



Planning and Zoning Board

Case Information

CASE NUMBER: Z16-015 (PLN2015-00644)
LOCATION/ADDRESS: 6215 East Arbor Avenue
GENERAL VICINITY: Located South of Main Street & East of Recker Road
REQUEST: Council Use Permit for a Social Service Facility in the Limited Commercial (LC) zoning district
PURPOSE: Development of a social service facility
COUNCIL DISTRICT: District 2
OWNER: Soba Mesa LLC
APPLICANT: Jenn O'Hara, Soba Mesa LLC
STAFF PLANNER: Mia L. Lozano

SITE DATA

PARCEL NUMBER: 141-57-090
PARCEL SIZE: 1.8 acres
EXISTING ZONING: Limited Commercial (LC)
GENERAL PLAN DESIGNATION: Specialty: Medical Campus
CURRENT LAND USE: Vacant building, previously Odyssey Hospice
BUILDING SQUARE FOOTAGE: 5,720 sq.ft.
PARKING REQUIRED: 15 spaces
PARKING PROVIDED: 21 spaces

SITE CONTEXT

NORTH: Discovery Point Retirement Apartments – Zoned RM-4 BIZ
EAST: Baywood Medical Center – Zoned LC PAD
SOUTH: Mi Casa Rehabilitation Center – Zoned RM-4
WEST: Emeritus at East Mesa Assisted Living – Zoned LC
Fountains Mobile Home Park – Zoned RM-4

ZONING HISTORY/RELATED CASES:

May 19, 1975: Annexation Ord. # 907
June 18, 1975: Establish City of Mesa Zoning (Z75-029 Ord. #936)
July 5, 1978: Expansion of Leisure World Center & major entrance off of Main Street (Z78-043 Ord. #1149)
February 18, 1980: Rezone to RS & C-2 and approval of conceptual DMP (Z80-006 Ord. #1312)
June 21, 1984: Rezone & Modification of a DMP (Z84-119 Ord. #1851)

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Approval with Conditions
P&Z BOARD DECISION: ☒ Approval with conditions. ☐ Denial
PROP 207 WAIVER: ☒ Signed ☐ Not Signed

PROJECT DESCRIPTION/REQUEST

The applicant, Soba Mesa LLC, requests a Council Use Permit for a Social Service Facility that would allow an inpatient treatment program to provide care for individuals seeking primary treatment for drug and alcohol addiction. The program provides assessment and inpatient substance abuse treatment services, including detoxification, in an alcohol and drug free environment. The environment provides structure and supervision to further a patient's ability to improve his/her level of functioning.

The proposed site is in an area of Mesa that is zoned Limited Commercial and developed predominantly for medical and health care uses. There is an existing single-story, 5,720 square-foot building on the site that was developed in 1998. The facility proposes an operating capacity of up to 20 patients and to operate 24 hours per day, seven days per week and will be fully staffed. Potential patients are considered through a pre-admission assessment, and then are fully assessed to ensure they meet the admission criteria and that the program is appropriate for them.

DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS

The applicant proposes no modifications to the site; it remains in essentially the same condition as was previously approved in 1997 for a hospice care facility. The property is in substantial conformance with all current City Development Standards. The applicant has submitted an updated landscape plan indicating the replacement of five dead trees. The replacement trees are compatible with the original landscape plan and palette. In addition, the revised site plan indicates the addition of a 5' wide striped pedestrian connection from Arbor Avenue to the facility entrance. The applicant has not proposed changes to the building exterior. There is an existing refuse enclosure and a 6' high concrete wall encloses the rear yard of the property. The applicant will submit a request for a sign permit and has indicated that the sign will display the facility name only, with no reference to the type of treatment conducted on the property.

NEIGHBORHOOD PARTICIPATION

The applicant has completed a Citizen Participation Plan which included mailing letters to all property owners within 1000 feet of the site, homeowners associations within one-half mile and registered neighborhoods within one mile of the site. The applicant posted the property per requirements and mailed notification letters for the public hearing to the same radius. In addition, the applicant held a neighborhood meeting on February 18th, 2016. There were eleven attendees from the surrounding community who asked questions and made comments. Soba Mesa representatives indicated that concerns raised by attendees were satisfactorily addressed. To date, staff has received two inquiries requesting information regarding this proposal.

CONFORMANCE WITH THE GENERAL PLAN

The subject site is in the Specialty Districts character type for large (typically over 20 acre) areas with a single use such as an educational campus, airport, or medical facility. The character of these areas can have a significant impact on surrounding development either through the amount of traffic they generate, or the noise associated with their activities. Typical uses for this character type may be supported by retail, offices, hotels, or residential dormitories. Development in this character type maintains a campus feel and connection between buildings by having consistency in landscaping and signage and a high quality of building design and materials.

More specifically, this request is within an area designated as Specialty: Medical Campus on the Land Use Plan map from the Mesa 2040 General Plan. The Medical campus designation is for hospitals and

associated medical office buildings on sites of at least 20 acres. These medical campuses often contain buildings at least 4 stories in height and can impact surrounding neighborhoods due to traffic and noise. The proposal is in conformance with the Mesa General Plan Specialty Districts: Medical Campus designation and will be compatible with the surrounding uses that include a medical center, rehabilitation center and assisted living facility.

Criteria for review of a Council Use Permit (CUP)

A CUP shall only be granted if the approving body determines that the project as submitted or modified conforms to all of the following criteria. If it is determined that it is not possible to meet all of the review criteria, the application shall be denied. The specific basis for denial shall be established in the record.

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;**
One of the focuses of the General Plan is on creating character types and “character of development in different areas”. Character types focus on the overall look of an area by combining concepts of land use with building form and intensity. The subject site is within a Medical Campus, Specialty District and is consistent with the policies of the General Plan for a rehabilitation facility for substance abuse detoxification and treatment.
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;**
The requested use is consistent with the Mesa General Plan Specialty Districts: Medical Campus designation. The area surrounding the site includes a major hospital, medical offices and specialty health care and rehabilitation facilities. The building and landscaping are complimentary to the adjacent sites and the applicant’s operations plan meets with applicable City policies.
3. **The proposed project will not be injurious or detrimental to the adjacent or surrounding properties in the area of the proposed project or improvements in the neighborhood or to the general welfare of the City;**
The applicant will implement a security plan that includes Mesa Police Department crime prevention principles including, but not limited to, adequate interior and exterior lighting, video surveillance, a security guard for nighttime hours, and the posting of a No Trespassing sign to discourage individuals, who are not patients or family members, from accessing the site.
4. **Adequate public services, public facilities and public infrastructure are available to serve the proposed project.**
The proposed site is a fully developed facility that is in conformance with all City development codes and regulations.

STAFF ANALYSIS

This request is for a Council Use Permit for a Social Service Facility in the LC zoning district. The applicant has substantially met the requirements for a Social Service Facility as set forth in 11-31-26 of the Mesa Zoning Ordinance. The property is compatible with the surrounding uses in an area that is mostly occupied by medical and health care facilities. The property is in substantial conformance with current City Development Standards related to landscaping, parking, screen walls and design guidelines. Staff is

supportive of this request.

The applicant has provided a detailed operations plan and “good neighbor policy” narrative. Staff findings indicate that Soba Mesa will be compatible with the adjacent uses; the name and phone number of the senior operations manager, who is responsible for the facility operations, has been provided; a procedure for responding to and resolving complaints is outlined; a security guard will be present and patrolling the property between the hours of 8:00 pm to 6:00 am. In addition, the property will be registered with the Mesa Police Department and Soba will apply many of the principles described in the Trespass Enforcement Program (TEP), developed by Mesa Police, including the posting of a No Trespassing sign on the property.

The narrative provided by the applicant indicates that admission is by appointment between the hours of 7:00 am and 9:00 pm. Patients are admitted voluntarily and the facility will not accept patients through a court order therefore not receive patients by means of police escort, nor by means of medical transport. If the facility is operating at full 20 patient capacity new patients will be referred and transported to another agency. All treatment activity is conducted indoors and patients will only be permitted outdoors when accompanied by a staff member. The narrative goes on to describe how upon discharge that patients are referred to Soba’s outpatient treatment program located at 6262 East Broadway. In cases where a patient wishes to leave before completing treatment then a patient’s loved one is contacted who will be asked to provide transport or Soba staff will provide transport. In no cases are patients left to discharge on to the streets in the surrounding neighborhood. The project narrative, operations plan and good neighbor policy will be included as a condition of approval.

Staff has reviewed the ‘Social Service Facilities Guidelines’ and finds that the document is more specifically addressed to social service facilities that are shelters or dining facilities. However; the guidelines listed below are addressed for the purpose of this report. A complete copy of the guidelines is provided.

Operational guidelines section V.H. for the requirement of handicapped-accessible restrooms is met for the subject property by providing eight patient bathrooms and one for employees.

Operational guidelines section V.J. requires a screened waiting area for people waiting outside for services. The applicant has stated that patients follow a pre-admission process and are admitted to the facility between the hours of 7:00 am and 9:00 pm. There is no waiting outside for admission. Outside areas in the rear are fully screened by a 6 ft. block wall.

CONCLUSION:

Staff recommends approval of the Council Use Permit with the following conditions:

CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL:

1. Compliance with the request as described in the project narrative, operations plan, good neighbor policy and as shown on the site and landscape plans except as otherwise conditioned.
2. Compliance with all City development codes and regulations.
3. **Landscaping shall comply with the approved site plan. Any dead, dying or missing landscape materials shall be replaced in kind and all landscaping shall be trimmed to maintain natural surveillance.**
4. **A security plan will be implemented which shall include:**
 - A. **Provision of and maintenance of adequate exterior night lighting for the site to provide**

uniform light levels throughout the property with management control either hardwired or dusk-to-dawn controlled with adjustment for on/off times seasonally as needed and equip exterior light fixtures with vandal resistant covers to prevent breakage.

- B. Placement of a security guard on the property between the hours of 8:00 pm and 6:00 am daily, surveillance cameras and an exit door alarm system.**
 - C. Installation of a No Trespassing sign in a highly visible location on the property and compliance with other elements of the Trespass Enforcement Program as described in the project narrative and operations plan.**
- 5. Additional signage or changes to existing signage will require the approval and issuance of a sign permit by the Development Services Department.**
 - 6. Compliance with all requirements of the Arizona Department of Health Services.**
 - 7. The Council Use Permit is issued specifically to Soba Mesa LLC and is not transferrable to any other owner or operator.**