

Planning Commission backs McDowell apartment plans

By Edward Gately

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The Scottsdale Planning Commission Wednesday endorsed a proposed apartment complex on the site that formally housed Pitre Buick on McDowell Road west of 68th Street.

Chason Development wants to build Las Aguas, a 154-unit apartment complex on the northern side of McDowell Road adjacent to single-family residences.

The commission voted unanimously to recommend City Council approval of a rezoning with amended development standards and a development plan for the \$25 million complex.

The vacant dealership would be demolished, with the exception of the two-story parking garage, to make way for the complex, which would include stoops on the units along McDowell.

John Berry, a zoning attorney representing Chason, outlined numerous concessions his client has made to gain the

support of nearby residents, such as no north-facing balconies, a higher buffer wall along the northern side, higher-pitched roofs on the one-story garages along the northern side and a construction sequence to buffer the neighbors.

However, that didn't stop some nearby homeowners from lodging protests against the proposal.

Roy Sosa, whose home is just north of the proposed complex on Almeria Road, said he and other homeowners are concerned about lower property values from crime, noise and increased traffic.

Kelly Vaughn, who lives north of the site on Granada Road, said she and other residents "fear" that a rental complex will have a negative effect on the overall neighborhood. She said the complex was pitched as "luxury," but the average monthly rent would be \$1,000.

Robert LaRoche, one of the nearby homeowners on Almeria, said 19 neighbors signed a petition listing their concerns, and that Chason has done "all within reason" to address those concerns.