



PLANNING DIVISION

STAFF REPORT

Planning and Zoning Board

June 14, 2023

CASE No.: **ZON22-00984**

PROJECT NAME: **Sunflower Cremation and Burial**

Owner's Name:	Sunflower Funeral Holdings, LLC.
Applicant's Name:	Richard Moore, RMA Design Group
Location of Request:	Within the 5600 block of East Main Street (north side) and the 0 to 100 block of North 57th Street (west side). Located west of Recker Road and north of Main Street.
Parcel No(s):	141-49-009J
Request:	Site Plan Review and Special Use Permit. This request will allow for a mortuary with an accessory crematorium.
Existing Zoning District:	Limited Commercial (LC)
Council District:	2
Site Size:	1± acres
Proposed Use(s):	Mortuary with an accessory crematorium
Existing Use(s):	Mortuary
Hearing Date(s):	June 14, 2023 / 4:00 p.m.
Staff Planner:	Charlotte Bridges, Planner II
Staff Recommendation:	APPROVAL with Conditions

HISTORY

On **December 16, 1974**, the subject property was annexed into the City of Mesa as part of a larger 3,956± acre annexation (Ord. #907).

On **May 19, 1975**, the City Council established a City of Mesa zoning designation of C-2 (equivalent to current Limited Commercial) on the subject property (Case # Z75-027, Ord. #936).

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Background:

The applicant is requesting Site Plan Review of an Initial Site Plan and a Special Use Permit (SUP) to allow for a mortuary with an accessory crematorium.

The subject property is located on the north side of Main Street west of Recker Road. The project site is currently developed with an existing 4,500 square foot mortuary. The applicant is proposing a 2,800 square foot addition in the northwest corner of the site that will function as an accessory crematory for the mortuary services use (Proposed Project). Per Table 11-6-2 of the Mesa Zoning Ordinance (MZO), a Special Use Permit is required for an accessory crematorium in the Limited Commercial (LC) district.

General Plan Character Area Designation and Goals:

The General Plan character area designation on the property is Neighborhood with a Suburban Sub-type. Per Chapter 7 of the General Plan, 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. These areas will contain a variety of housing types including commercial uses along arterial frontages.

The site is also located in a Transit Corridor Character Area. This character type overlays the other character area and is used to transition the built environment in this area into a more transit- and pedestrian-oriented development form. The focus in this character type is to develop a mixed-use, pedestrian-oriented, urban environment, particularly within walking distance of transit stops. Currently, there is a Valley Metro bus route along Main Street with a bus stop located east of the site.

As mentioned previously, the site is developed and in use as Sunflower Cremation and Burial Service. Although the site is developed and operational, the applicant has taken steps to ensure compatibility with the intent of the Transit Corridor Character Area by providing enhanced landscaping along Main Street and a direct pedestrian connection from the building to Main Street.

Overall, the request conforms to the goals of the Mesa 2040 General Plan.

Zoning District Designations:

The subject property 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, entertainment and service-oriented businesses that serve the surrounding residential trade area within a one (1) to ten-mile radius. Typical uses include, but are not limited to, grocery store and additional 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.

Per Table 11-6-2 of the City of Mesa Zoning Ordinance (MZO), crematories are permitted as an accessory use to a funeral parlor or mortuary use with the approval of a Special Use Permit.

Site Plan and General Site Development Standards:

The Proposed Project entails the development of a 2,800 square foot crematory addition in the northwest corner of the project site.

The existing building is 4,500 square feet and is centrally located on the parcel. As the site has been developed, the drive aisles and access points have been established for the development. There are two access points to the site, one from Main Street and a second from 57th Street.

The site was previously developed as a bank with a drive-thru with the drive-thru lane wrapping from the north side of the building around the west side of the building. As the proposed addition will be located in the northwest corner of the site, several modifications to the site circulation and parking will be needed to accommodate the addition. The drive aisle on the north side of the building will no longer wrap the building but will terminate at the building addition. This area will be used for deliveries to the mortuary. To provide an area for vehicles to turn around, the northern portion of the site will be modified to allow for an area for vehicles to safely backup and maneuver. Per the landscape plan submitted, the applicant intends to remove the drive aisle on the west side of the building and replace it with additional landscaping.

In total, the modifications to the northern portion of the site to accommodate the 2,800 square foot addition and the corresponding changes to the northern drive aisle will result in the loss of six parking stalls. Per Table 11-32-3.A of the MZO, public assembly uses, including funeral homes and mortuaries, are parked at a ratio of one space per 75 square feet used for assembly. Based on the site plan submitted, a total of 1,300 square feet of the existing building is used for public assembly, which requires a total of 18 parking stalls. The applicant is proposing a total of 21 parking stalls for the site and is in conformance with the parking requirements of the MZO.

Any future development of the eastern portion of the site will require Site Plan Review and Design Review approval in accordance with Chapters 69 and 71 of the MZO.

Zoning Ordinance, Section 11-70-5 – Special Use Permit

The applicant is requesting to add an accessory crematory to an existing funeral home. Per Table 11-6-2 of the MZO, an accessory crematory is only permitted in the LC zoning district with the approval of a Special Use Permit.

Per Section 11-70-5 of the MZO, the Planning and Zoning Board, when making a decision on a SUP, shall find that the project conforms to the following criteria:

1. Approval of the proposed project will advance the goals and objectives of and is consistent with the policies of the General Plan and any other applicable City plan and/or policies;

The proposal complies with the Neighborhood Character Area designation of the Mesa 2040 General Plan by locating a commercial use along the arterial frontage of Main Street. The addition of an accessory crematory to the existing funeral home allows the business to provide additional services to the surrounding community and helps to maintain successful commercial development along this portion of East Main Street.

The proposal complies with this criteria.

2. The location, size, design, and operating characteristics of the proposed project are consistent with the purposes of the district where it is located and conform with the General Plan and any other applicable City plan or policies;

The location, size, design, and operating characteristics of the funeral home and accessory crematory proposed being proposed align with the type of development outlined within the definition of the Limited Commercial zoning district and comply with the Mesa 2040 General Plan, the Neighborhood Character Area and the Transit Corridor Character Area.

The proposal complies with this criteria.

3. The proposed project will not be injurious or detrimental to the adjacent or surrounding properties in the area, nor will the proposed project or improvements be injurious or detrimental to the neighborhood or to the general welfare of the City; and

The proposed project will not be injurious or detrimental to the adjacent or surrounding properties in the area, which include other commercial uses along the Main Street frontage as well as single-residence development located south of Main Street.

The proposal complies with this criteria.

4. Adequate public services, public facilities and public infrastructure are available to serve the proposed project.

The addition of the site does not add any additional burden to the existing public services, public facilities, nor public infrastructure. The public infrastructure is already on-site and will adequately serve the site and proposed use.

The request complies with this criterion.

Design Review:

The Design Review Board reviewed the subject request at their August 13, 2022 meeting. Staff is working with the applicant to address minor aesthetic comments and recommendations from the Design Review Board that do not impact the site plan.

Surrounding Zoning Designations and Existing Use Activity:

Northwest	North	Northeast
LC Commercial	LC Commercial	LC Commercial

West LC Commercial	Subject Property LC Funeral Parlor	East LC Commercial
Southwest (Across Main Street) LC Vacant	South (Across Main Street) RM-2-PAD Single-residence	Southeast (Across Main Street) LC Commercial

Compatibility with Surrounding Land Uses:

The subject site is currently operating as Sunflower Cremation and Burial. Properties to the north, east and west of the site are zoned Limited Commercial and contain a variety of commercial uses. South of the subject site on the south side of Main Street are a mixture of vacant and developed properties also zoned Limited Commercial as well as a single-residence development zoned RM-2-PAD. The proposed addition of an accessory crematory to an established funeral home is compatible with the surrounding development and land uses.

Neighborhood Participation Plan and Public Comments:

The applicant completed a Citizen Participation Process which included mailing letters to property owners within 500 feet of the site as well as HOAs within $\frac{1}{2}$ mile or registered neighborhoods within one mile of the site.

As of the date of this report, staff has not been contacted by any resident or property owner. Staff will provide the Board with any new information during the scheduled Study Session on June 14, 2023.

Staff Recommendations:

Staff finds the subject request is consistent with the Mesa 2040 General Plan, the review criteria for Site Plan Review outlined in Section 11-69-5 of the MZO and meets the requirements for a Special Use Permit outlined in Section 11-70-5 of the MZO; therefore, staff recommends approval with the following conditions.

Conditions of Approval:

1. Compliance with the final site plan submitted.
2. Compliance with all requirements of Design Review Case No. DRB22-00978.
3. Compliance with all City development codes and regulations.

Exhibits:

Exhibit 1-Vicinity Map

Exhibit 2-Staff Report

Exhibit 3-Application Information

- 3.1 Site Plan
- 3.2 Grading and Drainage Plan
- 3.3 Landscape Plan
- 3.4 Elevations
- 3.5 Project Narrative

3.6 Citizen Participation Plan
Exhibit 4-Citizen Participation Report