

Planning and Zoning Board

Study Session Minutes

Mesa City Council Chambers – Lower Level, 57 East 1st Street

Date: January 16, 2018 Time: 7:30 a.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Chair Michael Clement
Dane Astle
Jessica Sarkissian
Tim Boyle
Jennifer Duff
Shelly Allen

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Vice Chair Michelle Dahlke

STAFF PRESENT:

John Wesley
Tom Ellsworth
Lesley Davis
Charlotte McDermott
Angelica Guervara
Rebecca Gorton

OTHERS PRESENT:

citizens who did not sign in

1. Boardmember Astle declared a quorum present and the meeting was called to order at 7:33 a.m.
2. Reviewed items on the agenda for the January 17, 2018 regular Planning and Zoning Board Hearing.

Items on the January 17, 2018 agenda were discussed.

Staffmember Lesley Davis presented case ZON17-00572 to the Board. Ms. Davis explained the case consists of a Minor General Plan Amendment to change the Character Type to Neighborhood; a rezoning from RS-90 to RSL-4.5-PAD; and, a preliminary plat. Ms. Davis stated the applicant has completed a citizen participation plan, mailing out over 180 letters within 1,000 feet of the site and held neighborhood meetings. Ms. Davis explained the applicant has received over 200 letters of support of the residential development by surrounding neighbors and staff has not received any contact directly from any neighbors. Ms. Davis provided the Board with an email from the property owner discussing finances for the property as well as letters of opposition for the project from Falcon Field Airport and Economic Development. Staffmember Davis stated a letter of support will be provided to the Board at the next Study Session from Bob McNichols of Longbow Business Development.

Ms. Davis explained staff's recommendation for denial of the Minor General Plan Amendment was derived by evaluating 5 points which are outlined in the 2040 General Plan. She stated staff has concluded the proposal does not meet the goals of the General Plan or the Falcon Field Sub-Area Plan and is not consistent with the goals of the Economic Development for this area. Ms. Davis continued to explain there are previous

site plan approvals for office and employment to the west of this site which includes hotel and office buildings. Ms. Davis stated due to the proximity of the freeway and arterial streets, the flight path to the airport, and the design principles of the General Plan, are other concerns this is not a proper fit for the site.

Boardmember Allen clarified there are site plan approvals which include a hotel and offices and the proximity is to the proposed site. Ms. Davis confirmed the previous approvals are to the west and south of the proposed development. Ms. Davis stated Chapter 5 of the Mesa 2040 General Plan outlines the need to do everything necessary to protect the city in these areas of economic growth from residential development. She explained this area is actively being marked by Economic Development.

Staffmember Davis explained there is a rezoning request and preliminary plat associated with the Minor General Plan Amendment. Staff is concerned that the subdivision has only one point of entry and if the rezoning does go forward, Fire Department has requested that a second point of access be added. Ms. Davis stated staff has added this as a condition of approval if this case were to go forward for approval. There is no product for the subdivision at this time, and staff has included conditions of approval to guarantee quality of the homes.

Chair Clement inquired if the City has had discussions with any developer for a commercial type use at this location. Applicant Sean Lake responded in 2008 the property owner had a request for retail which did not go through because there was a petition opposing the retail project at the time and the applicant withdrew application. Mr. Lake stated the same applicant is now coming before them to request the residential development.

Boardmember Allen inquired what the traffic count is and Ms. Davis responded she will provide that to the Board at the following study session. Ms. Davis pointed out the new Sprouts store opened recently which would increase the count. Boardmember Allen stated she has a concern that there is an abundance of vacancy and new projects in the area. Ms. Allen feels Economic Development has not been consistent in supporting and protecting employment districts. She pointed out the recent case that was approved on Baseline Road where the Economic Development Department did not oppose the General Plan Amendment. Boardmember Allen inquired if there has been a feasibility study completed on a hotel in this area. Applicant Sean Lake responded he has talked with people in the hotel industry and there has been no interest in this area because of the lack of freeway visibility.

Planning Director John Wesley provided the Board with the traffic count.

Boardmember Astle inquired what type of employment the City would like to see at this location. Ms. Davis responded staff feels the site is not good for retail because of the lack of freeway visibility and believes it would be a good area for office buildings.

Boardmember Allen confirmed the property is currently zoned R1-90 which would allow development of 90,000 sq. ft. lots and with the rezoning request the lots would more dense. Ms. Allen stated she continues to be adamant there is an overabundance of vacant space in the City.

Boardmember Boyle referenced the letter of opposition from Economic Development in which the Director referenced Mesa is behind surrounding areas in ratio between employment and residential development and if we have any sort of data that gives us specific areas of employment in Mesa. Planning Director John Wesley responded we could put together graphs which show areas of employment centers and Falcon Field area is one of the higher employment area. Mr. Wesley stated the Falcon Field area is one of the higher concentration areas in which we need to continue to provide this area the opportunity to grow as an employment district.

Mr. Boyle inquired if staff considers job to resident ratio when reviewing zoning cases. Mr. Wesley explained staff looks at these numbers and considers areas where residents have the opportunity to work and live. He stated it is reflected when you see increasing freeway traffic where residents are traveling out of the area to work. As we provide more local employment, we become more sustainable and more productive. Mr. Wesley stated although Mesa does not have the employment numbers that Tempe and Phoenix have, we can look at the county average and we want to move closer to that average.

Boardmember Duff confirmed Mesa has a greater area of open space than surrounding cities and Mr. Wesley confirmed that to be true. Ms. Duff confirmed the support from the surrounding area was for single-family residential and Mr. Lake responded that every resident they spoke with was in favor of the single-family development. Boardmember Duff confirmed that the 2040 Mesa General Plan was planned in conjunction with the surrounding areas. Mr. Wesley responded there was a lot of public outreach prior to the General Plan placed on the ballot to be voted upon by the people but we did not go out to each neighborhood.

3 Conduct a public hearing on the following general plan amendment:

3-a Conduct a public meeting on the following General Plan Amendment:

Chair Clement opened the public hearing for case ZON17-00572 at 8:18 am. Recommendation is for denial.

Applicant Sean Lake spoke on behalf of the applicant. Mr. Lake stated the surrounding residential area has made it clear they do not want commercial or retail in this area and prefers residential development only. Mr. Lake stated the request is consistent with what the neighbors want.

Chair Clement closed the public meeting on the General Plan Amendment 8:23 am.

4. Planning Director's Updates. (The items in the Planning Director's Updates are not for Board discussion and no Board action will be taken on the updated items.)

4-a Receive a presentation on the updated Sign Code.

Angelica Guevara, Project Manager, presented an overview of the draft Sign Code to the Board.

4-b Receive a presentation on the Airport Overlay District Zoning Land Use.


Planning Director, John Wesley, presented an overview of the Airfield Overlay District Modifications to the Board.

5. Adjournment.

Boardmember Astle made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:48 am. The motion was seconded by Boardmember Allen.

Vote: 6-0 (Vice Chair Dahlke, absent)

Respectfully submitted,


John Wesley, Secretary
Planning Director

Note: *Audio recordings of the Planning & Zoning Board study sessions are available in the Planning Division Office for review. The regular Planning & Zoning Board meeting is "live broadcasted" through the City of Mesa's website at www.mesaaz.gov*