



**PLANNING DIVISION
STAFF REPORT**

Board of Adjustment

June 1, 2022

CASE No.: **BOA22-00323**

CASE NAME: **The Landings at Fiesta Village**

Owner's Name:	Mesa Multifamily Owner, LLC
Applicant's Name:	Cassandra Baumann, TS&G Custom Architectural Signs
Location of Request:	1310 West Southern Ave
Parcel Nos:	134-28-862
Nature of Request:	Requesting a Special Use Permit (SUP) to allow a Comprehensive Sign Plan (CSP) for a multiple residence development.
Zone District:	Multiple Residence 5 with a Planned Area Development Overlay (RM-5-PAD)
Council District:	3
Site size:	10.2± acres
Existing use:	Multiple Residence development – currently under construction
Hearing date(s):	June 1, 2022 / 5:30 p.m.
Staff Planner:	Lesley Davis, Senior Planner
Staff Recommendation:	APPROVAL with Conditions

HISTORY

On **July 18, 1970**, the property was annexed into the City of Mesa (Ordinance No. 675) and subsequently zoned RS-6.

In **April of 1973**, City Council approved a rezone from RS-6 to Limited Commercial (LC) (Case No. Z73-5).

On **December 18, 1978**, City Council approved a site plan for the subject property to allow for a commercial development (SPR78-001 & SPM78-009).

On **August 26, 2019**, City Council approved a rezone from LC to RM-5-PAD and a site plan to all for multiple residence uses for the subject property. (ZON18-00066; Ordinance No. 5525).

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Background:

The applicant is requesting a Special Use Permit (SUP) for a Comprehensive Sign Plan (CSP) for a multiple residence development, titled The Landings at Fiesta Village, in the RM-5-PAD zoning district pursuant to MZO Section 11-46-3. The requested CSP would allow for modifications to exceed the allowed sign area per Table 11-43-B of the City of Mesa Zoning Ordinance (MZO) allowed per the City of Mesa Sign Ordinance.

Per Table 11-43-3-B of the MZO, development in the RM-5 zoning district is allowed a maximum of one sign per street frontage, attached or detached, at a maximum area of 32 square feet (SF) each for each street frontage. The allowed sign area is calculated at 1 SF of sign area for each 5 lineal feet of street frontage with a maximum sign area of 32 square feet and 8 feet in height.

The subject parcel has 487-feet of frontage along South Stewart and 213-feet of frontage along South Alma School Road. The parcel does not have direct frontage on Southern Avenue, however the primary access driveway to the site is from Southern Avenue, through the adjacent commercial property. There are additional driveways on South Stewart and on Alma School Road that provide secondary access through the commercial development to the entrance.

There is an existing entry canopy that is located between the commercial and multiple residences development that identifies the entry point for The Landings at Fiesta Village. The existing canopy structure is located 255-feet north of the Southern Avenue right-of-way. The subject CSP proposes one (1) 146.6 SF detached sign installed on the edge of that entry canopy. No other signs are proposed on the property. The canopy is 17-feet, and the proposed sign is 5-feet, so the overall proposed height is 22-feet. The request exceeds the allowed sign area and height per Table 11-43-3-B of the MZO.

Table 1 below shows a comparison between the proposed CSP request for detached and attached signs and current MZO requirements without a CSP. Items in **bold face type** indicate modifications from MZO allowances.

Table 1: Attached and Detached Sign Allowances (MZO Table 11-43-3(B))

Sign Standard	Allowed per MZO	Proposed
Maximum number of signs	2 signs per street front, attached or detached	1 detached along Southern Avenue
Sign area allowed	1 SF/5 lineal feet of frontage up to 32 SF maximum for each sign – total 64 SF	146.62 SF
Maximum height	8-feet	22-feet

Illumination allowed if the sign is adjacent to an arterial or collector street	Illumination allowed Adjacent to 2 arterial streets	Illuminated
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General Plan Character Area Designation and Goals

The General Plan character area designation on the property is Mixed-Use Activity District, as well as in a Transit Corridor area designation. Per Chapter 7 of the Mesa 2040 General Plan, the goal of the Mixed-Use Activity District is to help these districts be strong and viable centers of commercial activity that attract people to unique shopping and entertainment experiences. Uses may include a mix of retail, entertainment, office and residential uses.

The Transit Corridor designation applies to development of corridors between stations and stops. It is intended to create urban patterns such as a pedestrian-oriented urban environment that results in development within walking distance to and from transit stops. The proposed CSP promotes visibility to a multiple residence development in a mixed use setting that provides strong pedestrian connections for walkability.

The Landings at Fiesta Village multiple residence development is also located within the Fiesta District Economic Activity District. Per Chapter 5 of the Mesa 2040 General Plan, the Fiesta District is primed to revitalize and re-energize over the next decade. In accordance with the Plan, the development efforts should focus on the redevelopment and revitalization of retail and entertainment uses to a regional mixed-use activity hub.

The proposed CSP advances the goals and objectives of the Mixed-Use Activity District, Transit Corridor area designation and the Fiesta District Economic Activity District by allowing greater visibility for a multiple residence community that will support retail and entertainment uses in the area.

Site Characteristics:

The Landings at Fiesta Village multiple residence development is currently under construction and located at the northwest corner of Alma School Road and Southern Avenue. The development is on 10.2± acres consisting of seven (7) three (3) story apartment buildings for a total of 220 units. The development has direct frontage along Alma School Road, however access to the site is provided through one primary drive on Southern Avenue and two secondary drives from South Stewart and Alma School Road, that are shared with the adjacent commercial property. The shared driveways lead to an existing entry canopy structure signifying the entrance of The Landings at Fiesta Village multiple residence development. This canopy structure is located 255-feet from the Southern Avenue right-of-way and is 17 feet high.

Surrounding Zoning Designations and Existing Use Activity:

Northwest (Across South Stewart) RM-4 Existing apartments	North RM-4 Existing apartments	Northeast LC (Across Alma School Road) Existing automotive repair
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		RS-6 Residential
West (Across South Stewart) LC Existing commercial	Subject Property RM-5-PAD Under construction	East (Across Alma School Road) RS-6 Residential LC Existing commercial
Southwest (Across South Stewart) LC Existing commercial	South LC-PAD Vacant and existing commercial	Southeast (Across Alma School Road) LC Existing commercial

Mesa Zoning Ordinance Requirements and Regulations:

Comprehensive Sign Plan MZO Section 11-46-3(D)

Per Section 11-46-3(D) of the MZO, the Board of Adjustment shall find the following criteria are met for approval of a CSP:

1. The development site contains unique or unusual physical conditions, such as topography, proportion, size, or relation to a public street that would limit or restrict normal sign visibility; or

The Landings at Fiesta Village is unique because it is accessed through the adjacent commercial property to the south, which is 255-feet from Southern Avenue. There is limited visibility onto the site from Southern Avenue, the only public street access to the site.

The proposal meets this criterion.

2. The proposed or existing development exhibits unique characteristics of land use, architectural style, site location, physical scale, historical interest, or other distinguishing features that represent a clear variation from conventional development; or

The site plan for The Landings at Fiesta Village was approved as part of a mixed-use development that includes commercial development along Southern Avenue and Alma School Road. The residential component of this development is to support the commercial activity in the area. The design with the entrance setback 255-feet from Southern Avenue behind commercial property, creates a unique site location for the development.

The proposal meets this criterion.

3. The proposed signage incorporates special design features such as lighting, materials, and craftsmanship, murals, or statuary that reinforce or are integrated with the building architecture.

The proposed sign is integrated into the entry canopy structure. The applicant has incorporated materials and finishes into the design of the sign that are integrated with the architecture of the multi-residence development.

The proposal meets this criterion.

Special Use Permit MZO Section 11-70-5

Per Section 11-70-5(E) of the MZO, the Board of Adjustment shall also find the following criteria are met for approval of a SUP:

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 Landings at Fiesta Village development is located within the Mixed Use Activity District as well as the Transit Corridor area designation and the Fiesta Economic Activity District of the Mesa 2040 General Plan. This multiple residence development is consistent with the goals and objectives of the General Plan by allowing a customized sign plan providing greater visibility for a multiple residence community that will serve the adjacent commercial and entertainment uses in the area.

The proposal meets this criterion.

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 proposed project is located in the RM-5 district with a Planned Area Development overlay. Per Section 11-5-2, the multiple residence development is allowed in the RM-5-PAD zoning district and conforms to the goals of the 2040 Mesa General Plan. The proposed CSP allowances for a detached sign are consistent with the location, size, design and operating characteristics of the site and surrounding area.

The proposal meets this criterion.

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

There will be no injurious or detrimental impact to surrounding properties with the proposed modifications in signage and will only encourage harmonic growth for the

surrounding area. The proposed increase in the height and sign area will not be overbearing in size, and will not flash, blink, animate or emit any noise. The proposed sign is located 255-feet from the right-of-way along Southern Avenue – thus, the signage itself will not be injurious or detrimental to the neighborhood or to the general welfare of the City of Mesa. The proposed CSP will not be injurious or detrimental to the surrounding properties.

The proposal meets this criterion.

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

The City of Mesa utilities and public infrastructure are available to serve the approved Landings at Fiesta Village development.

The proposal meets this criterion.

Findings:

- A. On August 26, 2019, the City Council approved a rezoning and site plan (Case No. ZON18-00066, Ord. No 5525) to allow the development of a multiple residence development on the property with the primary access drive through the adjacent commercial development along Southern Avenue.
- B. The unique access to the development site with no direct frontage along Southern Avenue limits visibility to the primary entry for the development.
- C. The proposed CSP provides modifications to the detached sign height and sign area to adequately advertise the entry to the multiple residence development establishing a consistent place-making theme within the development.
- D. The CSP specifies design guidelines for the lighting, materials and craftsmanship for the proposed sign, which integrates with the entry canopy structure and building architecture.
- E. The Landings at Fiesta Village development is located in the RM-5-PAD district, within the 2040 General Plan character area designations of Mixed Use Activity District as well as the Community Scale and Transit Corridor sub-types.
- F. The proposed CSP advances the goals and objectives of the of the General Plan and character areas by authorizing an increase to detached signage that will increase visibility to the multiple residence use that will support the mixed use character of the area, including the adjacent and nearby commercial developments within the Fiesta District.
- G. The proposed CSP will not be injurious or detrimental to the surrounding properties.

Neighborhood Participation Plan and Public Comments:

The applicant mailed the required notification letters to all property owners within 500 feet of the subject property. As of the date of this report, staff has not been contacted by any resident or property owner to express support or opposition to the request.

Staff Recommendation:

Based on the application received and preceding analysis, staff finds the proposed CSP conforms to the review criteria for Comprehensive Sign Plans outlined in Section 11-46-3 of the MZO and the required findings 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 sign plan documents submitted.
2. Compliance with all requirements of the Development Services Department regarding the issuance of building permits.
3. All signage to be reviewed and approved through a separate permit application.

Exhibits:

Exhibit 1 – Vicinity Map

Exhibit 2 – Staff Report

Exhibit 3 – Comprehensive Sign Plan, including the Narrative and Justification Statement and Site Plan