

Board of Adjustment

Staff Report

CASE NUMBER: BOA17-00214
LOCATION/ADDRESS: 1200 to 1300 blocks of South Gilbert Road (west side)
COUNCIL DISTRICT: District 4
STAFF PLANNER: Lisa Davis, AICP, Planner II
OWNER: Mesa South LLC
APPLICANT: YESCO-Kimberly Euers

REQUEST: *Requesting a Special Use Permit (SUP) to modify a Comprehensive Sign Plan (CSP) in the LC District.*

SUMMARY OF APPLICANT'S REQUEST

This request is for approval of a Special Use Permit (SUP) for modification of the Comprehensive Sign Plan (CSP) for the Mesa South Center commercial development currently zoned LC-Limited Commercial. Mesa South Center is located at the southwest corner of Gilbert Road and Southern Avenue. The modification will allow for three attached signs, totaling 92.5 square feet (SF) for the Starbucks Coffee building and one detached sign to be added to the Gilbert Road frontage. The detached sign is proposed to be 8' in height and 14 SF in area. Approval of the CSP modification would allow for a total of six detached signs along the Gilbert Road frontage of the commercial center, not including the Circle K at the immediate corner which is not a part of the CSP.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends **approval** of case **BOA17-00214**, *conditioned upon following:*

1. *Compliance with the sign plan submitted, except as modified by the conditions listed below.*
2. *Compliance with all requirements of the Development Services Division in the issuance of sign permits.*
3. *Compliance with all conditions of approval for Design Review, DR17-034.*
4. *Compliance with the conditions of approval of the original Comprehensive Sign Plan of the center, BA81-089, except as herein modified.*

SITE CONTEXT

CASE SITE: Existing commercial center – zoned LC
NORTH: (Across Southern Avenue) Existing commercial – zoned LC and GC
EAST: (Across Gilbert Road) Existing commercial – zoned LC and OC
SOUTH: (Across Hampton Avenue) existing multi residential – zoned RM-3-PAD
WEST: Existing single residential, and existing office – zoned RS-7, and OC

STAFF SUMMARY AND ANALYSIS

The existing 20± acres Mesa South Center commercial shopping center was approved in 1981 (SPR80-004) and developed shortly after. In 2017, a Site Plan Review was approved by the Planning and Zoning Board, Z17-039. This approved a 1± acre pad site to be added adjacent to Gilbert Road for a 2,200 SF Starbucks drive-through.

A CSP for Mesa South Center was approved in 1981. It did not include the Circle K at the immediate corner. A modification of the CSP has been requested to add a detached sign to the Gilbert Road frontage for the new Starbucks drive-through project. It will allow for an 8'-high detached sign. The request also includes allowance for three attached signs to be installed on the building, a maximum of two signs are allowed per MZO. The current request does not change the signage standards for the rest of the center.

Attached Signs – MZO Chapter 11-41-6.E.1

Proposed attached signs for Starbucks, and MZO allowances:

Building	MZO Sign AREA Maximums	Proposed Sign AREA Maximum	MZO Maximum NUMBER of Signs	Proposed Maximum NUMBER of Signs
Starbucks building 86'-6" front feet	2.0 sf/linear foot of building frontage = 173 SF (Max. 160 sf aggregate)	92.5 SF aggregate	< 100 feet building frontage = 2 signs	3 signs

Three signs are proposed to be attached to the exterior of the 2,200 SF building. One 29.25 SF at the north elevation, one 29.25 SF at the south elevation and one 34 SF at the east elevation. The building is 86'-6" at the longest point. This allows for a maximum of two attached signs. Based on the 86'-6" dimension the maximum of 160 SF of sign can be utilized on the two allowed signs. The applicant is requesting a total of 92.5 SF for all three signs which is below the allowed area for the signs. The largest of the three signs is proposed on the east elevation adjacent to Gilbert Road.

A similar modification to the CSP was previously approved in 2008 for the Carl's Jr. restaurant south of the proposed project to be allowed to have 3 attached signs that were under the allowed area of attached signage. In that case an aggregate area of 132 SF of attached sign was allowed for the three attached signs for Carl's Jr. The proposed signs in the current request are simply the Starbucks logo with "drive thru" below, and equal 58% of the allowed attached signage. Staff is in support of the requested three attached signs.

Detached Signs – MZO Chapter 11-41-6.E.2

Gilbert Road *Existing* detached signs adjacent to the 1,075' frontage:

Existing Business	Height of Existing Sign	Area of Existing Sign
Carl's Jr.	7'-4"	26 SF
Bike Shop	5'-7"	18 SF
National Bank	8'-2"	20.64 SF
Mesa South Center Sign	12'	83.31 SF
Mi Amigos	10'	47.68 SF
Total of 5 detached signs	Total height 48'-1" (53'-9" aggregate allowed)	Total area 195.63 (537.5 SF aggregate allowed)

Gilbert Road *Proposed* additional detached sign:

Proposed Business	Height of Proposed Sign	Area of Proposed Sign
Proposed Starbucks sign	7'	14 SF
Proposed total number 6 signs	Total height 55'-1" (53'-9" aggregate allowed)	209.63 (537.5 SF aggregate allowed)

Based on the Mesa Zoning Ordinance (MZO) Section 11-41-6.E the group commercial center would be allowed a total of 537.5 SF in area and 53'-9" in height for all detached signs adjacent to Gilbert Road based on the 1,075' of frontage. As the table indicates above with the addition of the Starbucks sign, the commercial site is under the allowed area but slightly exceeds the allowed aggregate height by 1'-4". Staff believes that the added total height for the detached signs adjacent to Gilbert Road is mitigated by the considerable separation between signs, as demonstrated on sheet S-17 of the proposed CSP. To comply with current MZO Section 11-41, no single detached sign would be allowed to be more than 12' in height or more that 80 SF in area.

Southern Avenue *Existing* detached signs adjacent to the 529' frontage:

Existing Business	Height of Existing Sign	Area of Existing Sign
VetCare	8'	37.5 SF
Mesa South Center Sign	12'	83.31 SF
Title Max	4'-5"	6.13 SF
Total of 3 detached signs	Total height 24'-5" (26'-5" aggregate allowed)	Total area 126.94 (264.5 SF aggregate allowed)

The 529' Southern Avenue frontage would allow for a total of 26' of sign height, and 264 SF in area for detached signs. The table above shows the detached signs are below the area and height allowed by MZO. No additional detached signs are requested for the Southern Avenue frontage. The 644' Hampton Avenue frontage would allow for 322 SF of area, and 32 feet of height for detached signs. There are no existing detached signs adjacent to Hampton Avenue and none are requested.

Based on the existing and proposed number and size of detached signs, staff believes that the additional 1'-4" of detached sign height is justified. The design of the signs includes the logos and is integrated with the design of the building. The fact that the aggregate of detached signs adjacent to Southern Avenue and Hampton Road is well below what is allowed on the site also justifies the addition of the detached sign for the Starbucks.

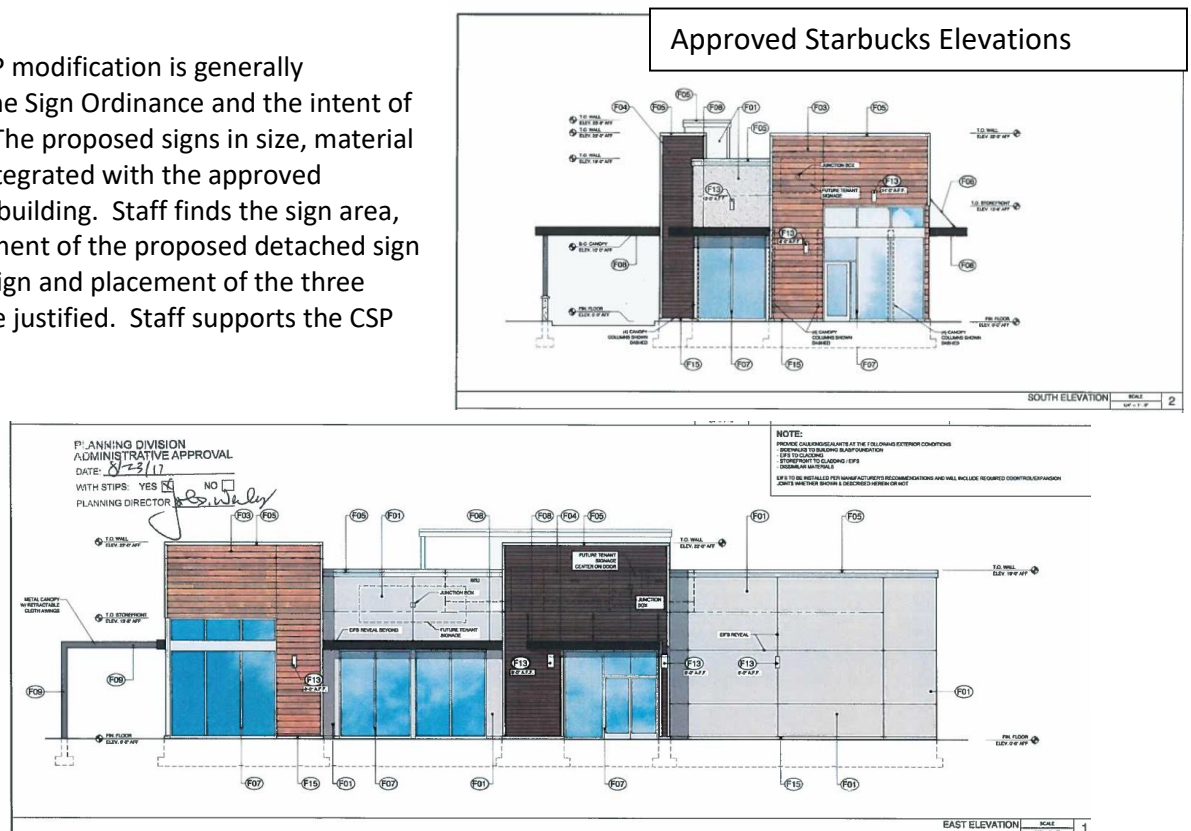
Summary of Applicant's Justification

As justification for the increase in attached sign number and area and the addition of the detached sign, the applicant has noted:

- A. The proposed Starbucks layout will limit visibility of the building from Gilbert Road;
- B. The proposed detached sign incorporates the logo and drive thru chevrons that mirror the attached signs on the building. Additional details have architectural and design features that are related to the proposed building;
- C. The project meets the guiding principles of the Mesa 2014 General Plan; and
- D. The project is within the commercial zoning district and is consistent with other commercial projects. Starbucks has created superior design for the project.

Conclusion

The proposed CSP modification is generally consistent with the Sign Ordinance and the intent of the original CSP. The proposed signs in size, material and design are integrated with the approved elevations of the building. Staff finds the sign area, height and placement of the proposed detached sign and the area, design and placement of the three attached signs are justified. Staff supports the CSP modification.



FINDINGS:

1. The proposed monument sign is approximately 264' north of the nearest existing monument sign utilized for the Mi Amigos and 314' south of the existing Circle K sign at the northeast corner of the site.
2. The Monument sign design, size and height, and the attached sign details are all consistent with the Comprehensive Sign Plan, BA81-089, and approved modifications for the existing Mesa South Center.
3. The CSP modifies the existing CSP adding one 8' high 14 square feet detached sign for Starbucks. This allows for a total of six (6) detached signs adjacent to Gilbert Road for the commercial center.
4. The CSP modifies the existing CSP to allow an increase of one attached sign, for a total of three attached signs for Starbucks. This is consistent with the approved three attached signs for the Carl's Jr. in the same commercial center. At 92.5 SF, all three signs are less than the allowed 160 SF for attached signs.
5. Five detached signs are existing adjacent to Gilbert Road. Given the dimension of the project adjacent to Gilbert Road at 1,075' the additional detached sign will fit the scale of the commercial development.
6. The area allowed for detached signs is less than would be allowed by Code, and the allowed aggregate height is exceeded by only 1'-4" along the Gilbert Road frontage. Therefore, the additional detached sign for the project is justifiable.
7. The scale and placement of the attached and detached signs is proportional and works well with the overall design and layout of the commercial center.
8. The proposed signs incorporate the Starbucks logo both on the detached and attached signs. The architectural details show architectural and design features that are directly related to the building.
9. The proposed CSP is largely consistent with current MZO requirements and is complimentary to the development and consistent with the use of the property. Therefore, the CSP, with the recommended conditions, will be compatible with, and not detrimental to, adjacent properties or the neighborhood in general.

ORDINANCE REQUIREMENTS:

Zoning Ordinance, Section 11-70-5 – Special Use Permit:

- A. *Special Use Permit (SUP)*. A SUP is a discretionary permit issued by the Zoning Administrator or Board of Adjustment.
- E. *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. 11-41-8.D – Supplemental Provisions:

13. ...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.