From:	WebServices
To:	Development Review Board
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Comment:
Please accept the enclosed comments on the revised proposal for the Mark Innovation Park (49-DR-2022#2), ahead of the hearing on January 4, 2024. I attended the first DRB hearing on this proposal on December 7, 2023 and provided input to the Board during public testimony. The modifications requested by Vice Chair Jeff Brand and Planning Commission Representative Diana Kaminski at the conclusion of the December 7 review were appropriate and aligned with the goal of ensuring that the buildings on this site are visually appealing and blend with the character of adjacent developments. The revised proposal from Mack Real Estate Group ("Applicant") is deficient in addressing Mr. Brand's request to use architectural features to break up the mass of the buildings. Applicant has modified just one section of each complex, the middle entrance, to add a recessed parapet, with no modifications to the rear of any structure. The buildings proposed on this site will be four times larger than the structures on any adjacent property. By quantitative comparison, Applicant's Building C will have a mass of 8.5 million cubic feet (185K sq ft x 46' tall), whereas the StorAmerica building to the immediate east (parcel 217-55-720), the Koll Perimeter Center to the immediate west (parcel 215-07-401), and the Potato Barn furniture showroom to the immediate south (parcel 217-13-007C) all have a mass of less than 1.8 million cubic feet. Per the design principles in the Scottsdale General Plan and Greater Airpark Character Area Plan: Scottsdale General Plan - Character & Design 1.4: Encourage transitions and blending of character between Character Types, including, open space areas, building height, massing, and orientation. Airpark Plan - Land Use 4.7: Encourage greater visual variety between employment/commercial land uses and residential neighborhoods, and avoid continuous building shapes and mass adjacent to residential neighborhoods. This property is located on the eastern edge of the Airpark, less than 1,200 feet from a medium-density residential neighborhood. Therefore, its design should provide a logical transition to non-industrial areas. Given the mass disparity of the proposed warehouses relative to adjacent properties, Applicant should be required to incorporate architectural features that create the impression of at least 4 different buildings when viewing Buildings B and C, and at least 3 different buildings when viewing Buildings A and D. Further, Applicant should be required to add architectural features to the back of the buildings to evoke a similar de-massing effect, as both sides of the edifice will be visible from surrounding roadways. During the hearing on January 4, I ask Mr. Brand and Ms. Kaminski to bestow upon the Applicant their architectural wisdom on how to accomplish this objective. I hope the Board agrees that Applicant's current proposal to modify one parapet wall above the main entrance falls short of the spirit of the Mr. Brand's request; each of the four buildings still looks like a giant box. Furthermore, the Board should treat with skepticism any testimony given by Applicant's Architect, Rick Butler. During the hearing on December 7, while fielding questions from Ms. Kaminski,

Mr. Butler made two false statements to the Board: First, that I-1 zoning allows for building heights of up to 54 feet [the maximum height allowed in I-1 is 52 feet]. Second, that the StorAmerica building adjacent to this property is 40 – 44 feet tall [the building was approved to a maximum height of 36 feet]. It is concerning that Mr. Butler is unfamiliar with the zoning rules for the very property he has designed. The Board should also remain steadfast against Mr. Butler's resistance to change. I was disappointed during the December 7 hearing to watch Mr. Butler push back against every idea proposed by Ms. Kaminski, many of which, such as softening the color of the dock doors, were appropriate modifications. Mr. Butler insisted that truck drivers prefer things a certain way, yet he does not possess a Commercial Driver License (CDL), nor does he operate an 18-wheeler, and thus, he lacks relevant experience to speak on this topic. His testimony should be validated for both veracity and credibility, and the Board should continue to require adjustments that make visual sense. I ask the Board to send this proposal back to Applicant for additional architectural changes that reduce the perceived mass of the buildings, enhance the visual appeal of the site, and blend the facility with surrounding developments. Sincerely, Chris Mullen Scottsdale Resident