

BANQUET AND CONFERENCE CENTER

2600 East Southern Avenue
Mesa, Arizona

REZONE, SCIP, & SUP REVISED PROJECT NARRATIVE

October 29, 2015

PROJECT SUMMARY & REQUESTS

Pew & Lake, PLC (Applicant), on behalf of Michael & Shelley McKown (Owners), hereby submit this revised project narrative and supporting documents in support of a zoning change on the approximate 1.4 acres located at 2600 East Southern Avenue in Mesa, Arizona (Property) and is commonly known as APN: 140-44-096A. The specific requests are as follows:

- A. Rezoning from Single Residence (RS-43) to Office Commercial (OC).
- B. Special Use Permit (SUP) for outdoor entertainment or outdoor activity.
- C. Substantial Conformance Improvement Permit (SCIP) to allow the majority of existing site conditions to remain.
- D. Site Plan approval.

If approved, these requests will accommodate the development and operation of a banquet and conference center on this existing property.

SITE & BUILDING DESCRIPTION

The lot size is 62,222 sq. ft. and the size of the primary residence is approximately 5,677 sq. ft. with an existing 1,020 sq. ft. detached storage building located in the rear yard. As demonstrated on the Site Plan included with this application, the existing buildings will remain as they exist today. Minor improvements will be made to the interior of the building to comply with current ADA Accessibility and City of Mesa Building code and Fire code requirements.

Please note that the exterior colors and materials will remain unchanged at this time, but may be touched up where needed with the same color of paint and materials. Of course, business signage (if any) will be applied for in the normal course and in conjunction with the required construction permits.

OPERATION

Hours of operation on the site are anticipated to be 9 AM to 10 PM Monday through Saturday and closed on Sunday, but are subject to change. The Owner's anticipate Thursday, Friday, and Saturday evening to be when the majority of their operations and activities will occur. Depending on the day and time of the day, there could be anywhere between 5 and 10 employees on site in support of the event being held.

PARKING & ACCESS

Access to the Property will continue from Southern Avenue via two existing driveways. Parking for guests will be provided primarily on the south and west sectors of the site and will exceed City of Mesa minimum standards. The primary entrance for guests will remain through the existing entry on the south side of the primary building.

As noted on the site plan submitted and consistent with Table 11-32-3A, the proposed use requires a minimum total of 51 parking spaces, which are provided. However, the Owners are sensitive to the occasional extra parking needs of banquet facilities and are thus proposing to provide a total of 64 parking spaces onsite, which includes 2 accessible/van spaces closely located near the main building entrance and 3 spaces in the garage for caterer services. In addition, the Owners have worked closely with the church (Sant Nirankari Mission Universal Brotherhood) immediately adjacent to their east property line to accommodate any overflow parking on their site. This arrangement would add an additional 55 parking spaces to the 64 being provided by the Owners for a total of 119. As reflected on the site plan, a pedestrian walkway is proposed between this property and the church to facilitate easy access between both sites. During events with heavier parking, directional signage will be utilized to accommodate and safely direct traffic. Additionally, the Owners propose through signage on site that the existing east driveway will become the "entrance only" and the existing west driveway will become the "exit only"

LANDSCAPING

The perimeter of the site will be landscaped consistent with the surrounding properties and per the standard requirements of the City of Mesa modified through these applications. The proposed landscaping palette will be harmonious with both the existing site landscaping and the surrounding context. Existing landscaping adjacent to the buildings exceeds City requirements and will be maintained. Two deviations to the standard City of Mesa requirements are detailed in the SCIP portion of this narrative.

The plan submitted clearly shows the existing and mature trees, shrubs, turf, and other plant materials that are already located on this site. Additionally, the plan also shows the existing mature trees that existing adjacent to this site on neighboring parcels. The combination of onsite existing landscaping, proposed supplementary landscaping, and existing landscaping on adjacent parcels easily demonstrates compliance with the intent of Mesa's landscape standards.

UTILITIES

The existing 1" onsite water service and meter is sufficient to serve the domestic water needs of the proposed use. The wastewater for this site is currently processed via an onsite private

septic system. A City of Mesa 4" public sewer service is provided to the site from Southern Avenue. Accordingly, the existing septic system will be abandoned and connection made to the aforementioned service. Water service for the proposed 4" automated fire sprinkler system will be provided via attachment to an existing 8" public water mainline stub existing on the north side of Southern Avenue near the east boundary of this parcel.

STORMWATER RETENTION

This Property has been historically flood irrigated, as are all the neighboring parcels. The Owner's intends to maintain the existing flood irrigation. As was previously approved for the other commercial land changes in this area, Mesa's storm water retention requirements will be achieved via the existing depressed irrigation areas on site. While these existing retention areas are generally shown on the Site Plan, detailed Grading & Drainage plans that demonstrate compliance with Chapter 8 of the 2012 Engineering Procedure Manual will be submitted with the Owner's comprehensive application package for construction permits.

PUBLIC RIGHTS-OF-WAY

The current Mesa Transportation Plan reflects maintaining the existing 4 lane arterial configuration of Southern Avenue in this reach. Furthermore, the existing utility mainlines and services in Southern Avenue are sufficient to accommodate the anticipated uses in the area. The Owner's anticipate dedicating an additional 10' of rights-of-way along its Southern Avenue frontage to achieve a total of 65' in accordance with City of Mesa Detail M-19.01. The Site Plan submitted reflects this dedication. Pursuant to discussions with staff regarding this dedication, Mesa indicates it will support an Encroachment Agreement/Permit to allow the existing wall to remain in its current location and allow the proposed parking and proposed landscaping shown on the Site Plan to be located within the proposed ROW dedication. Said support for an Encroachment Agreement/Permit will be noted in staff's written report to the P&Z Board.

NEIGHBORHOOD INTEGRATION

In an effort to ensure this proposed use will effectively blend and be harmonious with the mix of existing commercial and residential uses nearby, the Owners have been diligent in their efforts to communicate and discuss the proposed land use changes with their neighbors. Their proactive efforts have gone well beyond the required public meetings and have involved informal 1-on-1 conversations seeking input and comment. As a result of their efforts, the owners have obtained 28 written statements of support signed by property owners on the north side of Southern Avenue and within a 500' radius of the Property. These statements of support have been attached to the Citizen Participation Report that is part of this follow-up submittal package.

ADJACENT ZONING DISTRICTS AND EXISTING USES

The surrounding zoning and uses are as follows:

	EXISTING ZONING	CURRENT GENERAL PLAN	EXISTING USE(S)
North	RS-43	Neighborhood Suburban	Single Family Detached Homes
South	Southern Avenue and RM-2 PAD	Neighborhood Suburban	Southern Avenue, Single Family Detached Homes
East	OC	Neighborhood Suburban	Sant Nirankari Mission @ 2640 E. Southern, Law Offices @ 2650 E. Southern
West	RS-43 & OC	Neighborhood Suburban	Single Family Detached Home @ 2550 E. Southern, Medical Offices @ 2530 E. Southern

As indicated in the chart above, the change from RS-43 to OC will be compatible with the existing uses and zoning between the subject site and the properties to the north, east, and west. The proposed change is also consistent with the General Plan. The proposed use will be commensurate with the other commercial land uses in the area.

Specifically, on the north side of Southern Avenue between the 24th Street and Lindsay Road, there were originally built 11 suburban ranch-style, single-family homes that were constructed on large acre+ lots during the 1960's. Over time, all but 2 of the original 11 homes have been rezoned or otherwise transitioned to non-residential uses such as; churches, medical offices, professional offices and law offices, etc.

SPECIAL CONFORMANCE & IMPROVEMENT PERMIT (SCIP) CRITERIA

The SCIP request is to allow the existing conditions to remain as recognized deviations from the zoning code, while making strategic and specific improvements to satisfy substantial conformance with the City's standard zoning code requirements. The approval of the SCIP is necessary and justified because: (a) the demolition or reconstruction of existing building on the Property will cause a significant and unreasonable financial hardship, (b) the cessation of the existing use/building would cause an unreasonable hardship, and (c) the non-conformities, such as building and landscape setback requirements, do not impose unreasonable encroachments to surrounding properties and their uses.

Accordingly, the Applicant hereby requests a SCIP to address the following code requirements:

1. Deviation from the required 25 ft. rear yard setback per Table 11-6-3A to allow the existing storage building to remain at its current location, which meets the applicable setback established when the building was originally constructed in 1963. Please note that the existing storage building is over 150 ft. from the home to the northeast, over 100 ft. from the home to the northwest, and over 125 ft. from the home on the west. All these distances generously exceed the minimum separation between commercial and residential uses; thereby maintaining the intent of Table 11-6-3A.
2. Deviation from the required 15 ft. arterial street setback from Southern Avenue per Table 11-6-3A to allow for 5 ft. landscaped areas on the north side of the proposed parking adjacent to Southern Avenue. The existing screen wall on the south property line effectively obscures any benefit to be derived from a landscape area located in the traditional setback. By effectively relocating landscaping to the proposed areas adjacent to the proposed parking will create a visual aesthetic visible from both Southern Avenue and the interior of the site.
3. Deviation from the required 25 ft. interior side setback (adjacent to RS District) from the West property line per Table 11-6-3A to allow a 5 ft. landscaped setback. The proposed masonry fence along this shared property line will effectively obstruct a screening benefit that might have been achieved via the standard setback. In addition, the neighbor to the west is supportive of this deviation and has provided his support in writing.
4. Deviation from the required parking surface standards in 11-32-2(C.1) that: require parking areas, maneuvering areas, and driveways to be paved with asphalt, concrete, paving stone, or masonry to a sufficient thickness to withstand repeated vehicular traffic. In order to preserve the historic onsite retention provided for on the Property, the Owner proposes to use a porous and compacted crushed rock dust-free parking surface that will facilitate percolation of accumulated storm water as shown on the Site Plan approved as part of this Application.
5. Deviation from the typically required commercial M-42 driveway standards in the “Public Street Access Guidelines” of the City of Mesa. The pattern established by Mesa for other properties in this reach of Southern Avenue is the basis for this deviation. Specifically, that M-42 commercial driveways are only being required where the existing home is being razed and replaced with a totally new commercial building and completely new site improvements. In prior instances where existing residences have been maintained while being transitioned to commercial-related uses, the older residential-style driveways commonly found in the area have been allowed by Mesa to remain.

On October 13th, a formal appeal to the typical commercial driveway M-42 standards was submitted to the City of Mesa for review. On October 22nd, the City Traffic Engineer approved said appeal to allow the owners to maintain the two existing residential driveways while providing a new, 4' wide ADA compliant sidewalk behind those driveways. The approval included conditions as follows:

- a. Truncated domes to be provided where pedestrians are crossing open traffic areas (i.e., the drive isles of the parking lot).
- b. Accessible route should be aligned with main entrance and not skewed as currently shown.
- c. New walkway needs to provide sufficient clearance from the driveway wing (i.e., turning space for a wheelchair user).
- d. Establish turn prohibitions via signing to alert drivers that they cannot make westbound right and eastbound left turns off of Southern Avenue into the proposed exit only driveway. "DO NOT ENTER" signing will also be placed on each side of that driveway.

SCIP REQUIREMENTS

Full conformance with the current code requirements would cause or create:

- a) *The demolition or reconstruction of existing buildings or other significant structures; and*
- b) *The cessation of the existing conforming use (current applications pending for a Minor General Plan Amendment and Rezoning for the subject property to bring the use into conformance with the City Zoning Code).*

SCIP JUSTIFICATION & COMPATIBILITY

As previously mentioned, the proposed use on the site is compatible with the surrounding commercial and residential uses. The character of the neighborhood located on this reach of Southern Avenue has changed over time with many of the homes in the immediate area being converted to businesses. It is anticipated the only remaining RS-43 property in this area will ultimately make similar requests for their site to take advantage of the highest and best use for such transitional properties.

SUP JUSTIFICATION & COMPATIBILITY

A SUP is a discretionary permit issued by the Zoning Administrator or Board of Adjustment and is approved by showing compliance with the criteria shown in §§ 11-31-9 and 11-70-5 of the Zoning Code. Section 11-31-9 requires that for any commercial uses in a residential district, that the owner shall obtain a SUP, which shall be reviewed in accordance with the following specific criteria:

1. *Applicable Policies.* The use is found to be in compliance with the General Plan, and with applicable Sub Area Plans, Neighborhood Plans and other recognized development plans or policies, and will be compatible with surrounding uses.
2. *Site Plan.* A finding that an acceptable site plan has been submitted for review and consideration.

3. *Operational Plan.* A finding that an acceptable operational plan in narrative form has been submitted for review and consideration, which includes, but is not limited to, descriptions of acceptable measures to ensure ongoing compatibility with adjacent uses. Such policies shall include, but are not limited to, the name and telephone number of the manager or person responsible for the operation of the facility; complaint response procedures, including investigation, remedial action, and follow-up; and litter control measures.
4. *Addresses Adverse Impacts.* Evidence that acceptable documentation is present demonstrating that the building or site proposed for the use shall adequately provide paved parking and on-site circulation in a manner that minimizes impacts on adjacent sites; and existing or proposed improvements to the site shall minimize dust, fugitive light, glare, noise, offensive smells and traffic impacts on neighboring residential sites.

Section 11-70-5(E) provides the required findings for an SUP, which shall only be granted if the approving body determines that the project as submitted or modified conforms to all of the following criteria:

1. Approval of the proposed project will advance the goals and objectives of and is consistent with the policies of the General Plan and any other applicable City plan and/or policies;
2. The location, size, design, and operating characteristics of the proposed project are consistent with the purposes of the district where it is located and conform with the General Plan and with any other applicable City plan or policies;
3. The proposed project will not be injurious or detrimental to the adjacent or surrounding properties in the area, nor will the proposed project or improvements be injurious or detrimental to the neighborhood or to the general welfare of the City; and
4. Adequate public services, public facilities and public infrastructure are available to serve the proposed project.

CONCLUSION

The subject property meets all the requirements for a land use change, a Substantial Conformance Improvement Permit, and a Special Use Permit, and the granting of the rezoning and permits will not create conditions detrimental to any surrounding properties. The proposed use is appropriate for the subject site and is consistent the surrounding zoning context and existing character of the uses in the area.