



Planning and Zoning Board

Case Information

P&Z CASE NUMBER: Z16-044 (PLN2016-00427)
LOCATION/ADDRESS: East of the 200 to 400 blocks of North Power Road and south of the 6800 to 7000 blocks of East University Drive
GENERAL VICINITY: Located east of Power Road and south of University Drive
REQUEST: Rezoning from LC to RSL-2.5-PAD; and Site Plan Review. Also consider the preliminary Plat for "Skyview"
PURPOSE: The development of a single residence development
COUNCIL DISTRICT: District 5
OWNER(S): Highland Communities, LLC and Heather Wagenhals
APPLICANT: Mark Pugmire, Highland Communities, LLC
STAFF PLANNER: Lesley Davis

SITE DATA

PARCEL NUMBERS: 218-13-009G, 010-003J, 003F, 003G, 004A
PARCEL SIZE: 15.8± acres
EXISTING ZONING: LC
GENERAL PLAN DESIGNATION: Neighborhood – Village
CURRENT LAND USE: vacant land
PROPOSED DENSITY: 4.15 DU/AC

SITE CONTEXT

NORTH: (across University Dr.) Salt River Project – zoned PS
EAST: Existing Mobile Home Park – zoned RM-4
SOUTH: Existing Mobile Home Park – zoned RM-4
WEST: Existing QuikTrip Convenience Store with a fuel facility, Veterinary Clinic and Carwash – zoned LC. Properties across Power Road are commercial uses, but zoned in Maricopa County

ZONING HISTORY

January 15, 1975: Annexed into the City of Mesa, Ordinance #908
May 19, 1975: Zoned LC (Z75-033)

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

PROJECT DESCRIPTION/REQUEST

The applicant's request is to rezone and subdivide a 15.8± acres from LC to RSL-2.5-PAD with a Preliminary Plat titled "Skyview". The site is located south and east of the southeast corner of Power Road and East University Drive.

The proposed subdivision consists of 83 lots that are a minimum of 37.5-feet wide and 77-feet deep. Open space has been provided at the primary entrance along Power Road and provides an enhanced entry experience. The bulk of the open space has been provided through a central corridor in the subdivision terminating in a pool area with a tot lot. Additional pocket parks have also been included.

The proposed street system provides for a combination of public and private drives. Most of the homes will face a public street with private alleys that lead to their private garages, however there are some areas where homes face a private drive that is designed like the public street or they face onto an open space area.



RSL DESIGN ELEMENTS

Per Table 11-5-4-A of the City of Mesa Zoning Ordinance, there are six design elements that must be implemented in this subdivision to achieve the RSL 2.5 designation. The developer has chosen to implement the following design elements in consideration of reduced lot size and the 2.5 designator:

- Street and Sidewalk Improvements: The applicant has provided neck down elements in two locations.
- Parkland and Open Space: The minimum open space required for an 83-lot, RSL 2.5 subdivision is 3.7 acres. The common open space proposed in this subdivision is 4.3 acres, which exceeds the minimum 30% requirement. The amenities include a swimming pool, pocket parks, and a central gathering courtyard.
- Paving Material: Decorative paving materials that will include either pavers, stamped, colored or textured concrete are provided at the entries to the alleyways.
- Alley Accessed Parking: The applicant has provided 100 percent of the garages accessed from an alley.

- Architectural Diversity: An 83-lot subdivision would require a minimum of 7 unique elevations to comply with this requirement. The applicant has provided 5 different plans and 13 unique elevations.
- Garage Setbacks: The applicant has provided garages that are well behind the front façade of the dwelling with the garages located in the rear of the home.

Additional Elements:

- Entries and Porches: While the applicant is not in need of any additional design elements to qualify for the RSL district, staff believes that it is important to note that the applicant has provided front porches on all of the homes within this subdivision. When porches are provided to meet the criteria of the RSL district, the requirement is that at least 50 percent of the homes include entries and covered porches extending along a minimum of 50 percent of the width of the home's front facade (excluding the width of garages) at a size featuring a minimum 8-foot width by 4-foot depth. While not all of the front porches provided in Skyview meet the technical requirement for 50% of the width, the placement of porches will improve the streetscape and livability of the neighborhood.

MODIFICATIONS

The proposed residential subdivision portion of this request, meets or exceeds the development standards for the RSL-2.5 zoning district with two exceptions, which are listed below:

- The applicant has proposed to reduce the front building wall setback for livable area from 12-feet to 8-feet. The design of neighborhood has the garages located in the rear of the home, so that the streetscape will be the livable area with the front porches. The home designs bring the livable area up to the street front with the porches located adjacent to the home on one side in most cases with no view of garages as you drive or walk through the neighborhood. Staff views this design as an asset to the neighborhood and feels that bringing the livable area to closer to the street is appropriate. Staff supports this deviation.
- Each of the proposed homes will include a 2-car garage, however the applicant proposes that the internal dimensions of the garage at 20-feet by 20-feet. The current Zoning Ordinance standard is 20-feet by 22-feet. The applicant has justified this reduction by noting that this is a higher density product, which typically attracts homeowners who desire a smaller space and drive smaller vehicles.

NEIGHBORHOOD PARTICIPATION

The applicant has completed a Citizen Participation Process which included a mailed letter to property owners within 1000-feet of the site, as well as HOAs and registered neighborhoods within a mile. The applicant held their first neighborhood meeting on January 27, 2016, with a follow-up meeting on February 10, 2016. The questions and concerns that were raised related to lighting, parking, vegetation, drainage, traffic and 2-story homes adjacent to the mobile home park. Since those meetings, the applicant has indicated in an e-mail that they have spoken with the property owner and his attorney for the existing church along the north side of the proposed development. According to the applicant's report, they expressed concerns that residential development adjacent to the church may hinder their future development plans for that property.

Staff also received an e-mail from a Mr. Todd Lutz, who is a representative for the existing mobile home community to the south and east. He attended the neighborhood meetings, but wanted to be sure that

the items that were important to that community were addressed with the design of this subdivision. A brief summary of their concerns is listed below and a copy of the letter from Mr. Lutz is included in the packet materials that accompanies this report.

- Lighting that is adequate but non-intrusive;
- The alleyway for garage access be located adjacent to the mobile home park;
- A site wall that is 7 or 8 feet along the shared property border with maintenance by the new subdivision;
- Mitigation of 2-story units adjacent to Las Palmas either by removing or through design;
- Grading and Drainage not impact the Las Palmas community; and
- Additional landscape buffer/mitigation along shared property lines.

CONFORMANCE WITH THE MESA 2040 GENERAL PLAN

Summary: The Mesa 2040 General Plan Character area designation for this site is Neighborhood Village Center. This project provides a smaller, single-residence lot type adjacent to an existing mobile home park, and a variety of commercial uses, such as an existing QuikTrip service station, veterinary clinic and carwash facility. The proposed neighborhood is designed to be consistent with the Transect 4 Neighborhood from the Form Based Code, which is identified in the general plan as appropriate in areas designated for Neighborhood Village Center. The proposed development creates a neighborhood character that is consistent with the goals and objectives of the Plan.

The Mesa 2040 General Plan Character area designation is Neighborhoods with the sub-type Neighborhood Village Center. The primary focus of the Neighborhood Village Center character type is to for commercial and mixed use nodes of activity, generally between 15 and 25 acres in size, that serve the surrounding neighborhoods. Neighborhood Village Centers can include stand-alone residential or mixed use structures when integrated into the development of the “village.”

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 and focusing on those principles that build neighborhoods, stabilize the job base, and improve the sense of place.

The proposed development is establishing a sense of place through their intent to create a small pocket subdivision adjacent to commercial uses along the arterial streets, adjacent to an existing mobile home park. The design featuring porches, alley-loaded garages and other unique features supports the General Plan principle of establishing recognizable neighborhoods and greater housing diversity for the community. The proposed subdivision design also provides an appropriate transition between the mobile home subdivision and the commercial uses at the corner.

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

Mesa has not established a neighborhood or sub-area plan for this area.

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 as Neighborhood Village Center, which is defined as follows:

Character Area: Neighborhood

Focus: "Neighborhood Village Centers are typically shopping areas that serve the population within less than a two-mile radius. In aggregate, these shopping areas are generally between 15 and 25 acres in size. These centers may also include a mix of uses including residential and office. Big box uses (single retail spaces in excess of 80,000 sq. ft.) are generally not part of a village center. The goal for these areas, over time, is to provide for the regular shopping and service needs of the nearby population while also becoming a center or focal point to the surrounding neighborhoods; to become a gathering place for local residents."

The proposed subdivision supports the General Plan policy with the above references to "a mix of uses including residential", by providing residential to support the existing and future commercial uses along the arterial streets. Due to the way this site has developed over the years with commercial uses along the frontages and existing power line easements along University Drive, this site has been bypassed as a viable larger commercial center. The design of the proposed subdivision encourages walkability, and will facilitate access between the residential homes and adjacent commercial land uses and could encourage redevelopment of the commercial area into a form that is more neighborhood oriented.

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

• Providing appropriate infill development;

This proposal infills a 15+ acre property that has been leftover as a result of developments around it that were constructed in the 1970's, 1990's and early 2000's. The site's minimal frontages along University and Power Road makes commercial use of the site challenging from a land planning perspective and, therefore, reconsidering the location for residential uses that could support adjacent commercial land uses is appropriate.

• 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;

The intent is to provide for new housing options in an established neighborhood, that has not featured new residential development in many years.

• Improving the streetscape and connectivity within the area;

The proposal improves portions of the streetscape along University Drive and Power Road, creating new landscape areas and enhanced entries to the subdivision. Although this neighborhood is not able to directly connect with the mobile home park to the east or south due to existing constraints of the built environment, the applicant has proposed a subdivision with public streets that is not gated and with parking available on both sides of the street. Pedestrian pathways provide access to the commercial uses along the arterials from within the subdivision.

• Meeting or exceeding the development quality of the surrounding area;

The existing neighborhood to the east is one of the newer mobile home subdivisions within Mesa, as it was developed in the early 1990's. The existing commercial developments along Power Road are nicely designed. The applicant is proposing an upgraded residential housing product for smaller detached homes with alley loaded garages on small lots featuring a variety of elevations and

building materials to enhance the architectural character of the home to provide an enhanced streetscape and a home type that will be more sustainable long term. The quality of the proposed homes or exceeds that of the surrounding area and other recent RSL-2.5 projects.

- 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;**

A transition from a commercial zone, through a multi-residential zone into a single-residential zone is a common approach to land planning. The current proposal adds a smaller lot residential subdivision between the existing commercial and a mobile home park. The plan proposes a single-story plan as well as 4, two-story plans, all with single story garages at the rear, adjacent to the RM-4 mobile home park to the east and south. The applicant has provided a 10-foot landscape buffer adjacent to lots on the neighboring mobile home park, which have their own 10-foot rear setbacks. There will also be a private alleyway that is 20-feet wide adjacent to the neighboring property. In addition to the 30-feet created by the landscape buffer and alleyway, the adjacent structure will be a single-story garage that will be at least 20-feet deep with an additional 10-foot distance to the proposed homes. Cumulatively, this plan provides a 60-foot buffer from the mobile homes to any two-story structures. Similarly, the new proposed homes will have identical buffers from the existing and future commercial uses to the north and west.

Chapter 3 of The Plan also identifies 5 fundamentals to be considered to help move the City toward the goal of becoming a more complete, recognizable City. The five elements include:

1. High Quality Development
 - *As previously stated, the applicant is proposing elevations that include upgraded building materials for the 83 homes proposed. They have proposed five different home plans with a total of 13 elevations reflecting 3 distinct architectural styles with a range of color schemes. The quality level identified in the project narrative for the elevations that staff has been presented is higher than what has been submitted by other builders previously within our community.*
2. Changing Demographics
 - *By providing more choices in the housing types on the market we can meet the needs of a wider demographic. This is a fairly established neighborhood where new housing has not been introduced in quite some time. This project creates an opportunity for new people to move into an area that may not want a larger lot to maintain.*
3. Public Health
 - *Increased opportunities for walking: Making it possible to walk from home to a park, school, or shopping can improve health.*
4. Urban Design and Place-Making
 - *This area is a fairly traditional suburban part of our city. There are more opportunities for projects that have more urban designs to the south and west as you approach Main Street west of Power Road, which is identified as a growth area in the General Plan.*
5. Desert Environment
 - *This plan proposes large front porches on the homes and patio covers, which provide shade and cover from the elements. Trees have also been provided.*

STAFF ANALYSIS

RESIDENTIAL SUBDIVISION DESIGN:

RSL 2.5 Standards	Required	Proposed
Minimum Average Lot Area within Subdivision	2500 sf	2849 sf
Minimum Individual Lot Area	2000 sf	2500 sf
Minimum Lot Width-Interior Lot	25'	37'
Minimum Lot Width-Corner Lot	30'	42'
Minimum Lot Depth	75'	75'
Maximum Height (ft.)	30'	30'
Maximum Number of Stories	2'	2'
Minimum Yard Size (ft.):		
Front (building wall)	12'	8'
Front- Garage	20'	N/A
Front- Porch	7'	7'
Street Side	10'	10'
Interior side: minimum each side**	3'	4'
Interior Side: Minimum aggregate of 2 sides	8'	8'
Rear	15'	15'
Rear or side- garage, accessed by alley or common drive shared by 3 or more lots, measured to construction centerline of alley or drive	13'	13'
Minimum Useable Open Space (sq. ft.) per unit*****	400 sf	400 sf

STAFF ANALYSIS:

This request is to rezone and subdivide a 15.8± acre parcel from LC to RSL-2.5-PAD with a Site Plan Review to facilitate the development of an 83-lot, single-residence, and small-lot subdivision. The request also includes the review and consideration of the Preliminary Plat for a subdivision titled "Skyview".

The applicant has proposed a nicely designed subdivision with detached homes with alley loaded garages. The removal of the garages from the front of the homes will help to create an attractive streetscape for the neighborhood. The proposed lot sizes are smaller than a traditional single residence subdivision, and fall under the Residential Small Lot (RSL) category in the Zoning Ordinance. The applicant has met the requirement for 6 required design elements established in the code for the RSL-

2.5 category. The applicant did request two minor modifications to the standards for the RSL-2.5 category, but has provided significant increases in quality throughout the neighborhood with the quality and design of the homes, amenities and wall/entry designs to off-set those requests.

All approved preliminary plats are subject to potential modification through the Subdivision Technical Review process to meet all City codes and requirements, including but not limited to, all ADA requirements. This sometimes results in changing lot sizes and configuration, and could result in a reduction of lots.

CONCLUSIONS:

The subdivision design generally exceeds the development standards for the RSL-2.5 zoning district. The request is compatible with the surrounding neighborhoods.

Staff recommends approval of Z16-044 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 and preliminary plat submitted (without guarantee of lot yield, building count, lot coverage).
2. Compliance with all requirements of the Subdivision Technical Review Committee, including all required easements.
3. Dedicate the right-of-way required under the Mesa City Code at the time of application for a building permit, at the time of recordation of the subdivision plat, or at the time of the City's request for dedication, whichever comes first.
4. Compliance with all City of Mesa Code requirements and regulations.
5. **Prior to the recordation of the final plat for Skyview provide a private easement across the western portion of parcel 218-10-004A, that includes allowances for necessary improvements as required by the City of Mesa related to the access point to this development from University Drive. The easement document must be submitted for review through the Subdivision Technical Review process, and must be recorded with the Maricopa County Recorder and referenced on the final plat.**
6. **Prior to recordation of the final plat, provide letter from adjacent property owner (parcel 218-10-004A) to confirm willingness to provide PUF for waterlines.**
7. **Revise the site plan and preliminary plat to accommodate a continued access point for the existing church located on parcel 218-13-001X.**