

Planning and Zoning Board

Study Session Minutes

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

Date: August 25, 2021 Time: 3:00 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Tim Boyle
*Shelly Allen
Jeffrey Crockett
Deanna Villanueva-Saucedo
Ben Ayers

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Vice Chair Jessica Sarkissian
Troy Peterson

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

STAFF PRESENT:

Nana Appiah
Rachel Prelog
Lesley Davis
Evan Balmer
Charlotte Bridges
Chloe Durfee-Sherman
Charlotte McDermott
Sarah Staudinger
Rebecca Gorton

OTHERS PRESENT:

None

1. Call meeting to order.

Vice Chair Villanueva-Saucedo declared a quorum present and the meeting was called to order at 3:00 p.m.

2. Review items on the agenda for the August 25, 2021, regular Planning and Zoning Board Hearing.

Staffmember Evan Balmer presented case ZON20-00800 to the Board. Mr. Balmer stated this request is to allow for the development of an industrial building located on the northwest corner of Thomas Road and Val Vista Drive. The General Plan Character Area Designation for this property that is highlighted in yellow on the map is Neighborhood and the portion to the west is Neighborhood Village. Neighborhood allows for a variety of housing types with commercial on arterial frontage road and Neighborhood Character Type is more of a commercial with shopping areas. However, Chapter 16 of the General Plan states that the Zoning Ordinance establishes permitted uses on a property; that is important when we talk about the zoning on the property.

The zoning on the property is GI (General Industrial). That zoning was put into place when the property was annexed into the City in 1981. At that time, the City envisioned larger heavy industrial uses on this property. Since the zoning has been in place since 1981, there have been no rezoning's or other changes to the property. The GI District does allow for manufacturing, assembly and storage types of uses. This request is not a rezoning and is strictly a Site Plan Review for an industrial building.

The site is currently vacant and will have two access points onto Thomas Road. There would be a large industrial building on the west side of this site, a storage yard in the center, and a portion reserved for future development. The eastern side of the site has an existing substation with a cell tower. While it is part of the subject parcel there will be no development proposed on that site. The building is set back from Thomas Road 101 feet and on the west property line it will be set back 137 feet. The applicant did make some changes to the site to make it fit into the neighborhood a little bit better with enhanced landscaping along Thomas Road. Industrial developments are also required to provide a percentage of this site with a common open space. The applicant did provide this open space along Thomas Road to allow for use by both employees and residents in the area.

This project went to Design Review Board on August 10. The applicant did receive some comments from the Board, mostly looking for ways to soften the appearance of the building as it is surrounded by residential development. Some of the suggestions are to look at enhancing screen walls, landscaping and some additional articulation on the north side of the building that faces the 202. The applicant and staff are still working through those changes.

They did complete the required Citizen Participation process and notified neighbors within 1,000 feet of the site, HOAs and Registered Neighborhoods. In December they held a neighborhood meeting and at that neighborhood meeting there were 16 attendees. Some of the concerns were the use of the site, traffic, building height, and screening of the building. They also sent out the required public notices for the Planning and Zoning Board meeting on August 9th. This does comply with the Mesa 2040 General Plan, as well as the Review Criteria for Site Plan Review. Staff is recommending approval with conditions, and I would be happy to answer any questions the board might have.

Boardmember Crockett asked if staff has any information on the status of the city utilities in that area and if they are going to have work done to extend utilities. Staffmember Evan Balmer stated the applicant would be responsible for bringing utilities to their site and believe they are existing in Thomas Road. It should have a minimal impact to the utility service.

Staffmember Chloe Durfee-Sherman presented case ZON21-00353 to the Board. Ms. Durfee-Sherman stated it is near the corner of Baseline Road and Greenfield Road within the existing Greenfield Plaza. It is within the Mixed Use Activity District which promotes community and regional activities as well as significant retail and commercial. The site is within the Limited Commercial Zoning District which does support the current use as a medical office with the drive-thru.

The request is for a Site Plan Review for a dental office with a drive-thru which will be located on the left side of the building. They have a cross access agreement for vehicular access through other sites as there is a large retention area directly in front of the property and they do not have access on Baseline Road. They do have a pedestrian connection through to

Baseline Road. The elevations show a modern farmhouse style using materials such as board and batten, stucco, and brick.

They did complete the required Citizen Participation process and notified property owners within 1,000 feet, HOAs and registered neighborhoods. The applicant and staff has not received any responses or questions.

This does comply with the Mesa 2040 General Plan, as well as the review criteria for Site Plan Review outlined in Section 11-69-5 of the City of Mesa Zoning Ordinance. Staff recommends approval with conditions, and I would be happy to answer any questions.

There were no questions or discussion by the Board.

Staffmember Charlotte Bridges presented case ZON20-00210 to the Board. Ms. Bridges stated the location is east of Power Road on the southside of University Drive. The General Plan character area designation for this property is Neighborhood Village. The intention is to serve general population within a two-mile radius of the site. It also provides for regular shopping and service needs and is intended to create a sense of place within that neighborhood.

The existing zoning on the property as Limited Commercial (LC) which permits retail, offices, and service-oriented uses. The request before you is to rezone the property from LC to Limited Commercial (LC) with a Bonus Intensity Zone Overlay (BIZ) and also Site Plan Review. The purpose is to allow the development of a commercial center. As a part of the request, they are requesting a Bonus Intensity Zone Overlay and the purpose of this BIZ Overlay to allow for variations to certain development standards to allow greater intensity of development and unique innovative and superior quality.

As part of the variations from the development standards, the applicant is requesting reduction of the building setback and landscape setback along University Drive from 15 feet to 8 feet. Also, the interior side building setback on the east adjacent to the drive aisle that enters, from 25 feet to 15 feet and minimum landscape yard adjacent to RSL District from 20 feet to 10 feet to 15 feet.

The applicant is also requesting a reduction in the number of landscaped parking islands. The requirement is for a landscape island at each end of a row of stalls and in between 8 contiguous parking stalls. They are also requesting a reduction in the landscape material. This is primarily in the landscape islands that are within the SRP easement because SRP will not allow shrubs and trees in those areas. The applicant is proposing ground cover in those islands that are within the SRP easement.

Lastly, they are requesting a reduction in the foundation base. Normally 15 feet is required along the south elevations with primary entrances and the request is between 7 feet six inches to 12 feet in those areas.

The site plan shows the landscape areas that are being proposed for the property and highlights the entrances into the project. What is unique about this project is it is actually composed of three lots. The two east lots are owned by the property owner and the third lot to the west is actually Bureau of Land Management (BLM) property that has been granted to the City of Mesa as right-of-way. The applicant is working with the City to coordinate the Use

Agreement to allow the drive aisle to connect to the existing drive aisle that connects Quick Trip to University Drive serve the site as well.

This project was reviewed by the Design Review Board in February. The applicant has not changed the elevations at this time per the recommendations of the Design Review Board. Staff will work with the applicant to address the Design Review Board recommendations once this application is further along in the zoning approval. Part of the recommendations by the Design Review is to verify that the cap along the parapet of the structure is actually metal. They also recommended some changes to the color of the building so that the darker of the browns blend better with the rest of the palette of the building and they're recommending a less intense red on the awning. They also wanted the applicant to verify the plant material on the landscape plan was low water material and if it was not low water and material to replace it.

As part of Citizen Participation process, the applicant did reach out to property owners within 1,000 feet, HOAs, Registered Homeowners and the mobile home park directly to the east. A letter from the mobile home park is included in the Citizen Participation packet. There were a few minor concerns that were expressed by that community having to do with traffic. Per the review from the Transportation Department, they did not see significant traffic impact along University. The community was also concerned with some of the uses that might be allowed within that shopping center, specifically more adult oriented establishments, and some outdoor activities.

The uses that would be permitted in the shopping center would have to be permitted in the LC District and this district does not allow marijuana uses, adult entertainment uses or outdoor music that the community expressed concern for. The ordinance would allow indoor music, but it must be a fully enclosed space and the sound attenuated. The LC district does allow outdoor dining as a part of restaurants, and I believe there is an outdoor patio area shown on the site plan. Other than the responses from the mobile home community to the to the east, staff has not received any other comments or concerns about this project.

In summary, staff has reviewed this and found that it complies with the 2040 Mesa General Plan and the criteria of Chapter 21 of the Bonus Intensity Zone overlay district and meets the criteria for Site Plan Review outlined in Chapter 11-69-5 of the Mesa Zoning Ordinance. Staff is recommending approval with conditions, and I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.

Boardmember Allen asked, the landscape improvements on the BLM right-of-way portion of the land, was that donated or dedicated back to the City of Mesa? And if so, has staff talked to Real Estate Services about the project and are they in agreement with the use. Ms. Bridges responded that is correct. The applicant has worked with Real Estate Services, and we have an initial concurrence from the BLM through Real Estate that BLM will allow the property to be used for the driveway and the landscape improvements shown on the plan. Ms. Allen confirmed we will have an agreement in place in case something ever changes with the property.

Boardmember Crockett asked to follow up on that question. The maintenance responsibility for the landscaping and the roadway on that BLM right-of-way portion of the project will be with the applicant pursuant to a Use Agreement. Staffmember Charlotte Bridges stated, yes, that is correct. Mr. Crockett confirmed the applicant would be maintaining that segment of the

roadway on the right-of-way. It looks like the entrance will come in from the west side through the Quick Trip parking lot. Ms. Bridges responded that is correct. Ms. Bridges also noted the other central access point and the other access drive aisle on the east side. Mr. Crockett asked if the access from the west requires an agreement with QT to be able to use that portion of the property. Ms. Bridges stated the access from the west does require an agreement with QT and Ms. Bridges said it is a similar agreement that was done with the BLM and will be combined with that agreement.

Boardmember Crockett stated his other question is regarding the BIZ and what aspects of quality the applicant is proposing that qualify the project to be given a BIZ. Ms. Bridges responded the main unique development characteristic for this project is the north elevation that is closest to Broadway Road. They are proposing spandrel glass or a faux storefront all along that north elevation of the building. That is the primary reason to justify the request for the Bonus Intensity Overlay.

Boardmember Boyle stated, to further discuss Boardmember Crockett's request, the trade-off for approving the BIZ is that we are getting less landscape, longer parking aisles, zero landscape at some points and we are only getting bigger glass on the one side. There are not any other benefits that they are bringing to the design other than just more glass? Staffmember Charlotte Bridges responded they are actually providing additional landscaping on the BLM property along the south side of the driveway as well as adjacent to University Drive. Mr. Boyle asked if they are providing more trees and shrubs than is required. Ms. Bridges stated they are providing the number required by code in those additional landscape areas. Mr. Boyle asked for clarification, the only thing we are getting is the spandrel glass that we are getting for the tradeoff?

Planning Director, Nana Appiah, responded I actually like those questions. These are questions that I get excited when the Board asks because they are questions, we should be asking when an applicant requests a PAD or BIZ. We should ask what alternative standards they are proposing or providing that makes the development superior because it is a standard project. To add to Charlotte's response, due to the uniqueness of the property and physical constraints, there are electric lines that go through the property that requires them to be able to request use a BIZ to be able to have some modifications to be able to develop the property.

Mr. Boyle stated, I understand that. It seems like we're giving up an awful lot in exchange for bigger windows, and if that is Mesa standards, I don't know how well we're going to look here in the next 10 or 15 years. I think maybe there should be some more vegetation and trees in the landscape areas. I do not feel this is a good tradeoff for the city. Mr. Crockett stated, to follow up and to make sure I understand, so on the side of the building which fronts on to University that would ordinarily be the back side of the building, and if they are going to put full windows in so that it looks like a storefront across the back side of the building that faces University, is this the unique architectural feature? Ms. Bridges confirmed that is correct. Mr. Crockett stated on the landscaping on the BLM property, the maintenance of that portion will be done by the applicant which includes the water that is used to irrigate the landscaping will be paid for by the applicant. Staffmember Charlotte Bridges confirmed that is my understanding.

Boardmember Allen asked will there be variations in the elevations on the back side of the building such as awnings and that type of thing along University Drive. Ms. Bridges responded

yes, that is correct. The articulation along the elevations was reviewed through the Design Review Board and meets current code requirement.

Principal Planner Rachel Prelog clarified an item on this. The landscaping on the BLM property is not required for the development, so is that was additional as well, and is part of the BIZ justification.

Staffmember Charlotte Bridges presented case ZON21-00164 to the Board. This project is located at the northeast corner of Adobe Road and Recker Road. It is surrounded by single family residential to the north and to the west and then across Adobe Road and across Recker Road is within Maricopa County property and is single family residential as well. The General Plan for this property is Neighborhood Suburban, and the primary characteristic of the Neighborhood Suburban Character Area is single family residences. This character area also allows for a mixture of residential units with greater density dwelling units per acre adjacent to the arterial thoroughfares.

The current zoning on the property is the Single Residence 7 (RS-7) and it is undeveloped. The applicant is proposing to rezone the property from the RS-7 to Multiple Residence 3 (RM-3) with a Planned Area Development Overlay (PAD). Also included in this request is Site Plan Review and a Preliminary Plat. The purpose is to allow for the development of to Multiple Residence 3 (RM-3) with a PAD to total of 38 residences as a condominium development. As a part of the request, there is the PAD overlay which allows superior design and flexibility to create higher density development for this site. In this case, the applicant has agreed to reduce the maximum density for the site to 18.6 dwelling units per acre. That is principally to make sure that the minimum number of required parking spaces are provided on the site. This stipulation is being made through the PAD process.

On the site plan, it shows to two, two-story multiple residence buildings with a total of 38 condominium units. Access to the site is provided both from Adobe and Recker Road, there is a centralized amenity space and there are 81 provided parking spaces of which 42 parking spaces are covered. In addition, there is landscaping around the perimeter of the site, as well as in the interior and common space area.

The applicant did complete the Citizen Participation plan for this project, notifying property owners within 1,000 feet of the site, HOAs and registered neighborhoods. They did hold a meeting and the summary of the meeting as outlined in the Citizen Participation Report. In general, the majority of the comments were in regard to the use of the multi-family residential development as opposed to some type of single-family residential development and the applicant responded to those comments. We did receive the school analysis for this property which indicated there is plenty of capacity in both the elementary, middle school and high schools within the district for this development.

In summary, staff's analysis determined that this request does comply with the 2040 Mesa General Plan. It meets the criteria of Chapter 22 for a Planned Area Development Overlay, and it meets the Site Plan Review criteria as outlined in Section 11-69-5 of the MZO. Planning staff is recommending approval with conditions.

Dr. Appiah asked Ms. Bridges to explain what is making this proposal superior and the reason staff is in support of the PAD. Ms. Bridges explained staff supports the PAD request due to the unique architecture that is incorporated into this building the superior quality of the

materials used in the elevations. Also, the common open space, which exceeds development the Mesa Zoning Ordinance Standards for that common open space area.

Boardmember Crockett stated from one of the comments from the nearby residents they mentioned there was pooling of water sometimes in the intersection at Adobe and Recker. Does staff have any additional information on whether the City has any knowledge of that or whether anything needs to be done to address that. Ms. Bridges responded, not directly, but I will make sure to bring it to the attention of our Engineering staff so they are they are aware of the issue.

Boardmember Boyle stated. I think this is a good choice. With these corners that are vacant and have been zoned for single-family homes, we have learned through experience no one wants to live on a big major intersection corner. And so, switching these corner lots to multi-family facilitates that great blend that we're always trying to do going from single-family houses to multifamily on the street. So, I applaud that and its slightly unique architecture, which is always nice.

Staff received one comment card on this case, and it was determined case ZON21-00164 will not need to be removed from the consent agenda. The comment card will be read into the record at the regular meeting and Vice Chair Villanueva-Saucedo asked staff to read the comment card for the study session. Staffmember Rebecca Gorton stated, the comment card came from Jerry Kearsing, 6135 East El Paso, stating he is opposed. He states "the current zoning is appropriate for the subject parcel to claim that the proposed project as a condominium project is a total lie. It is an apartment complex. This is smack dab in the middle of senior housing. Some multifamily dwellings will be nothing more than an eyesore for the community. Just because the City wants to sell the property is not an adequate reason to rezone this parcel. That concludes their comment."

3. Planning Director's Update:

Dr. Appiah stated the City Council returned back from their summer break on August 23, for the actual public hearing. We have several planning land use cases on the agenda, but there was no decision because most of them are on for introduction. There is one case, the Sycamore Station Smart Growth Community Plan that was re-introduced. Again, it had been introduced before Council went on break, but during discussion with Council and some of the community members, there were two additional conditions of approval which were added to the original conditions. Because of the additional conditions, the case had to be introduced. The two additional conditions include the requirement that the ground floor and development facing Main Street be commercial. That was a requirement of the Form Based Code by Council that wanted to make sure that it is a visible condition that is also affirmed as part of the requirement. And then the second condition of approval is to require solar mounted panels on top of the covered parking that will be developed as part of the City's parcel whenever it is developed. It is up for action on Monday, August 30. I will be able to provide you feedback or the decision during our next meeting.

The other item is coming in the fall, are several long range planning items that we will be working on. I will be able to give you an update at our next meeting.

4. Adjournment.

Boardmember Crockett motioned to adjourn the meeting at 3:38 pm. The motion was seconded by Boardmember Ayers.

Vote: 5-0 Approved (Chair Sarkissian and Boardmember Peterson, absent)

Upon tabulation of vote, it showed:

AYES – Villanueva-Saucedo, Boyle, Allen, Crockett 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.