



COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR'S OFFICE

PIMA COUNTY GOVERNMENTAL CENTER
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C.H. HUCKELBERRY
County Administrator

September 6, 2019

Demion Clinco
Tucson Historic Preservation Foundation
P.O. Box 40008
Tucson, Arizona 85717

Re: Proposed City of Tucson Annexation near St. Philip's In the Hills Episcopal Church

Dear Mr. Clinco:

Thank you for your letter in which you expressed concern regarding the proposed annexation of property comprised of 26.5 acres near the St. Philip's In the Hills Episcopal Church at River Road and Campbell Avenue and on both the east and west sides of Campbell Wash. The County is also concerned about this annexation for a variety of reasons and is interested in determining if the proposed development is consistent with our natural and cultural resource conservation goals as outlined in the Sonoran Desert Conservation Plan and our historic preservation goals for the Catalina Foothills Planning Area.

Pima County has long recognized the importance of the area as an entry to the Catalina Mountain foothills where urban Tucson transitions to low density residential areas. The anchor of this gateway is the 1930s village core area at the intersection of River Road and Campbell Avenue, which although affected by roadway expansion and nearby later development, retains much of the original vision designed and developed by John Murphey and Josias Joesler. Key historic properties at the core of the area include:

- St. Philip's In the Hills Episcopal Church (1936)
- Murphey-Keith Office Building and Catalina Foothills Estate Sales Office (1937)
- Joesler Studio (1937)
- Hutton Webster Studio and Residence (1939)
- El Merendero Tea Room and Gift Shop (1937)
- St. Philip's Plaza and Park (1936)
- Catalina Foothills School (1931)
- Catalina Foothills Estates - North of River Road east and west of Campbell Avenue

Moreover, Pima County has lived up to its commitments to historic preservation of these buildings. A few decades ago, when the County realigned the split T intersection of River Road and Campbell Avenue to its present four-way configuration, the County paid to relocate the historic Joesler office building, then occupied by Murphey Trust, to a new site to the north in order to allow River Road to be straightened. In doing so, the County also fulfilled the directives of John Murphey who required that any new future development approved by

Mr. Clinco

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the County at the River/Campbell intersection be compatible with the design characteristics of the three Murphey/Joesler designed buildings to the west of Campbell. Recognizing the importance of maintaining the original design qualities of the Mexican village, Murphey placed a design covenant on the adjacent vacant parcels to guide later developments exemplified by the Bank One building and the Tucson Realty Office.

St. Philip's in the Hills Church and the existing office buildings at 4419-4445 North Campbell Avenue, Tucson, Arizona shall be the standard against which all designs shall be considered. That is, all improvements on the property shall be compatible with and compliment such above referenced existing improvements as to architectural style and quality of improvements. This language is not intended to require that the proposed improvements to be identical to the existing buildings in terms of architectural style, building materials, size and mass.

These restrictions resulted in new construction at each of the corners to be designed in a compatible architectural style. Pima County also holds covenants on two buildings south of the relocated office building that are now part of Joesler Village complex. These buildings, together with St. Philip's In the Hills Episcopal Church listed in the National Register of Historic Places, remain historically significant due to their age, village design and the vision of the architect and builder who designed and built them, Josias Joesler and John Murphey.

We are also concerned about the environmental impact of intense development adjacent to the Campbell Wash riparian area that remains an important wildlife corridor from the Catalina foothills south to the Rillito River.

For these reasons, we have asked to participate in any discussions regarding development of the property with the developer who has proposed annexation into the City of Tucson. We understand that the present annexation was rejected by the Tucson City Council with the developer's representative stating they would work with the neighbors before submitting any new request for annexation.

I have asked Pima County Director of Sustainability and Conservation, Linda Mayro, to actively participate in discussions with the developer proposes to have with area residents.

Thank you for your input on this project. We very much share your concerns.

Sincerely,



C.H. Huckelberry
County Administrator

c: The Honorable Chairman and Members, Pima County Board of Supervisors
Linda Mayro, Director, Office of Sustainability and Conservation