



Planning and Zoning Board

Staff Report

CASE NUMBER: ZON18-00169
LOCATION/ADDRESS: The 8200 to 8400 blocks of East Baseline Road (north side).
GENERAL VICINITY: Located west of Hawes Road on the north side of Baseline Road
REQUEST: Modification of an existing PAD
PURPOSE: This request will allow for the reduction of interior garage dimensions.
COUNCIL DISTRICT: District 6
OWNER: Baseline Mesa LLC
APPLICANT: Drew Huseth, Woodside Homes
STAFF PLANNER: Cassidy Welch

SITE DATA

PARCEL NO.: 218-57-006Q, 218-57-006U and 218-63-282A
PARCEL SIZE: 32.6 ± acres
EXISTING ZONING: RSL-2.5 PAD
GENERAL PLAN CHARACTER: Neighborhood - Suburban
CURRENT LAND USE: Vacant

SITE CONTEXT

NORTH: US 60 Freeway
EAST: (Across vacant land zoned AG) Loop 202 San Tan Freeway
SOUTH: (Across vacant land zoned RSL-2.5) Baseline Road. Across Baseline Road, existing residential and office – zoned RS-6 and OC PAD
WEST: Existing single residences – zoned RS-7

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Denial

P&Z BOARD RECOMMENDATION: ☐ Approval with conditions. ☐ Denial

PROPOSITION 207 WAIVER SIGNED: ☒ Yes ☐ No

HISTORY/RELATED CASES

December 7, 1983: Annexed to City (Ord. #1752).
July 16, 1984: Establish City of Mesa AG zoning (Z84-94, Ord. #1854).
October 15, 1984: Rezoned to R1-7 PAD (Z84-015, Ordinance # 1883)
November 18, 1985: Established conceptual zoning on the site to allow the future consideration of a multi-zone land use development (Z85-126)
December 8, 1986: Modification to DMP (Z86-109, Ordinance # 2154)
July 8, 2009: Rezone to C-2 and R-4 to establish Baseline Center DMP (Z08-047, Ord. #4941). Adopting an amendment to Mesa 2025 General Plan to change the MUR designation to HDR 15+ for 20± acres and NC for 34± acres (GPMinor13-09, Resolution # 9537). Also adopting the development agreement for the “Baseline Center” (Resolution # 9538)
October 28, 2013: GP amendment from HDR 15+ and NC to MDR 6-10, HDR 15+ and NC (GPMajor13-001, Resolution# 10352)
May 5, 2014: Rezoning to LC PAD, RSL-2.5 PAD and RM-4 PAD (Z14-021, Ordinance 5217)
December 20, 2017: Site Plan Review and Preliminary Plat for the development of a 197-lot single residence subdivision in the RSL-2.5 zoning district (ZON17-00326)

PROJECT DESCRIPTION / REQUEST

This request is to amend the PAD for the Heritage Crossing subdivision currently zoned RSL-2.5 PAD. The request is to modify the development standards to reduce the required minimum garage width and depth, per section 11-32-4.F of the zoning ordinance. The zoning ordinance requires a minimum interior garage dimension of 20' wide and 22' deep. The request includes a proposed garage size of 19'-4" x 22' for the traditional lots (45'x110') and a proposed garage of 21'-4" x 20' for the courtyard/alley lots (minimum lot size of 32'x69').

NEIGHBORHOOD PARTICIPATION:

The applicant has completed a Citizen Participation Process, which included a mailed letter to property owners within 500' of the site, as well as HOAs and registered neighborhoods within one half mile. Staff has not been contacted by surrounding property owners.

The applicant will be providing an updated Citizen Participation Report prior to the April 18, 2018 Study Session. An update will be provided by staff at the Planning and Zoning Board Study Session.

STAFF ANALYSIS

MESA 2040 GENERAL PLAN:

The Mesa 2040 General Plan Character area designation is Neighborhoods. The primary focus of the neighborhoods character type is to provide safe places for people to live where they can feel secure and enjoy their surrounding community. The overall development, as previously approved, establishes a unique neighborhood character that is consistent with the goals and objectives of the Plan. The previously approved PAD was designed to provide an integrated, connected neighborhood. The proposed modification to reduce the interior garage dimensions does not create a significant deviation from the previous approval from a General Plan perspective. This project is still consistent with the General Plan.

ZONING:

The subject site is currently zoned RSL-2.5 PAD. This property received its current PAD approval in 2014 with case Z14-021. The request for a PAD was approved for reduced lot sizes, reduced setbacks, and private drives.

SUMMARY:

Garage Standards	Required per Zoning Ordinance Section 11-32-4.F	Proposed Heritage Crossing Traditional Lot (45'x 110)	Proposed Heritage Crossing Courtyard/Alley Lots (32'x 69', 37'x 69', 43'x 69')
Width	20'	19'-4" (8" reduction)	21'-4" (1'-4" increase)
Depth	22'	22'	20' (2' reduction)
Square Footage	440 ft ²	425 ft ² (15 ft ² reduction)	427 ft ² (13 ft ² reduction)

The approved Heritage Crossing includes two parcels. Parcel 1 is a small, traditional-lot subdivision with lot sizes proposed at 45' x 110' (4,950 sq. ft.). Parcel 2 is a courtyard/alley load subdivision with 3 proposed lot sizes at 32' x 69' (2,208 sq. ft.), 37' x 69' (2,553 sq. ft.), and 43' x 69' (2,967 sq. ft.). This request would apply to all lots within the Heritage Crossing Development. The applicant has requested this change to maximize livable square footage and maintain industry standards to remain competitive.

Concerns:

Staff is not supportive of the proposed reduction to the size of the garage. Reducing the size of the garage makes it more difficult for homeowners to fit two cars within the garage and will likely force homeowners to park on their driveway. This will place more vehicles on driveways and on the streets and will decrease the quality of the development over time. This will be particularly prevalent in the Parcel 2 subdivision where there are no driveways and homeowners will be forced to park on the street. This will have a significant impact on the safety of the neighborhood as well as increased traffic concerns. As a part of the previous site plan approval, Parcel 2 has provided 135 guest parking spaces in addition to the 242 garage spaces provided. This parking was approved on the assumption the applicant would be providing a 2-car garage in conformance to City of Mesa standards and any additional on-street parking would be primarily for the use of the guests. Homeowners who cannot fit into their garage will begin parking on the street, increasing the number of vehicles on the street and increasing traffic and safety concerns.

Additionally, there are concerns that with the inevitable storage that happens in residential garages, it will become increasingly more difficult to fit two vehicles in the proposed garages. Due to the proposed lot sizes in conjunction with a reduced rear setback, it will be nearly impossible for additional storage options, like a shed, that may be possible on larger lots. Additional on-site storage will be all but impossible on the courtyard/alley loaded lots as the lots have no conventional backyard.

Staff is aware that the City of Mesa has greater minimum garage sizes than most of the municipalities in the Valley. This area of the City of Mesa is primarily suburban and auto-centric and as such, a larger garage is necessary to meet the needs of residents. The additional space is required with the consideration that garages are often used not only for parking but as an additional storage space for the homeowner.

Municipality	Minimum Garage Dimensions
Mesa	20' x 22'
Phoenix	19' x 19'
Chandler	18' x 19'
Gilbert	No minimum
Queen Creek	20' x 20'
Scottsdale	No minimum
Tempe	No minimum, recommended 17' x 18'

A reduction in garage sizes has previously been approved for subdivisions in the past, most recently in 2015. The Mulberry subdivision was approved for a garage width reduction of 8" for two parcels within the greater 5 parcel development (Z15-045). This request was for specific lots at a size of 45' x 115', which totaled 155 of the total 545 proposed lots and allowed for an expansion of the front entry to meet buyer demand. Unlike the Mulberry request, the current proposal will apply to the entire development of both traditional lot and courtyard/alley lots at a total of 197 lots. At the time the Mulberry request was approved, portions of the development had already been built and occupied allowing the applicant to provide a realistic review of how the neighborhood was being used while the proposed Heritage Crossing development has not yet been built. Staff concerns for storage are emphasized by a reduced rear setback of 10' for the traditional lots. Mulberry lots of the same size (45' x 110') provided a rear setback of 20' eliminating concerns for additional on-site storage. While City of Mesa has approved a garage reduction in the past, the current proposal has additional issues that further staff concerns and should be considered independently.

Previously approved small lot subdivisions have been able to meet the development standards while maintaining a quality product and a unique neighborhood character. Staff has concerns that continued approval of reductions in garage standards will have a detrimental effect on residential development and there are concerns future developments will request similar or greater garage reductions in the future.

The applicant's concern is that if they increase the size of the garage to meet the ordinance standards, and meet the lot setback and coverage requirements on these small lots, they will be forced to reduce livable area within the home. The issue comes from providing either too small of a lot or too big of a home. These are all issues within the control of the developer. The plats have not yet been filed for these developments so the lot sizes could be adjusted (which would reduce the number of lots) to allow for the required garage sizes and not impact the livable area of the homes. To accommodate staff concerns, the applicant has proposed providing enhanced architectural features to mitigate garage dominance and diversify the streetscape to be later reviewed as a part of the product review. While

staff appreciates the commitment to a greater design, improved architectural features fail to address the greater concerns of traffic and safety within the development. Staff has concerns with continuing to consider requests for reduction in required development standards without concurrent review of product to ensure quality and conformance to both required and proposed standards.

CONCLUSION:

Staff has concerns that the proposed reduction in the garage dimensions will result in a negative impact to the proposed development. Specifically, as it relates to a possible increase in the demand for on-street parking and potential conflicts with the pedestrian environment. Due to the increased traffic in the area, there are significant concerns for the safety of the residents. There are additional concerns with the suitability of the request to meet the storage needs of the residents. The request is not suitable to the functionality of the neighborhood and will not contribute to the safety of the community. Based on staff concerns, staff is recommending denial of the proposed request.