

Communities

Cavalliere Ranch rezoning approved by Scottsdale

Up to 443 homes could be built on vacant parcel

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A master-planned community of up to 443 homes is one step closer to development on a vacant parcel of land next to Scottsdale's McDowell Sonoran Preserve, just north of the Tom's Thumb Trailhead.

The Scottsdale City Council earlier this month granted a rezoning of land to accommodate Cavalliere Ranch.

The development of luxury homes, to be built east of 128th Street and north of the Pinnacle Peak Road alignment, will have plenty of open space and a buffer between houses and the desert preserve, project plans show.

Zoning attorney **John Berry** called the community "the poster child for appropriate and sensitive master planning in north Scottsdale."

The rezoning drew nearly an hour of public testimony at a council meeting Tuesday. While at least nine speakers supported the project, several residents voiced concerns about higher density, the potential for traffic and negative impacts to the surrounding preserve.

The proposal calls for nearly one house per acre, while previous density allowed for up to one house for every 3 acres, a city report says.

Councilwoman Linda Milhaven said that "by any community's standards, one home per acre would be considered rural."

The project will have "meaningful open space" encompassing half of the site, which is more than required, Councilwoman Virginia Korte said.

There will be a 47-acre buffer between the development and the preserve, she noted.

"The argument this is going to undermine the preserve — I do not believe this

is true," Korte said.

Korte, a longtime resident, said she could remember controversy surrounding other master-planned communities in Scottsdale, which were built and now are established in the community.

Happy Valley Road, a main thoroughfare to the development, is scheduled to be widened to four lanes from two lanes, said Paul Basha, Scottsdale transportation director.

"When that occurs, that roadway will be able to accommodate this development," Basha said. He did not provide a date for the widening.

Berry said the developer will improve 128th Street and bottlenecks along Happy Valley Road.

Councilman Bob Littlefield and Vice Mayor Guy Phillips voted against the rezoning. Phillips argued that other housing developments nearby "are too dense" and said it is time to start protecting the region from too much growth.

Also, the council passed a non-major General Plan amendment and rezoning for the Bahia Live Work Play project, a mixed-use development that would be built southwest of Bahia Drive and 92nd Street.

The project will have 64 three- and four-story townhomes with first-floor office and studio space. In addition, a four-story condominium building calls for 14 housing units and first-floor retail and services, a city report says. Residents will be able to live and work at the same location.

"I like the fact that this puts Scottsdale back on the cutting edge," Councilman Dennis Robbins said.

The developer has pledged to contribute nearly \$870,000 worth of improvements to nearby WestWorld.

Milhaven asked to have a future discussion about the funding. She wants to reconsider whether the funds should go to WestWorld or other city capital needs. Her request passed 5-2, with Mayor Jim Lane and Councilwoman Suzanne Klapp opposed.