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City of Mesa
55 N. Center St.
Mesa, Arizona

Re: New Rally's Restaurant
6941 E. Southern Avenue
Project Narrative

Introduction

This project is located east of the southeast corner of Power Road and Southern Avenue. The site consists of 34,771 square feet of area for a proposed new 1,073 square foot restaurant with site improvements. The property was recently split from the parent parcel which is Lot 1 of the Final Plat of WinCo Foods through a lot split that was filed on September 21, 2021, with the City of Mesa Planning Division, Case No. ADM21-00931. The lot split was approved by the city on April 14, 2022. The Mesa General Plan designates this property as both Neighborhood Village Center and Neighborhood Character Areas.

Existing Conditions

Currently the use of the property is a paved parking lot with perimeter landscaping along the north and east boundaries. The parking lot is screened from Southern Avenue with an existing 3-foot-high CMU wall. Southern Avenue is a fully improved six lane arterial street with a deceleration lane adjacent to the property and a flush center median. A drive aisle immediately east of the property leads to Southern and the deceleration lane. Current access to the site is via three separate driveways. One at the drive aisle from Southern Avenue and two from the south looped drive aisle which connects back to Southern Avenue on the west. The existing parking lot drains into a shared retention basin west of the property. To the north of the site across Southern Avenue are commercial and residential properties zoned LC and RS-6. To the east across the drive aisle is a full-service car wash zoned LC. South of the property is a loading dock and rear of a retail building zoned LC. West of the property beyond the retention basin is the side of a warehouse style grocery store also zoned LC.

Description

The plan is to remove the existing parking lot and replace it with a new Rally's quick service

restaurant. The restaurant will include an outdoor patio with seating for twenty patrons and be located west of the building. There will be a total of five precast concrete tables. Each table will seat 4 persons and will have its own round fiberglass shade umbrella. There will be a covered walk-up order window at the front of the building for customers to place and pick up orders. On the east side of the building will be a covered drive lane for drive through customers. This lane will feature dual order points behind the building. On the west side of the building will be another covered pick-up window for delivery orders only. Customers wishing to use the walk-up order window will use the parking located west of the building. Vehicular access to the project will be from the northeast corner via a new driveway and southwest corner via a widened existing driveway. The remaining existing driveways will be eliminated. Pedestrian access from Southern Avenue will be from a new sidewalk which will lead directly to the front of the restaurant. A double bin trash enclosure per Mesa standards is located at the rear of the site adjacent to the driveway.

The architecture of the building features Rally's corporate identity concept and follows a design previously approved for this franchise in the City of Mesa. Key design elements are the stainless-steel canopy across the front of the building and down a portion of the sides. This feature is for shading patrons and providing visual interest. The canopy will have a red LED accent lighting band. Above the stainless-steel canopy is a black and white checkerboard smooth tile tower with red accent tiles. Below the canopy is a feature brick wall to further define the entry. Other wall materials in the design include stucco, James Hardie lap siding areas and metal siding screening accents at the top of the walls. Attention has been paid to matching existing building color themes adjacent to this location. The bottom of the canopy columns has been enhanced by incorporating the same brick that is present at the building entry to provide further interest for the customers.

The project will continue to follow the previous drainage design and utilize the existing shared retention basin adjacent to the property. The storm water retention volume for the new design will be diminished from the prior required storm water retention as the new site design utilizes considerably more landscaped area. Thus, creating less runoff. Since the parking areas will no longer be adjacent to Southern Avenue, the existing screen wall along Southern will be removed to improve visibility to the site and landscaping. New screen walls will be constructed for the new parking areas. Much of the existing mature landscaping around the perimeter of the site will be preserved including the mature mesquite trees along Southern Avenue and three of the four tall palm trees at the east side of the property.

Alternative Compliance

Per Section 11-6-3(B)(5) of the Mesa Zoning Ordinance buildings shall have a recognizable base. Given the size of this building, the presence already of varied materials together with augmented wall planes it seems adding another perimeter characteristic would make the design become just too busy. If the building were more massive, taller and had longer expanses of walls, then yes, a base material would be appropriate. But here with a tiny building it is excessive. Also, strick enforcement of this standard in all cases begins to illicit a certain level of homogenesis design or universalness. Sometimes less is more particularly when it comes to scale.

Conclusion

This project will provide a needed service to the area. The proposed use is a considerable improvement to the current existing conditions at this site. The planned design is consistent with, sensitive to and bears similarity to the surrounding uses in the area. It will be a welcomed addition to the neighborhood.