

MESA INVESTMENT BLOCK REDEVELOPMENT

Project Narrative – Board of Adjustment 409 E. 1st Avenue

Overview and Background

Suburban Land Reserve, Inc represents the “Landowner” in the redevelopment of approximately .20 acres in Downtown Mesa at the Southeast corner of 1st Avenue and Mesa Drive. The subject property is one part of a collection of other residential infill lots located between Mesa Drive and the Mesa Arizona Temple and within ¼ mile of the light rail corridor. The subject property is currently a single-story commercial use building with surface parking. The Landowner has opted into Form Base Code (“FBC”) zoning for this project redevelopment. Based on the FBC Neighborhood Regulating Plan, the parcel is designated as T4-NF.



Purpose for Request

The purpose for making this “variance” request is to redevelop the subject parcel into single family residential unit designed to fit within the character of the adjacent neighborhood and within the Downtown District but cannot conform to all aspects of the Form Based Code. The property owner is requesting a variance from the following Form Based Code requirements:

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Transect Guideline: Building Placement:

FBC for T4-NF requires a 0' minimum and 15' max Front Build to Line

Proposed condition:

1. 21' front building placement

Justification for variance:

1. Historically, the homes built on 1st Avenue have a deeper setback than what is prescribed in the FBC. The house is proposed to be setback at a distance that is consistent with the existing adjacent homes.
2. The strict application of the FBC will force the structure closer to the street and out of alignment with the existing historic homes.
3. Approval of this variance does not constitute a special privilege since the scale of proposed home will fit on the lot in either the BTL or setback.

Transect Guideline: Building Placement:

FBC for T4-NF requires the building façade at the front BTL to be min 75%

Proposed condition:

2. Building façade at the front BTL is 59%

Justification for variance:

4. Homes on 1st Avenue have a significant amount of landscape and open space that contributes to the overall historic character of the neighborhood. The percentage of structure to landscape at the BTL is proposed to be in keeping with existing homes on the street.

Transect Guideline: Building Form:

The FBC requires that the building height be 20' minimum from plate to finish grade

Proposed condition:

1. The proposed building heights are 17'-1", 12'-1", and 10'-1" around the home

Justification for variance:

1. Most of the existing homes along 1st Avenue are 1 story structures facing the street.
2. The proposed 1 story home is consistent with the character and scale of the existing neighborhood.

Transect Guideline: Building Form:

The FBC requires that the building FFE be raised 18"-24" above finish grade

Proposed condition:

1. The proposed building FFE is 12"-16" above finish grade

Justification for variance:

1. There are special circumstances applicable to this property based on the demographic age of the current and future residents. Most older residents do not want steps in the homes, and 18"-24" has the result of 3-5 step risers at the front entry and garage entry.
2. The property owner is proposing 12"-16" of raised finish floors to limit the number of steps to 1 or 2 maximum.
3. Most existing homes in this neighborhood are slab on grade conditions
4. Approval of this variance would not constitute a grant of special privilege due to the ability of other properties to maintain existing lower finish floor elevations

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Transect Guideline: Parking:

The FBC requires that the driveway be 12' max width

Proposed condition:

1. The driveway is proposed in the rear and will be 18' wide

Justification for variance:

2. The rear loaded garage with a 18' wide driveway has no impact to the front of the home
3. The driveway matches the width of the garage door opening

Transect Guideline: Miscellaneous:

The FBC requires that the entire ROW be defined by a building, hedge, or wall

Proposed condition:

1. In some cases, the landscape wraps around the front corner of the home. A hedge or wall may be provided but it is set back from the street

Justification for variance:

2. The character of the existing historic neighborhood is to be more open with dominant landscape in the front yards. The requirement in the FBC is opposite of the desired character of the neighborhood.

Building Type Standards: Lot Width:

Single unit house-Cottage is the only single-unit house type allowed in T4NF, and the maximum width for a lot is 50'.

Proposed condition:

1. The existing lot is 63.9' wide and will not be changed in the redevelopment process

Justification for variance:

2. The lot size and dimensions are existing and consistent with the other lots in the neighborhood.
3. The single unit home Village typology matches the building typology currently used in this historic neighborhood, but it's not allowed in this transect.

Building Type Standards: Building size:

Single unit house-Cottage has a maximum width for the main body of 36'

Proposed condition:

1. The main body of the proposed home is 37', 40', and 33'

Justification for variance:

2. The lot size and dimensions are existing and consistent with the other lots in the neighborhood.
3. The single unit home Village typology matches the building typology currently used in this historic neighborhood, but it's not allowed in this transect.

Temple Historic District

The subject property is within the Temple Historic District. The existing commercial use structures will be demolished with required permits and approvals.

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