

November 8, 2013

8775 N. Maya Ct.  
Tucson, AZ 85742

Supervisor Ally Miller, District 1  
Pima County Board of Supervisors  
130 W Congress St., 11th Floor  
Tucson, AZ 85701

Supervisor Miller:

It was my pleasure to meet you last night during the Town Hall meeting. I appreciated your candor in discussing the issues facing Pima County and their impact on our community now and in the future.

My husband, Ron, and I were born and raised in Yuma, Arizona. I graduated from the University of Arizona with my BS in nursing, an education that provided me with an excellent basis to begin my career. I joined the USPHS Commissioned Corp after working at UMC in ICU and moved away from Arizona. Life, further education, and careers kept my husband and I away from Arizona, but finally, we had a window of opportunity to return.

After looking for a home for about a year and a half, we found exactly what we wanted and purchased our current home in Maya Estates in April, 2012. It is on a quarter acre lot, as are the other 27 homes in our small neighborhood. Immediately to the North of our homes are larger lots, 3.1 acres, with mostly larger homes. When we bought our home, we were fully aware that there could be future development in the 30 acres of beautiful old growth desert immediately behind us designated as low density according to the Comprehensive Plan. The 30 acres is a corridor of space abutted by four neighborhoods and Hardy Road which actually dead ends from Thornydale. The only way to access Maya Estates is from Shannon and turning west on Hardy to the end of the road into the private road for the subdivision.

As you know, Jim Portner with Projects International Inc. is representing Red Point Development in its request to amend the Pima County Comprehensive Plan for four different parcels. At the Planning and Zoning Commission meeting on September 25, 2013, Mr. Portner chose to request the amendment for four different parcels at the same time, utilizing maps of the areas in question. He stated in his presentation that he was requesting the amendment on all four parcels because they were all similar, although the property behind Maya Estates is not on Thornydale nor is it surrounded by commercial properties. The parcel behind Maya Estates is Co7-13-06. It is currently zoned Low Intensity Urban 0.3 (LIU 0.3) and the request is to amend the Comprehensive Plan to Medium Intensity Urban (MIU). He neglected to mention that the properties immediately to the North of Maya Estates are zoned and have been developed as LIU 0.3.

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There were approximately 30 neighbors in attendance at the meeting on September 25, many taking time off work to attend, and several of us spoke during our allotted time. A petition signed by all owners of homes in Maya Estates and many of the owners in the other surrounding Sunnyvale and Saguaro Vista subdivisions, to the East of Thornydale, was presented by our HOA President, Jed Benninghoff, totaling 66 signatures. Three owners from the larger parcels immediately North of Maya Estates were also in attendance. Those owners, too, spoke to the Commission regarding concerns about the proposed Plan change.

The Commission's recommendation was to deny the request to amend the plan for all four parcels represented by Mr. Portner, though the parcel behind Maya Estates was the only one with a 6-1 vote to deny. Commissioner Brad Johns had voted to amend the plan on the other three parcels; however, he voted to deny the amendment on Co7-13-06 because he stated that it was residential, unlike the others bordered by Thornydale Road.

Certainly, I greatly appreciated the Commission's recommendation to deny the request to amend the Pima County Comprehensive Plan, and all of us in attendance were relieved, though fully aware that this was just the first step in the amendment request process. There was a previous request in 2002 to do the same amendment and it was denied.

I hope that you and the other members of the Board of Supervisors will also deny the request to amend the Comprehensive Plan. My husband and I and our neighbors bought our homes understanding that there was a possibility for development of the 30 acres out our back doors. Nine homes being constructed as currently allowed by the Plan's LIU 0.3 zoning is tolerable; 300 homes would create a totally different living situation. Loss of privacy, destruction of old growth desert and ironwood forest, increasing traffic and noise, and plummeting property values are assured consequences of development with approval of the requested amendment to MIU zoning.

Thank you very much for your support, Supervisor Miller. We will be attending the Board of Supervisors meeting on November 19 when this amendment request will be on the agenda along with other concerned neighbors. Should you wish to visit our neighborhood, Ron and I would be happy to show you the parcel behind our home that is at risk.

Sincerely,

Katherine Harper-Beckett