Detail). Details regarding the height of this building are not included in the Plan at this time. The Plan calls for the existing single-story structure in this area to be retained. North of the Sixth Street frontage, the Plan calls for below grade parking under a practice field. The below grade parking is included in the third phase, but the building on the corner has not been included in any phase at this time.

5th/6th Street Livability and Circulation Study: This corridor study, though not adopted by Mayor and Council, incorporated input from various citizen, neighborhood, business groups, and individuals. The study outlined a number of Guiding Principles based on community input. These guidelines are general for the corridor; recommendations for specific sites will be created in Phase III of the study.

The study generally recommends pedestrian and bicycle friendly travel corridors that maximize shade and safety. Recommendations include the use of landscaping and street trees to improve the pedestrian environment. The study stresses the importance of crosswalk safety and design, and traffic calming strategies. The study also encourages design that relates to users. This includes building scale, the facilitation of pedestrian activity, integrated pedestrian and bicycle connections, and the accommodation of transit use.

Potential Traffic Impacts: Current traffic volumes and capacities (PAG estimates):

	Current Volume	Two-way Capacity
Campbell Avenue	35,200 Average Daily Trips (ADT) north of Sixth 35,300 ADT south of Sixth	63,000 ADT
Sixth Street	22,600 ADT east of Campbell 26,500 ADT west of Campbell	39,000 ADT
Norris Avenue	between 300 and 500 ADT	1000 ADT considered a problem
Seventh Street	between 300 and 500 ADT	1000 ADT considered a problem

An accurate trip generation estimation for the project is difficult without more detailed information regarding types of tenants, number of employees, specific unit counts, and number of residents. Based on the Institute of Transportation Engineers' 6th Edition Trip Generation manual, a rough estimation of trip generation could assume the following:

- Shopping Center – 43 weekday trips per 1000 square feet of gross leasable area
- Residential Condominium/Townhouse – 6 weekday trips per dwelling unit

The initial three and four story proposal consists of approximately 44,600 square feet of retail/restaurant/office space and 102 residential units. The retail/restaurant/office portion of the project would generate 1,918 weekday trips based on the estimate for a shopping center. The residential portion of the project would generate 612 weekday trips based on the estimate for condominiums and/or townhouses. Using the above assumptions, the project could generate approximately 2,530 weekday trips. If a further assumption is made that these trips would be equally distributed between Campbell and Sixth, they would represent less than 3.6% of the current volume on Campbell Avenue, and about 2.0% of Campbell's estimated capacity. These trips would represent slightly more than 5.6% of the current volume on Sixth Street (east of Campbell), and about 3.3% of Sixth's estimated capacity. Again, these are very rough approximations and could change depending on a more detailed analysis of trip distribution, specific commercial tenants, number of employees, and actual number of occupants per unit.

It is conceivable that the development's proximity to both the University and transit routes would result in fewer vehicular trips than might be expected if it were in another part of town. It should also be noted that the proposed bus bay on Sixth Street, and right turn lane on Campbell Avenue would provide circulation improvements to the immediate area. The closure of Seventh Street at Norris Avenue has also been suggested as a way of reducing traffic impacts on the neighborhood.

Compatibility and Transitioning: The *University Area Plan*, the *Sam Hughes Neighborhood Plan*, and the *General Plan* encourage compatibility of new development with existing neighborhood conditions. Setbacks and variations in height and mass can be used to compliment the scale of adjacent areas, and to reduce the appearance of excessive height and bulk. Stepping down the heights of new structures to compliment adjacent areas provides a transition between proposed and existing development, and can help to protect the privacy of surrounding areas. Varied setbacks and wall alignments help to soften the impacts of otherwise uniform building facades. Similar building materials and architectural styles can be used to compliment the character of surrounding development. These can include scale and massing, roof and parapet forms, materials and colors, and building orientation. Landscaping can also be provided around the perimeter of new development as both a buffer and a transition.

Height transitions are frequently employed to help ease the impacts of new development. Generally the building heights of proposed development should be similar to that of nearby properties. For a new structure that shares a common property line with a single-story structure, this can mean limiting the new structure's height to one story, or stepping back the second story from the adjacent property in a way that creates a similar massing along the property line. For properties across streets, upward transitions such as an additional story can be acceptable, provided privacy is not compromised. Privacy can be maintained by orienting balconies away from the edges of properties, and placing windows so that they avoid looking into neighboring homes.

In considering the amendment request, context is a critical issue. There is a relatively large two-story building north of the site, across Sixth Street. Next to this is the recently closed gas station. At this time, staff is not aware of what will replace the gas station. Single-story buildings surround the site on the remaining three sides. The area across Campbell Avenue to the west is within the boundaries of the University's Comprehensive Campus Plan, which conceptually calls for three-story mixed-use buildings on the south side of Sixth Street.

Pedestrian circulation: Given the site's proximity to the University, the proposed neighborhood-scale commercial activity, and the site's proximity to transit routes, it appears that this development should maximize pedestrian oriented features. These include wide sidewalks around the perimeter of the site, shade trees, and careful attention to the design of pedestrian crossings within parking areas (traffic calming features). Deep patios and walkways, and inviting storefronts help to create a more pedestrian friendly environment. Orienting commercial activity close to sidewalks and streets help maximize visibility for businesses as well as foster pedestrian and transit integration. Design elements that encourage crossing streets at signals and discouraging jaywalking should be employed.

Analysis

The first consideration with this request is the degree to which the *Sam Hughes Neighborhood Plan* and the *University Area Plan* should be amended. Clearly, the *SHNP*

Office/Commercial Development Concept Map needs to be amended to allow commercial or commercial-related activity on any area other than what is presently identified on the map. Additional text in the *SHNP* will address size, scale, character, orientation, and any other site specific parameters for development on the amendment site. An amendment to the *University Area Plan* is not required for the proposed development. Designating the intersection of Campbell Avenue and Sixth Street as a Pedestrian Commercial District would simply provide additional policy direction supporting pedestrian-oriented design for future development in the area. Given the concerns that have been raised regarding an amendment to the *UAP*, staff is not opposed to the applicant withdrawing this portion of the request.

The second question in considering the proposed amendment is whether a mixed-use development on the southeast Campbell Avenue and Sixth Street is appropriate. Though this corner is on the edge of the University, a major activity center, it is also on the edges of distinct residential neighborhoods. Scale and compatibility are central issues. The initial proposal, as submitted in the application, the three and four story building is considerably larger and more intense than anything in the immediate area, with the exception of the University football and basketball stadiums. Though the proposal steps down to three stories along Norris Avenue and Seventh Street, there is still a dramatic difference in massing relative to its surroundings.

Based on the evolving character of Sixth Street west of Campbell, and the potential redevelopment identified in the University's Comprehensive Campus Plan on the southwest corner of Campbell and Sixth, a maximum height of three stories rather than four stories along Campbell and Sixth appears to be an appropriate transitional height for this area. Given the existing residential development surrounding the site, it seems that a maximum height of two stories along Norris Avenue and Seventh Street would provide a more suitable transition of height and intensity towards the neighborhood. Varying wall alignments and massing along Norris and Seventh would compliment the building placement and orientation across these streets.

The suggested height modifications will help improve the project's compatibility with the neighborhood in terms of mass and scale. Design features also help promote compatibility. As proposed, the project internalizes some of the potential negative impacts it could have on its immediate neighbors. Outdoor activities, courtyards, and walkways are oriented towards the interior of the project and there are no balconies overlooking adjacent residences. These design features should help to mitigate some of the impacts of the project and provide at least a degree of compatibility, and should be incorporated in any alternative proposals.

In determining traffic impacts and possible street improvements, a more in depth traffic analysis is necessary. This would likely be a part of any subsequent rezoning case. Based on very rough estimates, however, it appears unlikely that extensive street improvements would be warranted. The proposed bus bay on Sixth Street, the right turn lane on Campbell Avenue, and the suggested closure of Seventh Street would provide circulation

improvements and could help reduce some of the traffic impacts on the immediate area. Reducing the overall mass and scale of the project would also reduce the potential traffic impacts.

Pedestrian oriented design is another consideration. Regardless of the *UAP* Pedestrian Commercial District designation, site design should maximize pedestrian connections between on-site businesses, the internal and external sidewalk systems, transit facilities, and the intersection. This can be achieved by orienting the commercial portions of the project as close to the street as possible and minimizing the amount of parking along Campbell and Sixth Street. Orienting the commercial portions of the project closer to the intersection of Campbell and Sixth, and integrating storefront patios with sidewalks would help maximize visibility for businesses as well as foster pedestrian and transit oriented design. This is consistent with the orientation of the commercial properties across Campbell to the west. It has been suggested that parking along Campbell Avenue and Sixth Street be reduced to one bay. A reduction of parking along these streets will help improve the aesthetics of the site. Strengthening the pedestrian connections between on-site businesses, internal and external sidewalk systems, and the intersection would be optimal.

Conceptually, a mixed-use development does not conflict with the 5th/6th Street Corridor Study. Consistency with the recommendations and direction of the study would largely depend on how well site design facilitates pedestrian, transit, and bicycle activity, to what degree the streetscape relates to and provides amenities for users, and how well the scale of the project relates to its surroundings. De-emphasizing the vehicular relationship to 6th Street and encouraging pedestrian/transit orientation is consistent with the 5th/6th Street Livability and Circulation Study.

These modifications are in keeping with policy direction in the *Sam Hughes Neighborhood Plan*, *University Area Plan*, and the *General Plan* relating to mixed-use and commercial development, compatibility, and site sensitivity.

Alternate Development Proposals: Recent meeting with the neighborhood has led the applicant to develop alternate proposals. At the May 15, 2003 neighborhood meeting, the applicant presented three additional development proposals to those in attendance (See Attachment E - Documentation of Neighborhood Meetings and Communications). In the meeting summary the applicant states that one of the proposals, referred to as Development Proposal 2, was generally well received by the audience. This proposal consists of a three story mixed-use building on the corner of Campbell and Sixth, two-story condominiums along Norris, two-story condominiums above terraced parking along Seventh, and surface parking towards the middle of the site (See Attachment D - Modified Conceptual Development Plan). The proposal includes approximately 16,000 square of retail and up to 60 condominium units.

Though Development Proposal 2 still requires an amendment to the *SHNP* Office/Commercial Development Concept Map, it is more consistent with the policy

direction of the *SHNP* and the *UAP*. It provides a greater degree of compatibility with the neighborhood and establishes a stronger pedestrian connection between on-site commercial uses, the intersection, and transit facilities. It maintains design features such as inward-focused outdoor activities, courtyards, and walkways that help to mitigate some of the external impacts of the project. The significant reductions in the overall scale, mass, and size of the development will likely lessen traffic impacts as well. Using the previously mentioned assumptions for trip generation, Proposal 2 would generate over 50% fewer trips than the initial proposal in the application.

On May 22, 2003, the applicant presented Development Proposal 2 to the Tucson-Pima County Historical Commission Plans Review Subcommittee for voluntary, non-binding review. At this meeting, the applicant presented Proposal 2 to the Subcommittee. A representative from a group of neighborhood residents who oppose the project also addressed the Subcommittee. Discussion included design features and aspects of Proposal 2, general planning issues, and University of Arizona land ownership and neighborhood interaction.

Regarding Development Proposal 2, the Tucson-Pima County Historical Commission Plans Review Subcommittee appreciated the opportunity to review the project. The Subcommittee pointed out that this type of development needs to be considered if the City is going to pursue infill development and increased density. Though the Subcommittee did not approve or disapprove of the project, they did offer some comments. There was uncertainty expressed about the appropriateness of the historic motifs for a building of such size. The Subcommittee suggested that details that work at small scales do not always work at larger scales. The Subcommittee pointed to the Campbell and Sixth Street frontage and the commercial visibility from the intersection as a strength of the design. The suggestion was made that the entire length of the street frontage be embraced, and that occupying the entire frontages with buildings would enhance the streetscape. The Subcommittee, however, recognized the possibility that the site may not be able to accommodate increases in commercial space. The Subcommittee stated that there appears to have been give and take between the developer and the neighborhood, and that progress has been made in reducing the overall scale of the project. The Subcommittee welcomed the chance to review future plans and urged continued cooperation.

Conclusion: Staff recommends the Planning Commission forward this item to Mayor and Council with a recommendation to amend the *Sam Hughes Neighborhood Plan* to allow a two and three story mixed-use development on the southeast corner of Campbell Avenue and Sixth Street (See Attachment H - Proposed *Sam Hughes Neighborhood Plan* Amended Policies and Map).

Regarding an amendment to the *University Area Plan*, staff recommends the evaluation of the Campbell Avenue/Sixth Street intersection as a Pedestrian Commercial District be postponed until the University's Comprehensive Campus Plan Update has been finalized. Should the Planning Commission recommend an amendment to the *University Area Plan*,

staff has provided possible text and map changes (See Attachment I - Proposed *University Area Plan* Amended Policies and Map).

Attachments

Attachment A – Location/Existing Zoning and Land Use Map

Attachment B – Withdrawal of UAP Amendment Request

Attachment C – Amendment Application

Attachment D – Modified Conceptual Development Plan

Attachment E – Documentation of Neighborhood Meetings and Communications

Attachment F – Letters and Petitions

Attachment G – Draft Comprehensive Campus Plan Detail

Attachment H – Proposed *Sam Hughes Neighborhood Plan* Amended Policies and Map

Attachment I – Proposed *University Area Plan* Amended Policies and Map