



**PLANNING DIVISION
STAFF REPORT**

City Council Meeting

January 13, 2025

CASE No.: ZON24-00405	PROJECT NAME: Skilled Nursing Facility
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Owner's Name:	Velda Rose United Methodist Church Inc
Applicant's Name:	Sean Lake / Sarah Prince, Pew & Lake, P.L.C.
Location of Request:	Located approximately 1,770 feet east of the northeast corner of North Higley Road and East Main Street.
Parcel No(s):	141-77-055C, 141-77-055D and 141-77-055E
Request:	Major Site Plan Modification and amending condition of approval No. 1, No. 7, No. 8, No. 9, No. 10, and No. 11 for Case No. Z89-009 to allow for a Skilled Nursing Facility.
Existing Zoning District:	Limited Commercial (LC)
Council District:	2
Site Size:	2.1± acres
Proposed Use(s):	Skilled Nursing Facility
Existing Use(s):	Vacant
P&Z Hearing Date(s):	December 11, 2024 / 4:00 p.m.
Staff Planner:	Jennifer Merrill, Senior Planner
Staff Recommendation:	APPROVAL with conditions
Planning and Zoning Board Recommendation:	APPROVAL with conditions (6-0)
Proposition 207 Waiver Signed:	Yes

HISTORY

On **November 16, 1974**, the City Council annexed 3,956.7± acres into the City of Mesa, including the project site (Ordinance No. 907).

On **May 19, 1975**, the City Council approved a rezoning for 35.2± acres, including the project site, from Maricopa County R-5, C-2 and C-3 to City of Mesa General Multiple Residence

(equivalent to current Multiple Residence-4 [RM-4]) and C-2 (equivalent to current Limited Commercial [LC]) (Case No. Z75-026; Ordinance No. 936).

On **April 24, 1989**, the City Council approved a Site Plan for 4.6± acres, and a rezoning from R-4 to C-2 for the northern 3.3± acres, for development of a 32,440 square foot bowling alley and a 5,500 square foot free-standing pad building (Case No. Z89-009; Ordinance No. 2427).

On **December 10, 2024**, the Design Review Board reviewed the building elevations and landscape plan. Staff is working with the applicant to address recommendations

On **December 11, 2024**, the Planning and Zoning Board approved a Special Use Permit for a parking reduction and recommended that City Council approve the Proposed Project (Case No. ZON24-00405).

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Background:

The applicant is requesting approval of a Major Site Plan Modification for an approximate 30,000 square foot single-story Skilled Nursing Facility (Proposed Project) and removal of several conditions of approval from Case No. Z89-009 that are no longer applicable to this request (Proposed Project).

The conditions of approval to be modified include:

- No. 1 – Compliance with the basic development as shown on the site plan and elevations.
- No. 7 – Approval of a use permit by the Board of Adjustment for a Comprehensive Sign Plan.
- No. 8 – Parcels 2 and 3 shall be combined for future development.
- No. 9 – Nonconforming and/or prohibited signs shall be brought into conformance prior to the issuance of a building permit.
- No. 10 – Parking spaces off the main drive aisle shall be redesigned to not allow backing into the main drive aisle.
- No. 11 – The refuse areas to be relocated away from the north property line, closer to Main Street.

The proposed project site is comprised of multiple parcels that were approved for an approximately 4.6-acre commercial development. The development was never constructed, and the proposed project site is currently vacant.

A lot line adjustment will be required prior to construction.

General Plan Character Area Designation and Goals:

Per the Mesa 2040 General Plan, the proposed project site is located within the Neighborhood Character Area with a Suburban Sub-type with a Transit Corridor Overlay. The primary focus of the Neighborhood Character Type 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 often have associated nonresidential uses such as schools, parks, places

of worship, and local serving businesses. The design, development, and maintenance of neighborhoods focuses on ensuring clean, safe, and healthy areas where people want to live and maintain their investments. Neighborhoods are designed to provide opportunities for people to gain a sense of place and feel connected to the larger community.

In the Suburban Sub-type, the primary land uses are residential. Per Chapter 86 of the MZO, a Skilled Nursing Facility is a residential use. Secondary land uses include small, neighborhood scale offices, retail, restaurants, and personal services in appropriate locations such as along arterials or at the intersection of arterials and collector streets.

The Transit Character Area overlays the other character types, and its focus is to develop a mixed-use, pedestrian-oriented, urban environment, particularly within walking distance of transit stops. Streets should maintain a pedestrian orientation, but first floors of buildings may not contain active uses.

Proposed Project includes a unique and well-designed buildings that is anticipated to provide additional character to the area. The building is at the front of the site, and fronts onto Main Street.

The Proposed Project is consistent with the Mesa 2040 General Plan.

Zoning District Designations:

The Proposed Project is located in the Limited Commercial (LC) District. The purpose of the LC district is to provide areas for indoor retail, entertainment and service-oriented businesses that serve the surrounding residential trade area within a one- to ten-mile radius. Typical uses include grocery stores, large commercial developments, anchored tenant shopping centers with additional drug stores, fast-food restaurants, hardware and building supply stores, gas stations with convenience stores, and restaurants and cafes. Other compatible uses include medical and professional offices, as well as public and semi-public uses.

The Proposed Project complies with the LC district.

Surrounding Zoning Designations and Existing Use Activity:

<p>Northwest RM-4 Motel</p>	<p>North LC Warehouse (Place of Worship)</p>	<p>Northeast LC & RM-4 Parking Area (Place of Worship)</p>
<p>West RM-4 & LC Motel</p>	<p>Project Site LC Vacant</p>	<p>East LC Commercial/Medical Uses & Place of Worship</p>
<p>Southwest (Across Main St.) LC Vacant</p>	<p>South (Across Main St.) LC Vacant</p>	<p>Southeast (Across Main St.) LC Motel</p>

Compatibility with Surrounding Land Uses:

The Proposed Project site is surrounded to the north and east by a place of worship and a medical/commercial building, and to the west by a motel. Across Main Street to the south is vacant property and a motel.

The Proposed Project is compatible with the surrounding uses.

Site Plan and General Site Development Standards:

The Proposed Project includes a 29,995 square foot single-story building on the west half of the site, and a parking area on the east half. The proposed project site is bisected by an existing entrance drive, which extends north through the site and continues beyond the project boundaries to connect with a storage building to the north, which is owned by Velda Rose Church.

The Proposed Project includes a landscaped interior courtyard. Additional landscaped areas are located along the perimeter of the site as well as across the front of the building and within the parking area. Along the east side of the building is the main entrance and a 1,792 square foot entry plaza with a pedestrian path to the public sidewalk along Main Street.

Per Table 11-32-3.A of the MZO, 75 parking spaces are required. The Planning and Zoning Board approved a parking reduction on December 11, 2024 to allow for 68 parking spaces on site, which will be located east of the building.

Alternative Compliance:

Per MZO Section 11-6-3(B)(4)(d), parking spaces shall be located behind buildings. The applicant requested alternative compliance from this requirement.

As the approving body of the site plan, City Council shall find that the request meets one or more of the approval criteria per Section 11-6-3(B)(7)(b) of the MZO. The applicant based their request on the first criterion, which states that there is topography, soil, vegetation or other site conditions that make full compliance impossible or impractical, or improved environmental quality would result from alternative compliance.

Per the applicant, the driveway is located at the end of a deceleration lane and cannot be shifted east or west. If the building were located at the front of the site with parking behind, the entrance drive would need to make three 90-degree turns around the building to reach the parking lot to the north, which is not feasible for fire or solid waste vehicles. Due to these site conditions, full compliance with Section 11-6-3(B)(4)(d) is impossible, and the current layout is the best solution. The driveway divides the property in half, with the building located on one side and parking on the other.

Neighborhood Participation Plan and Public Comments:

The applicant completed a Citizen Participation process including notifying surrounding property owners within 1,000 feet, as well as HOAs and registered neighbors.

A neighborhood meeting was held at Velda Rose United Methodist Church on July 15, 2024. Attendees asked questions about the construction timeline, building maintenance and whether this would be a for-profit facility. A summary of the questions and responses is included on the last page of the Citizen Participation Report. The attendees did not express any opposition to the Proposed Project.

Staff has not received any comments or concerns from surrounding property owners.

Staff Recommendation:

Staff finds that the Proposed Project is consistent with the Mesa 2040 General Plan, the criteria for Site Plan Review outlined in MZO Section 11-69-5, and the Alternative Compliance criteria outlined in MZO Section 11-6-3(B)(7)(b).

Staff recommends approval with the following **Conditions of Approval:**

1. Compliance with the final site plan submitted.
2. Compliance with all requirements of Design Review Case No. DRB24-00406.
3. Compliance with all City development codes and regulations.
4. All off-site improvements and street frontage landscaping must be installed in the first phase of construction.

Exhibits:

Exhibit 1 - Presentation

Exhibit 2 - Ordinance

Exhibit 3 - Ordinance Map

Exhibit 4 - Vicinity Map

Exhibit 5 - Site Plan

Exhibit 6 - Minutes

Exhibit 7 - Submittal Documents