

Board of Adjustment

Staff Report

CASE NUMBER: BA17-025
STAFF PLANNER: Kaelee Wilson
LOCATION/ADDRESS: 808 South Alma School
COUNCIL DISTRICT: Council District 3
OWNER: Leann's Inc
APPLICANT: Larson Associates Architects, Jim Larson

REQUEST: *Requesting: 1) a Substantial Conformance Improvement Permit (SCIP) to allow modifications to development standards; and 2) modification of a Special Use Permit (SUP); and 3) a Special Use Permit (SUP) for a modification to an existing Comprehensive Sign Plan (CSP); all to allow an expansion of an existing carwash in the LC District. (PLN2017-00164)*

SUMMARY OF APPLICANT'S REQUEST

The applicant is requesting a Substantial Conformance Improvement Permit (SCIP) to facilitate the redevelopment of an existing carwash. The applicant is proposing to add 18 self-service vacuum stations on the property and modify the carwash to an express wash model, which intensifies the non-conforming site requiring full conformance with development standards set forth in the Zoning Ordinance. Carwash uses within the LC zoning district require the granting of Special Use Permit (SUP). Since the carwash is being modified and expanded since a SUP was approved in 2014 (BA14-056), a modification to that SUP is required.

The carwash is proposing to update the exterior elevations. Approval of an Administrative Design Review through the Planning Director will be required. As part of the exterior upgrades, the applicant is proposing modifications to the attached and detached signs on the property. A Comprehensive Sign Plan was established in 1989 for the property but the records on the signs that were approved with this case are unclear. Through this proposal, a new CSP will be established to clarify the all of the allowable signage.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends **approval** of case BA17-025, *conditioned upon the following:*

- 1. Compliance with the site plan, landscape plan and sign plan submitted, except as modified by the conditions below.*
- 2. Compliance with all requirements of the Development Services Division with regards to the issuance of building permits.*
- 3. Ten additional shrubs shall be added to the east side of the screen wall along Alma School Road.*
- 4. The centralized vacuum motor shall be completely enclosed within the building to meet requirements of Mesa Zoning Ordinance (MZO) Section 11-31-7.F*
- 5. All detached signage for the carwash shall comply with all requirements of MZO Sections 11-41-6 and 8.*
- 6. The two modifier signs are capped at an aggregate area of 20 square feet.*
- 7. One trash receptacle shall be placed at each of the car wash entries.*
- 8. All exterior modifications shall be reviewed and approved by the Planning Director through an Administrative Design Review prior to the issuance of a building permit.*

SITE CONTEXT

CASE SITE: Existing pad building – zoned LC
NORTH: (across 8th Avenue) residential development – Zoned RM-4 and commercial-zoned LC
EAST: (across Alma School Road) Existing convenience store – Zoned NC
SOUTH: Existing parking lot of the shopping center- LC
WEST: Existing parking lot of the shopping center- LC

STAFF SUMMARY AND ANALYSIS

Substantial Conformance Improvement Permit (SCIP):

The applicant is requesting a Substantial Conformance Improvement Permit (SCIP) to allow for the redevelopment of an existing carwash that has been in existence since 1980's. The business model is changing from a staffed carwash with oil and lube services to a self-serve carwash. As part of their self-service business model, there are self-serve vacuum canopies being proposed. The applicant is enhancing the site by adding a substantial amount of landscaping. The addition of vacuum canopies on a legal non-conforming site requires compliance with current development standards. Since the development standards in the 1980's were different than current Code, a SCIP has been requested for slight deviations to current requirements.

The table below is a summary of the minimum Code requirements, applicant's proposal, and staff recommendation for the site:

DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS:

Standard	Code Requirement	Applicant Proposed	Staff Recommended
Alma School Setback	15' landscaping	5'	As proposed
8 th Avenue	20' landscaping	11'-6"	As proposed
West Property Line Setback	0'	0'	As proposed
South Property Line Setback	0'	0'	As proposed
Parking	1/375 SF under roof including the service bays, wash tunnels and retail = 17 required	18 spaces/ vacuum canopies provided	As proposed
Foundation Base	Exterior walls without Public Entrance: 5' Min. Exterior walls with Public Entrance: 15' Min.	Varies: 5' minimum	As proposed
Queuing Area	Cannot be within building/landscape setbacks	No encroachment	As proposed
Landscape Island Width	8 feet wide	Varies	As proposed
Landscaping Percentage	Minimum of 10% of site	Approximately 30% of site	As proposed

As shown in the above table, the requested SCIP would allow a reduction in the building setbacks, landscape setbacks and foundation base width around the building. The applicant has noted the following as justification for the granting of the SCIP: 1) the required setbacks cannot be met without the demolition of the building and 2) the proposed upgrades will enhance the site; and 3) the proposed upgrades include a pedestrian connection to Alma School Road.

The applicant is proposing to add a substantial amount of landscaping to the property. Since there are structures being demolished, it allows for flexibility in the site design. The existing drive-aisles are being modified or relocated. The relocation of drive-aisles along Alma School Road allows for the addition of landscaping internal to the screen wall. Staff has conditioned that 10 shrubs be added on the exterior of the screen wall along the Alma School frontage. These shrubs should be in addition to the landscaping proposed as part of the landscape plan.

Special Use Permit (SUP) for a carwash:

The Zoning Ordinance requires a carwash to be obtain a Special Use Permit (SUP) for the use and meet additional development standards beyond the minimum requirements for the zoning district. This application involves modifications made to an existing car wash facility, which is being considered through the SCIP application. These site conditions were established in 1980's when the carwash was constructed.

This application is otherwise in compliance with the additional criteria listed for a carwash. The proposed site plan otherwise complies and development on the property is being brought into substantial conformance with current development standards through the SCIP process. The master vacuum motor is being placed inside the existing building. Staff has added recommended condition that the applicant provide a trash receptacle at the entrance of the carwash.

Special Use Permit for a Comprehensive Sign Plan (CSP)

A Comprehensive Sign Plan was established for the original carwash in 1989. The records for the 1989 CSP are unclear as to what was authorized. Through this request, a new CSP will be established for this parcel. The carwash does have an existing detached sign that is not being modified through the CSP.

The applicant is proposing a complete remodel of the façade where the curve in the building cited in the 1989 CSP will be removed. A summary of the applicant's request for attached signage is below:

Table 1:

Proposed- Number of Signs	Allowed- Number of Signs	Proposed- Square Footage	Allowed- Square footage
3 - attached 2- modifier signs placed under 16' in height on the north elevation	3	160 square feet	160 square feet

FINDINGS FOR SCIP

- 1.1 This request for a SCIP would allow for the redevelopment of a carwash.
- 1.2 The proposed vacuum stalls invoke current development standards.
- 1.3 The proposed improvements will result in a development that is compatible with, and not detrimental to, adjacent properties or neighborhoods.
- 1.4 Requiring full compliance with the current code would require demolition of existing buildings.
- 1.5 The deviations requested are consistent with the degree of change requested and will improve the site.
- 1.6 The proposed improvements with the recommended conditions of approval help bring the site into a closer degree of conformance with current standards.

FINDINGS SUP FOR CARWASH

- 2.1 The carwash has been in existence since the 1980's.
- 2.2 The carwash has not been detrimental to the surrounding neighborhood and will not become detrimental with the modifications.
- 2.3 The site is coming further into compliance with code through the site improvements conditions through the SCIP process.

FINDINGS FOR SUP FOR CSP

- 3.1 The requested Comprehensive Sign Plan (CSP) would allow the property to utilize standard Sign Code allowances for square footage for detached and attached signage.
- 3.2 The requested CSP would allow the applicant to place three attached signs and two modifiers that are placed under 16' in height.
- 3.3 The proposed modifications are compatible with the group commercial center and will not be detrimental to the surrounding neighborhood.

Zoning Ordinance, Sec. 11-70-5 – Special Use Permits – Required Findings:

A SUP shall only be granted if the approving body determines that the project as submitted or modified conforms to all of the following criteria. If it is determined that it is not possible to make all of the required findings, the application shall be denied. The specific basis for denial shall be established in the record.

1. Approval of the proposed project will advance the goals and objectives of and is consistent with the policies of the General Plan and any other applicable City plan and/or policies;
2. The location, size, design, and operating characteristics of the proposed project are consistent with the purposes of the district where it is located and conform with the General Plan and with any other applicable City plan or policies;
3. The proposed project will not be injurious or detrimental to the adjacent or surrounding properties in the area, nor will the proposed project or improvements be injurious or detrimental to the neighborhood or to the general welfare of the City; and
4. Adequate public services, public facilities and public infrastructure are available to serve the proposed project.

Zoning Ordinance, Sec. 11-41-6 – Signs Permitted By Zoning District: (E) NC, LC, GC, PEP, LI, GI, HI and PS Districts.

Attached Signs.

1. Occupancies with less than 100 front feet: two (2) signs for each occupancy not to exceed 2 square feet of total sign area for each front foot of building occupancy.
2. Occupancies with more than 100 front feet: three (3) signs for each occupancy not to exceed 2 square feet of total sign area for each front foot of building occupancy.
3. Total attached signage shall not exceed 160 square feet per occupancy.

Zoning Ordinance, Sec. 11-41-8 (D) – Supplemental Provisions: 13. A **Comprehensive Sign Plan** for a proposed or existing development/building may be approved by the Zoning Administrator/Board of Adjustment in conjunction with the granting of a Special Use Permit under Title 11, Administration and Procedures Chapter of the Mesa City Code. The purpose of a Comprehensive Sign Plan is to provide for the establishment of signage criteria that are tailored to a specific development or location, and

which may vary from specific Ordinance provisions. The intent is to provide for flexible sign criteria that promote superior design through architectural integration of the site, buildings and signs.

A **Comprehensive Sign Plan** shall include the location, size, height, construction material, color, type of illumination and orientation of all proposed signs, either permanent or temporary.

A Comprehensive Sign Plan containing elements which exceed the permitted height, area and number of signs specified in this Chapter may be approved by the Zoning Administrator/Board of Adjustment only upon a finding that:

- . (a) The development site contains unique or unusual physical conditions, such as topography, proportion, size or relation to a public street that would limit or restrict normal sign visibility; or
- . (b) The proposed or existing development exhibits unique characteristics of land use, architectural style, site location, physical scale, historical interest or other distinguishing features that represent a clear variation from conventional development; or
- . (c) The proposed signage incorporates special design features such as logos, emblems, murals or statuary that are integrated with the building architecture.

The construction and placement of individual signs contained in the approved Comprehensive Sign Plan shall be subject to the issuance of sign permits in accordance with 11-41-8 (E).