



Planning and Zoning Board

Case Information

CASE NUMBER: **Z15-039 (PLN2015-00386)**
LOCATION/ADDRESS: 2200 THROUGH 2300 BLOCKS OF East Jacinto Avenue
GENERAL VICINITY: Located north of Baseline Road and east of Gilbert Road
REQUEST: Rezone from LC to RM-3-PAD and Site Plan Review. Also, consider the preliminary Plat of a re-plat of lots 5, 6 & 7 of Mesa Shores Shopping Center Unit 2
PURPOSE: This request will allow for the development of a multi-residential project.
COUNCIL DISTRICT: District 3
OWNER: Genica Arizona, LLC
APPLICANT: Welker Development Resources – Jeff Welker
STAFF PLANNER: Kim Steadman

PARCEL NUMBERS: **SITE DATA**
PARCEL SIZE: 140-62-311, -312C, -313B
EXISTING ZONING: 5.4± acres
GENERAL PLAN Character areas: LC
CURRENT LAND USE: Mixed Use Activity District & Neighborhood - Traditional Vacant

HISTORY/RELATED CASES
May 19, 1973: Annexed into the City and zoned C-2 & R1-6. (Ord. #812)
October 17, 1983: Rezone from C-2 & R1-6 to C-2 and Site Plan Review for a shopping center. (Z83-119 & SPR 83-007)
July 18, 1988: Site Plan Modification to add a theater. (SPM88-008)

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Approval with conditions
P&Z BOARD RECOMMENDATION: ☐ Approval with conditions. ☐ Denial
WAIVER SIGNED: ☒ Yes ☐ No

SITE CONTEXT
NORTH: (Across Jacinto Ave.) Existing single residential – Zoned RS-6
EAST: (Across 24th St.) Existing single residential –Zoned RS-6
SOUTH: Existing commercial pad buildings (4) –Zoned LC
WEST: Existing commercial center –Zoned LC

PROJECT DESCRIPTION/REQUEST

This site is located in an undeveloped portion of an existing commercial center. Its position in the northeast corner of the center is adjacent to single residential neighborhoods across both Jacinto Ave. to the north, and 24th St. to the east. The applicant proposes a 102-unit multi-residential development.

The request is for rezoning from LC - a commercial district - to RM-3, a multi-residential district that allows a density of up to 20 dwelling units per acre. The request also includes Site Plan Review and a Planned Area Development (PAD) overlay that will provide relief from development standards in exchange for increased quality. There is an existing commercial plat on this site. A Preliminary Plat is included, to re-plat Lots 5, 6, and 7 of the Mesa Shores Shopping Center Unit 2 subdivision into a condominium plat.

NEIGHBORHOOD PARTICIPATION

The applicant has enacted a Citizen Participation Plan for this project that included mailing letters to property owners, HOAs and Registered Neighborhoods within the area. The applicant also reports holding numerous discussions with the leaders of the Ranch West registered neighborhood association, which is the closest neighborhood to the project site. These discussions led up to an open-air neighborhood meeting at the site on October 29th. Per the Citizen Participation Report provided by the applicant their efforts resulted in 33 property owners in attendance at the neighborhood meeting, with 24 signing the sign-in list. The following questions and concerns were raised:

- Potential for increased traffic on 24th St. and Jacinto Ave.
- The intended sales price of the condo units
- Potential for parking along Jacinto Ave.
- The lack of an additional perimeter wall along the Jacinto Ave. frontage
- Potential for vehicle headlights projecting from the new development into the existing residences on the north side of Jacinto Ave.
- Opportunity for Mesa to install additional traffic signalization at Jacinto Ave. and Gilbert Rd.

The applicant's responses to these questions are included in the Report. The outdoor meeting was interrupted by rain approximately 15 minutes before the end. The applicant has committed to maintaining ongoing communication with the Ranch West neighborhood leaders to address questions that may arise.

Staff has not been contacted by the Public with regard to this project.

CONFORMANCE WITH THE MESA 2040 GENERAL PLAN

Summary: The General Plan designates this area principally as "Mixed Use Activity District" transitioning into "Neighborhoods". This case demonstrates a fundamental element of the General Plan, that of connectivity, as opposed to hardline separation between uses. This proposal achieves that vision, adding a residential component, providing pedestrian connectivity, and reinvesting in the viability of an existing commercial center within a Mixed-Use Activity District.

Criteria for review of proposal: The following criteria (Ch. 15 of the General Plan) have been developed for use during the review process to determine whether the proposed development is achieving the vision and goals established in the General Plan and thus meeting the statute requirements.

1. Is the proposed development consistent with furthering the intent and direction contained in the General Plan?

The General Plan focuses on creating land development patterns that emphasize the character of place. Strengthening neighborhoods and the commercial centers that serve them is also important. There is an emphasis on retrofitting our auto-centered form of suburban development with infill developments that provide pedestrian connections. As an infill development between existing commercial and single residential areas this project provides a strong identity and amenities for its residents. At the same time, it integrates with adjacent commercial and residential, allowing pedestrian connection with the greater surrounding neighborhood.

2. Is the proposed development consistent with adopted sub-area or neighborhood plans?

There is not an established sub-area for this neighborhood.

3. Is the proposed development consistent with the standards and guidelines established for the applicable character type(s)?

The Character Area map of the Mesa 2040 General Plan defines this location mainly as Mixed Use Activity District with a sub-type of Community-Scale Districts. This is defined as follows:

Character Area: Mixed Use Activity District

“Focus: Mixed Use Activity Districts are large-scale (typically over 25 acres) community and regional activity areas that usually have a significant retail commercial component including shopping areas such as malls, power centers, or lifestyle centers that are designed and developed to attract customers from a large radius. These districts often include other uses such as office, entertainment and residential... Particularly with redevelopment of shopping centers, these districts may take on a significant residential character, but will still have a mix of uses. The goal is to help these districts be strong and viable centers of commercial activity that attract people to unique shopping and entertainment experiences.”

Located at the rear of an existing commercial center the proposed development adds a residential component without detracting from the center’s commercial viability. This complies with the above references to “a significant residential character” and “strong and viable centers...that attract people to unique shopping and entertainment experiences”. The addition of this residential component that connects directly to the commercial center should help strengthen the commercial center.

Sub-type: Community-Scale Districts

“Community-Scale Districts (primarily serving up to a 4-mile radius) typically contain one or two big box buildings and associated shops and pad sites. These character types are typically at the intersection of two arterial streets and are typically auto-dominant unless part of a Transit District. As part of redeveloping older community commercial areas, this character type may transition into providing a greater mix of uses including office and residential activities and should take on a more pedestrian-friendly environment... The primary goal of this character type is to provide high quality

opportunities for commercial and entertainment activities consistent with the needs of today's consumer."

The proposal complies with provisions in the Sub-type for "more urban forms that balance autos with pedestrians" and "pedestrian-friendly environment."

4. Will the proposed development serve to strengthen the character of the area by:

- **Providing appropriate infill development;**

This proposal infills a large unbuilt portion at the rear of the commercial center. Placing access to some units directly along Jacinto Ave. allows these homes to function as a continuation of the existing residential neighborhood.

- **Removing development that is deteriorated and/or does not contribute to the quality of the surrounding area;**

N/A

- **Adding to the mix of uses to further enhance the intended character of the area;**

As mentioned above, the proposed new use is listed in the Plan as appropriate to this Character Area.

- **Improving the streetscape and connectivity within the area;**

The General Plan discourages "multi-residential development that is segregated from the surrounding community..." (P.4-12.). This proposal adds direct front-door access from the units that face Jacinto Ave., completing this street and bringing it into the neighborhood.

The proposal improves the streetscape along Jacinto Ave., adding residential units with windows and balconies facing the street. This improves the pedestrian experience along that street. The site plan also provides auto and pedestrian connectivity within the commercial center, allowing residents access to and from shopping within the block.

- **Meeting or exceeding the development quality of the surrounding area;**

The project design was well received at the October 13th Design Review Board work session. Staff explained that the Design Review process is used in determining that the final product meets a standard of higher quality required both by the General Plan and the PAD overlay.

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 close to one another. In more suburban locations these transitions should be addressed through separation of uses and/or screening;

The current proposal adds a multi-residential use between existing commercial and single-residential uses, and the burden of "transitioning" falls fully on this new use. The design relies on solid site fencing to screen the interior of the subject site from the adjacent parking lots. The existing streets serve to transition from this multi-story residential site to the existing single-residential on the opposite side.

STAFF ANALYSIS

Rezoning:

The existing LC zoning was established in 1982 for the development of a commercial center. The main body of the center developed to the west, with anchor stores flanked by inline shops, and freestanding commercial pads in the parking lot. Additional commercial pad buildings have developed along Baseline Rd., to the south of the subject parcels. All of the previously-developed commercial center will retain its LC zoning.

The current request rezones 5.4± acres of unbuilt LC land in the northeast corner of the site to RM-3-PAD to allow for a 102 unit multi-residential development. The request includes a Preliminary Plat for the re-platting of Lots 5, 6, and 7 of the Mesa Shores Shopping Center Unit 2 subdivision into a condominium plat. The RM-3 zoning designation allows for 20 dwelling units per gross acre. The proposed 102 units equals 18.9 du/ac, calculated with the 5.4 *net* acres.

Planned Area Development (PAD) Overlay:

The rezoning includes a Planned Area Development (PAD) overlay. Per §11-22-1 a PAD overlay is used “to allow for innovative design and flexibility in projects of sufficient size that are planned for development as a cohesive unit...The intent of this district is to provide for creative, high-quality development incorporating:

- A. Well designed and integrated open space and/ or recreational facilities held in common ownership and of a scale that is proportionate to the use;
- B. Options for the design and use of private or public streets;
- C. Preservation of significant aspects of the natural character of the land;
- D. Building design, site design, and amenities that create a unique and more sustainable alternative to conventional development;
- E. Sustainable property owners’ associations;
- F. Maintenance of property held in common ownership through the use of recorded covenants, conditions, and restrictions; and
- G. Single or multiple land use activities organized in a comprehensive manner, and designed to work together in common and in a synergistic manner to the benefit of both the project and the neighboring area.”

The applicant’s request for a Planned Area Development (PAD) overlay will allow for deviation from development standards in these specific areas:

Standard		RM-3 Required	Proposed	Staff recommends:
Jacinto Avenue (Local Street)	Building Setback	20’	Varies: 7’ – 20’	As Proposed
	Landscape Width	20’	Varies: 7’ – 20’	As Proposed
24 th Street (Collector Street)	Building Setback	25’	10’ to fence 25’ to bldg.	As Proposed
	Landscape Width	25’	10’ to fence 25’ to bldg.	As Proposed

Interior (Adj. to LC Zoning)	Building Setback	30' or 45'*	30' plus	As Proposed
	Landscape Width	20' (P. 5-20, 33-8)	5' plus	As Proposed
Building Separation on Same Lot		35' for 3 Stories	Varies: 24' plus	As Proposed
Open Space: 175/unit		17,850 SF	Pool: 25,886 SF NW Play area: 6,200 SF	Exceeds standards

*15' per story: 2 Stories: 30'; 3 Stories: 45'

The allowance for these deviations is being addressed through quality building design as required by the PAD overlay. The design documents were presented at a Design Review Board work session on October 13th. The Board's comments were very positive and suggested that the design reflects that level of quality. The applicant has also exceeded the useable open space requirement by provided two areas of useable, designed common space well in excess of the minimum area required for multi-residential projects. Staff also recommends participation in the Tri-Star Program, through Mesa Police. It is a "cooperative effort to foster a safer community in rental properties."

Site plan:

Auto access to the site is from 24th St., a wide, mid-section collector street. The entry/exit configuration is designed to allow direct circulation from the residential development within the commercial center. Pedestrian access is also provided, through 3 gates at the corners of the triangular gated development, outward to the commercial center, and to the surrounding residential neighborhoods.

A limited number of units (16 of the 102) have their front door fronting Jacinto Ave., a local residential street. These front doors are within gated yards, and provide direct access to the public sidewalk and street. Across Jacinto Ave. 5 of the 7 existing single-residences present side yard walls to the street, with 2 of the houses facing the street.

The design provides pedestrian paths within the development that will allow residents to avoid walking in the drive aisles. Staff has included a condition of approval that the applicant work with staff to continue to refine the details of this sidewalk system.

In addition to good building design, site amenities help establish the quality required of a PAD development. The residential buildings surround a central fenced pool area with adjacent tot lot with turf and ramadas. There is also a tot lot and turf area in the northwest corner of the site.

The landscape plan identifies tree locations. Staff has included landscape conditions that will allow continued development of the landscape plan to identify areas of turf, shrubs and groundcover. Also, the design of tree planters near the residential driveways is being revised to improve conditions for trees. Also, per conditions, the applicant will work with staff on fence design and the final design of the covered pedestrian "Gateway Arbors" leading to the commercial center.

Conclusion:

The requested zoning with PAD overlay will result in a multi-residential development that exceeds minimum standards of design. Relief from development standards is balanced by the level of quality represented in the design package. Staff recommends approval, with the following conditions:

Conditions of Approval:

1. Compliance with the basic development as described in the project narrative and as shown on the site plan, landscape plan, and building elevations without guarantee of lot yield except as otherwise conditioned;
2. Compliance with all requirements of the Subdivision Regulations;
3. Recordation of cross-access easements between this plat and the surrounding commercial center;
4. All street improvements to be installed with the first phase of development;
5. Compliance with all City development codes and regulations;
6. Compliance with all requirements of Design Review approval (case DR15-038.)
7. **Submission to the Planning Director for sign-off prior to building permit submittal, a revised site plan incorporating the following items as discussed in the report:**
 - a. a final sidewalk system;
 - b. a final landscape plan which identifies all plant material, including turf areas;
 - c. detailed design of the 2 "Gateway Arbors" in conjunction with DR approval of DR15-038;
 - d. the design of site fencing in conjunction with DR approval of DR15-038.