

Planning and Zoning Board



Study Session Minutes

Mesa City Council Chambers – Lower Level, 57 East 1st Street

Date: October 9, 2019 Time: 3:00 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Chair Michelle Dahlke
Vice Chair Dane Astle
Jessica Sarkissian
Tim Boyle
Shelly Allen

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Jeffrey Crockett
Deanna Villanueva-Saucedo

STAFF PRESENT:

Nana Appiah
Tom Ellsworth
Lesley Davis
Veronica Gonzalez
Margaret Robertson
Rebecca Gorton

OTHERS PRESENT:

citizens who did not sign in

1. Call meeting to order.

Chair Dahlke declared a quorum present and the meeting was called to order at 3:03 p.m.

2. Review items on the agenda for the October 9, 2019 regular Planning & Zoning Hearing.

Staffmember Lesley Davis presented case ZON19-00577 to the Board. There was no discussion by the Board.

3. Receive and discuss a presentation on the Inner Loop Land Use study.

Principal Planner, Tom Ellsworth, stated staff has invited the consultants who conducted the study to give a presentation to the Board of findings of the Inner Loop land use study. Mr. Ellsworth informed the Board that the consultants began the study in 2018 and the need for the study was a result of several inquiries and interests to develop in the study area, which prompted the in-depth study to identify the appropriate land use allocations in the area. In addition, the goals of the General Plan include creation of a vibrant community; protection of the airport operation; and, economic development goals for the City, which was also a major reason for the study to ensure proposed land uses aligns with the goals of the General Plan. Mr. Ellsworth introduced the consultants, Leslie Dornfeld, PLAN*et Communities, and Rick Merritt of Elliott D. Pollack & Company. Mr. Ellsworth also informed the Board that the goal of the study was to inform future land use decisions in the area.

Ms. Dornfeld explained the process of the study and discussed their suggested recommendations. She stated the Consultant Group began the study by performing preliminary research comparisons of five other airports across the country and how they impacted land use as well as how those land uses impacted the airports.

Ms Dornfield informed the Board that as part of the study, there was a public education session where alternative plans were presented to the public to solicit their feedback. A major key for developing the options was to demonstrate how the airport could grow and asked for comments from the public of each of the options. Based on the public comments, they refined the three options given at the meeting to one and presented it to in another meeting with several stake holder groups; utilities, landowners as well as Economic Development.

Ms. Dornfeld stated the process for public input took about six to eight months. One of the things they considered when developing the Land Use allocations was the changes that had happened between the time the Gateway Plan was developed and the development of the study and land use. She stated the overflight patterns have been modified which provided additional options on the impact of development on the airport. Due to the proximity to the airport, Ms. Dornfeld stated the location of the study area is accessible and offers a lot of opportunities for a variety of development types.

Rick Merritt spoke about the economic analysis and future employment and maintaining existing employment in the area. He informed the Board that the study reviewed long term impacts on employment which went out as far as 2050.

Boardmember Allen stated the consultants mentioned in their presentation that there had been some changes of the airpaths when the study began and inquired if there would be the possibility of the air traffic patterns changing again to accommodate the increase of potential future cargo planes coming in and out of the Mesa Gateway Airport. Ms. Allen stated she has concerns about the housing portion of the development in the plan. Ms. Dornfeld explained the review of the air patterns was a large portion of the study and the airport was an active participant in the process. And that the responses they received from the airport staff was considered in the plan. She explained when they reviewed the comparison airports, residential was looked at as a substantial component of the areas. Mr. Merritt stated that aircrafts are quieter planes than it used to be and was the main reason the flight paths have changed. There was a discussion about areas surrounding the airport that typically has residents complaining about noise from the airport. Ms. Dornfeld stated currently there are few residents living in the surrounding area of the airport so there may not be a large number of complaints.

Vice Chair Astle stated he is excited about the plan and sees a good balance of land uses in the plan. Boardmember Sarkissian stated she was on the project team and thought it was a very well done plan. There was a lot of involvement with many different partners and the airport was a large participant in the process.

Boardmember Boyle inquired if employees per acreage is high in the City of Phoenix. Mr. Merritt responded that it is higher within the City of Phoenix. Mr. Boyle inquired about the next steps. Mr. Ellsworth responded this is a study and the General Plan shows a mixture of land uses with two-character types that lay over the inner loop area.

And that the study is an analysis of the appropriate land use mixture within the area. As requests for development come forward, it can be used for analysis. Staff will be able to utilize this plan for analyses to help make a more informed recommendation for development.

4. Receive and discuss a presentation on proposed Quality Design Guidelines and associated text amendments to Chapters 4, 5, 6, 7, 22, 30, 31, 33, 69, 86, and 87 of Title 11 of the Mesa Zoning Ordinance including, but not limited to, the modification and addition of certain site and building form standards, landscape standards, and related definitions.

Veronica Gonzalez, Development Services Project Manager, presented the Quality Design Guidelines and recommended text amendments to the Board. Ms. Gonzalez explained this is the final proposal of the Design Guidelines and text amendments which will help in implementing the Quality Design Guidelines in the City.

Boardmember Allen inquired if the term "shall" will be used for the requirement for improved building elevations on four sides of buildings, or will it be a vague sentence such as using the term "should". Ms. Gonzalez replied that a majority of the text amendments uses the term "shall" but there are also alternative compliance section that allows proposals to provide alternatives if it is infeasible to strictly comply with the requirements. Vice Chair Astle suggested that items that are near or next to a building such as transformer boxes should be encouraged to property screen or be located in appropriate areas on a site. Dr. Appiah stated staff has been careful writing the text amendments to avoid diminishing good creativity of designs that may not have been thought of with the text amendments.

Boardmember Sarkissian suggested the need to address the non-garage dominated design in the higher density areas with smaller lots.

Boardmember Boyle inquired if the guidelines have been presented to the Design Review Board and Ms. Gonzalez confirmed the plan was presented to the Board the previous evening. Boardmember Allen asked what the response from the Design Review Board was. Ms. Gonzalez stated the guidelines were very well received with minimal discussion. She stated there were questions about the plan for date of implementation and said staff will be making its recommendation when the case is brought for recommendation to the City Council.

Chair Dahlke inquired about standards for providing shade within developments and said she found only four obscure references to shade which were not very detailed in the guidelines. Boardmember Boyle referenced the lack of shade trees placed in parking lots. Ms. Gonzalez responded that in the residential, commercial and industrial chapters, the newly proposed requirement to have certain maximum lot coverage is intended to result in more meaningful landscaping on sites and provide more shade. The Board requested staff to include more details of guidelines for providing shade in the ordinance. Dr. Appiah stated staff will look at the text amendments and code to include such details.

Ms. Gonzalez informed the Board that the next step in the process will be the final presentation for recommendation at the October 23, 2019 Planning and Zoning Board meeting. The Board asked the process to send additional comments to staff and would it be feasible to address the comments prior to the hearing. Dr. Appiah stated although

the timing will be tight, staff is committed to incorporating the Boards suggestions into the final draft prior to the October 23rd meeting or for City Council.

Boardmember Boyle made suggestions for the text amendments and the guidelines. He suggested the City should require different elevation for each home in a subdivision so each would be unique and not identical. Dr. Appiah responded there has been extensive meetings and discussions with the Home Builders Association and staff had to find a common ground and compromise to certain elements and requirements and wants to make sure we can continue to move forward with the request with the common ground already established with all the Stakeholders. Mr. Boyle suggested the City to review requirements for lighting elements; and find ways to make Mesa a recognizable City by updating and highlighting entrances to the City with certain lighting systems and designs.

5. Planning Director's Updates.

a. Discuss potential By-Laws for the Planning and Zoning Board.

Dr. Appiah stated staff has been discussing and researching By-laws to be presented to the Board and will be requesting the board's input about creating such By-laws in the coming weeks.

6. Adjournment.

Boardmember Allen motioned to adjourn the meeting at 4:34 pm. The motion was seconded by Boardmember Boyle.

Vote: 5-0 Approved (Boardmember Crockett and Villanueva-Saucedo, absent)

Upon tabulation of vote, it showed:

AYES – Dahlke, Astle, Boyle, Allen, and Sarkissian

NAYS – None

Respectfully submitted,



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.