



Planning and Zoning Board

Staff Report

CASE NUMBER: ZON17-00507
LOCATION/ADDRESS: The 1200 block of North Ellsworth Road (west side) and the 9100 block of East Glencove Avenue (south side).
GENERAL VICINITY: Located north of Brown Road on the west side of Ellsworth Road.
REQUEST: Rezoning (modification of Zoning Stipulation) and Site Plan Modification
PURPOSE: This request will allow for the development of an enclosed RV storage facility
COUNCIL DISTRICT: District 5
OWNER: Broc Hiatt
APPLICANT: Dorothy Shupe, Sketch Architecture Company
STAFF PLANNER: Cassidy Welch

SITE DATA

PARCEL NO.: 218-06-140F
PARCEL SIZE: 1.8 ± acres
EXISTING ZONING: Limited Commercial – LC
GENERAL PLAN CHARACTER: Neighborhood: Desert Uplands
CURRENT LAND USE: Vacant

SITE CONTEXT

NORTH: (Across Glencove Ave) Existing single family residential – County land, R1-6
EAST: (Across Ellsworth Road) Existing single family residential – Zoned RS-9
SOUTH: Existing commercial – Zoned LC
WEST: Proposed assisted living facility – Zoned RM-2 PAD

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Continuance to May 16, 2018

P&Z BOARD RECOMMENDATION: ☒ Approval with conditions. ☐ Denial

PROPOSITION 207 WAIVER SIGNED: ☒ Yes ☐ No

HISTORY/RELATED CASES

May 5, 1998: Annexed to the City of Mesa (Ord. #3464)
January 19, 1999: Establish comparable zoning for recently annexed land (Z98-117; Ord. #3589)
July 6, 1999: Rezoned from R1-43 (RS-43) to C-2 (LC) to allow the development of a commercial retail center (Z99-010; Ord. # 3650)
November 4, 2002: Site Plan Modification (Z02-026; Ord. # 4022)

PROJECT DESCRIPTION / REQUEST

This is a request for a rezoning to modify the condition of approval for compliance with the basic development associated with case numbers Z99-010 and Z02-026 and Site Plan Modification for an enclosed RV storage facility in the LC zoning district. The proposed development is located north of the northwest corner of Ellsworth and Brown Roads. The development consists of 3 buildings with a total of approximately 25,000 square feet.

NEIGHBORHOOD PARTICIPATION:

The applicant has completed a Citizen Participation Process, which included a mailed letter to property owners within 1,000' of the site, as well as HOAs within one half mile and registered neighborhoods within a mile. Several neighbors from the neighborhood directly north of the property attended the Design Review session with concerns regarding this development. As the comments were related to the site plan and not related to the design of the landscaping or elevations, they were advised to attend the Planning and Zoning Board hearing. The primary concern to the residents involves the access off Glencove Avenue with large vehicles driving through their neighborhood. A petition has been signed by property owners from the neighborhood to the North that does not support any access from Glencove Avenue. Staff has been contacted by several property owners from the surrounding neighborhood with concerns over the project.

The applicant will be holding another neighborhood meeting on April 12, 2018 in an attempt to work with the adjacent neighborhood. An updated Citizen Participation Report will be provided prior to the April 17, 2018 Study Session. An update will be provided by staff at the Planning and Zoning Board Study Session.

STAFF ANALYSIS

MESA 2040 GENERAL PLAN:

The General Plan character area for this site is Neighborhood: Desert Uplands. The primary intent of the neighborhood character type is to "provide safe places for people to live where they can feel secure and enjoy their surrounding community" (pg. 7-5). The Desert Uplands sub-type encourages large lot development with preservation of the natural desert. Whereas the Neighborhood character type anticipates and allows for commercial activity as part of the neighborhood, the intent would be for those commercial uses to primarily serve the immediate neighborhood. This property is, however, already zoned for commercial uses so the proposed use is allowed, if it can be designed in a way to meet the Site Plan Review criteria, which includes conformance with the General Plan.

Chapter 4 of the General Plan provides guidance on tools that can be used to create and maintain neighborhoods. Applicable concepts contained in this Chapter include:

- Avoiding incompatible land uses (e.g. locating an auto repair shop next door to a single-family residence or locating residences near an airport) and/or providing appropriate transitions between uses, particularly when developing or redeveloping neighborhoods next to or near higher impact employment areas to lessen the impact on the employment use.
- Encouraging new development and redevelopment that improves walkability between housing and key amenities and services such as parks, schools, shopping, and transit connections.
- Reviewing all development projects for conformance with high-quality design/construction standards.
- Maintaining a pedestrian scale and attractiveness along streets.

Given that the property is already zoned for commercial uses and has previous site plan approvals for commercial development, the question becomes whether or not the site can be designed to allow the operation of the proposed use in a manner consistent with the General Plan. Staff finds some challenges with the proposed use because it will bring large vehicles down a residential street to access the storage facility and because the large building masses along the south side of the street will be out of character with the residential area to the north. At the same time, however, the use of the site will be very low volume compared to other commercial activities that could take place on the site and the storage units will provide a screen and transition to the neighborhood from the more active commercial uses at the corner. To be consistent with the General Plan, staff would recommend the massing of the buildings be broken up to provide a more residential scale.

ZONING:

The subject site is currently zoned LC. The storage facility is a permitted use within the LC zoning district. There will be no outdoor storage at this facility. The original zoning case (Z99-010) and the previous site plan modification (Z02-026) were conditioned on compliance with the basic development associated with those cases. The proposed modifications are considered major which requires a rezoning to modify the site plan associated with the zoning condition.

SITE PLAN - MZO Section 11-69-5:

Development Standards – MZO Table 11-6-3.A	Required	Proposed
Maximum Building Height	30'	28'
Street-side Setbacks		
East – Ellsworth Road	15'	Meets
North – Glencove Avenue	20'	Meets
Interior Lot Line Setback		
West, adjacent to RM-2 PAD	20'	Meets
South, adjacent to LC (within future group center)	0'	Meets
Parking Standards – MZO Table 11-32-3.A	Required	Proposed
Storage Facility	4 spaces	4 spaces

The site is located north of the northwest corner of Brown Road and Ellsworth Road on approximately 1.8 acres. This proposal is for 3, single-story RV storage buildings and a total of 25,241 square feet. For added security, an 8' fence will be installed along the property lines of the site. There is no office or caretaker on site but the development does include on-site restrooms and custodial space. The required parking, trash enclosures, and water & sewer dump are located on the southern property line. The site plan provides 1 gated ingress only access drive off Glencove Avenue and a gated egress only drive on Ellsworth Road. There is an additional egress only gate on the southern property line identified as an "Emergency Exit" connecting to the existing CVS store site.

Concerns:

Staff has concerns with the proposed site plan specifically as it relates to the location of the buildings along the northern property line and the access drive off Glencove Avenue. Past site plans for this property have identified this parcel as a pad site within a greater commercial development with no drive access from Glencove Avenue. When the commercial zoning was approved in 1999, there was no median on Ellsworth Road so this portion of the property could have had direct access to full turning movements on Ellsworth. The site plan from 2002 acknowledges the proposed median on Ellsworth Road, which was built in 2004, and provided primary access off Brown Road and Ellsworth Road. The current proposal sites the sole access drive from Glencove Drive on the western side of the property. This will force all traffic related to the development to Glencove Avenue with no alternative access that avoids the residential neighborhood. This is not in keeping with the review criteria for site plan review in Section 11-69-5.A.3 of the zoning ordinance which states "The project site plan is appropriate to the function of the project and will provide a suitable environment for occupants, visitors, and the general community."

The most recently approved site plan modification from 2002 included a condition that a minimum 100' building setback must be maintained adjacent to Glencove; however, a lesser distance may be deemed appropriate with review by the Planning and Zoning Board and approval by the City Council (Z02-026; Ord. # 4022, Condition #2). This condition was based on the previous site plan (Z99-010) as well as significant neighborhood concern with the proximity of commercial development to residential. The proposed site plan greatly reduces this setback. In addition to the proposed setback reduction, there are two large buildings located along the north property that will give the appearance of a large building mass along Glencove Avenue. The large building massing in combination with the reduced setback will create an overwhelming visual that is directly in opposition of Section 11-69-5.A.2 of the site plan review criteria which states "the overall design of the project including its scale, massing, site plan, exterior design, and landscaping will enhance the appearance and features of the project site and surrounding natural and built environment."

To reduce the impacts of these concerns, staff suggests the site plan be modified so that all access is taken through the adjacent parcel to the South and the building massing along Glencove be reduced. An alternative would be to have the entry drive from Glencove in the middle of the site with buildings on each side. This would reduce the distance the RV's are traveling down the residential street and break up the building massing.

DESERT UPLANDS:

The proposed property is located in the Desert Uplands Sub-Area. The development complies with the Desert Uplands Area Design Guidelines. Landscaping and inorganic ground cover will be installed to comply with the preferred landscaping for the Desert Uplands Guidelines. The buildings are designed to blend with the desert environment and the surrounding community.

CONCLUSION:

The proposed development is an allowed use in the existing zoning district. The project as designed creates some conflicts with the adjacent residential neighborhood. Based on the current proposal, as well as concerns from surrounding property owners, staff is recommending continuance to the May 16, 2018 Planning & Zoning Board Hearing to allow staff to continue to work with the applicant to resolve the concerns. Should the Board determine the design as proposed is appropriate for the location and the applicant has mitigated the potential negative impacts, staff would recommend approval with the following stipulations.

CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL:

1. Compliance with the basic development as described in the project narrative, and as shown on the site plan, and preliminary elevations as approved by the Design Review Board (without guarantee of lot yield, building count, lot coverage) except as modified below.
2. Compliance with zoning cases Z99-010 and Z02-026, except as modified through approval of this case.
3. Compliance with all requirements of Design Review approval through DRB17-00506.
4. A minimum 5-foot-wide foundation base shall be provided along exterior walls adjacent to drive aisles per section 11-33-5.A of the zoning ordinance.
5. Recordation of cross-access agreement with adjacent property owner to the South.