



PLANNING DIVISION
STAFF REPORT

Planning and Zoning Board

April 28, 2021

CASE No.: ZON20-00820	PROJECT NAME: Casa Ramos Restaurant
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Owner's Name:	Casa Ramos Inc.
Applicant's Name:	Justin Pasternak
Location of Request:	Within the 1500 block of East Main Street (north side) and within the 0 to 100 block of North Hunt Drive (west side). Located east of Stapley Drive on the north side of Main Street.
Parcel No(s):	138-05-135A
Request:	Site Plan Review. This request will allow for the redevelopment of a restaurant.
Existing Zoning District:	General Commercial (GC)
Council District:	4
Site Size:	0.8± acres
Proposed Use(s):	Restaurant
Existing Use(s):	Restaurant
P&Z Hearing Date(s):	April 28, 2021 / 4:00 p.m.
Staff Planner:	Charlotte Bridges
Staff Recommendation:	APPROVAL with Conditions

HISTORY

On **January 5, 1949**, the City Council annexed approximately 2,419± acres, including the subject site, into the City of Mesa and subsequently zoned the site to General Commercial (GC) (Ordinance No. 228).

On **February 7, 2020**, the Fire Department responded to a fire that destroyed the existing restaurant building.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Background:

The subject request is for Site Plan Review to allow for the redevelopment of a 5,630 square foot restaurant in the General Commercial (GC) zoning district. On February 7, 2020, Mesa Fire Department responded to a fire that destroyed an existing restaurant on the subject site. The proposed site plan shows a new building located within the footprint of the previous building destroyed by the fire. Other improvements include installation of new landscape material, a six-foot privacy wall, and restriping of the existing parking lot.

General Plan Character Area Designation and Goals:

The Mesa 2040 General Plan Character Area designation on the property is Neighborhood with a Suburban Sub-type. The primary focus of the Neighborhood Character Area is to provide safe places for people to live where they can feel secure and enjoy their surrounding community. The Suburban Sub-type is the predominant neighborhood pattern in Mesa. These neighborhoods are primarily single residence in nature but may also contain areas of higher density residential and commercial uses along arterial frontages and at major street intersections. The proposed restaurant use on Main Street conforms with the General Plan's Neighborhood Character Area and Suburban Sub-type designation for the property.

The subject site also lies within the Transit Corridor Character Type of the Mesa 2040 General Plan. The Transit Corridor Character Type includes the light rail corridor, bus rapid transit corridors, and areas designated for a consistent high-level of transit options. The focus in this character type is to develop a mixed-use, pedestrian-oriented, urban environment, particularly within walking distance of transit stops. This character type overlays other character types and is used to transition the area into a more transit and pedestrian-oriented development.

Lastly, the subject site is within Central Main Street Area Plan, specifically within the Fraser/Sherwood Neighborhood Planning Area. Key recommendations for this Planning Area are creating a mixed-use, local-scaled, pedestrian-friendly transit village focused on the light rail stations and improving the pedestrian environment along arterial streets.

Staff reviewed the request and determined it is consistent with the development review criteria outlined in Chapter 15 (pg. 15-1) of the Mesa 2040 General Plan. The proposed redevelopment of a restaurant use conforms to the goals of the Neighborhood Character Area with the Suburban Sub-type designation. In addition, the site plan conforms to goals of the Transit Corridor Character Type of the Mesa 2040 General Plan and the key recommendations of the Central Main Street Area Plan for the Fraser/Sherwood Neighborhood by placing the building in close proximity to Main Street, providing hardscape and landscape improvements along the street frontages, and providing a sidewalk connecting the subject site to the public sidewalks.

Zoning District Designations:

The subject property is zoned General Commercial (GC). Per Section 11-6-2 of the Mesa Zoning Ordinance (MZO), the proposed restaurant is a permitted use in the GC zoning district.

Site Plan and General Site Development Standards:

The subject site is located at the northwest corner of East Main Street and North Hunt Drive. The proposed site plan shows construction of a new 5,630 square foot restaurant building in the southwest portion of the site, adjacent to Main Street. Access to the site is provided by an existing driveway along Main Street and two existing driveways along Hunt Drive. Parking for the site is located east and north of the building. Per Chapter 32 of the MZO, 72 parking spaces are required for the development. However, a Substantial Conformance Improvement Permit was approved through the Board of Adjustment to reduce the number of parking spaces to 52 parking spaces as shown on the site plan.

Substantial Conformance Improvement Permit (SCIP):

In order to redevelopment the property, the applicant requested a Substantial Conformance Improvement Permit (SCIP) through the Board of Adjustment to allow for modifications to certain development standards.

The subject site was developed in the late 1960s and does not conform to current building setbacks per Sections 11-6-3, to perimeter landscape and parking lot landscape islands requirements of Chapter 11-33, or on-site parking requirements of Chapter 32 of the MZO. Per Section 11-73 of the MZO, the intent of the SCIP is to recognize existing site constraints and work with applicants to bring the site into substantial compliance. On April 7, 2021 the Board of Adjustment reviewed and approved the requested SCIP (Case No. BOA20-00626). To bring the site into substantial conformance with the development standards of the MZO, the applicant will provide the following improvements as identified on the site plan and landscape plan:

- A 15-foot building setback and landscape area adjacent to Main Street in compliance Section 11-6-3 of the MZO;
- A 10-foot building setback and landscape area along the west property line;
- Installation of landscape areas adjacent to North Hunt Drive;
- New perimeter landscape material along the north property line;
- New retention area and landscaping adjacent to the west property line;
- New landscape islands and diamonds within the parking field; and
- Installation of a foundation base adjacent to the north and west elevations.

Design Review:

The Design Review Board (DRB) is scheduled to review the subject request on April 13, 2021. Staff will work with the applicant to address any comments and recommendations from the DRB and update the Planning and Zoning Board about the decision of the DRB during the scheduled Study Session on April 28, 2021.

Surrounding Zoning Designations and Existing Use Activity:

Northwest LC Commercial	North (Across Main Street Alley) RS-6 Single-Residences	Northeast (Across Hunt Drive) RS-6 Single-Residences
West GC Commercial	Subject Property GC Commercial	East (Across North Hunt Drive) GC Commercial
Southwest (Across Main Street) GC Commercial	South (Across Main Street) GC Commercial	Southeast (Across Main Street) GC Commercial

Compatibility with Surrounding Land Uses:

The subject site is located along a major arterial street (Main Street) which contains a mixture of large and small format commercial uses on both sides of the street. To the north, are existing single residence neighborhoods. The subject site has been historically used as a restaurant since the early 1970's. The building is proposed to be located along Main Street providing the greatest separation possible from the existing single residence neighborhoods to the north. Furthermore, the applicant will be constructing a new six-foot masonry wall and installing new landscape material along the northern property line in order to provide greater buffering between the restaurant and residential uses.

Neighborhood Participation Plan and Public Comments:

The applicant completed a Citizen Participation Process that included mailing letters to property owners within 1,000 feet of the site, as well as HOAs within ½ mile, and registered neighborhoods within one mile of the site. As of writing this report, staff has been contacted by three property owners within the notification area.

Two property owners indicated their support the project. The third property owner called to verify that a masonry wall, six feet in height would be constructed along the northern property line. This property owner was also concerned with maintenance issues associated with the proposed tree variety planted along the north property line. As a result, the applicant revised the landscape plan to show a different tree type. Planning staff will present the proposed landscape plan to the Design Review Board at the April 13, 2021 meeting and will update the Planning and Zoning Board about this issue during the scheduled Study Session on April 28, 2021. Also, the applicant will be providing an updated Citizen Participation Report to staff prior to the April 28, 2021 Study Session. Staff will provide the Board with any new information during the scheduled Study Session.

Staff Recommendation:

Based on the application received and the preceding analysis, staff finds the subject request is consistent with the General Plan and meets the review criteria for Site Plan Review outlined in Section 11-69-5 of the MZO. Therefore, staff recommends approval with the following conditions:

Conditions of Approval:

1. Compliance with the final site plan submitted.
2. Compliance with all City development codes and regulations, except the modifications to the development standards approved by the Board of Adjustment in case no. BOA20-00626.
3. Compliance with all requirements of the Board of Adjustment's approval for a Substantial Conformance Improvement Permit (Case No. BOA20-00626).
4. Compliance with all requirements of Design Review.

Exhibits:

Exhibit 1-Staff Report

Exhibit 2-Vicinity Map

Exhibit 3-Application Information

3.1 Project Narrative

3.2 Site Plan

3.3 Grading and Drainage

3.4 Landscape Plan

3.5 Elevations

Exhibit 4-Citizen Participation Plan

Exhibit 5-Citizen Participation Report