

Board of Adjustment



Staff Report

CASE NUMBER: BA16-018 (PLN2016-00206)
STAFF PLANNER: Wahid Alam, AICP
LOCATION/ADDRESS: 1305 South Alma School Road
COUNCIL DISTRICT: Council District 3
OWNER: DH STAR LLC
APPLICANTS: Victor Olson, Phoenix Design Group, PLC.

REQUEST: *Requesting a Development Incentive Permit (DIP) to allow redevelopment of commercial site as a retail building in the LC zoning district.*

SUMMARY OF APPLICANT'S REQUEST

The applicant is requesting a Development Incentive Permit (DIP) to facilitate redevelopment of a vacant building. This building was initially built in the 1990's as a drive thru bank, and more recently has been used as a children's dentist office. The proposal is to raze and build a new single tenant retail building on approximately 0.5± acres site, which is located at the northeast corner of Alma School Road and Grove Avenue.

The proposed site plan will eliminate the existing Alma School Road driveway, and orient the building parallel to Alma School Road with a parking lot behind the building to the east. If approved, the DIP authorizes redevelopment of the site with deviations to otherwise required development standards for a commercial site.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends **approval** of case BA16-018, *conditioned upon the following:*

1. *Compliance with the project narrative, site plan, landscape plan and elevations submitted except as modified by the following conditions.*
2. *Compliance with the Design Review approval for this redevelopment project.*
3. *Compliance with all other City development codes and regulations.*
4. *Compliance with all requirements of Development Services in the issuance of building permits.*
5. *Provide a raised landscape island, minimum 5-ft wide, adjacent to the west wall of the trash enclosure.*
6. *Revise Site Plan to move the nearest parking stalls at least 20 feet away from the existing R.O.W. along Grove Avenue.*
7. *Provide 4-feet wide landscape yard along north property line adjacent to trash enclosure.*
8. *Revise the proposed site plan to show driveway access from Grove Avenue to be in compliance with City of Mesa Traffic Engineering driveway standards. This may result in the site plan being revised from two driveways exiting to Grove Avenue, down to one driveway.*
9. *Compliance with the Fiesta District Design Handbook regarding the chapter entitled Private Realm Design Guidelines, including site design, architectural design, landscape palette, site furniture, fixtures, and connectivity.*
10. *Submit a revised site plan, landscape, building elevations (including color elevations) and materials board for Planning Division staff approval prior to Building Permit submittal.*
11. *All conditions attached to the Development Incentive Permit shall be completed prior to issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy.*

SITE CONTEXT

CASE SITE: Existing vacant building – zoned LC
NORTH: Existing vacant restaurant and multi storied parking garage – Zoned LC
EAST: (across driveway access to the garage) Existing retail buildings – Zoned LC
SOUTH: (across Grove Avenue) Existing bank building- Zoned LC

WEST: (across Alma School Road) Existing Fiesta Mall parking lot- Zoned LC

STAFF ANALYSIS

The applicant is requesting a DIP to facilitate the redevelopment of an existing site previously occupied by bank and dental office originally developed in the 1990's. The proposed redevelopment includes demolition of the existing building and replacement with a 4,000 sq. ft. building for a single tenant retail use. As proposed, the request includes the following:

1. One single story building for 4,000 sq. ft.
2. A parking lot for 30 spaces accessed by two driveways from Grove Avenue.

Since this a very small site less than one acre and by passed parcel for long time, any proposal would require waivers to current development standards. Therefore applicant has requested for the following items under Development Incentive Permit:

- a) Reduced foundation base along east elevation, 8-ft requested where 10-ft is required.
- b) Reduced raised landscape islands width of 5-ft compared to minimum 8-ft required.
- c) To exceed maximum limit of 125% parking spaces (30 spaces compared to maximum of 11 required).
- d) Building set back of 10-ft at the intersection of Alma School and Grove Avenue compared to 15 required.

Since 1990's, the site's existing condition has not changed, and there are no parcels within 1200 feet that are undeveloped. The existing site is served by two driveways, one from each street front. The last submittal creates a more pedestrian friendly environment along Alma School, as recommended by the Fiesta District Design Guidelines. The proposal orients the building close to the street intersection, and places the parking lot completely behind the building, to the east, by eliminating the existing driveway from Alma School Rd.

Table 1:

Standard	Code Requirement	Applicant Proposed	Staff Recommendation
Alma School Road	15 feet from future 65-foot right-of-way	15 feet from current 67' right-of-way	As proposed/existing
Groove Avenue	20 feet from 58 feet right-of-way	15 feet from current right-of-way	As proposed
North property line	15 feet setback	10 feet setback	As proposed
East property line	0 feet setback (group commercial)	0 feet setback	Meets Code
Parking	Retail 4,000 s.f. @ 1/375 s.f. = 11 required	Proposal 33 spaces provided.	Total achieved after revision of the site plan.
Foundation Base	Exterior walls with Public Entrance: 15 feet Exterior wall without entrance and head on parking: 10 feet.	6 feet existing	Provide 10' with plant materials on ground and on pots
Parking Lot Landscape Islands	(1) 8'x15' island every 8 parking spaces and at the end of each row of parking	5' wide islands in between and at the end of each row except adjacent to trash enclosure.	As proposed with staff recommended condition #5
Parking area screening	Parking areas and drive aisles shall be screened from street(s) with masonry wall, berm or combination of wall/berms and densely planted landscaping	Use proposed and existing screen walls along Grove Avenue	Meets Code

Concerns:

- a) City of Mesa Traffic Engineering staff support closing the existing driveway along Alma School, however they expressed concern about constructing a new, additional driveway adjacent to the existing one accessing Grove Avenue. This new driveway will not be supported or approved by Transportation, as it does not meet the City's Public Street Access (Driveway) Guidelines.
- b) City of Mesa Solid Waste Division expressed concern for navigating the turn with a Front Loader serving the proposed trash enclosure.
- c) The proposed nearest parking stall on the drive aisle directly accessing Grove Ave. is only 17 feet from the existing curb or 10 feet from existing R.O.W. MZO Section 11-32-4 requires the nearest parking stall in these circumstances (backing out into a drive aisle that leads directly to the adjacent street) to be a minimum of 50-feet away from the R.O.W. However the small size and the depth of the site will make the parking lot non-functional if 50 feet setback is provided. Therefore staff suggests removing at least one stall along Grove Avenue from the proposed site plan or move the stalls at least twenty feet away from R.O.W. (condition# 6).
- d) There is no setback between the location of the trash enclosure and north property line. A setback of at least 4 feet wide should be provided with a landscape yard along the north property line (condition # 7).

This project also requires approval by Design Review process. The applicant has indicated that they are in the process of preparing a submittal for Design Review application.

FINDINGS

- 1.1 The proposed redevelopment of the site invokes conformance with current development standards.
- 1.2 At the time of initial development in 1990's, the setbacks, foundation base, and landscape requirements of the Zoning Code varied or were non-existent when compared to the development standards of the current Code.
- 1.3 The proposed project provides 30 parking spaces on-site where only 11 spaces are required. There is a total of 19 additional (30-11= 19 spaces) parking spaces, which is 272% more than the minimum required 11 spaces. The maximum typically allowed without additional review is 125%, or in this case 14 spaces. The additional spaces may be authorized by approval of the DIP application.
- 1.4 Requiring full compliance with the current MZO development standards would discourage the redevelopment of the site, because the area in question is urban oriented, and the standards are based on more suburban oriented places found elsewhere in Mesa. In addition, the proposed design is consistent with the Private Realm Design Guidelines found in the Fiesta District Design Guidelines.
- 1.5 The proposed use will not be detrimental to surrounding properties.

ORDINANCE REQUIREMENTS:

Zoning Ordinance, Sec. 11-72-3 – Development Incentive Permits – Required Findings:

A **DIP** shall not be granted unless the **Zoning Administrator**, acting at the **Hearing Officer**, or **Board of Adjustment** shall find upon sufficient evidence:

- A. The proposed development is consistent with the **General Plan**, any other applicable Council adopted plans and/ policies, and the permitted uses as specified in this **Ordinance**;
- B. The incentives do not allow development that is more intense than the surrounding neighborhood; commensurate with existing development within a 1200 foot radius of the by-passed property; and,
- C. The architectural elements, construction and landscape materials, and other site improvements of the proposed development meet the intent of the **Design Standards** of this **Ordinance**.