



## Planning and Zoning Board

### *Case Information*

**CASE NUMBER:** **Z17-005 (PLN2016-00943)**  
**LOCATION/ADDRESS:** The 9700 through 9800 blocks of East Southern Avenue (south side) and the 9700 through 9800 blocks of East Hampton Avenue (north side)  
**GENERAL VICINITY:** Located west of Crismon Road and south of Southern Avenue.  
**REQUEST:** Rezone from RS-43 to PEP and RM-2-PAD; and Site Plan Review  
**PURPOSE:** This request will allow for a multi-residential development and a future office development.  
**COUNCIL DISTRICT:** District 6  
**OWNER:** Montgomery 320, LLC  
**APPLICANT:** Burch & Cracchiolo, P.A. – Brennan Ray  
**STAFF PLANNER:** Kim Steadman

**SITE DATA**  
**PARCEL NUMBERS:** 220-80-005A; 220-80-005B; 220-80-006A; 220-80-006B  
**PARCEL SIZE:** 19.4± acres  
**EXISTING ZONING:** RS-43  
**GENERAL PLAN Character area:** Employment  
**CURRENT LAND USE:** Vacant

**HISTORY/RELATED CASES**  
**September 2, 1987:** Annexed into the City. (Ord. #2249)  
**October 5, 1987:** Comparable zoning of “SR” which is now called R1-43 (Z87-066)  
**June 25, 1990:** East half of site - “Conceptual” zoning to PEP & M-1 (Z90-023)  
**October 18, 2010:** Adjacent land, south of Hampton Ave rezoned from RS-43 to PEP-PAD-CUP (Z10-024)

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:** Denial  
**P&Z BOARD RECOMMENDATION:** ☒ Approval with conditions ☐ Denial  
**WAIVER SIGNED:** ☒ Yes ☐ No

**SITE CONTEXT**  
**NORTH:** (Across Southern Ave.) Manufactured home subdivision –Zoned R1-6 in County  
**EAST:** Vacant land, church athletic field, & Post Office –Zoned RS-43-PAD  
**SOUTH:** Vacant –Zoned PEP-PAD-CUP  
**WEST:** School, and vacant –Zoned RS-43

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION/REQUEST**  
This 19.4± acre site is located west of Crismon Rd. running from the south side of Southern Ave, southward to the Hampton Rd. alignment. Two zoning districts are proposed: PEP zoning for the portion of the site fronting Southern Ave., and RM-2-PAD for the portion of the site that will front Hampton Ave. The applicant proposes a multi-residential development of 142 freestanding rentals, or “rental casitas” {00233754.2}

fronting on Hampton Ave., and seeks Site Plan Review of that development. A conceptual site plan accompanies the request for PEP zoning on the portion fronting onto Southern Ave. This will require future Site Plan Review.

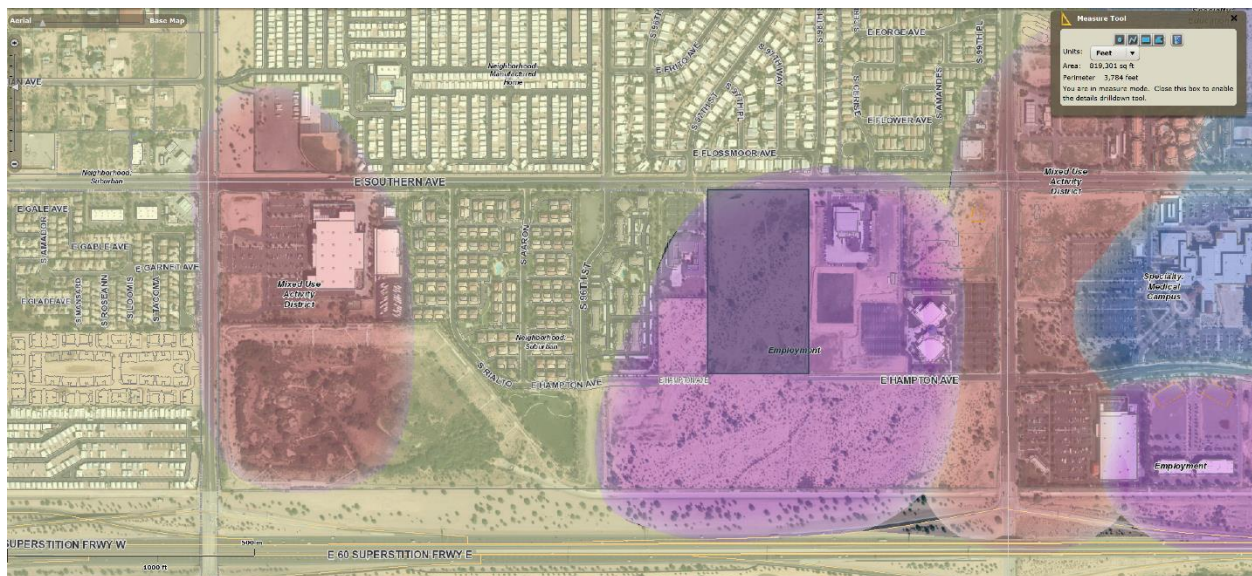
### NEIGHBORHOOD PARTICIPATION

The applicant has notified surrounding property owners within 1000 feet of the subject site, and registered neighborhoods within one mile of the site. A community meeting was held on 2/8/2017. The applicant submitted a Citizen Participation Report on 3/7/2017. The applicant's report lists the two meeting attendees. Questions and comments made in the meeting were of a general nature, and the neighbors were supportive. Staff has received one phone call, requesting information about the proposal.

### CONFORMANCE WITH THE MESA 2040 GENERAL PLAN

*Summary: This site is within the Character Type of "Employment Districts" as identified on the Character Area map in the Mesa 2040 General Plan (P.7-3) and is part of the Superstition Freeway East Economic Activity Area (P.5-9). Residential uses could only be considered appropriate on this site if it were to develop as an "Employment Core" Sub Type (P. 7-25 of the Plan). This would need to be a master planned approach, integrating residential uses as a component of an employment district with an urban design. The current proposal is a stand-alone residential development. It is not an integrated urban approach, and therefore, not consistent with the General Plan.*

*The General Plan does not require a Minor Amendment in this case since the proposed residential incursion into the Employment District is under 20 acres and the remaining Employment District area is large enough for the district to develop per Plan. However, approval of residential development on this property would likely lead to additional residential development on adjacent parcels and thus lead to the need to amend the Plan to change the designated character from Employment to Neighborhood.*



The goal of the Mesa 2040 General Plan is to establish and maintain character areas 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 proposal:**

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 (from Ch. 15 of The Plan) 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.

**1. Is the proposed development consistent with furthering the intent and direction contained in the General Plan?**

The General Plan focuses on creating a complete and recognizable city, and on principles that build neighborhoods, stabilize the job base, and improve the sense of place through rich public spaces (P. 3-7).

1. Creating and maintaining a variety of great neighborhoods.
  - *The isolated nature of this residential area does not contribute to the building of great, interconnected neighborhoods. If residential is going to be a secondary part of a mixed-use development, then residential may be appropriate.*
2. Growing and maintaining diverse and stable jobs.
  - *The proposed PEP zoning of the north portion, along Southern Ave., is consistent with the intent of the Plan. The creation of a residential pocket is not.*
  - *This property is part of the Superstition Freeway East Economic Activity Area. This Economic Activity Area is expected to see continued growth in the retail and medical services industries.*
  - *Economic Development Policy P1 is to preserve designated commercial and industrial areas for future job growth. Mesa is currently an exporter of employees. Our goal is to increase the ratio of jobs to population and this can only be done if there are areas designated and developed for employment uses. Given this property’s location near a freeway interchange and the presence of the hospital nearby, it is a good location for employment activities. As required by Economic Development Policy P1, the Office of Economic Development has been asked to review and comment on this proposed development. That office is not supportive of the proposal and feels it would be detrimental to the City’s employment goals in this area.*
3. Providing rich, high-quality public spaces and cultural resources.
  - *The site plan provides good shared spaces within the residential development. Residents will have access to a community pool and greenspace.*

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

*This falls within the Superstition Freeway East Economic Activity Area (P.5-9), but does not have a sub-area or neighborhood plan.*

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

*The Mesa 2040 General Plan defines Employment Districts as follows:*

**Employment Districts**

*Focus:*

Employment Districts is a character type that is primarily used for employment-type land uses of at least 20 acres and typically have minimal connection to the surrounding area. Examples of employment districts include areas for large manufacturing facilities, warehousing, business parks, etc. Employment districts may include supporting retail and office areas but rarely include any type of residential uses. If residential uses are included, they need to be done in a manner that supports the continued development of the employment uses. The goal for these districts is to provide for a wide range of employment opportunities in high quality settings.

*The protection of employment areas is a strong emphasis of the General Plan. The lead-in statement of Chapter 5 of the Plan states: "The future of the City of Mesa is tied to its ability to continue to secure and maintain a stable and diverse employment base." and Policy P1 directs: "Preserve designated commercial and industrial areas for future job growth." Using this Employment area for residential development runs counter to the General Plan.*

*As previously noted, this request for a residential use, while not in keeping with the Employment District character type, can proceed without a Minor Amendment because it is less than 20 acres. If it does move forward, it should develop to the standards of the Neighborhood character type.*

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

• **Providing appropriate infill development;**

*N/A. This area cannot be regarded as a candidate for infill development.*

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

*N/A. The land is undeveloped.*

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

*This project adds a multi-residential use to an Employment District area. It does not add one of the uses intended for Employment areas.*

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

- *This is a suburban proposal, whereas "Streetscape" is an Urban Design idea. The proposed plan provides landscaped setbacks, as required by Mesa's Zoning Ordinance, rather than creating a streetscape.*
- *Acknowledging the PEP rezoning to the north, and the potential for future employment development there, the residential site plan includes a pedestrian path to the north.*

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

*The proposed residential site plan includes building design, site amenities, landscaping, and entry features that represent a level of quality that meets or exceeds the surrounding area.*

**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;**



*The proposed development is in a suburban form. Therefore, transitions between uses are addressed through screening and/or separation. The current proposal requests a modification from code to reduce the setbacks from 25' down to eight feet. This proposed reduction will not provide sufficient separation to ensure a quality, sustainable residential development and will impair the development potential for the adjacent employment uses.*

## STAFF ANALYSIS

### Existing Zoning and Development Patterns:

In the aerial photo, below, the subject site is shaded to show the surrounding zoning and uses. The existing zoning on the subject site is RS-43, which extends to the properties on each side as well. The adjacent properties have developed with a school to the west, and a post office, and church athletic fields to the east. Properties across Southern Ave., to the north, and farther west of the subject site have developed with smaller-lot residential, and multi-residential uses. The vacant land to the south of this site that is currently zoned PEP-PAD-CUP, as the first step in development of this Employment District.



### PEP Zoning and Conceptual Site Plan:

The subject site is divided into two blocks: north and south. The land north of the proposed residential development is proposed to receive PEP zoning. This is listed in the General Plan as appropriate zoning for Employment Districts. A conceptual site plan accompanies the request for PEP zoning. While staff could ultimately support PEP zoning for this portion of the property (and for the entire property), There no pre-set development standards in the PEP zone; they are “Plan Specific” (See Table 11-7-3) based on the site plan approved with the zoning. It would be better to wait on the zoning until a firm site plan is provided rather than approving it with a conceptual site plan. A review of the conceptual plan reveals elements of quality, such as green spaces that are well-integrated with the buildings, a well-developed pedestrian system that integrates with the adjacent site, and interesting, three-dimensional building forms. If the PEP zoning is granted with a conceptual site plan, staff will be looking for these elements, and the same level of quality in a future Site Plan Review. A future site plan that is consistent with these elements of this conceptual site plan would be supported. (See Condition #6.)

**RM-2-PAD Zoning:**

While the proposed residential density of 13.2 du/ac (142 units on 10.76 net acres) is within the RM-2 density range, RM-2 zoning is not consistent with the General Plan for this location. This property and the surrounding area are designated for employment uses in association with the freeway frontage and access, and the nearby hospital. While the planned employment uses have been slow to materialize, more development is moving this way and the uses associated with the hospital are starting to expand. Allowing residential zoning and development on this parcel will significantly reduce the possibility that adjacent parcels will have employment uses, resulting in a need to amend the General Plan to eliminate this employment area. For Mesa's long-term sustainability it is important that we develop our employment base which means we need to protect employment areas from residential development.

The applicant states that properties away from the arterial street network are not conducive to development for employment activities. However, we find many locations around Mesa where this type of development has occurred. A few examples are: along Horne north of Baseline, along Juanita east of Mesa Drive, the area along Norwalk north of McDowell, and the area east of Greenfield along Ivy.

**RM-2-PAD Site Plan Review:**

Auto and pedestrian access to the multi-residential development is from Hampton Ave., on the south. The site is auto-oriented. A driveway/parking aisle circulates through the site, creating a large central rectangle. The residential units, in pods of one to six units, are distributed behind the parking canopies and garages that line the driveway. The center of the rectangle includes a community lawn and the amenity pool area. In addition to these community amenities, each unit is provided a fenced rear yard for private outdoor space. A pedestrian grid overlays the plan, with enhanced materials and landscaping where pathways cross the drive aisle. The plan meets the code requirement for usable outdoor space in multi-residences.

**Planned Area Development (PAD) Modifications:**

The applicant's request for a Planned Area Development (PAD) overlay will allow for deviation from development standards in these specific areas:

- Building Entrances, Orientation: Section 11-5-5(D)(3) requires all units located along public rights-of-way to have individual unit entrances facing the right-of-way. The ordinance provides an exception for 4- or 6-lane streets carrying high traffic volumes, however this section of Hampton Ave. will be a 2-lane street. A deviation from this building form standard is needed to carry out the applicant's request.
- Building Setbacks from East & West Property Lines: Table 11-5-5 of the Zoning Ordinance requires a 25' setback from interior property lines that are adjacent to Single-Residential districts. The site plan proposes 8' setbacks on the east and west. These 8' setbacks will serve as private rear yards for the individual "rental casitas". Large-lot residential zoning is not likely to develop on adjacent land, although it is zoned as such. Currently there is a school, a post office, and athletic fields adjacent to this property. Given the General Plan designation for employment uses in this area, these reduced setbacks would make for less-effective transitioning between this residential use and future employment uses. Future developments on adjacent parcels would have to compensate in order to effectively buffer/transition on their side of the property line, or risk adversely affecting the residents of the proposed units. The intrusion of this residential use into

the Employment District becomes more damaging when the buffering transitions are reduced. If a residential use is approved on this site, Staff could support the 20' setbacks required in the Zoning Ordinance for multi-residential development adjacent to non-single residence development. **(See Condition #5)**

- Building Setback from North Property Line: Table 11-5-5 of the Zoning Ordinance requires a 20' setback from interior property lines that are adjacent to non-residential districts. The site plan proposes 8' setbacks on the north, adjacent to the proposed PEP district. These 8' setbacks will serve as private rear yards for the individual units. Because this property owner is zoning both the residential and PEP areas and has provided a conceptual site plan showing how the two developments can work together, staff can support this reduction in the required setback.
- Separation Between Buildings: The Zoning Ordinance requires 25' of separation between buildings on the same site. This requirement is based on multi-residential developments that consists of several buildings, each containing multiple units. The design of this development, however, separates each unit into a freestanding house with a small, fenced rear yard. The applicant proposes an 8' minimum separation between units. This minimum is usually between the sidewalls of individual units. Staff has measured a sample of other separations and found they generally range from 12' to 20' between units. This is the second proposal of freestanding rental units Mesa has reviewed. So far, it seems a reasonable alternative to the large-block apartment building.
- Separation Between Buildings and Parking Canopies: A 20' separation is required between buildings and parking canopies. A range of separations is proposed, with 6'.7" as a minimum. The justification is the smaller, freestanding units. The smallest separations are between canopies that are at the side of houses. The plan has been revised to break canopies into shorter runs, and to move entry doors away from parking canopies.
- Parking Canopies:
  - Ch. 11-33-4.B.6 requires a 24' wide landscape island between parking canopies that are adjacent to each other in a single row. The applicant has revised the parking lot design to meet the intent of this standard by breaking long canopies into shorter runs, with parking spaces and standard landscape islands between them.

The PAD overlay allows for modifications to Code in exchange for creative, high-quality development. Staff finds the modifications noted above are necessary for this style of multi-residential development. In exchange, the applicant has provided upgrades that establish a high-quality site plan and community. Staff, however, is not supportive of the modifications that reduce the setbacks on the east and west sides of the development because of the intended employment uses of these properties. The ordinance-required setbacks should be maintained in these areas to provide the separation needed so the employment uses do not negatively impact the residential development (See condition #5). The project will go to a Design Review work session, which will focus on the quality of the building and landscape design. Staff also recommends participation in the Tri-Star Program, through Mesa Police. It is a "cooperative effort to foster a safer community in rental properties."

#### **Conclusion and Recommendation:**

The request for residential zoning and development on the major portion of this property is not consistent with the General Plan designation of an employment character type at this location. Further, rezoning and development to a residential land use would be incompatible with the adjacent PEP zoning and

development of adjacent properties for employment uses. Staff believes that the Mountain Vista Medical Center is going to continue to expand and will bring additional employment uses to this area. The applicant has provided a good residential site plan, and has modified the site design to address most of staff's concerns. Still, a stand-alone residential development does not fit the intent of the Employment District character area of the General Plan. Staff must therefore recommend denial, but has provided the following conditions, should the Board determine the proposed zoning and site plan is appropriate for the area:

**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 except as otherwise conditioned;
2. All street improvements to be installed with the first phase of development;
3. Compliance with all City development codes and regulations;
4. Compliance with all requirements of DR17-012 Design Review approval.
5. **Modify the site plan for acceptance by the Planning Director to show the ordinance required 20-foot setbacks along the east and west property lines.**
6. **Future Site Plan Review, through the Planning and Zoning Board, of the PEP portion of the property. Site plan to be consistent with the elements of the conceptual site plan as described in this report.**