

# SCOTTSDALE REPUBLIC

FRIDAY, APRIL 27, 2012

A GANNETT COMPANY

Z9 SECTION SR

## Taller condos get OK from city planners

A complex under construction west of Scottsdale Fashion Square could include an 11-story building along Camelback Road and hundreds of additional units.

PAGE 4

# Height increase for condominiums advances

## Complex under construction near Fashion Square

By Edward Gately  
The Republic | azcentral.com

A condominium complex under construction west of Scottsdale Fashion Square could include an 11-story building along Camelback Road and hundreds of additional units.

The Scottsdale Planning Commission on Wednesday recommended City Council approval of an amended site plan, amended development standards and a downtown infill-incentive district application for Optima Sonoran Village, at the southeastern corner of Camelback and 68th Street.

The complex is being developed by Optima, which has developed properties in Arizona and Illinois. It also developed the Optima Camelview Village condominiums at Scottsdale Road and Rancho Vista Drive.

The requests seek an increase in maximum height from 65 feet to 129 feet to

**GG** *There were many obstacles overcome. We know David Hovey (Optima president and owner) will honor his pledges."*

**PAULA CHRISTENSEN**  
Neighbor

increase the building along Camelback to 11 stories from seven, said John Berry, a zoning attorney representing Optima. The requests also would increase the number of units from 493 to 781.

"That building was chosen (for greater height) because it was farthest from the neighbors, so from the beginning we were sensitive to the neighborhood's concerns," he said. "We also increased the open space a little bit from the prior approval, but all of those essential elements stayed the same."

The complex descends in height toward the south, with the lowest buildings adjacent to single-family residences.

Although the project is being built as condominiums to be sold, units will be rented, Berry said.

"They're (Optima) in the business of building luxury condominium units and that's what they're doing here," he said. "Until the market for luxury condominiums gets even stronger, and it's improving now ... in the meantime, they'll be renting them until the opportunity to sell them gets even better."

At its April 11 meeting, the commission postponed consideration of the requests until April 25. At the previous meeting, some nearby residents were ready to speak in opposition to increased height and density.

Optima requested the continuance to work with nearby residents and address concerns. As a result, there was no opposition at Wednesday's meeting.

"The developer made a concerted effort to listen to the neighbors, and ... to

come up with solutions that address their concerns," Berry said. "The solutions discussed include mainly landscaping ... to help shield the adjacent buildings."

Paula Christensen, a nearby resident, thanked Optima for working with neighbors.

"There were many obstacles overcome," she said. "We know David Hovey (Optima president and owner) will honor his pledges."

The first phase, which is on the east side of the property, is now under construction and should be completed in 2014, Berry said.

"The second phase would be the building along Camelback," he said.

Commission Chairman Michael D'Andrea said Optima is a great revenue generator and builds great projects for the city.

"They're a world-class developer and they finish their projects when others packed up and left," he said.

The proposal still must be approved by the City Council.