



mesa·az

Planning and Zoning Board

Case Information

CASE NUMBER: Z16-028 (PLN2016-00221)
LOCATION/ADDRESS: 1131 South Stapley Drive.
GENERAL VICINITY: Located north of Southern Avenue and east of Stapley Drive on the east side of Stapley Drive.
REQUEST: Site Plan Review/ Modification.
PURPOSE: This request will allow development of a drive-thru restaurant.
COUNCIL DISTRICT: District 4
OWNER: Stapley and Southern Partners LLC
APPLICANT: Jeff Looker, Looker and Cappello Architects Inc.
STAFF PLANNER: Wahid Alam, AICP

SITE DATA

PARCEL NUMBER(S): 13905004K
DEVELOPMENT AREA: 1.26 ± acres
EXISTING ZONING: Limited Commercial (LC)
GENERAL PLAN DESIGNATION: Mixed Use Activity District, Community Scale
CURRENT LAND USE: Undeveloped.

ZONING HISTORY/RELATED CASES:

October 6, 1973: Annexed into the City of Mesa (Ordinance 829)
February 16, 1982: Approved for Group Commercial Medical Complex (SPR82-001).

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Approval with conditions.

PROPOSITION 207 WAIVER SIGNED: ☒ Yes ☐ No

SITE CONTEXT

NORTH: Existing medical facility – zoned LC
EAST: Undeveloped parcel– zoned LC
SOUTH: Existing Panda Express-zoned LC.
WEST: (across Stapley Drive) shopping center - zoned LC

PROJECT DESCRIPTION/REQUEST

The applicant is requesting Site Plan Review/Modification for a Taco Bell restaurant with drive-thru. The 1.26 acre site is zoned LC and located north of Southern Avenue on the east side of Stapley Drive. The location sits between Panda Express to the south and a medical building to the north. The proposed building consists of 2,530 square-feet of restaurant space with 420 square-feet of outdoor seating area. The rest of the site to the east of Taco Bell will remain undeveloped at this time.

NEIGHBORHOOD PARTICIPATION

The site is located within a Mixed Use Activity District and there are no adjacent residential developments. The applicant contacted all property owners within 1,000 feet and homeowners associations within half a mile. To date, staff has not received any comments or concerns from neighboring property owners regarding this request.

CONFORMANCE WITH THE GENERAL PLAN

Summary: The proposed site plan modification is consistent with the intent of the Mesa 2040 General Plan and will help to develop and maintain a mixed use activity district in this area. The proposed site plan is also consistent with the LC zoning on the site and is compatible with the overall site plan for the center.

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.

Criteria for review of development

The zoning ordinance requires that all site plans be consistent with the adopted General Plan. Determining consistency with the General Plan requires a review of the proposal against the character area requirements and the other goals and policies of the Plan and any adopted sub-area plans. The following criteria have been developed for use during the review process to determine whether the proposed development is achieving the vision and goals established in this 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 and focusing on those principles that build neighborhoods, stabilize the job base, and improve the sense of place.

This proposal infills an undeveloped site along Stapley Drive between two existing pad sites. The previously approved site plan for this parcel was a larger center with five buildings, without drive-thru uses. This proposal is for a much smaller building consisting of 2,530 sq. ft. with a drive-thru pick-up window facing north and store front facing south and west.

Applicable General Plan goals and policies are to create inter-connected places that build strong neighborhoods. In order to achieve this goal the continued development of pad sites will need to provide vehicular and pedestrian connections and continue to establish a sense of place established by the surrounding facilities like the medical center and shopping.

The proposed building architecture, landscape areas and the proposed pedestrian connectivity from Stapley Drive and neighboring facilities to the north and south will improve the appearance along Stapley Drive. Locating the drive-thru pick up window facing north and providing an outdoor seating facing Stapley Drive is an enhancement over the previously approved site plan SPR 82-1 in 1982.

The Plan also describes 5 fundamentals to be considered with development to help move the City toward the goal of becoming a more complete, recognizable City. The five elements include:

1. High Quality Development
2. Changing Demographics

3. Public Health
4. Urban Design and Place-Making
5. Desert Environment

The building architecture, Urban Design and Place-Making are acknowledged through the quality and orientation of the building with the suggested revisions and the provision of outdoor patio seating and sidewalk connections to the surrounding development per DR16-014.

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

This location is not within any specific Sub-Area Plan.

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

Figure 7-1 of the Mesa 2040 General Plan designates this area designated as a Mixed Use Activity District. The Mixed Use Activity Districts are large-scale (typically over 25 acres) community and regional activity areas characterized by 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. The goal is to help these districts be strong and viable centers of commercial activity that attract people to unique shopping and entertainment experiences.

The character sub-type is Community-scale, 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 for a restaurant with drive-thru is an appropriate use for the character type given its location adjacent to the intersection of Stapley Drive and Southern Avenue. Enhanced architecture and design with shaded outdoor seating area and pedestrian connectivity to the surrounding facilities and Stapley Drive will facilitate visual interest in the development from passing traffic along Stapley Drive and visitors to medical building to the north with positive implementation of the General Plan's intent.

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

- **Providing appropriate infill development;**

This site is an undeveloped parcel between existing development along Stapley Drive. The new site plan is designed to provide pedestrian access from Stapley Drive and utilize the existing driveway access to the north and south including new one from Stapley Drive. The proposed development will offer an opportunity to serve the large employee base at this intersection and surrounding neighborhood.

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

Not applicable.

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

The addition of a restaurant building at this location will add to the mix of uses like medical, retail, restaurants and neighborhood services intended for the Mixed Use Activity District character type.

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

This request will enhance the existing streetscape appropriate to a Mixed Use Activity District based on the building's orientation, architecture, outdoor seating and use of landscaping including the pedestrian connectivity.

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

Staff believes that the project is well designed and, with suggested modifications, will add to the development quality of the surrounding area. The Design Review Board has reviewed the building elevations and landscaping and proved their input to further improve the building.

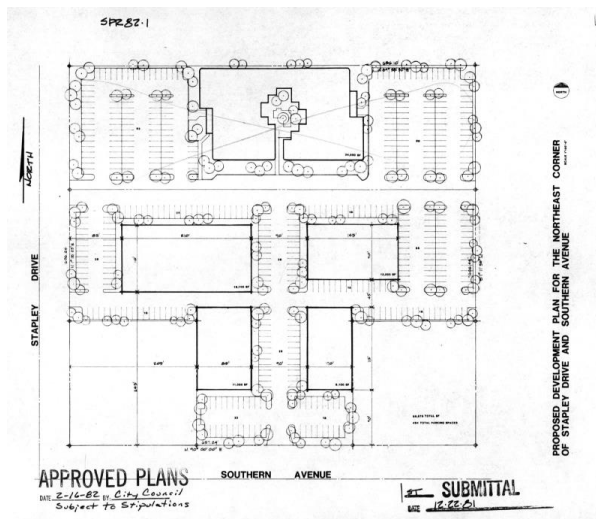
5. Does the proposed development provide appropriate transitions between uses? In more urban areas these transitions should generally be accomplished by design elements that allow adjacent buildings to be close to one another. In more suburban locations these transitions should be addressed through separation of uses and/or screening;

This is a suburban area being developed as a Mixed Use Activity District. The site design provides connection to the adjacent land uses. The goal in these developing areas, compared to early development styles, is to provide a balance between auto and pedestrian activities.

STAFF ANALYSIS

SUMMARY:

The proposal creates a new pad site along Stapley Drive between an existing medical building to the north and a recently built Panda Express at the northeast corner of Stapley Drive and Southern Avenue. The proposed restaurant will be accessed by one new driveway from Stapley Drive and the two existing driveways from north and south. Pedestrian connectivity is provided to the sidewalk along Stapley Drive and to the existing medical facility to the north. The rest of the site to the east of the proposed Taco Bell will remain undeveloped at this time. This application for Taco Bell does not include site plan approval for the rest of the site to the east, however the applicant has provided a conceptual layout with two office buildings of 6,000 square feet each.



In 1982 (SPR 82-1) the medical building to the north was approved along with four additional building at this location, however over the years only two retail building along Southern Avenue have been built and the two between the retail and medical buildings have not been built.

The building is located along Stapley Drive with parking in front and main entry facing south toward Panda Express. The drive-thru lane wraps around the east and north elevations with the pick-up window facing north. The site plan provides an outdoor seating area for 420 square feet located near the west elevation facing Stapley Drive. Staff appreciates the applicant's

willingness to provide a defined outdoor seating area, however there is no permanent shade provided in the site plan. Typically, customers of this type of eating facility have the option of an outdoor seating area with permanent shade. These outdoor spaces help address General Plan goals for improved connectivity and developing a sense of place in commercial development. Often in the absence of defined outdoor seating area, later it is either difficult to provide outdoor seating or they are built with lesser quality material and not in compliance with the building design. At the northwest corner of Stapley Drive and Southern Avenue the shopping center has a defined outdoor seating area with permanent shade structure and surrounding landscaping. The Planning and Zoning Board and the Design Review Board have recently approved quality outdoor seating with permanent shade structures integrated as part of the building architecture with other projects. Therefore, staff suggests providing a defined outdoor seating area with permanent shade structure. The outdoor area is shown on the site plan to extend 15 feet from the front of the building, but 5 feet of this space is taken for the pedestrian route connecting to the north, therefore reducing space usable for outdoor dining. For this reason, staff proposes a condition of approval to extend the distance of the patio from the front of the building to a distance of 20 feet. Sufficient land area exists behind the building to shift the building footprint backwards by five feet (Condition # 7).

The proposed building will require the following parking spaces:

Restaurant building:	2,530 square feet (parking @ 100=26)
Additional outdoor seating area:	420 square feet (parking @ 200=3)
Total required:	29 spaces
Total provided:	30 spaces

The proposed site plan with the drive-thru meets the required parking calculations per the current zoning code. Also the entire center will have the parking spaces as follows:

Taco Bell:	29 spaces	30 provided
Medical building:	145 spaces	203 provided
Retail buildings:	60 spaces	84 provided
Future Offices	32 spaces	56 provided
Grand total for the center	266 spaces required	373 spaces provided

The proposed site plan provides a 15' setback from the future ROW (approximately 40' of additional ROW to existing 50' ROW) along Stapley Drive. Along the north and south property

lines the proposed landscape yards are 40' and 20' wide, respectively. The landscape plans provide foundation base, parking lot island landscaping, right of way landscaping and retention area landscaping however the landscape plans need to be modified to provide foundation base landscaping between the north side of the building and the drive-thru lane and landscaping adjacent to the undeveloped parcel to the east (condition #7).

CONCLUSIONS:

Staff supports the request, however we have concerns with the lack of a defined outdoor seating area with permanent shade. Staff suggests conditions of approval to address unresolved issues for the site plan approval. Therefore, staff recommends approval of zoning case Z16-28 subject to 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 submitted.
2. Compliance with all City development codes and regulations.
3. Signs (detached and attached) need separate approval and permit for locations, size, and quantity.
4. **Compliance with all conditions of Design Review (DR16-014) approval for architectural and landscaping design.**
5. **Provide stamped concrete or other enhanced material (striping on asphalt is not acceptable) in all pedestrian walks across parking lots and drive aisles.**
6. **Design of the screen wall and trash enclosure shall be compatible with the building architecture in material, color and texture.**
7. **Prior to building permit submittal, submit revised site plan, landscape plans and elevation exhibits for Planning Director review and acceptance to include:**
 - a. **A minimum 2-foot foundation base along exterior building adjacent to the drive-thru lane per Zoning Ordinance Section 11-31-18 B; and**
 - b. **At least 5-foot-wide landscape strip with temporary curbing along the edge of the driveway adjacent to undeveloped parcel to the east of the Taco Bell pad.**