



**PLANNING DIVISION
STAFF REPORT**

Board of Adjustment

November 1, 2023

CASE No.: BOA23-00660	CASE NAME: Extra Space Storage
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Owner’s Name:	Extra Space Properties Two LLC
Applicant’s Name:	Omar Abdallah, Rose Law Group
Location of Request:	Within the 9300 block of East Southern Avenue (south side). Located south of south of Southern Avenue and east of Ellsworth Road.
Parcel Nos:	220-81-772C
Nature of Request:	Requesting a Substantial Conformance Improvement Permit (SCIP) to allow deviations from certain development standards to allow for the expansion of a mini-storage facility in the Limited Commercial (LC) zoning district.
Zone District:	Limited Commercial (LC)
Council District:	5
Site size:	5.4± acres
Existing use:	Mini-Storage Facility
Hearing date(s):	November 1, 2023 / 5:30 p.m.
Staff Planner:	Kwasi Abebrese
Staff Recommendation:	APPROVAL with Conditions

HISTORY

On **March 20, 1986**, the subject site was annexed into the City of Mesa as part of a larger 230± acre annexation (Case No. A86-001; Ordinance No. 2040).

On **July 7, 1986**, the Mesa City Council established a comparable zoning of Agriculture (AG) on the project site (Case No. Z86-069; Ordinance No. 2104).

On **December 4, 2000**, the Mesa City Council approved a rezone of the project site from Agriculture (AG) to Commercial ([C-2] equivalent to Limited Commercial) and a Site Plan to allow for the development of a commercial shopping center (Case No. Z00-081; Ordinance No. 3839).

On **April 7, 2003**, the Mesa City Council approved a modification to the previously approved Site Plan to allow for the development of a retail use on the project site (Case No. Z03-008; Ordinance No. 4056).

On **January 18, 2007**, the Mesa Planning and Zoning Board approved a Site Plan Modification to allow for the development of a retail building and a self-storage facility on the project site (Case No. Z07-006).

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Background:

The applicant is requesting a Substantial Conformance Improvement Permit (SCIP) to allow for deviations from certain development standards to allow for the expansion of an existing mini-storage facility in the Limited Commercial (LC) zoning district. The project site is comprised of two existing mini-storage buildings and 48 RV parking spaces as well as a communication building located at the southwest corner of the site. The site is approximately 5.4± acres in size and is located south of Southern Avenue on the east side of Ellsworth Road.

The proposed project encompasses the addition of a new 29,495 square foot mini storage building at the south side of the site where the existing 48 RV parking spaces are located. The existing RV parking spaces are proposed to be reduced to 30 spaces and relocated to the southwest corner of the site where the communication building is located.

The mini-storage facility and the existing site improvements were constructed in 2008. Several aspects of the existing site design do not conform to current development standards. The project site does not conform to the landscape standards as well as the required setback for cross drive aisles outlined in Sections 11-33 and 11-32 of the Mesa Zoning Ordinance (MZO). Therefore, the site is considered legal non-conforming.

Due to existing conditions, achieving full conformance with the MZO would require significant alterations to the site including the existing buildings, existing driveway at the northeast corner of the site, parking area and on-site circulation. Section 11-73 of the MZO establishes the Substantial Conformance Improvement Permit (SCIP) process and review criteria which allows the site to be brought into substantial conformance without having to bring the entire site into full conformance with the development standards of the MZO. Due to the existing placement of the two storage buildings, significant alterations to the site, including demolition of the existing buildings, and redesign of the existing driveway and parking area would need to occur to bring the site into full conformance with current MZO development standards. The SCIP will allow the buildings and the existing conditions on the site to remain to enable the addition of another mini-storage building on the south side and the relocation of the existing RV parking spaces to the southwest corner of the project site.

General Plan Character Area Designation and Goals:

The Mesa 2040 General Plan Character area designations on the property include Mixed-Use Activity District and Neighborhood. Per the General Plan, the Mixed-Use Activity District character area is a large community and regional activity area that usually has a significant retail

commercial component. The goal of the district is to create strong and viable centers of commercial activity that attract people to unique shopping and entertainment experiences.

Per Chapter 7 of the General Plan, the focus of the Neighborhood character area is to provide safe places for people to live where they can feel secure and enjoy their surrounding community. Neighborhoods can contain a wide range of housing options and may also contain supportive land uses such as retail, restaurants, and personal services that are located along arterials and collector streets.

The proposed expansion of the existing mini-storage facility is consistent with the goal of the General Plan character areas by contributing towards meeting the storage needs of the surrounding neighborhoods.

Site Characteristics:

The project site is located south of Southern Avenue on the east side of Ellsworth Road and consists of one parcel totaling 5.4± acres. The proposed site plan shows the development of one building totaling approximately 29,495 square feet as well as 30 RV parking spaces on the south side and at the southwest corner of the project site respectively.

Vehicular access to the site is provided from an existing driveway from East Southern Avenue. A system of pedestrian walkways will connect the primary building entrances on the site to the parking areas and to the existing public sidewalk on East Southern Avenue.

Surrounding Zoning Designations and Existing Use Activity:

<p>Northwest (Across Southern Avenue) LC Commercial and Recreational Development</p>	<p>North (Across Southern Avenue) RM-4 Existing Multiple Residences</p>	<p>Northeast (Across Southern Avenue) RM-4 Existing Multiple Residences</p>
<p>West LC Existing Commercial</p>	<p>Subject Property LC Existing Commercial Development</p>	<p>East RM-2-PAD Existing Multiple Residences</p>
<p>Southwest Agricultural Vacant</p>	<p>South Agricultural Vacant</p>	<p>Southeast Agricultural Vacant</p>

Mesa Zoning Ordinance Requirements and Regulations:

Substantial Conformance Improvement Permit (SCIP) MZO Section 11-73:

The project site is legal non-conforming as it does not conform to the current landscaping requirements outlined in Section 11-33 of the MZO as well as requirement on the setback of cross drive aisles outlined in Section 11-32 of the MZO. Table 1 below summarizes the minimum MZO requirements, the applicant’s proposal, and staff’s recommendations. Text in bold indicates modifications from the MZO code requirements.

Table 1: Development Standards

Development Standard	MZO Requirements	Applicant Proposal	Staff Recommendation
<p><i>Setback of cross drive aisles:</i> [Section 11-32-4(A)] Parking spaces along main drive aisles connecting directly to a street and drive aisles that cross such main drive aisles</p>	50'	28' (Existing)	As proposed
<p><i>Interior Parking Lot Landscaping:</i> [Section 11-33-4(B)] Minimum dimensions for an interior parking lot landscape island</p>	8' wide by 15' long	<p>One island at 7' wide by 16' long (Existing)</p> <p>One island at 6' wide by 16' long (Existing)</p>	As proposed
<p><i>Foundation base width:</i> [Section 11-33-5(A)(2)(A)] Foundation Base for exterior wall without a public entrance adjacent to parking stalls</p>	15'	0' (Existing) at the east side of the existing south building	As proposed
<p><i>Foundation base width:</i> [Section 11-33-5(A)(2)(A)] Foundation Base for exterior wall without a public entrance adjacent to parking stalls</p>	10'	5'(Existing) at the south side of existing south building	As proposed
<p><i>Foundation base width:</i> [Section 11-33-5(A)(2)(B)] Foundation Base for exterior wall without a public entrance adjacent to a drive aisle</p>	5'	0' (Existing) at the east side of the existing north building	As proposed
<p><i>Perimeter landscaping:</i> [Section 11-33-3(B)(2)] Landscaping for Non-Single Residence Uses adjacent to other Non-Single Residence</p>	A minimum of three (3) trees per 100 linear feet of adjacent property line	A minimum of three (3) trees per 155 linear feet of adjacent property line at the existing west property line	As proposed
<p><i>Foundation base landscaping:</i> [Section 11-33-5(B)(1)] Number of Trees</p>	A minimum of one (1) tree per 50 linear feet or less of exterior wall length	<p>None provided at the south side of the existing north building</p> <p>1 tree per 109 linear feet provided at the east side of the existing south building</p>	As proposed

Development Standard	MZO Requirements	Applicant Proposal	Staff Recommendation
		None provided at the south side of the existing south building	

To bring the site into substantial conformance with the development standards of the MZO, the applicant proposes the following improvements as identified on the site plan and landscape plan:

- Installation of adequate perimeter landscaping with plant materials at the north side of the project site along East Southern Avenue and at the north parking area to improve the appearance of the site from the right-of-way as well as meet the landscaping requirements outlined in Section 11-33 of the MZO.
- Installation of adequate landscaping with plant materials on the south and the southwest sections of the project site to meet the landscaping requirements outlined in Section 11-33 of the MZO.

Per Section 11-73-3 of the MZO, when deciding on a SCIP, the Board of Adjustment shall find upon sufficient evidence that:

A. The entire development site will be brought into substantial conformance. Substantial conformance shall mean physical improvements to the existing development site which constitute the greatest degree of compliance with this Ordinance that can be attained without causing or creating any of the following conditions:

1. The demolition or reconstruction of existing buildings or other significant structures (except signs); or

Significant alterations to the site, including demolition of the existing non-conforming building, alterations to the existing driveway on the northeast side of the site, the existing parking area and on-site circulation would need to occur to bring the site into full conformance with current MZO development standards.

The request complies with this criterion.

2. The cessation of the existing conforming use, or the preclusion of any other lawful, permitted use.

Full compliance with current development standards would not allow for the proposed expansion of the existing mini-storage facility on the site and would discourage redevelopment of the site.

The request complies with this criterion.

3. The creation of new non-conforming conditions.

The proposed mini-storage building, and site improvements will meet all the development standards for the LC district outlined in Section 11-6-3 of the MZO and the foundation base landscaping outlined in Section 11-33-5 of the MZO. Therefore, no new non-conforming conditions will be created with the addition of proposed development.

The request complies with this criterion.

- B. The improvements authorized by the SCIP will result in a development that is compatible with, and not detrimental to, adjacent properties or neighborhoods.

The proposed addition and improvements to the site are compatible with the adjacent uses. The improvements will bring the site into further compliance with the MZO, enhance the appearance of the site, and improve the streetscape. Therefore, staff does not believe that the proposed request will be detrimental to adjacent properties or neighborhoods.

The request complies with this criterion.

Findings:

- A. The site is zoned LC, and the existing two mini-storage buildings and site improvements were constructed in 2008.
- B. The project site does not meet current MZO development standards and is therefore legal non-conforming.
- C. Full compliance with current MZO would require significant alterations to the site including demolition of the existing structures and alterations to the existing driveway at the northeast corner of the site, the existing parking area, and on-site circulation.
- D. Improvements to the existing site include improvement in landscaping around the perimeter of the site, specifically at the north side adjacent to East Southern Avenue and the north parking area.
- E. The modifications requested along with the proposed improvements are consistent with the degree of change requested to improve the site and to bring the site to a closer degree of conformance with current MZO standards.
- F. The proposed improvements will not create any new non-conformities.
- G. The proposed improvements will result in a development that is compatible with, and not detrimental to adjacent properties or neighborhoods.

Neighborhood Participation Plan and Public Comments:

The applicant completed a Citizen Participation Process, which included mailing notification letters to all property owners within 500 feet of the subject property. As of the writing of this report, staff has not been contacted by any resident or property owner to express support or opposition to the request.

Staff Recommendations:

Based on the application received and preceding analysis, staff finds the request for a Substantial Conformance Improvement Permit meets the required findings of Section 11-73-3 of the MZO, and therefore recommends approval with the following conditions:

Conditions of Approval:

1. Compliance with the final site plan and landscape plan as submitted.
2. Compliance with all City Development Codes and regulations, except as identified in Table 1 of this report.
3. Compliance with all requirements of the Development Services Department regarding the issuance of building permits.

Attachments:

Exhibit 1 – Vicinity Map

Exhibit 2 – Staff Report

Exhibit 3 – Site Plan

Exhibit 4 – Landscape Plan

Exhibit 5 - Building Elevations

Exhibit 6 – Narrative/Justification Statement