



Planning and Zoning Board

Case Information

CASE NUMBER: Z15-004 (PLN2014-00653)
LOCATION/ADDRESS: 4558 East Virginia Street
GENERAL VICINITY: Located east of Greenfield Road and north of McDowell Road
REQUEST: This request will allow for the expansion of an existing hazardous material facility.
PURPOSE: Rezone from GI-PAD to Heavy Industrial with a Council Use Permit (HI-CUP), Site Plan Review and Preliminary Plat
COUNCIL DISTRICT: District 5
OWNER: RD Greenfield, LLC.
APPLICANT: Reese L. Anderson, Pew and Lake, PLC.
STAFF PLANNER: Angelica Guevara

SITE DATA

PARCEL NUMBER(S): 141-37-031, 032, 033, 034, 039, 040, 041A, 041B, 049B, 050, 052A
PARCEL SIZE: 20.2±
EXISTING ZONING: GI-PAD
GENERAL PLAN CHARACTER: Employment

SITE CONTEXT

NORTH: Red Mountain Loop 202 Freeway
EAST: Existing SDI Facility – zoned GI-CUP
SOUTH: (across Virginia St.) Contractor yards – zoned LI
WEST: Contractor yard – zoned GI

HISTORY/RELATED CASES

February 5, 1979: Annexed into the City (Ord. 1208)
August 13, 1979: Establishment of city zoning on annexed property (Z79-070)
April 7, 2008: Approval of a PAD and Site Plan Review for the development of an industrial subdivision

PROJECT DESCRIPTION/REQUEST

Special Devices, Inc. (SDI) is requesting rezoning of the site from GI-PAD to HI-CUP, Site Plan Review and approval of a Preliminary Plat. SDI supplies igniters for driver and passenger-side airbags and has an existing facility at 3431 N. Reseda Cir. SDI is proposing an expansion on the 20.2± acres located just west of their existing site.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Approval with conditions

P&Z BOARD RECOMMENDATION: Approval with conditions. Denial

PROPOSITION 207 WAIVER SIGNED: Yes No

PROJECT DESCRIPTION/REQUEST (Continued)

The expansion is planned in phases. The first phase contains seven buildings and is approximately 63,480 sq.ft. in area and will be used as assembly space. The second phase increases the expansion to a total of 121,780 sq.ft. which will be triggered by future production levels and demand.

NEIGHBORHOOD PARTICIPATION

The applicant has completed a Citizen Participation Plan in order to inform neighboring property owners of the project, solicit feedback, and address any comments or concerns that may arise. The Citizen Participation Plan included a contact list consisting of all registered neighborhoods and Homeowner's Associations within a half-mile and all property owners within 1,000 feet of the site. Each person or entity on the contact list was sent a letter providing general information on the request with contact information and notice of the neighborhood meeting.

The neighborhood meeting was held on December 18, 2014 and had 14 people in attendance. After providing an overview of the project the applicant fielded some questions. The questions were general in nature regarding the existing and proposed operations and expansion of the site. Initially, there seemed to be some concerns raised regarding the explosions and vibrations that the adjacent neighbors had felt in the past. The applicant explained that those activities were not happening on their site and that they were not responsible for it. The applicant indicated that the vibrations felt south of the freeway were caused by the operations at the Namu Talley site located north of the 202 Freeway which was not associated with SDI.

MESA 2040 GENERAL PLAN

The goal of Mesa 2040 General Plan is to establish and maintain neighborhoods and to build a sense of place in neighborhoods and in commercial/employment areas of activity. Rather than focusing on individual land uses, the Plan focuses on the "character of development in different areas." Character types combine concepts of land use with building form and intensity to describe the type of area being created through the development that occurs.

The Mesa 2040 General Plan designates the character for this site as an Employment District. The Employment District is a character type that is primarily used for employment-type land uses of at least 20 acres and typically has minimal connection to the surrounding area. Examples of employment districts include areas for large manufacturing facilities, warehousing, business parks, etc. The goal for this district is to provide for a wide range of employment opportunities in high quality settings.

Development areas with the Employment District character type will be reviewed for the opportunity to maintain and enhance employment options within the City of Mesa; areas with this character type are important to the long term vitality of the community and need to be protected from incompatible development types. Review shall also consider compliance with any approved sub-area or neighborhood plan for the specific area.

The following criteria have been developed for use during the review process to determine whether or not the proposed development is achieving the vision and goals established in this Plan and thus meeting the statute requirements. The next section of this report includes an

analysis of this development against the following criteria.

1. Is the proposed development consistent with furthering the intent and direction contained in the General Plan?
2. Is the proposed development consistent with adopted sub-area or neighborhood plans?
3. Is the proposed development consistent with the standards and guidelines established for the applicable character type(s)?
4. Will the proposed development serve to strengthen the character of the area by:
 - Providing appropriate infill development;
 - Removing development that is deteriorated and/or does not contribute to the quality of the surrounding area;
 - Adding to the mix of uses to further enhance the intended character of the area;
 - Improving the streetscape and connectivity within the area;
 - Improving safety within the area;
 - Adding to the sense of place; and,
 - Meeting or exceeding the development quality of the surrounding area?
5. Does the proposed development provide appropriate transitions between uses? In more urban areas these transitions should generally be accomplished by design elements that allow adjacent buildings to be in close proximity to one another. In more suburban locations these transitions should be addressed through separation of uses and/or screening.
6. Compliance with the character area is based on both the zoning being consistent with the range of zoning designations approved for each character type and on the development form, design, and quality being consistent with the standards and guidelines provided in this Plan, any adopted sub-area or neighborhood plans, and the context of the neighborhood surrounding the proposed development.

STAFF ANALYSIS

The proposed expansion is consistent with furthering the intent and direction contained in the Mesa 2040 General Plan. It furthers the guiding principles of the General Plan through the proposed phased expansion that consists of a total of twelve buildings totaling 121,780 sq. ft.

The first phase will include seven buildings, approximately 63,480 sq. ft. The proposed expansion of the automobile airbag inflator facility intends to meet current and future needs of the automobile industry which will add 240 more diverse and stable jobs. It should be noted that SDI recently consolidated the company to this Mesa facility.

The proposed rezoning to the 19.6± acres to the Heavy Industrial district with the Council Use Permit (HI-CUP) is necessary for the handling of the hazardous materials on the site. The proposed use of this property is also consistent with the Plan objectives and will be compatible with and not detrimental to the other existing industrial uses surrounding the site.

The proposed expansion also helps move the City toward the goal of becoming a more complete, recognizable City. The proposed buildings express high quality development through the incorporation of various building materials which include concrete tilt-up panels, cmu, and smooth metal panels. Overall, the buildings are designed in a way that provides variety and interest and responds to our desert environment with the use of natural materials that include masonry and concrete.

The proposed development is also consistent with adopted goals of the Falcon Field Sub-Area Plan and is also compatible with the standards and guidelines established for the Employment District character type.

The expansion is planned on almost 20 acres which adds to the existing 20 acre site. The development has minimal connections to the surroundings as it is located on the south side of the 202 Red Mountain Freeway and in the middle of an existing industrial area. The development is planned on several lots which are being assembled and plated as part of this request. The expansion is designed with the main entry, offices, manufacturing and assembly building closest to Virginia Street to provide the necessary access and connections to the public street. The storage and manufacturing buildings are proposed behind the office buildings and are provided circulation for large vehicles through controlled paved drive aisles that extend throughout the site.

The proposed base zoning of HI is a primary zoning district in the Employment District character type and the proposed structures and site layout are consistent with the form and guidelines provided in the General Plan.

The proposed development strives to strengthen the character of the area since it is providing appropriate infill development of a vacant site in the middle of an industrial area. SDI will landscape with drought tolerant plants that are indigenous to the area and will provide the necessary improvement across their frontage on Virginia Street further improving the streetscape and connectivity within the street. Having development consistent with City standards will also improve safety in the area. The proposed buildings are attractive and supportable and will add to the overall sense of place within this industrial area. The proposed site plan and building design exceeds the development quality of the surrounding area.

SDI is proposing 8' tall masonry screen walls to provide appropriate screening between property lines.

CONCLUSION:

The proposed rezoning to HI with the Council Use Permit, the Site Plan, and Preliminary Plat are consistent with the range of zoning designations approved for the Employment District character type. The development form, design, and quality are consistent with the standards and guidelines provided in the 2040 General Plan, the adopted Falcon Field Sub-Area Plan, and the context of the area surrounding the proposed development, therefore, staff is recommending approval with the following:

CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL:

1. Compliance with the basic development as described in the project narrative, and as shown on the site plan, preliminary plat, preliminary elevations, and landscape plan

- (without guarantee of lot yield, building count, lot coverage).
2. Compliance with all requirements of the Design Review approval.
 3. Compliance with all City development codes and regulations.
 4. Dedicate the right-of-way required under the Mesa City Code at the time of application for a building permit, at the time of recordation of the subdivision plat, or at the time of the City's request for dedication whichever comes first.
 5. All street improvements and street frontage landscaping to be installed in the first phase of construction.
 6. Certificates of Occupancy and/or Completion for individual buildings shall not be granted until Zoning Ordinance required parking and landscaping are constructed for those buildings.
 7. Compliance with all requirements of the Subdivision Technical Review Committee.
 8. Property owner shall grant an Avigation Easement and Release to the City, pertaining to Falcon Field Airport which will be prepared and recorded by the City (concurrently with the recordation of the final subdivision map, prior to the issuance of a building permit).