

Menlo Park Neighborhood Association

June 12th, 2025

To:

Infill Incentive District Design Review Committee  
Planning and Development Services Department  
City of Tucson

RE: Position Statement on Proposed Development and Neighborhood Involvement

Dear Members of the Design Review Committee,

On behalf of the Menlo Park Neighborhood Association (MPNA), we write to affirm our commitment to affordable housing, transit-oriented development, protections for existing homeowners, and context-sensitive architectural design. These values are embedded in our draft Menlo Park Neighborhood Plan, a document that represents over six years of extensive community work, engagement, and consensus-building. While this plan is not yet finalized, it reflects our neighborhood's collective vision and aspirations.

Our draft plan explicitly supports:

- Infill development compatible with the massing, scale, and architectural features of adjacent historic homes
- Affordable, sustainable housing that protects long-time residents from displacement
- Transit- and pedestrian-friendly development that reduces carbon emissions and promotes connected communities
- Land use that respects and complements the cultural and historic fabric of Menlo Park

The most recent design by Lizard Rock Design firm proposed a perplexing mix of three- and four-story units, placing the higher density building on the north side of Congress Street and closest to existing single-story, historic contributing residential homes. Meanwhile, the south side of Congress Street where existing and planned five- and six-story multi-family housing units are located, Lizard Rock proposes a three-story unit. These proposals should be redesigned and at minimum flipped both to take advantage of significant planning and investment made to the Mercado District PAD and to provide context-appropriate design for existing residential homes. MPNA cannot support the plans as proposed until this imbalance is addressed, nor should the City of Tucson. Tucson residents and taxpayers deserve a plan that leverages the significant investments made in the Mercado District PAD by insisting in more density there, rather than adjacent to residential construction.


In light of this proposal, MPNA requests the opportunity to provide substantive feedback on critical elements such as parking requirements, density mix, and design compatibility. Of particular concern is how parking will be managed so that it aligns with our neighborhood's mobility goals and does not adversely impact existing residents.

We respectfully call on the Infill Incentive District Design Review Committee to:

1. Continue review of the current development proposal but defer final approvals until the concerns of Menlo Park residents are addressed;
2. Direct the developers to work in direct partnership with the MPNA to resolve outstanding issues related to parking, density, and design in a manner consistent with the values of our draft plan;
3. Recognize and respect the considerable time, energy, and care the Menlo Park community has invested in shaping its future.

We are committed to participating in good faith and look forward to working collaboratively with the City and developers to ensure this project serves both current residents and future generations.

Sincerely,



Kylie Walzak

President

on behalf of Menlo Park Neighborhood Association