

Planning and Zoning Board

Study Session Minutes

Virtual Platform
Date: June 9, 2021 Time: 3:00 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Chair Dane Astle
Vice Chair Jessica Sarkissian
*Shelly Allen
Jeffrey Crockett
Deanna Villanueva-Saucedo
Ben Ayers

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Tim Boyle

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

STAFF PRESENT:

Nana Appiah
Tom Ellsworth
Lesley Davis
Evan Balmer
Jennifer Gniffke
Charlotte McDermott
Rebecca Gorton

OTHERS PRESENT:

None

1. Call meeting to order.

Chair Astle declared a quorum present and the meeting was called to order at 3:00 p.m.

2. Review items on the agenda for the June 9, 2021 regular Planning and Zoning Board Hearing.

Staffmember Evan Balmer presented case ZON20-00699 to the Board. This is a request for Site Plan Review for the development of an RV storage facility. The subject property is cross hatched on this map on the south side of Pecos Road west of Sossaman Road. The General Plan designation is Employment which allows for a wide range of employment opportunities, manufacturing, warehousing and business parks. The zoning is designated Light Industrial (LI) and the purpose of the LI Zoning District is to allow for areas of limited manufacturing, wholesaling, warehousing, and commercial uses. As the Board is aware, we did update our Zoning Ordinance to require a Council Use Permit for these types of facilities. That code update went into effect January of this year and this application was received in October of 2020. So, we're still under the previous code as far as that goes.

The site plan is for approximately 76,000 square feet of the self-storage component and 92,000 square feet for the RV storage. Access is off of Pecos with access into the storage itself gated so the actual storage uses would be screened from the public view.

This went to Design Review Board at their May meeting. The applicant received some comments back from the Board, mostly related to landscaping and bringing that closer to Pecos and spreading the landscaping out a little and creating some more interest at the office on the north elevation. We are working with the applicant to address those changes as it moves forward. The applicant completed the Citizen Participation Plan notifying property owners within 1,000 feet, HOAs and registered neighborhoods. We did not receive any responses.

This complies with the General Plan and meets the criteria for a Site Plan Review as outlined in Section 11-69-5 of the Zoning Ordinance. We are recommending approval and I would be happy to answer any questions the Board might have.

Boardmember Crockett asked Mr. Balmer to comment on what is quality development in the context of a self-storage and RV project and does this incorporate the elements of quality.

Mr. Balmer responded as you know quality can have a pretty wide meaning when we start talking about storage facilities and it really gets down to the elevations and making sure that the portions of the buildings that are seen from the public are interesting and that they have got interesting architecture and similar characteristics. It is difficult when you've got this type of facility to make it super high quality in a business park type of field. But it really comes down to the elevations and I think the applicant has done a good job with those.

Mr. Crockett added, in terms of landscaping, what is the applicant doing in terms of landscaping? Mr. Balmer stated they are meeting all our standards from the Zoning Ordinance as far as perimeter landscaping and foundation base, landscaping. Some of the comments that they got from Design Review Board was to bring the landscaping closer to the buildings and to the wall to screen any uses. They also have RVs that are above the wall and the feedback that they got from Design Review Board, especially the area along Pecos, was to actually bring that closer to the street and spread it out a bit. They were kind of clustering the landscaping, but they are meeting all our standards for landscaping. It is just a matter of tweaking it a little bit to meet the Design Review Boards comments.

Boardmember Allen stated the location of this property is in the proximity, obviously, of the Gateway Airport and it is not necessarily a Gateway entrance feature. It is however, right along some heavily traveled roads coming from Queen Creek to Mesa, and with this type of a use and the quality of construction. Did you receive any feedback at all from the Airport on that and they have any issues with a storage facility going in this location? Evan Balmer stated yes, we did reach out to the airport and they did not have any concerns with the project moving forward with this specific use at this location.

Ms. Allen had another question. When you are looking along Pecos and maybe a little further to the east, is that also currently zoned LI? Mr. Balmer stated it is and that whole section of Pecos is zoned either Light Industrial or General Industrial. It was confirmed it is the same for the west to Sossaman Road.

Staffmember Evan Balmer presented case ZON20-00447 to the Board. This case is similar to our last case in that it is also a Site Plan Review for a development of a storage facility. This one does not have a self-storage component and is just outdoor storage for RVs. It is located at the northwest corner of 222nd Street and Pecos Road. As the last case, the General Plan is

also Employment and it provides for a wide range of uses such as manufacturing, business parks and similar type uses. This one is also similar to the last one in that we currently require a Council Use Permit for storage. This application came in in July of 2020, whereas that code requirement kicked in January of this year.

This site is currently vacant, on Pecos Road, and the site plan shows 188 RV parking spaces. The access to the site is from 222nd Street, and there are no structures on this site. It will have open storage and no RV canopies, so it is paved with the required eight-foot screen wall. For outdoor storage, the Zoning Ordinance requires an eight-foot screen wall with wall articulation. Every 40 feet, the applicant has staggered the wall and included landscape pockets within, and they have also increased the size of the landscaping buffer. It would be required by code to have 20 feet and the applicant has set this back 40 feet from the road to try to screen some of the uses.

This is going to go to Design Review Board next week. As mentioned, there are no buildings on the site so there is not a lot to look at as far as elevations go. It is primarily a screen wall for this site as well as the rolling gate.

This is another Citizen Participation Plan that we did not get any responses on. They did complete the process of notifying residents within 1,000 feet, HOAs and registered neighborhoods, but we did not get a response on that. Again, it complies with the General Plan and Site Plan Review and we're recommending approval and I'm here for any questions.

Boardmember Villanueva-Saucedo stated that was great Citizen Participation. Boardmember Allen inquired what the business to the east of the property is and Mr. Balmer replied that it is a general industrial building.

Staffmember Evan Balmer presented case ZON21-00069 to the Board and explained this one has a few components. This is for Gallery Park and is a rezoning of the entire 41-acre site. It is a rezoning of one acre in the southeast corner from Agriculture (AG) to Limited Commercial (LC) PAD. It is a modification of the Gallery Park PAD to bring in that portion into the PAD. They are also asking for a couple deviations that I'll review as well as Site Plan Review for the entire 41-acre parcel. This is for a mixed-use development and is located north of Ray Road on the east side of Power Road.

The map shown does a good job of showing the portion that's being rezoned and is outlined in blue, and the PAD modifications for the entire 41 acres, that's cross hatched in black. The General Plan is Mixed Use Activity which allows large scale developments over 25 acres with a unique shopping and entertainment experiences as well as a mixture of uses.

The site was previously approved in 2019 and there is a mixture of uses within Gallery Park to include some residential components, commercial, and some office space. There are 27 buildings in total and the applicant is making some minor modifications to the building footprints for those pads along Power Road from the original site plan. In the southwest corner of this site there is Building 2, to which they have added a drive-thru. Building 20 is on the northeast corner of this site and is a multiple residence development that was previously approved, but they are modifying the footprint of that. It sits on that one-acre parcel and we need to bring that in for this development to move forward. We have approved a number of developments at Gallery Park, primarily in the southeast corner. There is a Spencer's,

Starbucks and Raising Canes and the applicant has updated the site plan to reflect what has been previously approved through Administrative Reviews.

As I mentioned, they are asking for two deviations to the PAD as part of this request. The first one is the setback for a street and front-end street facing sides for the area along the freeway. Loop 202 is on the west side of this site, and they are asking for a reduction from the requirement of the Zoning Ordinance from a 30-foot setback for buildings and 15 feet for parking structures to 20 feet and 15 feet for parking structures.

The second deviation has to do with compact parking and is specific to that Building 20. That is that multiple residence piece in the northeast corner. The requirements for compact parking is that on sites with at least 10 parking spaces, up to 20% can be compact. In addition to that there are some other requirements, where covered parking is required, those should be standard sized spaces. Compact spaces should be called out with pavement markings and they need to be distributed so that no more than nine compact spaces are grouped together. They are asking for a deviation, and basically want to remove those last three components and cover the compact parking as 20% of total parking spaces. The reason being that the multiple residence has two loft buildings in the center of this site with parking underneath. And the way that's arranged with the pillars for the loft buildings they can't fit nine-foot parking spaces in those areas. A compact parking space is 8x16 so it is a little narrower and would be able to fit within the footprint of those two loft buildings that they would be parking under. And again, this doesn't apply to the whole site. It is specific to that Building 20 in the northeast corner of the site.

They did the Citizen Participation as well as the with the standard 1,000 feet, HOAs and registered neighborhoods. We did not get any feedback from property owners within the community or within the notification radius, and the applicant did not either. So that being said, it does comply with the General Plan, meets the criteria for a Planned Development Overlay and Site Plan Review. We're recommending approval, and I'm happy to answer questions.

Boardmember Allen asked if he believes the changes that are being requested will change the development as a whole. Mr. Balmer replied, the other unique component of this project is they actually have Design Guidelines that were approved with the case in 2019. There are no modifications to those and they will still be there. All the changes that they are proposing have no new uses on the site, they were all previously approved. It comes down to the need to add that one-acre into the property to facilitate that multiple residence building. Because we're going through this process they also wanted to update some of the footprints for those PADs along Power Road; so they're really minor changes in that regard.

Boardmember Crockett asked if Mr. Balmer knows what the timetable is for this project to move forward. He stated they are actually moving forward now as we have approved a handful of Administrative Reviews. As I mentioned, Design Review within Gallery Park requires an administrative process for those Design Guidelines. We've approved three PADs and I believe we have two more that have been submitted. The apartments in Building 20 have been through Design Review. They are just waiting on site plan approval to bring that acre in to the overall project.

Staffmember Evan Balmer presented case ZON21-00177 to the Board. This is a request for Site Plan Review to allow a mixed-use development. This time we're talking about Mountain Vista Marketplace and it is located on the west side of Signal Butte Road north of the 60. The

General Plan on this one also is Mixed Use Activity. It allows large scale developments with a mixture of uses. The property is zoned LC-PAD. Today we are talking about parcel A of Mountain Vista Marketplace, which is one of the commercial components with the frontage on Signal Butte. The purpose of the LC Zoning District is to allow for indoor retail entertainment and those types of uses.

Just to kind of give you some context, the map shows the overall Mountain Vista Master Plan. Parcel A is the salmon-colored parcel on Signal Butte. West of that there are two multiple residence properties. The green pieces on the south are currently vacant, those are also zoned LC-PAD. On the north side of Hampton, we have another multiple residence development.

The next one is a little unique and we spent a lot of time on it. The Board might remember this was before you about a year ago now and we had some very specific conditions of approval with this one. There is also a Development Agreement that limits the number of drive-thrus on parcel to 4 and there was a condition of approval that any changes to those would require Council approval. There is only one modification to the site plan for this request and it is the relocation of the drive-thru from P4, which is the second pad on the north side of the site, and then moving that drive-thru to P1. But because of that condition of approval, it needs to go back to Council. They are not adding any additional drive-thrus, it will remain the same number of them and nothing else is changing. There are still three accesses onto Signal Butte Road and one onto Hampton.

This also completed the Citizen Participation and I have no results to report on this one and did not receive any comments. It complies with the General Plan and the criteria for Site Plan Review in Section 11-69-5. We are recommending approval and I'm ready for questions.

Boardmember Crockett asked, the hotel and fitness center on the property, are those conceptual or do they actually have someone identified to move into those buildings. Mr. Balmer responded I don't know if they have identified specific users at this point but there is a specific plan that calls out those uses within the site plan. The idea is that eventually there will be a hotel and a fitness center. I know they are actively marketing the site, I just don't know that they have identified specific tenants.

Mr. Crockett said, so does that mean that they couldn't put another use such as an office building where the hotel is? Does it have to be a hotel there based on the site plan approval? Mr. Balmer said it does. Modifications to the approved site plan and, to get a little deeper into it, as part of the PAD, there were some deviations specific to certain users on the site. For example, a parking reduction for fitness center or increased height for a hotel. If not, they would come back through Planning and Zoning. Mr. Crockett said, okay, and do you know anything about the timeline for this project? Mr. Balmer said I don't but this is another one that has Design Guidelines that have made that design review process administrative, and we currently have three applications in for some of the PAD restaurants. So, they are moving on this one also.

Planning Director, Nana Appiah, stated we had a conversation with the property owners about three or two months ago. And my understanding was they have identified a user for the gym, and that is moving forward. But as we all know, the hotel was on hold because of the pandemic but they will be coming forward to get an application to get building permits for the gym very soon.

Staffmember Jennifer Gniffke presented case ZON20-00364, The Grove on Main Condominium to the Board. The location is on the east side of Mesa Drive and on the south side of Main Street, just west of LeSueur. The General Plan land use designation for the property is Neighborhood with a Transit District and Station Area Overlay. The site is also located within the Temple-Pioneer Park Neighborhood Planning Area of the Central Main Plan. The zoning for this site is T5 Main Street Flex (T5MSF) and the intent of that zoning district is to have flexible transition from commercial to residential uses and a mixture of ground floor uses.

This request is a is for a preliminary plat and the intent of the plat is to provide condominium ownership for the common spaces in the development. Those would be the ground level pedestrian areas, the gardens, the swimming pool, and the other amenity areas on this site as well. It also includes the underground parking garage. There is an updated preliminary plat that was just submitted today. The only real change with this new submitted plat is that it is titled "Preliminary Plat" and the original referred to it as a "Final Plat". Today we are considering the preliminary plat and so we needed that to be corrected. Otherwise, there were no other changes. The Site Plan was approved in November of 2018 and was approved through a Zoning Clearance process, which is an administrative process because it is within the Form Based Code.

Staff received one comment card that was submitted today from a neighbor to the south of the property, and staff will be reading that in for the record. It essentially was a concern with the prices of the property after condominium ownership. I responded to the neighbor explaining what it is, and I believe what the concern was is if these are individually owned condominium units. So, I explained that this is not for the purpose of this plat. That is my understanding of the concern at this point.

In summary, the request complies with the Mesa 2040 General Plan and the Mesa Subdivision Regulations. Staff is recommending approval with conditions and I'm happy to answer any questions.

Boardmember Crockett asked if this is the typical way we do these things because as far as I can tell, the improvements are already constructed so why are we doing a preliminary plat. Ms. Gniffke stated it is my understanding that the owners just want to establish a condominium association to maintain those amenities. I am not sure why the timeline is the way it is. Mr. Crockett said, so can I assume then that they did not contemplate that previously or is this a new concept they have come up with? I mean, typically, I would think that that preliminary plat and the common areas being shared would be done at the beginning of the project and not after everything has been built. Ms. Gniffke responded, throughout the discussions that we had with the developer over the years, I remember discussions of individual ownership of residential units, and then rental of those individual units. So, my understanding is that the type of ownership has just evolved.

Boardmember Allen stated, I know you said they go back between each individual homeowner who owns each unit or whether it is rental or apartments, and so, what we are talking about here is if this is not homeownership, each one of these are not individually owned. Ms. Gniffke stated that is correct. Ms. Allen said, and then the common area is just going to be listed as a common area but taken care of by the HOA. Ms. Gniffke confirmed that to be correct.

3. Planning Director's Updates.

- Decisions of the City Council's May 17 and June 7, 2021 land use hearings.

Planning Director Nana Appiah stated, on the agenda I do have an update for City Council land use decision that took place on May 17 and June 7. Unfortunately, there has not been any major land use decisions made by the City Council on these dates. There were several projects that were introduced Monday, but they are going for action at the next meeting on June 21.

One big project or one of the significant projects that you discussed, was the Center Street project where the City is requesting to rezone the property from Agricultural and Light Industrial to Public/Semi Public for the development of a public park. We received a significant number of residents that wanted to speak in favor and against it. I will provide you an update in a in our next meeting on this case.

Two other updates that I have for you is that at this time of the year we gain great, amazing new Boardmembers and we also lose some Boardmembers. For staff we always get into this state where we really enjoy working with the Board and whatever you guys do really does have an impact on what we do and how well we work with our Board. So, with that being said, it is very unfortunate that Chair Astle's term has ended. My understanding is today is going to be his last meeting. I wanted to take this opportunity to thank him for the amazing work that he's done the past year. We have been able to do all these great things because of your leadership and we do appreciate that very much.

Chair Astle responded it has been a wonderful time working on the Board and it has gone by so quickly. To be honest, it feels like it has been only a couple years but I have really enjoyed my time and look forward to further volunteering with the City. I'll have to look for that opportunity and, and see you guys some more. But you guys will do very well and there are a lot of great people here.

Dr. Appiah said, I always say once you leave the Board it does not mean you disengage yourself from all the land use, citizen participation, and activities that happen. There is an alumni that is formed where we can fall back on you. We are expecting you to get involved in future projects. As you know, there are several big projects including the General Plan update coming up. That is going to have a lot of stakeholder and citizen participation, and somebody like you that has had the experience can really help us with the process. We are looking through the applications we have received and working with the Mayor and then he will be making an appointment for a new Boardmember.

That is the change on the Board level. On the planning staff level, one great thing and also not so great, is when you have amazing staff doing so well it also creates opportunity for other people around here to also steal them. I don't really know if this management style of developing staff is really a good idea, but I think I'm beginning to have different opinions on that. But, with that being said, I think it is a great opportunity and to genuinely get excited when we see one of our own actually going to another high position. With that, I'm not going to steal the time from Tom, but I'm going to pass it on to him to actually talk about what he's going to be up to.

Principal Planner Tom Ellsworth said, my six years turned into 22 years with the City of Mesa. There is an opportunity that's come up and I was offered the position of the Director of Planning and Development at Maricopa County, so I'll be moving on. I will be here for the June 23 meeting and my last day with the City will be the 24th of June. The Boardmembers congratulated Tom and wished him well.

4. Adjournment.

Boardmember Villanueva-Saucedo motioned to adjourn the meeting at 3:38 p.m. The motion was seconded by Boardmember Ayers.

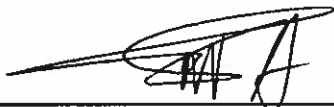
Vote: 6-0 Approved (Boardmember Boyle, absent)

Upon tabulation of vote, it showed:

AYES – Astle, Sarkissian, Allen, Crockett, Villanueva-Saucedo and Ayers

NAYS – None

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Nana K. Appiah', written over a horizontal line.

Nana K. Appiah, AICP, 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.