



mesa·az

Planning and Zoning Board

Case Information

CASE NUMBER: **Z17-017** (PLN2017-00121)
LOCATION/ADDRESS: The 1100 block of North Ellsworth Road (west side).
GENERAL VICINITY: Located on the west side of Ellsworth Road south of Brown Road.
REQUEST: Rezone from RS-43 to LC-BIZ and Site Plan Review.
PURPOSE: This request will allow a self-storage facility.
COUNCIL DISTRICT: District 5
OWNER: Magicgifts LLC/ETAL
APPLICANT: Adam Baugh/ Kirste Kowalsky-Withey Morris, PLC
STAFF PLANNER: Wahid Alam, AICP

DATA

PARCEL NUMBER: 218-07-001N
PARCEL SIZE: 4.84 ± acres
EXISTING ZONING: RS-43-Residential RS-43 district.
GENERAL PLAN Character Area: Neighborhood: Desert Uplands and Neighborhood Village Center
SUB-AREA PLAN Desert Uplands
CURRENT LAND USE: Vacant

ZONING HISTORY/RELATED CASES:

May 4, 1998: Annexed into the City of Mesa (**Ord# 3464**)
January 19, 1999: Established City R1-43 zoning (**Z98-117**)

SITE CONTEXT

NORTH: (Across Brown Road) commercial building – zoned LC
EAST: (Across Ellsworth Road) Existing shopping Center – zoned LC
SOUTH: Single residence – zoned RS-6
WEST: (Across Signal Butte Floodway) Commercial development – zoned OC

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Approval with conditions.

PLANNING AND ZONING RECOMMENDATION: ☒ Approval with conditions ☐ Denial

PROPOSITION 207 WAIVER SIGNED: ☒ Yes ☐ No

PROJECT DESCRIPTION/REQUEST

This request is for a rezoning from RS-43 to LC-BIZ and Site Plan Review for a self-storage facility on a vacant piece of land at the SWC Ellsworth and Brown Roads. The proposed self-storage facility will be served by two driveways from Ellsworth Road. The facility will have two buildings, Building A – 52,645 S.F. on the south side of the property, and Building B – 31,133 S.F. on the north side of the property. Both Building-A and Building-B are single-story. The site will provide 6 parking spaces accessible by both proposed driveways. The access to the interior of the site for the users of the facility will be controlled by three gates. The vehicular circulation loops around both buildings.

New Building Area/Height	Parking Required/Provided	Building and Landscape Setbacks Required (Provided)
Total Area: Bldg. A- 52,645 SF. Bldg. B- 31,133 SF. Total 83,778 SF Height: 25'-4" (max. 30')	Ratio: Manager's Office: 2 Self-Storage: 4 Required: 6 Provided: 6	South – Residential RS-6 Bldg - 25' (50') Landscape - 20' (20') North/West – Residential RS-43: Bldg - 25' (50' West, 35' North) Landscape - 20' (20' West, 5' North) East – Ellsworth: 15' (15')

NEIGHBORHOOD PARTICIPATION

The applicant sent mailings to property owners within 1000 feet of the site, to HOAs and register neighborhoods within ½ mile of the site. The applicant reports that they have been contacted by a home owner regarding view and landscaping and they are working with him. Staff has received an inquiry about the proposal and concerns from the same homeowner who attended Design Review Work Session and expressed his concern regarding building coverage, potential blocking of the Spook Hill mountain from his backyard and potential lush landscaping compared to desert uplands area character. Applicant held a neighborhood meeting on March 30, 2017, four neighbors attended the meeting. A detail Citizen Participation Report was submitted for the file.

CONFORMANCE WITH THE GENERAL PLAN

Summary: Given the location near an arterial intersection, the Neighborhood Village Center designation, and desert compatible design, the proposed zoning and self-storage facility is appropriate for this location and consistent with the Mesa 2040 General Plan.

The goal of 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 development

The state statutes require that all rezoning 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 if 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? Staff Answer: Yes.

The General Plan focuses on creating land development patterns that emphasize the character of place and focus on those principles that build neighborhoods, stabilize the job base, and improve the sense of place. There are limited areas in the Desert Uplands where non-residential land uses are allowed. Given the location near the arterial intersection and the non-residential uses to the north and east, this is an appropriate location to consider other neighborhood serving non-residential uses. The applicant is working with staff on the site plan design to incorporate the Desert Uplands design guidelines to be consistent with the intended character for this area.

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

The applicant has provided a preliminary Native Plant Preservation Plan in compliance with requirements of the Desert Uplands and is working with staff to revise the proposed site plan and building design to address Desert Uplands Area Design Guidelines. The BIZ overlay is being used to help modify the landscape requirements to provide a more desert compatible design.

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

This property is in an area where a "Neighborhoods" character area and Neighborhood Village Center character area come together. An area such as this could develop with either residential or low-impact commercial uses that serve the surrounding area. Regardless of the actual use, the key objective is for the development to be consistent with the Desert Upland design guidelines. The applicant has been working with staff to address this goal and is revising the site plan, building elevations, and landscape plan.

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

• **Providing appropriate infill development;**

The proposed self-storage will be an appropriate type of development that can strengthen the Desert Uplands character of the area by implementing a Native Plant Preservation Plan and by incorporating desert design themes into the building and landscaping. The location for the proposed rezoning and development is a challenge for residential development because of its location on the edge of the Neighborhood Village Center and at the intersection of two major arterials.

• **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 proposed use meets the General Plan goals for providing a mix of uses and Desert Uplands compatible site plan and building design will enhance the intended character of the area.

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

. The proposed site plan will improve the streetscape and connectivity along Ellsworth Road will complete this section of Ellsworth Road with desert compatible streetscape.

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

The proposed development has been reviewed by staff and the Design Review Board. The Board recognized the original design was not appropriate for Desert Uplands Area Design Guidelines and has requested revisions to improve the overall design. Staff believes a revised site plan and building design will be able to exceed the quality of development in the surrounding area consistent with the intent of the Desert Uplands Design Guidelines concepts.

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 design provides landscaping and screening as a buffer to the existing single-residential neighborhood to the south.

STAFF ANALYSIS

Zoning:

The Desert Uplands area of Mesa is a special and unique area where every effort is made to maintain the natural desert character. Because of this, the primary land use envisioned for the area is large-lot, single residence. There is a need, however, for appropriately sited and carefully developed neighborhood serving non-residential uses. This tract near the intersection of Ellsworth and Brown with its odd shape, relatively shallow depth off Ellsworth, and lack of connectivity to the adjacent residential neighborhood, limited access from Ellsworth, and adjacent non-residential uses is just such a location. Given the existence of commercial zoning and land uses to the north and east and the Neighborhood Village Center General Plan designation of for the area, rezoning to Limited Commercial (LC) is appropriate. To be fully consistent with the goals of the General Plan, however, the site plan, elevations, and landscaping need to follow the Desert Uplands Area Design Guidelines.

BIZ Overlay

The applicant has requested a BIZ overlay for four deviations from code to allow:

- a) a reduced landscape setback along the floodway;
- b) modification to the standard landscape requirements to better address Desert Uplands guidelines;
- c) minor reductions in the foundation base requirements; and,
- d) an 8' wrought iron fence along the north and west property lines instead of the minimum 6' screening wall.

Section 11-21-3 of the Zoning Ordinance establish the criteria for consideration and approval of a BIZ overlay. The first criteria is for superior design quality (section 11-21-3 B. 1.). The revised site plan with two buildings helps address this criterion by breaking up the building massing. The applicant has met twice with the Design Review Board to receive their feedback and direction on architectural design. They are working with staff and the Design Review Board to provide this standard of quality. Final Design Review will occur prior to consideration of this case by the City Council.

A second criteria is for the project to address several environmental performance standards (11-21-3 B. 2.) This development is on property that is already served by utility and transportation infrastructure. The site is being designed to connect to the pedestrian network and has provided the minimum number of parking spaces. The design is taking into consideration the natural terrain and native vegetation by stepping the buildings down the site and providing a Native Plant Preservation Plan. This criterion is

being met.

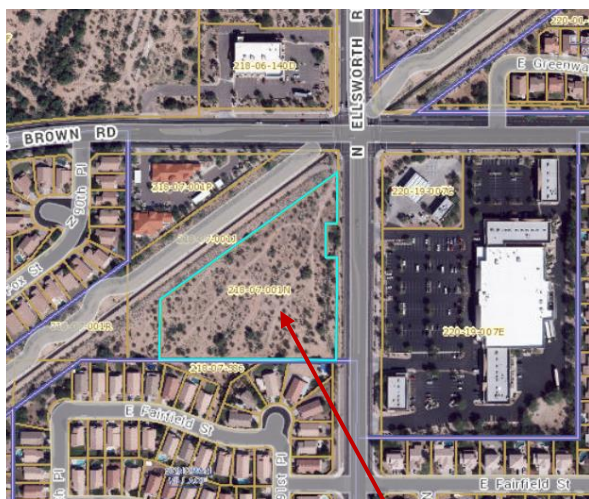
Site Plan:

Staff has been working with the applicant to prepare a site plan that is compatible with this area. The original submittal had one very large building in the middle of the site and a smaller building along the floodway. In working through the issues with this site plan it became apparent that a significant revision was required. A draft of that revised site plan was submitted to staff on the afternoon of May 9 and modified again on May 10. While a fully detailed site plan and associated landscape plan have not yet been submitted, staff can see that the revised building sizes and placement address staff's concerns and will do a much better job of addressing the design guidelines.

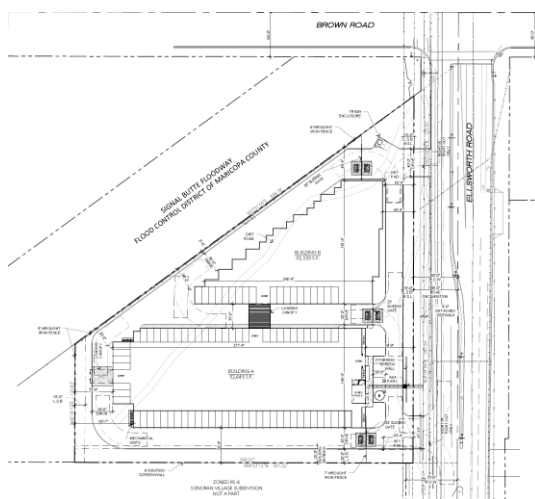
The site is organized internally with two building foot prints. One building is located along the southern side of the property and is approximately 370' by 146'. The other building, in the northern part of the site stair steps along the floodway and has 181' of frontage along Ellsworth Road. Breaking the previous large building mass down into two separate buildings that step down with the elevation change will be more consistent with the smaller building masses typically associated with this area.

The site is served by two proposed driveways from Ellsworth Road. The private access to the storage facilities are controlled by three proposed gates, one near the northern driveway, one between the buildings, and the other near the southern most driveway. Public access to office and visitor parking faces Ellsworth Road. The drive aisle circulates around the buildings. The landscape setback along Ellsworth Road and south and west property lines meet the current city code, however the five-foot landscape setback provided along the Floodway does not meet code.

Section 11-33-5 of the zoning ordinance establishes foundation base requirements for landscaping between parking/drive aisles and buildings. The BIZ overlay is requesting a deviation from the standard ordinance requirements. This reduction is being offset through the high quality design of the buildings, the preservation of native plant material, and implementation of a landscape plan that maintains a native desert appearance.



Current vacant site zoned RS-43



Proposed self-storage

There is a section of the Right-of-Way (ROW) along Ellsworth Road that is wider than standard. It appears that the need for this wider ROW no longer exists and the applicant plans to have this section

vacated. They have drawn their plans as if the ROW has already been adjusted. In order to build the site as designed, they will need to have the ROW vacated before submitting for a building permit. If they are unable to have this section of ROW vacated, the site plan will have to adjust the internal drive and building as necessary to provide at least five feet of landscape area between the drive aisle and the property line (see condition #5).

Design Review:

Design Review approval is required for this project because it fronts on an arterial. The design was discussed by the Design Review Board at the April 11, 2017 and at their May 9, 2017 work sessions (DR17-024). A property owner in the neighborhood to the south appeared at the first meeting and expressed some concerns about the bulk of the building, the consistency of the proposed landscaping with desert uplands requirements, and the possible blocking of views. The applicant has responded with modifications to address those concerns.

At the May 9 meeting the applicant presented some revised elevations, but they were not based on the newest site plan. The Board felt the design was moving in the right direction and made some suggestions for additional modifications to achieve the design objectives for both the buildings and the landscaping. This will go back to the Board for further review. Given the importance of the design aspects of the development of this site, design review needs to be finalized prior to action by the City Council.

Conclusion:

Given the efforts the applicant is making to address the Desert Uplands design guidelines, the proposal to rezone and develop it with a self-storage facility is in conformance with the General Plan and meets the review criteria for Site Plan Review from Chapter 69 of the Zoning Ordinance (Section 11-69-5). The site plan, building design and landscaping address the criteria in Section 11-21-33 for approval of the BIZ overlay Desert Uplands Design Guidelines for alternative site plan, landscaping and building design. Therefore, staff recommends approval of the rezoning case # Z17-07 with conditions.

CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL:

1. Compliance with the basic development as described in the project narrative, and as shown on the site plan submitted, except as modified by the conditions below (without guarantee of lot yield, building count, lot coverage).
2. Compliance with all requirements of Design Review approval case DR17-024.
3. Compliance with all City development codes and regulations.
4. Signs (detached and attached) require separate approval and permit for locations, size, and quantity.
5. **Prior to submission for building permit review, receive approval to vacate that portion of Ellsworth Road needed to straighten the Right-of-Way line as shown on the site plan, or amend the site plan as needed to show the correct Right-of-Way line and provide a minimum five-foot landscape strip between the Right-of-Way line and the drive aisle.**