



Planning and Zoning Board

Case Information

CASE NUMBER: Z16-058 (PLN2016-00754)
LOCATION/ADDRESS: 6442 East Test Drive
GENERAL VICINITY: Located west of Power Road and south of US Highway 60
REQUEST: Site Plan Review
PURPOSE: This request will allow development of an office building.
COUNCIL DISTRICT: District 6
OWNER: FCA Realty, LLC
APPLICANT: Paul E. Gilbert, Beus Gilbert PLLC
STAFF PLANNER: Lesley Davis, Planner II

SITE DATA

PARCEL NUMBER(S): 141-54-757
PARCEL SIZE: 1 ± acres
EXISTING ZONING: LI-PAD
GENERAL PLAN Character area: Mixed Use Activity District
CURRENT LAND USE: Vacant

SITE CONTEXT

NORTH: (Across Superstition Springs Boulevard) Office development – Zoned LC-PAD
EAST: (Across Test Drive) Existing Multi-residence project -Zoned LC-BIZ-CUP-PAD
SOUTH: Existing Golf Course – Zoned AG-PAD and RS-43-PAD
WEST: Vacant Lot F zoned LI-PAD approved for an auto dealership

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Approval of the Site Plan Review with conditions

PLANNING & ZONING BOARD DECISION: ☒ Approval with conditions ☐ Denial ☐ Continuance

CONSENT & WAIVER: ☐ Signed ☒ Not Signed

HISTORY/RELATED CASES

April 28, 1982: Annexed into City of Mesa (Ord. 1590)
Nov. 22, 1982: Establishment of AG zoning (Z82-91)
Aug. 18, 1988: Eastern portion of subject site annexed into City of Mesa (Ord. 2358)
Nov. 16, 1998: Rezoned from AG to C-2 to allow the development of a hardware store, retail building, and two restaurant pad sites (Z98-102)
May 21, 2001: Rezoned from C-2 to M-1 PAD to allow the development of “Auto Center at Superstition Springs” (Z01-12, Ord. #3889)
Oct. 16, 2003: A Planning and Zoning request to modify Ordinance #3889 to allow the development of an auto dealership on Lots F and G of the Auto Center at Superstition Springs was on the Oct. 16, 2003 Board agenda. The application was

- Sept. 18, 2008:** formally withdrawn by the applicant on Oct. 22, 2003. (Z03-052)
The Planning and Zoning Board recommended approval of Z08-060 a modification of the PAD and the site plan review request to allow the development of an auto dealership at Lots F&G. Board vote was 4-2. The case has no history on the City Council agenda.
- June 17, 2015:** The Planning and Zoning Board continued PAD modification and site plan modification for Lot F&G @ Superstition Springs Auto Center, 3.2 acres. Staff recommended approval of the zoning case and continuance of the site plan.
- October 21, 2015:** The Planning and Zoning Board recommended denial of the PAD overlay modification and site plan modification for Lots F&G. The vote was 4-3. Staff recommended approval of the zoning case and continuance of the site plan.
- January 20, 2016:** The Planning and Zoning Board recommended approval for a modification to the PAD overlay and Site Plan Review for Lot F of Superstition Springs Auto Center. (Z15-020)
- February 22, 2016:** City Council approval for the modification to the PAD overlay and Site Plan Review for Lot F of Superstition Springs Auto Center. (Z15-020, Ordinance 5316)

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This request is for Site Plan Review to allow the development of an office building on a property at 6442 East Test Drive, which is located on the south side of US60 and west of Power Road. The Planning and Zoning Board and City Council, recently approved an automotive dealership on the property to the west (Z15-020). This site, as well as the lot for the approved automotive dealership to the west, have been referred to as Lots F & G of the "Auto Center at Superstition Springs", dating back to 2001 (Z01-012). The applicant has recently re-platted the subdivision and retitled the lots as Lot 1 and Lot 2. Additional history for this site has been provided in the "Staff Analysis-Background" portion of this report, which begins on page 4.

The proposed office building is located on the new Lot 2 and is proposed to be developed concurrently with the automotive dealership, which has been identified as a Jeep dealership. (Z15-020, DR16-43). The two projects will share a common access point from Test Drive and will also share drive aisles, pedestrian walkways, parking, landscaping, etc. The proposed project for this 1± acre site includes a single-story 3,498 square-foot (SF) building. The office building will contain offices, conference room, lunch room and restrooms. There will be no auto-sales display for autos to the public within the building or on their lot, pursuant to the approved rezoning case Z15-020 for the auto dealership facility to the west.

This Site Plan Review will also require approval by City Council, pursuant to the conditions of approval as part of Ordinance 3889.

CITIZEN 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 one mile. They also included interested neighbors/property owners for those that participated in or sent correspondence with regards to the recent abutting rezoning case (Z15-020). The applicant held their first neighborhood meeting on Thursday, October 20, 2016. The applicant will provide a Citizen Participation Report prior to the Planning and Zoning Hearing that will identify results from that meeting and any contact that they have had with interested parties. Staff has not received any comments from neighbors with questions or concerns regarding this proposal. An update will be provided by staff at the Planning and Zoning Board Study Session on December 20, 2016.

CONFORMANCE WITH THE MESA 2040 GENERAL PLAN

Summary: *Utilizing the tools of the Mesa 2040 General Plan in review of the proposed project, it was determined that this request would further implement and enhance the planned Mixed Use Activity District character of the given area, help to create a greater sense of place, and make the place more economically viable into the future.*

The goal of Mesa 2040 General Plan is to establish and maintain neighborhoods and to build a sense of place in neighborhoods and commercial/entertainment districts. 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.

The General Plan establishes criteria to be used in evaluating development requests to measure compatibility with the Plan.

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

This request is within the Character Type of *Mixed Use Activity District* with a further designated sub-type of *Regional Scale District* as identified on the Character Area map in the Mesa 2040 General Plan.

Mixed Use Activity District- The Mixed Use Activity Districts are large-scale (typically over 25 acres) community and regional activity areas that usually have a significant retail commercial component that are designed and developed to attract customers from a large radius.

Sub-type: *Regional-scale districts* are typically larger than 60 acres and contain multiple big box stores, unique features (lifestyle center), an enclosed mall, and/or auto-malls that attract customers from a large trade area. Regional-scale districts may have significant areas devoted to office, research and development or other light industrial uses and may contain areas of supporting, integrated residential uses. These districts are typically along an arterial at a freeway interchange. The goal with this character type is to provide a location for businesses and attractions that brings people to Mesa from the larger region.

This area also abuts up to an area designated as *Neighborhood* with a sub-type of *Suburban*.

To grow and maintain a diverse job base, Mesa must continue to develop and maintain Economic Activity Areas that provide busy, vibrant places which draw people and businesses together. This project is located in the Superstition Springs/Power Road Corridor Economic Activity Area and part of the Superstition Freeway East Economic Activity District. The Superstition/Power Road Economic Activity Area is established around the opportunity to grow employment associated with the Loop 202 and US 60 Freeways and expand medical services. Superstition Freeway East Economic Activity District: Superstition Springs Center, one of two regional shopping centers located in Mesa, serves as a focal point for the Superstition Freeway East Corridor. It is dominated by businesses representing the advanced business services, healthcare services and retail industry clusters extending for approximately eight miles along the Superstition Freeway (US 60). This area is expected to see further growth in these clusters as vacant parcels throughout the corridor are developed over time.

As part of these economic activity areas it is appropriate that this area have flexibility to develop with a wide range of commercial, office, residential, and entertainment uses. At the same time, however, it is located adjacent to an established residential community. The General Plan also places strong emphasis on maintaining neighborhoods. One of the statements contained in the

Neighborhoods chapter of the plan regarding maintaining safe, clean, and healthy living environments in neighborhoods states: "Avoid incompatible land uses (e.g. locating an auto repair shop next door to a single family residence or locating residences near an airport) and/or providing appropriate transitions between uses, particularly when developing or redeveloping neighborhoods next to or near higher impact employment areas to lessen the impact on the employment use." By proposing that Lot 2 (formerly known as Lot G) maintain the established PAD requirements and develop under these original expectations with a small office building, it will create the transition between the existing neighborhood and the approved auto dealership.

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

There are no sub-area plans for this location.

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

The Mixed Use Activity District, Regional Scale, specifically anticipates office developments as a part of this character area. The proposed zoning is consistent with and conforms to the General Plan designation for this property.

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

- **Providing appropriate infill development.**
-By developing Lot 2 as an office, a transition is provided from the residential district and incorporates into the existing four automobile dealerships. East Test Drive provides the primary entrance into this location. For Lot 2, care has been given in site planning to continue to provide an attractive and appropriate entry and to minimize other visual and auditory impacts for the existing residential neighborhood.
- **Removing development that is deteriorated and/or does not contribute to the quality of the surrounding area.**
-This property is vacant, this does not apply.
- **Adding to the mix of uses to further enhance the intended character of this area.**
-There are already several automobile dealerships in this area. When originally developed there was a need for restaurants and other services. Much of the area to the north and east has developed with those restaurant and other uses. The office building would be an additional use within the existing development area on the south side of Superstition Springs Boulevard.
- **Improving the streetscape and connectivity within the area.**
-New landscaping will be added with development that will improve the streetscape.
- **Improving safety within the area.**
-New development will utilize the property and provide more lighting and activity which should serve to improve safety.
- **Adding to the sense of place.**
-The proposed project will wrap into the existing automobile dealerships and Lot 2 will allow for development that will provide the needed transition from the residential neighborhood and the automobile dealerships. Particular care has been given to the way that the office building has been sited to provide enhanced elevations and landscaping on the sides most impacted by the neighborhood and provide an enhanced entry experience as you enter the development.
- **Meeting or exceeding the development quality of the surrounding area.**
-The surrounding area has been developed under newer standards thus has a quality appearance and mix of land uses transitioning from the freeway corridor to residential areas to the south.

The building proposed is single-story designed in a modern style in keeping with the design of the automotive dealership to the west. The proposed design and materials are high quality and appropriate in this location. The proposal was presented to the Design Review Board at their November 8, 2016 'Work Session' and the Board was supportive of the proposed building design.

5. Does the proposed development provide appropriate transitions between uses?

As stated above, the key transition point is the proposed office building on Lot 2. The office building is sited at the northeast corner of the site with significant landscape areas on the east and south sides of the building to enhance that transition to the existing neighborhood.

STAFF ANALYSIS:

Request:

The current application is for Site Plan Review to allow a 3,498 square-foot office building at 6442 East Test Drive.

Background:

The Auto Center at Superstition Springs, Z01-012, was formally approved by the City Council on May 21, 2001. During the rezoning process, the adjacent residential property owners of Superstition Lakes Resort Condominiums were opposed to the development of the Auto Center Mall. The Auto Center developer worked with condominium owners and developed the numerous stipulations in Ordinance #3889. The 2001 exhibits show Lots F&G in the site plan layout and in the project narrative as restaurant use or high end office. In 2001, Staff indicated concern with stipulation #16, however the developer and the neighbors had come to an agreement. Since that time there have been two additional applications, one in 2003 and the other in 2008, to eliminate the stipulation on uses for Lots F & G. Both applications were withdrawn prior to the City Council hearing. The Cardinale's purchased the property in 2005 and were the applicant for the 2008 case.

A revised submittal was made in 2015 and was first heard by the Planning and Zoning Board in June of that year with a decision of continuance (Z15-020). The Case was heard a second time with a completely different site plan that absorbed all of Test Drive and created a new access drive from Superstition Springs Boulevard. The P&Z Board recommended denial of the case. Following the October P&Z Board meeting, the applicant significantly revised the area of the project and the site plan. As a result of the substantial changes the case was agendized for recommendation by the P&Z Board and approved by City Council on February 22, 2016. Since that hearing, the property owner has received approval through the Design Review process (DR16-043) to move forward with construction plans for a Jeep dealership on Lot F. They have also recorded a revised subdivision plat, per case Z16-020, which required completion of a lot line adjustment through a re-plat prior to issuance of a building permit, which adjusted the lot line between lots F & G and reduced the size of Lot G to 1 acre. This plat also revised the name of those lots to Lots 1 and 2 of "Lots F & G of Auto Center at Superstition Springs".

Site plan:

Access to the site occurs from Test Drive, a private street. The access drive for the office building is located on the Automotive dealership property to the west, minimizing the impact of this development on the neighbors to the southeast. Earlier versions of conceptual site plans for this lot had indicated a separate driveway entrance for Lot 2 that was further to the east. The final determination of the driveway location was based on the curve of the street and creating safe turning movements on-to and off-of Test Drive.

The parking and circulation adjacent to Superstition Springs Boulevard is indicated to have a minimum setback of 2' from the property line. This area is unusual because of the wide amount of right of way along Superstition Springs Boulevard and the grade difference. The site layout for this office project places the building adjacent to Superstition Springs Boulevard and Test Drive with lush landscaping at the corner to create a sense of place.

Design Review:

The elevations submitted, show a design that has more modern forms than a typical office building and references the design of the approved Jeep of Superstition Springs building to the west. The proposed materials are very high quality, with some metal, EFIS and CMU. The building is also quite small with a maximum height of approximately 22-feet and 3,498 square feet in area. The architectural Design Guidelines for the PAD require elevations to be broken up by stepping, fenestration or architectural treatments. The Guidelines further state that other architectural treatments shall be used to add human scale to the buildings. Also, all attached lighting will be limited to a maximum of 15' in height with no wall packs installed as indicated by the original ordinance 3889. Design Review approval is required for this project. The applicant presented the building to the Design Review Board at the November 8, 2016 meeting. The Board was supportive of the design and did not raise any concerns regarding the proposed building.

CONCLUSIONS:

The applicant has provided a well-designed project that is consistent with the General Plan, Zoning Ordinance standards as well as requirements established in Ordinance No 5316. Staff recommends approval of the Site Plan 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, elevations and landscape plan.
2. Compliance with all conditions of Design Review approval for architectural and landscaping design.
3. Compliance with all City development codes and regulations.
4. **Compliance with all requirements of Ordinance 3889 except as modified by Ordinance 5316.**
5. **Compliance with all requirements of Ordinance 5316.**
6. **Recordation of cross-access, shared parking and cross-drainage easements with Lot 1 of "Lots F & G of Auto Center at Superstition Springs".**
7. **No auto sales or display for autos to the public will take place within the building or on Lot 2 of "Lots F & G of Auto Center at Superstition Springs", pursuant to the approved case Z15-020.**