

StaPlanning and Zoning Board

Study Session Minutes

Virtual Platform

Date: June 24, 2020 Time: 3:00 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

*Chair Michelle Dahlke
*Vice Chair Dane Astle
*Jessica Sarkissian
*Tim Boyle
*Shelly Allen
*Jeffrey Crockett
*Deanna Villanueva-Saucedo

MEMBERS ABSENT:

None

(*Boardmembers and staff participated in the meeting through the use of audio conference equipment)

STAFF PRESENT:

Nana Appiah
Tom Ellsworth
Lesley Davis
Charlotte McDermott
Evan Balmer
*Cassidy Welch
*Kellie Rorex
Rebecca Gorton

OTHERS PRESENT:

None

1. Call meeting to order.

Chair Dahlke declared a quorum present and the meeting was called to order at 3:00 p.m.

2. Review items on the agenda for the June 24, 2020 Zoning Board Hearing.

Staffmember Kellie Rorex presented case ZON20-00214 to the Board. Ms. Rorex explained this is a request for a site plan review for the development of a medical office and is a part of the Parkwood Ranch commercial subdivision. She informed the Board that the current Limited Commercial (LC) zoning allows for medical offices. Also, the applicant provided building elevations with the application. This building elevations will be presented to the Design Review Board meeting in July for their review.

Boardmember Crockett inquired about guidance the City staff has given applicants on handling neighborhood meetings amongst during the current pandemic climate. Mr. Crockett also asked how the project will meet quality standards set by the City.

Planning Director, Nana Appiah, replied to the question regarding neighborhood

meetings and stated staff sent a memo to the development community with alternative requirements of holding virtual meetings in order to meet the requirements of the citizen participation process. Dr. Appiah explained the applicant is to provide citizens an opportunity to participate through a virtual meeting or other alternative form of meetings. This is also in addition to the standard notification requirement of sending mails to property owners, posting signs on the property and advertisement in the newspaper. He also informed that Board that the City's requirements is similar to what other cities have also adopted.

Staffmember Kellie Rorex responded to Boardmember Crockett's question regarding quality development and stated the applicant will be required to meet all requirements of the zoning ordinance, including wall and roof articulation, provide different materials on each façade and be more compatible with the building to the west.

Boardmember Villanueva-Saucedo stated the Citizen Participation Report was only one page and lacked information about who received the notification and what kind of information was provided. She stated this is the only way she can determine how the project was perceived by the surrounding neighbors and would like to see a more substantial report included in future projects. Boardmember Boyle stated when he sees a report that has no response by the citizens, he wonders if there is a better way for the neighborhood participation process such as emailing or using social media.

Staffmember Evan Balmer presented case ZON19-00872 and preliminary plat "Mountain Vista Master Plan" to the Board. Mr. Balmer explained the request is to rezone the property to allow for a mixed-use development. He informed the Board the property was rezoned in 2007 to allow for commercial use and hotel but was never built. The applicant is now requesting to rezone the property to a variety of zoning designations in order to develop the Mountain Vista mixed-use activity district. Mr. Balmer presented the overall development plan which has eight development parcels. He stated four of the eight parcels include specific site plan review. The other four parcels are conceptual site plans and would require specific site plan review prior to any development on them. He also informed the Board that the idea behind the mixed-use development is to create a mixture of uses between residential and commercial development and creating a cohesive design.

Mr. Balmer informed the Board that the applicant has included a Design Guideline that establishes design themes for landscaping and building styles within the development. The guidelines include three building styles which the applicant has identified, and each building style has corresponding architectural features. Mr. Balmer said the Design Review Board reviewed the design in May and determined the design resulted in quality development on the site.

Mr. Balmer also stated that as part of the requested Planned Area Development (PAD) overlay, the applicant is requesting deviations from certain development

standards for parcels A, B, C, D1, D2 and F2. Some of the deviations requested include building height, building and landscape set back requirements, parking reductions, and garage frontage limitations.

Boardmember Boyle inquired about staff evaluation of the project and determination of how the proposed garage frontage conforms to the City's standard. Staffmember Balmer responded and informed the Board that the code requires a development to have a maximum of 3 garages in a row before there is a plane break. This number of garages allowed in a row was adopted as part of the Quality Design Guidelines and the applicant has provided one large break and varied elevations through the addition of series of plane changes that break up blank walls of the buildings. Mr. Balmer further explained that the elevations have recesses and projections that exceeds standard of the Code. Such additions meet the intent of the Zoning Ordinance.

Mr. Boyle asked if the city has determined impact of the use on surrounding schools. Mr. Balmer responded staff has notified the school district with the number of units anticipated with the project. Mr. Balmer also clarified one of the developments will be an age restricted project and will not have student age residents. Dr. Appiah informed the Board that the school district has a formula they use to calculate the number of projected students from proposed developments and use this system to determine if they have capacity to serve a project or not. Staffmember Rebecca Gorton informed the Board that staff sent the application to the school district and did not receive a response that they cannot accommodate the additional student population.

Boardmember Villanueva-Saucedo asked for clarification in the staff report about the applicant entering in a Development Agreement to restrict certain land uses and timing of development for the overall site. Veronica Gonzalez, Project Manager, clarified the reference to timing in the Development Agreement is to ensure the City receives a certain amount of development prior to the residential portion of the project. Ms. Gonzalez stated the DA requires any on site sewer and water main lines to be completed prior to any vertical construction of the multi-residential development on the site. Dr. Appiah added the DA is a critical part of the project. And said, there are three parcels designated with the General Plan as Mixed-Use Activity District and these parcels being rezoned from LC to Residential, the DA will ensure the onsite infrastructure on Parcel A to be developed with the LC standards before development of the other parcels.

Staffmember Cassidy Welch presented case ZON20-00204 to the Board. Ms. Welch explained the request is to rezone the property for the development of an office and self-storage facility within the Mixed Use Activity District, Transit District and Fiesta District sub-area which encourages redevelopment and revitalization. She informed the Board that the site is zoned LC on the northern portion of the site and NC on the southern portion. And the specific request is to rezone the entire site to LC with a BIZ overlay to allow certain deviations from development

standards. The development will require the demolition of an existing house on the site with minor revisions to an existing medical building. A self-storage facility will be constructed on the northern portion of the site.

Ms. Welch stated as a part of the BIZ Overlay, the applicant is requesting reduction to the building and landscape setbacks for the office. This is because the current office, as it exists, is considered legal nonconforming and does not meet our current development standards. The request also includes reduction in the landscape requirements and foundation base requirements of the self-storage facility.

Boardmember Allen inquired what the development is providing as superior design in exchange for allowing the amount of deviations requested by the applicant. Ms. Welch responded that in exchange for the deviations, the applicant is helping to revitalize the area and a redesign of the medical office to engage with Southern Avenue to comply with the Fiesta District areas.

Boardmember Crockett inquired if the medical office will be operated in connection with the self-storage facility or separately. Ms. Welch responded that it would continue to be a separate business. Mr. Crockett asked how the proposed self-storage development will meet the objective of the Fiesta Economic Activity District to revitalize and re-energize the area. Ms. Welch stated that the property is considered an infill property and it is important to evaluate if the proposed use would be appropriate to the surrounding area. She informed the Board that when staff evaluated the specific project, it considered if a more traditional commercial use be appropriate. However, part of the concern is that the site is long and narrow which does not allow for a lot of engagement with the street, making it difficult for a traditional commercial use to fit on the site.

Mr. Crockett asked if staff looked at the number of self-storage businesses in the area and if this was a part of the process in reviewing the request. Ms. Welch stated there are no specific use requirements or limitations on the number of self-storage businesses within the area.

Boardmember Villanueva-Saucedo stated her concern that the citizen participation report lacked substance.

3. Planning Director's Updates.

a. June 1 and June 15 City Council's land use cases and decisions.

Dr. Appiah informed the Board that the City Council has considered and approved the General Plan Amendment and rezoning case for the property at Recker and Thomas. This project was considered by the Planning and Zoning board last year and includes a Development Agreement.

Dr. Appiah thanked Chair Dahlke and stated this is her last hearing on this board and she will be greatly missed.

4. Adjournment.

Vice Chair Astle motioned to adjourn the meeting at 3:58 pm. The motion was seconded by Boardmember Allen.

Vote: 7-0 Approved

Upon tabulation of vote, it showed:

AYES –Dahlke, Astle, Sarkissian, Boyle, Allen, Crockett and Villanueva-Saucedo

NAYS – None

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Nana K. Appiah', with a horizontal line extending to the right.

Nana K. Appiah, AICP, Secretary
Planning Director

Note: Audio recordings of the Planning & Zoning Board study sessions are available in the Planning Division Office for review. The regular Planning & Zoning Board meeting is “live broadcasted” through the City of Mesa’s website at www.mesaaz.gov.