

# Citizen Participation Plan Update

## The Homestead at Lehi Crossing

Related to the Rezoning, Site Plan Review, Design Review, Special Use Permit and removal of an Historic Overlay for a Proposed Multi-Family Residential Development on Approximately 9 Acres Located at the Southeast Corner of Gilbert and McDowell Roads



Prepared By:



Benjamin W. Graff, Esq.  
Quarles & Brady LLP  
2 N. Central Ave.  
Phoenix, AZ 85004

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## **Introduction & Purpose:**

Quarles & Brady LLP submits this updated Citizen Participation Plan on behalf of Sweetwater Companies LLC (the "Applicant") in regard to "The Homestead at Lehi Crossing," a proposed 262-unit, 4-story multi-family residential development on approximately 9 acres located at the Southeast corner of Gilbert and McDowell Roads in Mesa (the "Development").

This updated Citizen Participation Plan addresses our community outreach associated with our formal Rezoning (from RS-43-HL to RM-5 PAD), Site Plan, Design Review, Special Use Permit and removal of an Historic Overlay applications. The purpose of the Citizen Participation Plan is to provide the City of Mesa with information regarding the efforts made by the Applicant to inform citizens and property owners in the vicinity concerning the Applicant's request to the City of Mesa for the above-referenced Development.

By providing opportunities for citizen participation, the Applicant will ensure that those interested in this application will have an adequate opportunity to learn about and comment on the proposed plan.

Sweetwater is a proven multi-family developer based in the East Valley with over 15 years of development experience in different regions of the inter-mountain west. Sweetwater looks for development opportunities where they can satisfy a market demand while also working with the community and other stakeholders to create a best-in-class project. Sweetwater's team members, Ryan Nelson and Kevin Chaka, have been actively involved in all community outreach and neighborhood meetings.

## **Contact Information:**

The individuals coordinating the Citizen Participation activities are:

Benjamin Graff  
Quarles & Brady LLP  
2 North Central Avenue  
Phoenix, AZ 85004  
Phone: 602-229-5683  
Email: [Benjamin.graff@quarles.com](mailto:Benjamin.graff@quarles.com)

Ryan J. Nelson  
Sweetwater Companies LLC  
Phone: (work) 602-935-9389 / (mobile) 602-751-9068  
Email: [ryan@sweetwatercompanies.com](mailto:ryan@sweetwatercompanies.com)

### **Pre-Submittal Outreach:**

It is important to note that prior to any submittals to the City of Mesa, including the Pre-Submittal application, our goal was not to initiate this application without first receiving feedback from the community. In essence, our team reversed the standard order of operation for City of Mesa rezoning cases and conducted neighborhood outreach before filing anything with the City. To date, we have completed extensive neighborhood and community outreach, including: **(1)** a full virtual neighborhood meeting held on September 21, 2020 which met all of the City of Mesa notification requirements; **(2)** discussions and an onsite meeting with City of Mesa Planning Department staff and virtual meetings with City of Mesa appointed and elected officials; and **(3)** additional in-person and virtual neighborhood meetings with members of the Lehi Community directly south of the Development location. Ryan Nelson of Sweetwater held an in-person meeting with neighbors in the backyard of one of the homes facing the proposed development on January 20, 2021, and a virtual meeting with neighbors on January 27, 2021, in addition to other phone calls and emails with neighbors who have reached out with questions. This is only the beginning of our outreach efforts and we plan to continue engage with the community throughout the process. The following is an outline of the key meetings and application submittal dates:

- July 22, 2020: On-site meeting between Applicant team, City of Mesa Planning Director, Nana Appiah, and Deputy Director of Inspections, Tom Wandrie.
- September 3, 2020: Detailed letter and notification sent to 49 property owners within 500-feet of the property, and 23 neighborhood associations within a half-mile of the property in accordance with City of Mesa notification requirements for neighborhood meetings. This was not a meeting required by the City of Mesa.
- September 21, 2020: The Applicant held a virtual neighborhood meeting and provided a detailed overview of the site history, proposed development, and provided preliminary plans for the development. The Applicant team and 19 individuals attended the virtual meeting and provided written feedback and questions.
- September - November, 2020: The Applicant responded to outreach from individual neighbors and worked on revising the preliminary site plan based on public feedback.
- November 12, 2020: Applicant filed pre-submittal online.
- December 8, 2020: Pre-submittal conference meeting held with City of Mesa.
- December 2020 – January 2021: The Applicant continued conversations via email and phone calls with multiple neighborhood property owners and neighborhood association leaders to discuss the development.
- January 20, 2021: The Applicant met with interested neighborhood property owners and neighborhood association leaders in-person in a neighbor's backyard.
- January 20 – 27, 2021: The Applicant conducted additional follow-up and outreach to interested neighborhood property owners and neighborhood association leaders via email and phone calls.
- January 27, 2021: The Applicant held a virtual meeting with additional interested neighborhood property owners to discuss the proposed development.

- February 16, 2021: The Applicant filed its formal rezoning submittal with the City, which now reflects a reduction in units from 320 to 262, and 100% preservation of views for the residents facing north toward the mountains and scenic corridors.
- April 6, 2021: Ben Graff held a productive phone call with one of the Lehi neighbors, Denise Strand, to discuss her concerns related to height, traffic, and views. Ben encouraged Denise to continue to reach out to him and the team with any questions.
- April 8, 2021: Ryan Nelson from Sweetwater followed up with Denise by email.
- April 8, 2021: Ryan Nelson met with one of the Lehi neighbors, Jeff Keeney, in his backyard to take additional photographs to ensure accuracy in our line-of-sight and view study exhibits.

In addition, we have continued to provide any exhibits or information requested by neighbors.

As a result of these initial meetings, the Applicant initially reduced the number of proposed units from 320 to 300 in our pre-application submittal. However, in its February 16, 2021 formal submittal, the units have now been reduced to 262, drastically reducing density. Additionally, in response to neighborhood outreach, the Applicant worked on improving traffic conditions, revising the site plan configuration and design based on neighborhood comments to address issues related to access, maintaining views of the mountains for residents, enhancing connectivity to area trails, and optimizing the quality of design. Per neighbors' specific requests to study those with half-wall view fencing in backyards, all line-of-sight exhibits within the formal application are from the perspective of southern neighbors with half-walls/view fencing. Based on initial neighbor comments to these specific exhibits, our team re-verified the scale of each exhibit. Our team will continue to engage with the Lehi community and other stakeholders as we move through the process.

### **Pre-Submittal Conference Meeting:**

A Pre-Submittal Conference meeting with City of Mesa planning staff was held on December 8, 2020. Our formal application submitted on February 16, 2021 reflects the comments and requests received from City Staff. Additionally, City Staff agreed our team should continue its robust neighborhood outreach efforts.

### **Neighborhood Meetings:**

In order to provide effective citizen participation in conjunction with this application, the following post-submittal actions will be taken to provide opportunities for feedback from surrounding property owners:

1. The Applicant will hold a second formal and noticed meeting in May 2021 as required by the City of Mesa.

The notification list for the neighborhood meeting includes:

- A. All property owners within 500' of the subject property
- B. Registered neighborhood contacts within ½-mile of the property (as provided by the City of Mesa Neighborhood Outreach Division)

Contact information for the Applicant's Representative will be included with the notice.

An e-mail distribution list will be collected at the neighborhood meeting in an effort to have continued dialogue with those who participate in the meeting.

- 2. All persons listed on the contact list will receive a letter describing the project, project schedule, site plan and an invitation to a neighborhood meeting to be held at a to-be-determined location. All individual citizens who have reached out to our team during our initial community outreach will also receive notification letters and invitations to future neighborhood meetings.
- 3. The Applicant will continue to engage in as many smaller group and individual neighborhood meetings as needed and we intend to continue to exceed the standard neighborhood meeting requirements.
- 4. Onsite meetings upon the vacant land can be arranged for any community members, City Staff, or appointed/elected officials to help share the unique topographic and context of the site in person.

All materials such as mailing lists, contact letters, sign-in lists, comments, and petitions received will be copied to the City of Mesa, and a copy of the notification map and notification mailing list will be provided in the update to this Citizen Participation Plan (as requested/required by Mesa staff).

The site will also be posted as required by the City of Mesa.

**Schedule** (current place in schedule is in **bold**):

- Pre-Submittal Conference Application Filed - November 12, 2020
- Pre-Submittal Conference –December 8, 2020
- Submittal (initial) – February 16, 2021
- **Re-submittal of revised application and related materials – May 3, 2021**
- Neighborhood Meeting – May, 2021
- Historic Preservation Board Meeting – TBD
- Planning and Zoning Board Hearing – TBD
- City Council Introduction – TBD
- City Council Final Action – TBD