

Planning and Zoning Board



Study Session Minutes

Mesa City Council Chambers – Lower Level, 57 East 1st Street
Date: May 25, Time: 3:00 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Chair Jessica Sarkissian
Vice Chair Deanna Villanueva-Saucedo
Jeffrey Crockett*
Benjamin Ayers
Troy Peterson

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Tim Boyle
Shelly Allen

(*Boardmembers and staff participated in the meeting through the use of telephonic and audio conference equipment)

STAFF PRESENT:

Rachel Prelog
Michelle Dahlke
Lesley Davis
Cassidy Welch
Kellie Rorex
Joshua Grandlienard
Jennifer Merrill
Sarah Staudinger
Pamela Williams

OTHERS PRESENT:

Call meeting to order.

Chair Sarkissian declared a quorum present and the meeting was called to order at 3:05 p.m.

Review items on the agenda for the May 25, 2022, regular Planning and Zoning Board Hearing.

Staffmember Kellie Rorex presented case ZON21-01311: Applicants are requesting a Site Plan Modification to allow for building expansion at an existing industrial development. The site is located west of Greenfield Road, north McDowell Road, within an existing industrial park. The General Plan character area is Employment. The purpose of that character area to provide employment type land uses, typically with minimal connection to the surrounding area. This is also within a mile of Falcon Field, so it's within the Falcon Field Sub area. And the goal of that sub area plan is to ensure that the area is an oasis for abundant, high-quality employment uses. Zoning on the site is Light Industrial and indoor warehousing is permitted in the LI district. In a photo of the existing building, kind of behind the tank, is where the expansion will be. On the site plan, access will be from Omaha, Palm Street and

Oakland, and the addition, will be 11,451 square feet. The screened storage yard will be moved from where it is currently to the south side of the building. And the applicants are also proposing an outdoor amenity space, and entry plaza, in front of the new addition. Applicants will be going to the Board of Adjustment for a SCIP on June 1, and some of the items that they are requesting will be to allow for existing non-conforming landscape yards, existing non-conforming foundation bases, parking stall sizes, and interior parking lot landscape islands. They did go to the Design Review Board on May 10, and they did receive minor comments. They have addressed those with staff, and they are now approved for their elevations. Here's the proposed landscape plan that they brought to the Design Review Board.

They completed their citizen participation process and mailed letters to property owners within 500 feet, HOAs and registered neighborhoods, and they had a neighborhood meeting via Zoom on January 24, 2022. And there were no comments from interested parties that were received by staff, or by the applicant. And with that, staff finds that the request complies with the 2040 Mesa General Plan. It meets the review criteria for Site Plan Review outlined in Section 11-69-5 for the Mesa Zoning Ordinance, and staff recommends approval with conditions.

Boardmember Crockett inquired: Did Economic Development have any comments on this project?

Staffmember Kellie Rorex responded: No, they were in support of the expansion.

Staffmember Jennifer Merrill presented case ZON22-00040: The request is for Site Plan Review and a Special Use Permit to allow for the development of an industrial building. The location is north of Germann Road and the railroad, on the west side of Sossaman Road. It's triangular parcel, also known as the Weta property (if you're familiar with that area). The General Plan Character area is Employment, and this site is also located within the Mesa Gateway Strategic Development Plan and the Logistics and Commerce district in that plan. For the Employment character area, the Logistics, and Commerce district- the goal of those areas is for the area to be developed as large manufacturing facilities, warehousing, and business parks. The zoning designation is General Industrial, and it allows manufacturing processing, assembly, and warehousing, and the proposed use fits in those categories. This site plan shows and almost 450,000 square foot building. The entries and the detailing on the building is along the east elevation facing Sossaman Road. There are 78 dock doors, and they are screened from view, there on both the north, and south side of the building. So, it is a cross dock design building. And those doors are screened from view by eight-foot walls and gates. The Design Review Board discussed the architecture and the landscaping at their work session on April 12. They had several comments. They are relatively minor, and staff and the applicant have been working on addressing those.

The applicant completed a citizen participation process. They notified property owners within 500 feet. They also corresponded with the Union Pacific Railroad and the neighboring property owners. Staff has received no comments from the surrounding property owners. In summary, the request complies with the Mesa 2040 General Plan. It meets the review criteria for Site Plan Review, and it meets the requirements for a Special Use Permit, and we are recommending approval with conditions.

Boardmember Crockett inquired: I read that this the owner is not opting into the Pecos Road Employment Opportunity Zone. What is the relevance, or significance of that, if any?

Staffmember Jennifer Merrill clarified: The Pecos Road Employment Opportunity Zone is an option for properties that are on the west side of Hawes Road, north of Germann, and south of Pecos. It is a large area, and the intent of that opportunity zone is for the development of primarily industrial uses. It does not allow a lot of commercial, or showroom type of uses. And there are occasionally some developers who want to leave that option open for their future tenants. So, not everyone opts into the PREOZ. If developers do opt into the PREOZ, then there is a potential for the Site Plan Review to be administrative.

Boardmember Crockett responded: Thank you. I just want to understand that a little bit better. And then I just had two other questions quickly. Is there is any anticipation that the owner, or the project, will access the railroad tracks to the south?

Staffmember Jennifer Merrill responded: The original site plan for this development showed a rail spur into the property. And staff did have discussions with the applicant about either keeping that spur on the property shown on the site plan or removing it. Because of the detail that would need to be thought through in designing the site for that rail spur, it would depend largely on what specific user comes in. So, they opted to not show that rail spur, but it could be accommodated in the future. If the changes to the site are minor enough, it could be handled administratively. Otherwise, it would be coming back through a Site Plan Modification process.

Boardmember Crockett inquired: And then the last question I had, is to do with the screen wall. Is an eight-foot screen wall pretty standard height for a screen wall around a cross dock facility like this?

Staffmember Jennifer Merrill clarified: Eight feet is required for truck docks and loading areas.

Boardmember Crockett commented: Is that typically what we see when these comes to when these projects come through? Is an eight-foot wall?

Staffmember Jennifer Merrill confirmed: Yes, it is.

Staffmember Joshua Grandlienard presented case ZON22-00085. This is for a Site Plan Review and Rezone. It is concurrent with an annexation request as well. So, it is currently zoned IND-2, as well as RU-43 within the County. As part of that, it has to have a concurrent rezone, as part of that, it is going to AG, and then it is going to LI-PAD. The site is located north of Pecos, east of Ellsworth. The site just to the east is Project Cork and to the northwest is Legacy Sports Park. It is within the Mixed-Use community, which contains a mix of employment, office, retail, medical, educational, community service, tourism, entertainment, open space, recreational, and residential uses. And as part of this, this helps to add to the employment mix the area. Per the Logistics and Commerce District, as part of the Mesa Gateway Strategic Plan, it is consistent with those industrial uses as part of that. As I said earlier, is currently zoned RU-43 and IND-2 in Maricopa County. As part of ANX22- 00084 (on that one) it is an annexation request that would give comparable zoning to AG, and then from that it would be AG to LI-

PAD. On the two proposed site plans for the two buildings, Building A to the north faces Legacy (or at least along that alignment) and south faces Pecos. And you'll notice there is a very large drainage basin and between Pecos and the structure, and that is because of existing flows in that area. That is a requirement for not only this site, but sites along Pecos, just due to the overall drainage concerns in those areas. As part of this request, is a PAD: requesting a maximum building height of 60 feet instead of 40, reducing the setback for the side of Pecos from 20 to 15 (even though it exceeds that), and then parking space by use, reducing the parking as well as the interior parking lot Island standards, foundation based in order to meet the fire code, as well as general applicability for the refuse collection (the storage containers for the dumpsters). This went through Design Review on May 10. They are still working with staff on the final elevations. There were some minor comments, but they are mainly aesthetics, that is not going to affect anything on the site plan. Here is the landscape plan, that was presented to DRB. Again, you'll see that drainage channel, pretty obviously, on that south channel side.

Neighbors were contacted within 1000 feet. To this day, I have not received any comments from that area and neither has the applicant. Staff finds that complies with the 2040 General Plan, complies with the Gateway Strategic Development Plan, meets Site Plan Review criteria of 11-69-5, as well as meeting the PAD standards per section 11-22. Therefore, staff recommends approval conditions.

Boardmember Ayers inquired: Remember there's more of a question or guest statement than a question itself. I noticed there's some significant deviations on the standards obviously. I think most of them are fine. However, the one question I had is under the justification, it says internal landscaping and amenity areas will also be enhanced to provide more pleasing employee break and gathering area. Is that the only trade off we're getting out of this, with the significant development?

Staffmember Joshua Grandlienard responded: Yes, most of the issues with the PAD is because of that drainage channel and having to incorporate that. I definitely worked pretty hard on making sure the drainage channel was something aesthetically pleasing, as much as I could. So, there was definitely enhanced landscaping in there as well. But that was more of a requirement for screening rather than purely for the PAD justification.

Chair Sarkissian stated: That concluded the agenda. Do we have any Planning Director updates?

Assistant Planning Director Rachel Prelog: I do have a couple of things to update. So, in March, we were talking about the drive thru amendments and temporary use permit amendments. So, we are going to be having a neighborhood meeting on June 29, at 6pm, right here in lower council chambers. It is going to be on Zoom as well. So, we will definitely send out a reminder and ask if you can help spread the word. In addition to that, another update is, as you know, we've had a couple of issues on cases lately with the public notification. And so, we have been looking at our public notification process. And we do have some proposed changes that we are going to be unveiling soon. So, at a future session, if you're interested, I can go over those details with you. Or if you'd like, I can just send an email to the board describing the changes.

The board agreed upon receiving an email.

Boardmember Peterson inquired: Is there for summer board meeting schedule? Are there any deviations from the standard? I'm not aware of any.

It's the same as what the published schedule is right now. I can't remember off the top of my head.

Senior Planner Lesley Davis: August has one meeting versus two. I believe it follows the council. But Rachel is double checking here.

Assistant Planning Director Rachel Prelog clarified that there are 2 meetings in June, 2 meetings in July, and then just the one meeting in August. That is on August 24.

Vice Chair Villanueva- Saucedo motioned to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Boardmember Ayers.

The Study Session was adjourned.