

Planning and Zoning Board



Study Session Minutes

Mesa City Council Chambers – Lower Level, 20 E. Main St.

Date: February 25, 2026 Time: 3:30 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Benjamin Ayers
Troy Peterson
Jeff Pitcher
Genessee Montes
Jamie Blakeman
Chase Farnsworth

MEMBERS ABSENT

Jayson Carpenter

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

STAFF PRESENT:

Mary Kopaskie-Brown
Evan Balmer
Cassidy Welch
Kirstin Dvorchak
Kwasi Abebrese
Chloe Durfee Daniel
Danika Heying

OTHERS PRESENT:

1 Call meeting to order.

Chair Ayers excused Boardmember Carpenter and declared a quorum present the meeting was called to order at 3:31 pm.

2 Review items on the agenda for February 25, 2026, regular Planning and Zoning Board Hearing.

Staff Planner Kwasi Abebrese presented ZON25-00774. See attached presentation.

Responding to multiple questions from Boardmember Chase Farnsworth regarding the Blue Sky Pest Control project, specifically concerning the storage, mixing, and transfer of concentrated chemicals and potential groundwater impacts due to the site's proximity to an adjacent floodway, Staff Planner Kwai Abebrese clarified that, based on discussions with the applicant, there will be no mixing of chemicals on-site and that operations are limited strictly to storage. He confirmed that the request was reviewed by airport officials to ensure compatibility with the surrounding area and noted their approval of the project.

Further responding to Boardmember Farnsworth's observation regarding the lack of visible containment features or design elements for spill remediation in the submitted plans, Assistant

MINUTES OF THE FEBRUARY 25, 2026, PLANNING & ZONING STUDY SESSION

Planning Director Evan Balmer explained that hazardous materials storage, storage methods, and spill mitigation are addressed through the building permit process. He confirmed that this process includes a review of rigorous standards for the storage of chemicals and mandates the required mitigation of potential spills.

Presentation and discussion only; no formal action taken by the Board.

Staff Planner Chloe Durfee Daniel presented ZON25-00326. See attached presentation.

Responding to a question from Boardmember Jeff Pitcher regarding the second-floor element of the building for the proposed dance studio, Staff Planner Chloe Durfee Daniel clarified that the second story is situated at the rear and middle of the structure and is dedicated to classroom and studio space. In response to an inquiry from Boardmember Genessee Montes regarding neighbor concerns, Ms. Durfee Daniel explained that neighboring residents expressed a preference for a single-story development, noting that existing commercial properties to the west do not exceed one story.

Further responding to comments from Chair Benjamin Ayers regarding the extent of development standard reductions requested through the Bonus Intensity Zone (BIZ), specifically the ambiguity of 'superior design' as a justification for such deviations, Planning Director Mary Kopaskie-Brown informed the Board that administrative text amendments are currently before the City Council for final action on March 9. She stated that these amendments are intended to establish objective design standards and provide a clearer definition of 'superior quality' to resolve the ambiguities discussed. Chair Ayers acknowledged the upcoming amendments and expressed his support for the project.

Presentation and discussion only; no formal action taken by the Board.

3 Planning Director Update:

Mary Kopaskie-Brown, Planning Director, had no updates for the Board.

4 Adjournment.

Chair Ayers motioned to adjourn the study session. The motion was seconded by Boardmember Farnsworth.

The study session was adjourned at 3:48 pm.

Vote (6-0; Boardmember Carpenter, excused)

Upon tabulation of vote, it showed:

AYES – Ayers, Peterson, Pitcher, Montes, Blakeman, Farnsworth

NAYS – None

Respectfully submitted,

Note: Audio recordings of the Planning & Zoning Board Meetings are available in the Planning Division Office for review. They are also “live broadcasted” through the City of Mesa’s website at www.mesaaz.gov

MINUTES OF THE FEBRUARY 25, 2026, PLANNING & ZONING STUDY SESSION

Benjamin Ayers
Planning and Zoning Board Chair

Note: Audio recordings of the Planning & Zoning Board Meetings are available in the Planning Division Office for review. They are also “live broadcasted” through the City of Mesa’s website at www.mesaaz.gov