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Planning and Zoning Board

Case Information

CASE NUMBER:	**ZON18-00214**
LOCATION/ADDRESS:	The 3100 to 3300 blocks of East Thomas Road (north side).
GENERAL VICINITY:	Located on the north side of Thomas Road and west of Val Vista Drive.
REQUEST:	Rezoning from AG and RS-43 to RM-2-PAD; and Site Plan Review, also consider the preliminary plat for "Lehi Cove"
PURPOSE:	This request will allow for the development of an attached single-residence development
COUNCIL DISTRICT:	District 1
OWNER:	Arthur L. Freeman Family Trust, Kaser Citrus, Inc., John Babiarz
APPLICANT:	Blake McKee, Skybridge Companies
STAFF PLANNER:	Evan Balmer, AICP

SITE DATA

PARCEL NUMBER(S):	141-21-005P, 141-21-005R, 141-21-005Y and 141-21-005X
PARCEL SIZE:	7.5± acres
EXISTING ZONING:	AG and RS-43
GENERAL PLAN DESIGNATION:	Neighborhood: Suburban
CURRENT LAND USE:	Vacant

SITE CONTEXT

NORTH:	Loop 202 Red Mountain Freeway
EAST:	Vacant – Zoned GI
SOUTH:	Existing single residence – Zoned RS-9-PAD
WEST:	Contractor storage yard – Maricopa County

ZONING HISTORY/RELATED CASES:

March 19, 1981: Parcels 141-21-005X and a portion of 141-21-005Y annexed into the City of Mesa and subsequently zoned AG (Ord. #1465 and Z81-058)

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Approval with conditions
P&Z BOARD RECOMMENDATION: ☐ Approval with conditions. ☐ Denial
PROPOSITION 207 WAIVER SIGNED: ☒ Yes ☐ No

PROJECT DESCRIPTION/REQUEST

The applicant is proposing an 89 unit attached single-residence development. The site is located on the north side of Thomas Road west of Val Vista Drive. The subject property consists of four parcels. One parcel and a portion of another parcel are currently within the City of Mesa limits. The applicant has submitted an application for the other two parcels to be annexed into the City of Mesa through a companion annexation case (ANX18-00229), which will be forwarded to the City Council for consideration. To facilitate the development of the attached single-family development, the applicant is requesting a rezone from AG and RS-43 to RM-2-PAD and Site Plan Review. A preliminary plat for "Lehi Cove" is also included.

NEIGHBORHOOD PARTICIPATION:

The applicant has completed a Citizen Participation Process, which included a mailed letter to property owners within 1000' of the site, as well as HOAs and registered neighborhoods within one mile. The applicant held a neighborhood meeting on April 18, 2018, which was attended by several neighboring property owners. The property owners who attended the neighborhood meeting primarily live in the Lehi Crossing development, which is located on the south side of Thomas Road adjacent to the subject property. The attendees voiced concerns with the location of the proposed development as it relates to the location of the Vulcan Materials asphalt plant located adjacent to the Lehi Crossing development. The neighbor complaints with the Vulcan Materials plant generally focused on the odor and potential toxins negatively impacting the health of the residents in the area. Testing is currently being conducted by the Maricopa County Air Quality Department and the Arizona Department of Air Quality to gather data on the air quality in the area.

At the time of this writing, staff has not been contacted by any neighbors in the area. The applicant will be providing an updated Citizen Participation Report prior to the August 14, 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 (15-1) of the Mesa 2040 General Plan and has determined that the proposed use is in conformance with the General Plan.

The Mesa 2040 General Plan Character area designation is Neighborhood-Suburban. The Neighborhood character area is primarily single-residence subdivisions, attached or detached, with some multiple-residence projects permitted. The General Plan also specifies that new neighborhoods should be consistent with the Neo-Traditional type. Some of the guidelines for the Neo-Traditional character type include accessible, useable community space spread throughout the community and open space designed with homes that front on to the open space. This proposal has a community open space located in the center of the development with pedestrian connections to the open space and the homes surrounding the open space fronting on to the open space. The proposed project is consistent with surrounding uses and meets the Neighborhood-Suburban character area.

ZONING:

The site is currently zoned AG and RS-43. The applicant is proposing a rezone to RM-2-PAD to accommodate the single-residence attached development. On the south side of Thomas Road across

from the subject property is a single family residential development that is zoned RS-9 and nearing build out. Also, on the south side of Thomas road a 10± acre parcel was rezoned to RM-2-PAD in 2016. The majority of the property between the RWCD South Canal and the Loop 202 Red Mountain Freeway west of Val Vista Drive has been zoned residentially, and the RM-2-PAD zoning requested by the applicant is consistent with the development and zoning patterns in the area.

As previously mentioned, there is an existing asphalt plant located in a County island on the north side of the canal west of Val Vista Drive. As the asphalt plant is in a County island, the City of Mesa does not have any jurisdiction over the plant. There has been some concern raised by neighbors about adding more residential to the area due to the presence of the plant. The subject property is approximately ¼ mile north of the plant as illustrated by the map below. The ¼ mile buffer from the asphalt plant provides an adequate buffer for noise and other potential nuisances associated with the operation of the plant.

PAD OVERLAY MODIFICATIONS – MZO Article 3:

The purpose of the Planned Area Development Overlay (PAD) is to allow flexibility for the development of a cohesive project. The intent of the PAD overlay is to provide for creative, high-quality development in exchange for the flexibility in development standards. MZO section 11-22 lists some elements to be considered when evaluating the quality of a proposed PAD. Some of these elements include well designed and integrated open space and building and site design that create a unique and sustainable alternative to conventional development. The applicant's proposal for Lehi Cove includes a large, centrally located open space area that includes recreational amenities and a pool for the residents of

the development. The homes surrounding the open space front on to the open space, which creates a neighborhood park feel. The buildings themselves are well designed and utilize quality materials and feature four-sided architecture with elevation changes including recessed windows and architectural pop-outs. The floor plans and elevations are also included in this rezoning request. If the applicant's request for rezoning is approved, they would not need to submit an Administrative Design Review application for Planning Director approval and could proceed directly to the building permit process. The applicant is proposing a mixture of three, four and five-unit buildings with two different elevations for each building. Below are renderings of the 'A' and 'B' elevation, which would be the same for the three, four and five-unit buildings. Full elevations and floor plans are provided for Board review with the supplemental materials included with the Planning and Zoning Board packet.

Elevation 'A'

Elevation 'B'

In exchange for these higher quality design elements, the applicant is requesting a PAD overlay to accommodate reduced setbacks and other development standards, which differ from the traditional RM-2 development standards. The units will be attached on both sides and the development features an alley loaded design, meaning the garage is located at the rear of the development and is accessed via an "alley" that runs through the development. This type of design would not be feasible with traditional development standards. The specific deviations requested with the PAD overlay are listed in Table 1 below:

Table 1

Standard	RM-2 (Proposed)	RM-2 (Required)
Minimum Lot Area (SF)	**1,197.21**	7,200
Minimum Lot Width – Attached	**21'**	36'
Minimum Lot Depth	**57'**	94'
Maximum Density (du/ac)	**12.95**	15
Minimum Density	**-**	-
Minimum Lot Area/Dwelling Unit	**1,053**	2,904
Maximum Height	**30'**	30'
Front and Street-Facing Side	**5'**	20'
Interior Side: Single Residence – Attached	**0'**	0'
Rear	**0'**	15'
Maximum Lot Coverage	**100%**	45%
Minimum Open Space (sqft/unit)	**1,353**	200
Total Parking (Spaces/Unit)	**2.8**	2.1

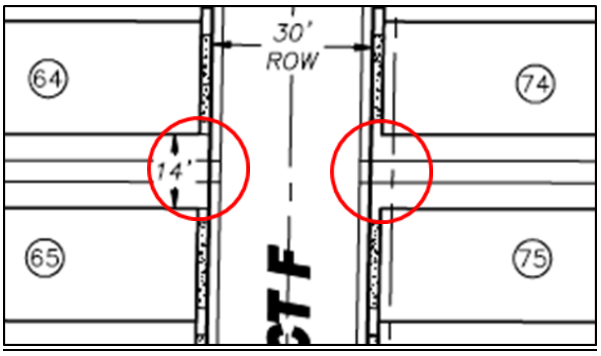
SITE PLAN – MZO Section 11-69-5:
The development utilizes an "alley" loaded design which creates several inherent challenges that can impact the feel of the community for residents and visitors alike. A true alley provides a secondary means of access to a home and there is a separate street that provides the main circulation through the development. In this case, the only street system is the "alley." Because all the garages are located in the rear of the home along the alley and the entry to the home is in the front, when a resident or guest enters the community their experience with the development is a row of garages, which does not lend itself to an inviting neighborhood feel. The applicant has taken steps to attempt to mitigate some of the challenges of the garage dominant design including fronting the homes along Thomas Road to the street, which gives the development an inviting street presence. The applicant has also provided enhanced landscaping and a rail fence along Thomas Road to further enhance the street presence.

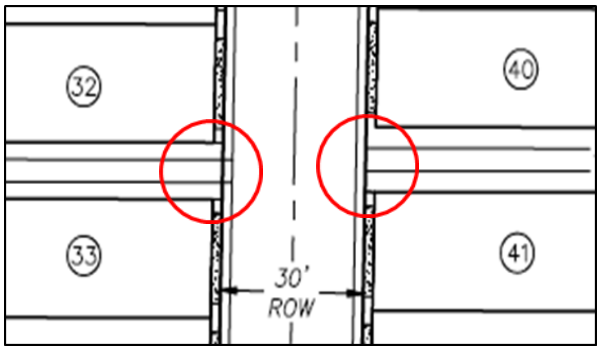
The applicant has also provided a large central open space area featuring a ramada, play area, pool and grass open space for recreation. The homes surrounding the open space front on to the open space, which will create a neighborhood feel and give the residents an inviting area to congregate. Additionally, there are pedestrian connections from the east and west sides of the development that lead to the central amenity area. These connections will give the residents on the east and west sides of the development the ability to walk to the open space area without having to walk through the alleys. The applicant has also provided a pedestrian connection network in front of the units on the east and west side of the property. These areas are 16 feet between the front patio walls with 35 feet between the units themselves, providing more of an open feel in these areas.

<u>Alley Width Concerns:</u>
Staff does still have some concerns with the overall design of the project. While the applicant has provided a prominent open space feature for the residents and the buildings feature architectural interest and quality materials, the design itself is still very garage dominant and the primary way residents and guests will experience the development will be through the alleys. Although the property will not be gated, the alleys themselves will be a 30-foot wide private drive. The 30-foot width of the

drives allows for additional on-street parking to be provided on the north, east and west sides of the property, but because the internal alleys have garages on both sides, on-street parking would not be allowed in these areas.

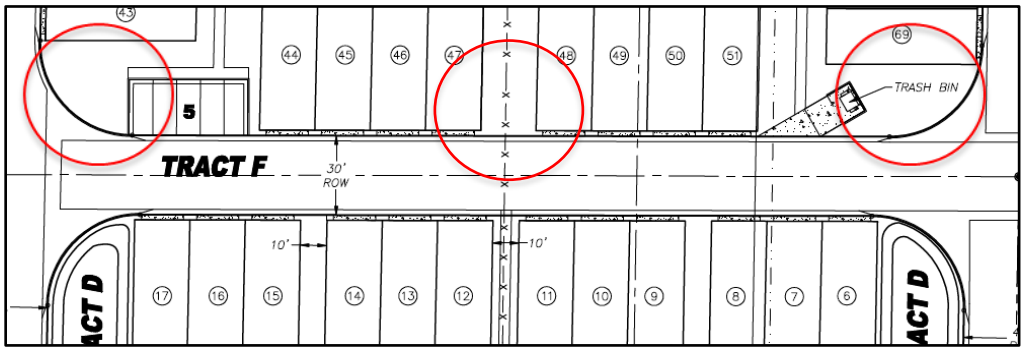
In order to create a more inviting experience and add some visual interest to the two internal alleys, staff would recommend adding a speed table and extending the landscaping along the pedestrian connections into the alleys between lots 32 and 33, lots 40 and 41, lots 64 and 65, and lots 74 and 75 as highlighted on the images below:

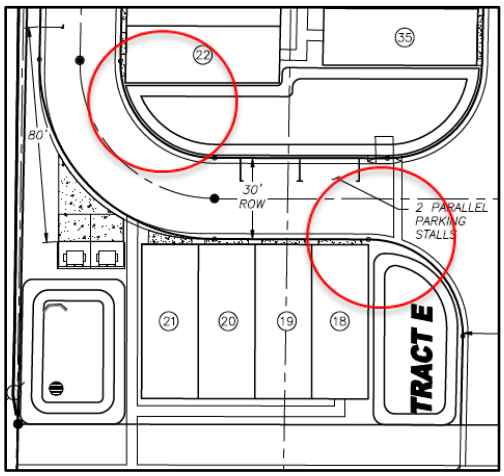


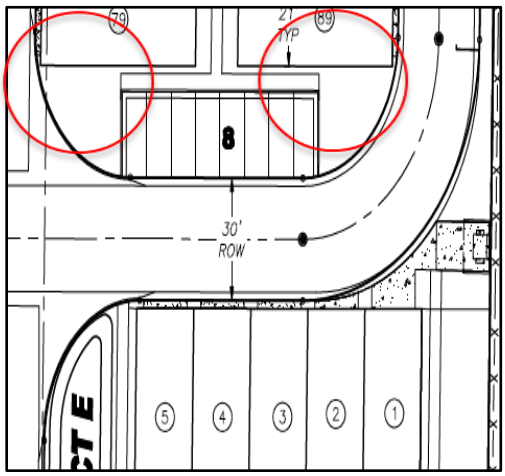


Pedestrian Connectivity Concerns

Another area that staff has concerns with is the internal pedestrian connection network. The applicant has included connections to the central amenity area from the east, west and north sides of the development, but there are still some areas of the development where the pedestrian connection is lacking. The southeast and southwest units specifically are only able to access the open space through the street network. Additionally, the parallel parking spaces on the perimeter of the development are lacking access to the sidewalk network. Staff would like to see some additional sidewalks added to provide a more robust pedestrian network. Some of the areas of concern are highlighted below.







PRELIMINARY PLAT:
This request includes a preliminary plat titled "Lehi Cove". 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 and meets the review criteria for the Planned Area Development Overlay from Chapter 22 of the Zoning Ordinance (Section 11-22-1). Due to the non-traditional nature of the site, staff has some concerns with the layout of the project and included conditions of approval that will allow staff and the developer the ability to finalize a site plan that meets the review criteria listed in Chapter 69 of the Zoning Ordinance (Section 11-69-5). Staff recommends approval with the following conditions:

CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL:
1. Compliance with the basic development as shown on the site plan and preliminary plat submitted, except as modified below (without guarantee of lot yield, building count, lot coverage).
2. Compliance with all City development codes and regulations, except as modified in Table 1 of the staff report.
3. Compliance with all requirements of the Subdivision Technical Review Committee.
4. Prior to submitting for a building permit, submit a revised site plan for Planning Director review and acceptance that includes:
    a. A reduction of the alley to a width of 24' and enhanced landscaping and speed tables between the following lots:
        - 32 and 33
        - 40 and 41
        - 64 and 65
        - 74 and 75
    b. Enhanced pedestrian network from the central open space area to the following areas:
        - Southeast building

- Southwest building
- On-street parking locations

5. Compliance with the building elevations and floor plans as submitted.