



Planning and Zoning Board

Staff Report

CASE NUMBER: ZON18-00066
LOCATION/ADDRESS: The 1000 through 1100 blocks of South Alma School Road (west side) and the 1200 through 1300 blocks of West Southern Avenue (north side).
GENERAL VICINITY: Located at the northwest corner of Alma School Road and Southern Avenue.
REQUEST: Rezoning from LC to RM-5 PAD for 10.5± acres, Rezoning from LC to LC-PAD for 5.5± acres; and Site Plan Review for 16± acres, also consider the preliminary plat for "Fiesta Village".
PURPOSE: This request will allow for development of multi-residential and commercial uses.
COUNCIL DISTRICT: District 3
OWNER: WM Grace Development Co./Et. Al.
APPLICANT: Adam Baugh, Withey Morris, PLC
STAFF PLANNER: Lesley Davis

SITE DATA

PARCEL NO.: 134-28-380, 381A, 382, 383, and 384
PARCEL SIZE: 16± acres
EXISTING ZONING: LC
GENERAL PLAN CHARACTER: Mixed Use Activity District – Transit Corridor
CURRENT LAND USE: Vacant retail center

SITE CONTEXT

NORTH: Existing multi-residence – zoned RM-4
EAST: (Across Alma School Road) Existing retail center – zoned LC and single residences – zoned RS-6
SOUTH: (across Southern Avenue) existing retail, office and restaurants – zoned LC
WEST: (across Stewart) existing retail – zoned LC

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Approval with Conditions

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

PROPOSITION 207 WAIVER SIGNED: ☒ Yes ☐ No

HISTORY/RELATED CASES

July 18, 1970: Annexed into the City of Mesa (Ord. #675)
April, 1973: Rezoned to C-2 (LC)
December 18, 1978: Approval of a proposed site plan (SPR78-001 & SPM78-009)

PROJECT DESCRIPTION / REQUEST

This request is to rezone the property located on the northwest corner of Southern Avenue and Alma School Road from LC to RM-5 PAD for 10.5± acres, LC to LC-PAD for 5.5± acres; and Site Plan Review for 16± acres. This request includes a preliminary plat for “Fiesta Village and will accommodate the development of multi-residential and commercial uses.

NEIGHBORHOOD PARTICIPATION:

The applicant has completed a Citizen Participation Plan, which included a mailed letter to property owners within 1,000’ of the site, as well as HOAs and registered neighborhoods within a mile. The applicant met with the Dobson Ranch Home Owner’s Association on March 15, 2018 and also held a neighborhood meeting on March 20, 2018. Staff has received a written letter of support from the Dobson Ranch HOA. A copy of that letter has been included in the packet of materials that accompanies this report. At the time that this report was written staff has been contacted by residents and property owners in the area wanting information regarding the proposed development, but no concerns have been raised. The applicant will be providing a Citizen Participation Report prior to the May 15, 2018 Study Session. An update will be provided by staff at that Planning and Zoning Board Study Session.

STAFF ANALYSIS

MESA 2040 GENERAL PLAN:

Staff has reviewed the proposal and found that it is consistent with the criteria for review as outlined in Chapter 15 (pg. 15-1) of the Mesa 2040 General Plan and has determined that the proposed use is in conformance with the General Plan.

This site is within the Character Type of Mixed Use Activity District as identified on the Character Area map in the Mesa 2040 General Plan. More specifically it falls under the Community Scale sub-type and falls within the area designated as Transit District – Transit Corridor sub-type.

The proposed development with street front commercial and multi-residence development, is consistent with the Mixed-use Activity District-Community Scale as defined within the General Plan. The focus in the Transit District character type is to develop a mixed-use, pedestrian-oriented, urban environment, particularly within walking distance of transit stops. This character type overlays the other character types and is used to transition the area into a more transit and pedestrian oriented development form. This sub-type should evolve into a more urban pattern with buildings brought close to the front property lines and parking behind or beside buildings. Streets should also maintain a pedestrian orientation.

The proposal for a development that includes two drive-thru pad sites may not be the ideal land use given its location on Southern Avenue, however the proposed design with wide decorative pedestrian connections to the street and multiple trellises at the two drive-thru pads along Southern Avenue will

facilitate visual interest in the development from passing traffic and facilitate implementation of the General Plan's intent. Additionally, staff has recommended conditions of approval that will facilitate further engagement between the buildings and the street. Those recommended changes and conditions are identified below.

FIESTA DISTRICT:

This project is located within the Fiesta District, which has a set of City Council approved design guidelines, titled "*Fiesta District Design Handbook*". These guidelines encourage pedestrian-friendly buildings that front the sidewalk. The City of Mesa has invested significantly in the area and has applied the guidelines with the completion of streetscape improvements along Southern Avenue, which will benefit the proposed project.

The Fiesta District Design Handbook includes Private Realm Design Guidelines that encourage buildings that front the street:

"The siting of a building will play an important role in establishing the character and a sense of place for the Fiesta District. Siting buildings at the street's edge gives spatial definition to the public realm that is critical to supporting pedestrian activity. It also establishes a visual connection between businesses on opposite sides of the street that is an important ingredient of a successful business district."

The proposed site plan complies with these standards by placing the multi-residence buildings along Stewart and a commercial/retail building located at the intersection corner of Alma School and Southern Avenue. The applicant has sited their drive-thru pads along the street frontage but have included some design elements to mitigate the visibility of those drive-thru lanes along Southern Avenue. The applicant has incorporated solid screen walls with trellises and wide decorative pedestrian connections to facilitate visual interest in the development from passing traffic and to help create an enhanced pedestrian experience as they engage the development from the Southern Avenue.

Staff feels that some additional improvements should be incorporated to further improve the pedestrian experience and how this project engages with the street along Southern Avenue, furthering the design goals within the Fiesta District. Those improvements include the following:

- Setback along Southern Avenue: Reducing the front setback by creating a 5-foot maximum setback along Southern Avenue for an architecturally integrated drive-thru canopy, outdoor patio space or building, maintaining a minimum 10-foot setback for parking areas. Allowing this additional reduction to be included with what has been requested as part of the PAD overlay for the reduction to a 10-foot setback on Southern Avenue. **(See condition #6a.)**
- Landscaping along Southern Avenue: Eliminate the standard suburban landscape edge along Southern Avenue to provide hardscape with trees within tree grates and eliminate the need for required shrubs as part of the modifications granted through the PAD overlay. **(See condition #6b.)**

- **Building A:** Provide an architecturally integrated canopy over the drive-thru lane that is more open and creates more visibility into the site. The design of that canopy can be reviewed and approved through the Design Review process. Also raise the decorative path and create a traffic table as that pedestrian connection crosses the drive aisle to create a larger outdoor patio with on the east side of the building where it connects from Southern Avenue. **(Conditions #7a. c. & d.)**
- **Building B:** This building is sited facing Southern Avenue, which creates an opportunity to draw a pedestrian into the site through an outdoor patio space that better engages with the street even though it crosses a drive-thru lane. The proposed site plan provides a covered canopy over the drive-thru lane, but only a limited amount of hardscape surface has been provided on the south side of the building. Staff is suggesting that the area adjacent to the building along Southern Avenue include additional hardscape to create an outdoor patio and further increase the width of the decorative pedestrian crossing in this location with a raised traffic table that provides a safe and engaged pedestrian connection to the patio from the street. The proposed canopy over that drive through lane should be designed to be architecturally integrated but open design that creates visibility into that patio space from the street. The design of that canopy will be reviewed and approved through the Design Review process **(Conditions #7a. & e. & f.)**
- **Building D:** Staff has included a stipulation requiring a wider decorative pedestrian connection with the traffic table across the drive-thru lane for Building D along Alma School Road, which is currently shown as a narrower connection point. **(Condition #7g.)**

These minor design changes will more appropriately accomplish the desire described in the Fiesta District Handbook for an urban edge along Southern Avenue and better achieve a visual connection between businesses and the public realm.

ZONING:

This request is to rezone the property located on the northwest corner of Southern Avenue and Alma School Road from LC to RM-5 PAD for 10.5± acres, LC to LC-PAD for 5.5± acres. The rezoning will accommodate the development of multi-residential and commercial uses. The PAD overlay will allow for deviations from development standards to maximize opportunities for a cohesive development.

PAD OVERLAY MODIFICATIONS – MZO Article 3:

The purpose of the PAD is to allow more freedom and creativity in site design. In return for allowing deviations to the standard code requirements, there needs to be added features that provide for a higher quality development. The applicant has requested a PAD overlay to accommodate reduced setbacks in both the LC and RM-5 districts as identified in the tables below:

Commercial - LC-PAD Request:

Development Standards	Typical LC	Proposed PAD LC
Maximum Bldg. Height	30'	50'
Front & Street-Facing Building and Landscape Setbacks:	Alma School – 15' Southern Ave. - 15' Stewart St. – 20'	Alma School – 10' Southern Ave. - 10' Stewart St. – 10'
Setbacks at Street Intersections for buildings and patios	Arterial to Arterial: 25'	10'
Interior Side & Rear Building Setback adjacent to RM district	1st Story: 20' Each additional story: 15'	0'
Interior Side & Rear Building Setback adjacent to non-residential district	15'	0'
Minimum Bldg. Separation on Same Lot	Building Height up to 20 feet: 25' Building Height between 20-40 feet: 30' Building height over 40 feet: 35'	Building Height up to 20 feet: 25' Building Height between 20-40 feet: 30' Building height over 40 feet: 35'
Ground Floor Transparency	Yes	No
Main Building Entrance Orientation Requirement Applies	Yes	No

The applicant has identified the additional features that they have incorporated into the commercial portion of the development within their project narrative and have identified those areas on their Site Plan, dated March 30, 2018. The items identified include shaded pedestrian paths with trellises and landscaping, decorative hardscape surfaces along pedestrian pathways and in courtyards and in the foundation base areas around the commercial buildings. An enhanced entry into the project has also been included from Stewart and Southern Avenue with decorative hardscape, but with primary focus on the Southern Avenue entrance to the multi-residence development with a palm lined entrance including shade trellises, leading to a roundabout with a decorative surface that serves as the entrance into the apartment project. The pedestrian linkages have been described as “robust, wider, and as implementing the same colors and decorative pavement surfaces throughout all pedestrian crossings and building/patio connections to create a common and synergistic project”. As discussed in the ‘Fiesta District’ section of this report, staff has included additional reductions and additional stipulations regarding hardscape and landscape design that will further the description in the narrative for a synergistic project as well as furthering the design goals of the Fiesta District.

Multi-residential - RM-5 PAD request:

Standard	Typical RM-5	Proposed PAD
Minimum Lot Width:		
•Multiple-Family Residential	60'	60'
Minimum Lot Depth:		
•Detached Single-Family Dwelling or Multiple-Family Residential	65'	65'
Maximum Density	43 D.U./Net Acres	43 D.U./Net Acres
Minimum Density	20 D.U./Net Acres	20 D.U./Net Acres
Minimum Lot Area per Dwelling Unit sf	1,000 sf	1,000 sf
Maximum Height (feet)	50'	50'
Minimum Yards (feet):		
•Front & Street-Facing Side	0'	0'
•Interior Side & Rear: Adjacent to RM District: 1 st Story Each Additional Story	15' 10'	North Property line - 15' Each Additional Story - 0'
•Setback at Street Intersections for Buildings and Parking Areas – minimum radius (feet)	0'	0'
•Maximum Yard – Front & Street Facing Side	10'	10'
•Minimum Separation between Bldgs. On Same Lot One-story building Two-story building Three-story building Detached Covered Parking	None Required None Required None Required None Required	None Required None Required None Required None Required
•Maximum Building Coverage (% of lot)	65%	65%

The applicant has identified the amenities for the multi-residential component of the development to include a fitness center, pool/spa, ramada/outdoor kitchen area, game court, dog park, dog wash, tot lot and community park/open space area. A limited number of garages have also been included.

Decorative hardscape surfaces have been included along pedestrian pathways, in and around the clubhouse and pool area and at the primary entrance point for the apartments, but pedestrian connections have not been identified across drive aisles within this portion of the overall development. Staff has created a condition of approval to provide those pedestrian connections. **(Condition #2.)**

The Design Review Board reviewed the elevations for the apartments at their March 13, 2018 'Work Session'. The board supported the general direction of the design but had several comments with suggestions to provide enhancements. The applicant is working with staff to incorporate comments from the board and to finalize their design. **(Condition #2.)**

SITE PLAN - MZO Section 11-69-5:

The proposed development is comprised of five parcels located at the northwest corner of Southern Avenue and Alma School Road. The developer proposes to construct a multi-residence apartment project on 10.5± acres on the north side of the site with the remaining 5.5 acres developed for commercial/retail development with four new commercial pad sites along Southern Avenue and Alma School Road. There are two existing outparcels identified on the site plan which are not a part of this request. The outparcel at the northeast corner of the development is an existing auto-related use, which has separate ownership and will function independently from the proposed development. The outparcel along Southern Avenue has an existing retail building with a separate ownership entity. That parcel has historically functioned as part of the overall development and will continue that function in the new development with shared access and parking. **(Condition #5.)** The proposed site plan would eliminate some parking for the outparcel along Southern Avenue, which is not part of this request, therefore the applicant will need to adjust their parking design at the southeast corner of the Building B site along Southern Avenue to accommodate the existing parking for the outparcel. The property owner for the outparcel is not included as part of this request; therefore, the proposed site plan may not affect their existing condition. **(Condition #6c.)**



The proposed site plan meets the review criteria per Section 11-69-5 of the MZO as the overall design of the project enhances the appearance of the built environment, creates a more visually interesting streetscape and is suitable to the pattern of development in the area.

PRELIMINARY PLAT:

This request includes a preliminary plat titled "Fiesta Village". All approved preliminary plats are subject to potential modification through the Subdivision Technical Review process to meet all City codes and requirements, including but not limited to, all ADA requirements. This sometimes results in changing lot sizes and configuration and could result in a reduction of lots. The proposed plat is consistent with the PAD and meets Subdivision Regulation requirements.

CONCLUSION:

The proposed project complies with the General Plan, meets all review criteria for Site Plan Review from Chapter 69 of the Zoning Ordinance (Section 11-69-5), Section 11-22-1 of the Zoning Ordinance for a PAD overlay district and with the recommended conditions of approval, this project will comply with the intent of the Fiesta District Design Guidelines. Staff recommends approval with the following conditions:

CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL:

1. Compliance with the basic development as described in the project narrative, as shown on the site plan and preliminary elevations except as modified below.
2. Compliance with all requirements of Design Review for DRB18-00067, including but not limited to locations of decorative at-grade pedestrian connections across drive aisles within the multi-residential portion of the project.
3. Compliance with all City development codes and regulations except as modified by the PAD and the conditions below.
4. Compliance with all requirements of the Subdivision Regulations to accommodate a reconfiguration of parcels.
5. Recordation of cross-access agreement(s) between the outparcel located along Southern Avenue and each of the adjacent buildings on the property.
6. Prior to submitting for a building permit, submit a revised site plan for Planning Director review and approval includes:
 - a. Provide a maximum 5-foot setback along Southern Avenue for buildings, drive-thru canopy or outdoor patio space.
 - b. Removing the shrubs, groundcover and landscape surface material along Southern Avenue and replacing it with hardscape and trees within grates. The quantity and spacing of trees shall be consistent with Chapter 33 of the Mesa Zoning Ordinance.
 - c. Adding back the existing parking spaces, that are located on the southwest side of the outparcel located along Southern Avenue and are included in the out-parcel's parking requirements.
7. Design Review approval is required for buildings A, B, C and D and shall include the following:
 - a. Buildings A and B: Architecturally integrated canopies for drive through lanes along Southern Avenue. The canopies must maintain visibility into the site.

- b. Buildings A, B, C and D: The pedestrian paths that cross drive aisles shall consist of a decorative surface similar in design and material with the pedestrian paths throughout the commercial and multi-residence portions of the development.
- c. Building A: Additional hardscape to create an outdoor patio or plaza adjacent to the building.
- d. Building A: A raised traffic table, to serve as a pedestrian crossing at the drive-thru lane along Southern Avenue.
- e. Building B: Additional hardscape to create an outdoor patio or plaza along the south side of the building adjacent to the pedestrian that crosses the drive-thru lane along Southern Avenue. The width of the outdoor patio or plaza shall match or exceed the width of the pedestrian crossing.
- f. Building B: A raised traffic table to serve as the pedestrian crossing at the drive-thru lane along Southern Avenue. The width of the pedestrian crossing and traffic table shall be twice the width of the decorative pedestrian crossing shown on the site plan.
- g. Building D: Widen the pedestrian connection and include a raised traffic table to serve as the pedestrian crossing at the drive-thru lane along Alma School Road. The width shall be consistent with the pedestrian connection between the drive-thru lane and Alma School Road on the site plan.