



**PLANNING DIVISION
STAFF REPORT**

Cite Council Meeting

February 5, 2024

CASE No.: ZON23-00455	PROJECT 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 east of Ellsworth Road and south of Southern Avenue.
Parcel No(s):	220-81-772C
Request:	Major Site Plan Modification and Council Use Permit. This request will allow for the expansion of a mini-storage facility.
Existing Zoning District:	Limited Commercial (LC)
Council District:	5
Site Size:	5.4± acres
Proposed Use(s):	Mini-Storage Facility
Existing Use(s):	Mini-Storage and Boat and RV Storage
P&Z Hearing Date(s):	January 10, 2024 / 4:00 p.m.
Staff Planner:	Kwasi Abebrese, Planner I
Staff Recommendation:	APPROVAL with Conditions
Planning and Zoning Board Recommendation:	APPROVAL with Conditions (5-0)
Proposition 207 Waiver Signed:	Yes

HISTORY

On **March 20, 1986**, the City Council annexed 230± acres, including the project site, into the City of Mesa (Case No. A86-001; Ordinance No. 2040).

On **July 7, 1986**, the 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 City Council approved a rezone of a 25± acre parcel including all but the south and southeast sides of the project site from AG to Commercial ([C-2] equivalent to Limited Commercial) and a site plan to allow for a grocery store and retail center (Case No. Z00-081; Ordinance No. 3839).

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

On **May 2, 2005**, the City Council approved a Site Plan Modification to allow for the development of a commercial center. The project site was identified as Phase 3 on the approved site plan and was conditioned to future site plan review (Case No. Z05-033; Ordinance No. 4385).

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 mini-storage facility on the project site (Case No. Z07-006).

On **December 1, 2020**, the City Council approved an amendment to the Mesa Zoning Ordinance requiring the approval of a Council Use Permit (CUP) for a mini-storage facility in the LC district. The amendment also included Recreational Vehicle (RV) storage as a prohibited use in the LC district. On **January 1, 2021**, the text amendments went into effect (Ordinance No. 5593)

On **January 10, 2024**, the Planning and Zoning Board recommended approval of Major Site Plan Modification and Council Use Permit with conditions of approval (Vote 5-0).

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Background:

The applicant is requesting a Major Site Plan Modification and a Council Use Permit (CUP) to allow for the expansion of an existing mini-storage facility in the Limited Commercial (LC) zoning district (Proposed Project).

The project site is approximately 5.4± acres in size and is located south of Southern Avenue on the east side of Ellsworth Road. The site is comprised of two existing mini-storage buildings and RV storage spaces as well as a communication building located at the southwest corner of the site. The existing mini-storage and RV storage facility was approved by the Planning and Zoning Board in 2007 (Case No. Z07-006) prior to the City Council adopting Zoning Code Ordinance amendments that removed RV storage from the permitted uses in the LC district and requires a CUP for mini-storage facilities in the LC district.

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 RV parking spaces are located. The existing RV parking spaces are proposed to be reduced from 60 to 30 spaces and relocated to the southwest corner of the site where the existing communication building is located.

General Plan Character Area Designation and Goals:

The Mesa 2040 General Plan Character area designations on the property include Mixed-Use Activity 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 project will provide storage opportunities for the growing southeast portion of Mesa and minimize the need for additional locations. Staff reviewed the request and determined it is consistent with the review criteria outlined in Chapter 15 (pg. 15-1) of the Mesa 2040 General Plan.

Zoning District Designations:

The project site is zoned Limited Commercial (LC). Per Section 11-6-1 of the MZO, the purpose of the LC district is to provide areas for indoor retail and service-oriented businesses that serve the surrounding residential trade area within a one (1) to ten-mile radius.

Per Section 11-6-2 of the MZO, a mini-storage facility is permitted in the LC district with the approval of a CUP. As a result of the zoning ordinance amendments adopted by City Council in 2021, outdoor boat and RV storage is no longer a permitted use in the LC zoning district. However, per Section 11-36-5 of the MZO, any use legally established prior to the effective date of this Ordinance or of any subsequent amendments to its text or to the Zoning Map may only be continued and maintained provided there is no alteration, enlargement, or addition to any building or structure; no increase in occupant load; nor any enlargement of the area, space, or volume occupied by or devoted to such use. Per the site plan and narrative submitted with this request, the applicant is proposing to reduce the number of outdoor boat and RV spaces from 60 (as approved by Case No. Z07-006) to 30 spaces. In addition, these 30 spaces will be relocated to the southwest portion of the site. The existing communication building in this area is vacant and will be removed. Because the proposed relocation of the boat and RV storage will occur on the same parcel where it was previously located and the amount of storage is being reduced, the relocation is in conformance with Section 11-36-5 of the MZO.

Airfield Overlay – MZO Article 3 Section 11-19:

Per Section 11-19 of the MZO, the property is located within the Airfield (AF) Overlay District. Specifically, within the Airport Overflight Area Three (AOA 3), in proximity to the Phoenix Mesa Gateway Airport. Per Section 11-19-4 (C) of the MZO, there are no use limitations beyond those in the LC district. However, proposed developments within an AOA 3 overlay area are subject to the supplementary provisions of Section 11-19-5 of the MZO. These supplementary provisions are included as conditions of approval for this request.

Surrounding Zoning Designations and Existing Use Activity:

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

Compatibility with Surrounding Land Uses:

The project site currently consists of an existing mini-storage facility and an RV storage area. To the west of the site is an existing Lowes Home Improvement store. The adjacent properties to the north, and northwest across East Southern Avenue are comprised of existing multiple residences. Moreover, the property to the south, southeast and southwest of the site is an existing undeveloped parcel zoned Agricultural. To the east of the site is an existing single residence development. There is an existing 15-foot landscape buffer with adequate landscaping provided for the new expansion area on the east side of the site adjacent to the RM-2 zoning district.

The proposed mini-storage and RV storage use will not be out of character with existing developments and uses in the surrounding area.

Site Plan and General Site Development Standards:

The proposed site plan shows the expansion of an existing mini-storage facility and relocation of an outdoor RV storage area. The expansion entails the addition of a one-story 29,495± square foot storage building at the south side of the site where the existing RV parking spaces are located. The RV parking spaces are proposed to be reduced from 60 to 30 spaces and relocated to the southwest corner of the site where the existing communication building is located, which will be removed.

Vehicular access to the site is provided from an existing drive aisle from East Southern Avenue on the northeast side of the project site. On-site walkways will connect the primary entrance of the proposed building to the entrances of the existing buildings on the site as well as to the public sidewalk on East Southern Avenue.

Per Section 11-32-3 of the MZO, a minimum of four parking spaces are required for the proposed development. The submitted site plan shows a total number of 54 existing parking spaces which were approved in 2007 (per Case No. Z07-006). These parking spaces are located at the north, east, west and south sides of the existing north building as well as on the south side of the existing south building on the site. Overall, the proposed site plan conforms to the

requirements of the MZO including the review criteria for Site Plan Review outlined in Section 11-69-5 of the MZO.

Council Use Permit:

Per Section 11-6-2 of the MZO, a mini-storage facility is permitted in the LC district subject to the approval of a CUP. Section 11-70-6(D) of the MZO outlines the CUP review criteria discussed below:

- 1) Demonstrating that the proposed project will advance the goals and objectives of the General Plan and other City policies;

As mentioned earlier, the character area designations on the project site include Mixed Use Activity and Neighborhood. These character areas typically include a mix of commercial uses to collectively provide for the regular shopping and service needs of the nearby population. Mini-storage is generally considered a service-based commercial use that allows individuals safe and convenient access to leasable storage space. The proposed development advances the goals and objective of the General Plan and the character areas by providing pedestrian walkways as well as improving the streetscape along East Southern Avenue. The expansion of the existing mini-storage facility will not bring this area out of its intended character per the 2040 Mesa General Plan.

The Proposed Project meets this criterion.

- 2) Demonstrate that the location, size, design, and operating characteristics of the project are consistent with the purpose of the zoning district designation on the property;

The Proposed Project is designed in accordance with applicable MZO development standards including maximum building height, minimum building setbacks, and perimeter landscaping.

The Proposed Project meets this criterion.

- 3) Ensuring the project will not be injurious or detrimental to adjacent properties or surrounding areas; and

The Proposed Project does not encroach into required building or landscape setbacks per the MZO. Over 30 feet of building separation is provided from both the east and west property lines with an existing 15-foot landscape buffer provided for the new expansion area on the east side of the site adjacent to the RM-2 zoning district. Additionally, the proposed mini-storage will function as an expansion of the existing mini-storage facility on the site. Therefore, no detrimental impacts are anticipated to the east.

The Proposed Project meets this criterion.

- 4) Demonstrating that there are adequate public services and infrastructure to support the development.

There are adequate public services and infrastructure available to support the development.

The Proposed Project meets this criterion.

Design Review:

The Design Review Board reviewed the proposed building elevations and landscape plan at their December 12, 2023, work session. The Board did not have any major concerns with the proposed building elevations and landscape plan as well as any concerns that have an impact on the site plan.

Neighborhood Participation Plan and Public Comments:

As part of the completed Citizen Participation Process, the applicant mailed notice letters to property owners within 1,000 feet of the site, as well as nearby HOAs and neighborhood associations.

Two neighborhood meetings were organized on July 3, 2023, and November 21, 2023, respectively. There were no attendees. The applicant received two (2) phone calls from residents who made enquiries about the intent of the notification letters they had received as well as the purpose of the proposed project and did not express their support or opposition to the request. The applicant provided an overview of the proposed project and explained that they have received the letters as part of the public noticing requirements.

In addition, staff received one (1) comment from a resident who was in opposition to the proposed project and expressed concerns regarding the operating hours as well as the level of noise that will occur on the site and how this would impact quality of life in the area. The applicant reached out to the concerned resident and explained that the access to the mini-storage facility was limited to 6:00am to 10:00pm. Also, there is an existing perimeter block wall and a 15-foot landscape buffer with adequate landscaping provided at the east property line adjacent to the existing single residence development.

A summary of the concerns raised by the concerned neighbors is included in the Citizen Participation Report.

Staff Recommendation:

Staff finds that the Proposed Project is consistent with the Mesa 2040 General Plan, the review criteria for Site Plan Review approval outlined in Section 11-69-5 of the MZO and the review criteria for a CUP outlined in Section 11-70-6(D) of the MZO.

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

1. Compliance with all conditions of approval of Case No. Z07-006, except compliance with the final site plan, landscape plan, and elevations submitted with this request

instead of the site plan, landscape plan and elevations approved with Case No. Z07-006.

2. Compliance with all requirements of Design Review, Case No. DRB23-00659.
3. Compliance with all requirements of Chapter 19 of the Zoning Ordinance including:
 - a. Owner must execute the City's standard Avigation Easement and Release for Phoenix-Mesa Gateway Airport prior to or concurrently with the recordation of the final subdivision map or the issuance of a building permit, whichever occurs first.
 - b. Due to the proximity to Phoenix-Mesa Gateway Airport, any proposed permanent or temporary structure, as required by the FAA, is subject to an FAA filing for review in conformance with CFR Title 14 Part 77 (Form 7460) to determine any effect to navigable airspace and air navigation facilities. A completed form with a response by the FAA must accompany any building permit application for structure(s) on the property.
 - c. Prior to the issuance of any building permit, provide documentation by a registered professional engineer or registered professional architect demonstrating compliance with the noise level reductions required in Section 11-19-5 of the Mesa Zoning Ordinance.
 - d. Provide written notice to future property owners that the project is within 2 miles of Phoenix-Mesa Gateway Airport.

Exhibits:

- Exhibit 1 – Presentation
- Exhibit 2 – Staff Report
- Exhibit 3 – Ordinance
- Exhibit 4 – Ordinance Map
- Exhibit 5 – Vicinity Map
- Exhibit 6 – Site Plan
- Exhibit 7 – Minutes
- Exhibit 8 – Submittal Documents