



**PLANNING DIVISION
STAFF REPORT**

Planning and Zoning Board

January 22, 2020

CASE No.: ZON19-00802	PROJECT NAME: Mesa Mercado Fiesta Center
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Owner's Name:	Bear Stearns Commercial Mortgage Securities
Applicant's Name:	Kimley Horn
Location of Request:	Within the 1300 and 1400 blocks of West Southern Avenue (south side) and within the 1200 block of South Longmore (east side). Located west of Alma School Road on the south side of Southern Avenue.
Parcel No(s):	134-26-810
Request:	Site Plan Modification. This request will allow for the redevelopment of a group commercial center. Also consider the preliminary plat for "Mercado Fiesta" and preliminary condominium plat for "Mercado Fiesta Condominium".
Existing Zoning District:	Limited Commercial (LC)
Council District:	3
Site Size:	6.9± acres
Proposed Use(s):	Medical Office, Restaurant, General Office and Retail
Existing Use(s):	Medical Office, Restaurant, General Office and Retail
Hearing Date(s):	January 22, 2020 / 4:00 pm
Staff Planner:	Cassidy Welch
Staff Recommendation:	APPROVAL with Conditions

HISTORY

On **August 17, 1970**, the property was annexed into the City of Mesa (Ord. #675) and rezoned to Limited Commercial (LC).

On **November 17, 1980**, the City Council approved a site plan to allow a group commercial center development on the property (SPM80-017).

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Background

The subject request is to allow the redevelopment of an existing group commercial center on the property. Currently, the existing development consists of four buildings, buildings A-D (see attached site plan). The proposed redevelopment includes construction of a 6,270 square foot area to join buildings A & B into one large building of 43,870 square feet. The site plan also shows a demolition of sections of building C and D. Specifically, the demolition of the center part of building C to create two individual buildings, and the demolition of the southern section of building D to create a smaller building. The request also includes development of a new pad site for a 2,400 square foot restaurant building with associated drive-thru at the northwest corner of the site.

General Plan Character Area Designation and Goals

The property is located in the City's Mixed-Use Activity District as well as in a Transit Corridor area designation. Per Chapter 7 of the Mesa 2040 General Plan, the goal of the Mixed-Use Activity District is to help these districts be strong and viable centers of commercial activity that attract people to unique shopping and entertainment experiences. Retail, professional and medical offices, and restaurants, as proposed on the site, are typical primary uses allowed within the Mixed-Use Activity District character area designation.

The Transit Corridor designation applies to development of corridors between stations and stops. It is intended to create urban patterns such as a pedestrian-oriented urban environment that results in development within walking distance to and from transit stops. The proposed changes to the existing development will improve pedestrian connections on the site and orient the development towards Southern Avenue; thus, contributing to the desired pedestrian-oriented urban environment. Staff has reviewed the request and determined it is consistent with the criteria for review outlined in Chapter 15 of the Mesa 2040 General Plan.

Fiesta District Sub-Area

The site is also located within the Fiesta Economic Activity District. Per Chapter 5 of the Mesa 2040 General Plan, the Fiesta District is primed to revitalize and re-energize over the next decade. In accordance with the Plan, development efforts should focus on the redevelopment and revitalization of retail and entertainment uses to a regional mixed-use activity hub. The proposed redevelopment of a group commercial center conforms to the goal of the district to encourage revitalization and development of various properties in the sub area.

Zoning District Designations:

The subject site is currently zoned Limited Commercial (LC). Per Section 11-6-2 of the City of Mesa Zoning Ordinance (MZO), retail, professional and medical offices, and restaurants with drive-thru facilities are permitted in the LC zoning district.

Site Plan and General Site Development Standards:

The subject site is approximately 6.9 acres and consists of 4 commercial buildings identified as buildings A-D. The proposed redevelopment includes the partial demolition of portions of two buildings, the expansion of a building, and the construction of a new building. The applicant is proposing to combine buildings A & B and demolish part of building D. The applicant is also proposing the partial demolition of building C to create two buildings, which will become buildings C & F. Additionally, building C will include a new drive-thru.

The request also includes the construction of a new 2,400 square foot restaurant building with a drive-thru. This proposed drive-thru is identified as building E on the site plan. As a part of the redevelopment of the site, the applicant is proposing to redesign the façade of all the buildings to create a cohesive design of the group commercial center.

Per Section 11-73 of the Mesa Zoning Ordinance, the site is considered legal non-conforming. The site was developed in the 1980's and does not conform to all of the City's current development standards. Specifically, the landscaping on the site does not conform to the City's requirements outlined in Section 11-33 of the MZO. Per Section 11-73 of the MZO, a Substantial Conformance Improvement Permit (SCIP) will be required for the redevelopment of the subject site. However, such a SCIP will not be required if the site can be brought into conformance with current development standards. The request conforms to the review criteria for site plans outlined in Section 11-69-5 of the City of Mesa Zoning Ordinance.

Substantial Conformance Improvement Permit (SCIP):

Per Section 11-73 of the MZO, the intent of the SCIP is to recognize existing site constraints and work proportionately with the degree of improvement being sought by the applicant to improve the property. The site does not conform to the City's current landscape setbacks, foundation base requirements, and interior parking lot landscape requirements. The property does not meet the current landscape setback of 15 feet along Southern Avenue. In exchange, the applicant has provided an increased landscape setback where building E faces Southern Avenue. Additionally, a majority of the parking on the site does not meet the City's requirement of parking islands every 8 parking spaces. The applicant has provided additional landscape islands, where possible. Due to these non-conformities, the SCIP will aid to bring the site further into conformance with the City's current development standards. As part of the subject request, the applicant has also applied for the SCIP. Staff is currently reviewing the application and plan to schedule it for the Board of Adjustment public hearing in February.

Design Review:

On November 12, 2019, the Design Review Board reviewed the proposed elevations and landscape plans for the development and recommended certain modifications. The applicant is working with staff to incorporate the suggested revisions by the Board.

Preliminary Plat

Section 9-6-2 of the Mesa Subdivision standards requires approval of all subdivision plats located in the City to be processed through four progressive stages. Review and approval of a preliminary plat is the second stage in the series of the progressive stages. Per Section 11-66-2 of the Mesa Zoning Ordinance, the preliminary plat is reviewed and approved by the Planning and Zoning

Board. All approved preliminary plats are subject to potential modification through the City’s Subdivision Technical Review process, which is the third stage after approval of the preliminary plat. The Subdivision Technical Review process considers the overall design of the subdivision and details, such as utilities layout, ADA compliance, detention requirements, etc. This process can sometimes result in modification to lot sizes and configuration and a reduction in the number of lots. The request includes two preliminary plats. The first preliminary plat is to split the property into two parcels. The second preliminary plat is a condominium plat to allow for the individual ownership of buildings and suites on the site.

Surrounding Zoning Designations and Existing Use Activity:

Northwest (Across Southern Avenue & Longmore) LC Commercial	North (Across Southern Avenue) LC Commercial	Northeast (Across Southern Avenue) LC Commercial
West (Across Longmore) LC-BIZ Retail	Subject Property LC Commercial	East LC Bank
Southwest (Across Longmore) LC-BIZ Retail	South LC Fiesta Mall	Southeast LC Fiesta Mall

Compatibility with Surrounding Land Uses:

The proposed site plan modification is for the redevelopment of an existing group commercial center. The surrounding sites are developed for commercial uses and the proposed development will not be out of character with the surrounding area and uses.

Neighborhood Participation Plan and Public Comments

The applicant has completed a Citizen Participation Process, which included mailed letters to property owners within 1,000-feet of the site, as well as HOAs within ½ mile and registered neighborhoods within 1 mile of the site. As of writing this report, neither the applicant nor staff has received any comments/concerns from surrounding property owners. The applicant will be providing an updated Citizen Participation Report to staff prior to the January 22, 2019 Study Session. Staff will provide the Board with any new information during the scheduled Study Session.

Staff Recommendations:

The subject request is consistent with the General Plan and meets the review criteria for Site Plan Review outlined in Section 11-69-5 of the MZO; therefore, staff recommends approval with the following conditions:

Conditions of Approval:

1. Compliance with the final site plan submitted.
2. Compliance with all City development codes and regulations.
3. Compliance with all requirements of Design Review.
4. Prior to application of a building permit, receive approval through the Board of Adjustment for a Substantial Conformance Improvement Permit to address existing non-conformities on the site, or bring all non-conformities on the site into compliance with current City development standards.