
Wednesday, September 15, 2021
6:00 P.M.

Note from the Clerk: The August 18, 2021 Planning Commission meetings was hosted online using the online Zoom Cloud Meeting platform.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Thompson called the Regular Meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL

The following members and representatives were present:

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT VIA ZOOM MEETING

Christopher Thompson, Chair
Lisa Osborne, Vice Chair
Blanca Uvari, Commissioner
Larry White, Commissioner

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT

Alisha Meginnis, Commissioner
Linda Warren, Commissioner

CITY STAFF PRESENT

Jodie Novak, DES Assistant Director
Michelle Simerdla, Senior Planner

Commissioner Stanfield arrived after the meeting started and was deemed present after initial roll call; however, Ms. Stanfield missed the minutes roll call vote.

3. OPENING STATEMENT

Chair Thompson read the Opening Statement.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

a. August 18, 2021

Vice Chair Osborne moved to approve the August 18, 2021 minutes as presented; Commissioner Uvari seconded the motion.

Upon vote, the motion was carried 4 to 0.

Christopher Thompson, Chair	Aye
Commissioner Osborne, Vice Chair	Aye
Commissioner White	Aye
Commissioner Uvari	Aye

Commissioner Stanfield was not yet present.

5. PUBLIC HEARING ITEMS

a. OMNI AVONDALE SELF-STORAGE - CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT - (APPLICATION PL-21-0151)

Michelle Simerdla, Senior Planner, stated that the purpose is to review a proposed conditional use permit to allow for the operation of a mini-storage warehouse and personal storage facility in the Durango Park Planned Area Development (PAD) that allows for C-2 (Community Commercial) uses. The site is located approximately 323 feet north of the northeast corner of Avondale Boulevard and Lower Buckeye Road. The project is proposed on a vacant 3.65-acre portion of an 8.57-acre parcel. There is an accompanying request to create a separate lot for the storage facility. The property was annexed into the City's corporate limits on April 14, 1999 and rezoned to Durango Park Planned Area Development. Surrounding land uses were reviewed. The proposal will construct one office and four storage buildings with 613 storage units. No car or RV storage is proposed; 14 visitor parking spaces are provided. A review of the site plan and elevations were provided. Staff supports the project, as it will result in development that is compatible with and complementary to existing uses in the area. The development meets the City's design guidelines. Mini storage is considered a low intensity use, providing a service to the area. The development meets all setbacks, buffering, landscaping and parking requirements. All required notifications were completed. Staff recommends approval with six recommended conditions.

Chair Thompson invited comments from the applicant. Applicant representative, Jason Sanks with Sanks and Associates, the applicant, stated that significant time was spent on the architecture, which includes material diversity. It complements the McDonald's palette and expanded it to match the facility. Traffic to the site is expected to be low at less than two dozen trips per day. Buildings will only be 14 feet tall.

Chair Thompson welcomed Commissioner questions.

There being no questions, Chair Thompson opened the public meeting. The City Clerk has received no requests to speak. There being no questions, Chair Thompson closed the public hearing and invited a motion.

Commissioner White moved to approve Application PL-21-0150 subject to six (6) recommended conditions of approval; Commissioner Stanfield seconded the motion.

Upon vote, the motion was carried 5 to 0.

Christopher Thompson, Chair	Aye
Commissioner Osborne, Vice Chair	Aye
Commissioner White	Aye
Commissioner Stanfield	Aye
Commissioner Uvari	Aye

b. SIERRA ESTRELLA ENERGY STORAGE FACILITY - CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT - (APPLICATION PL-21-0116)

Ms. Novak, DES Assistant Director, stated that the request is to allow the development of an unstaffed, walled-in, open air battery energy storage facility located on property zoned Diamond P Ranch Planned Area Development (PAD), which allows for electrical energy storage and battery energy storage adjacent to public utility substations, subject to City Council approval of a Conditional Use Permit. The site location, details and surrounding uses were reviewed. The property is 11.5 acres, having been annexed and zoned many years ago to allow a mix of single family, residential, schools, churches and public facilities with a conditional use permit being approved. A minor amendment to the PAD in September, 2018, further allowed consideration of the use by allowing private utilities that would serve the general public at the substation. As such, it would be treated as a public facility, subject to City Council approval. The facility will store energy obtained from the adjacent red electrical substation during times of off-peak usage of the substation and will reintroduce the energy stored back to the power grid during periods of peak usage. Battery packs will not exceed nine feet in height and will be fully screened by a decorative ten-foot wall along the site perimeter. A solid metal gate at the southeast corner will allow access to the site for maintenance and emergency services.

The landscape plan was reviewed, including a double row of trees, which will serve as a screen buffer in addition to a ten-foot wall along the north, east and south property lines. Planning staff have analyzed the request and find it is consistent with General Plan 2030. It has a Medium Density Residential Designation, which allows for public utility facilities. It is a good transitional use to the existing substation to the west. It will not generate noise, smoke or odors. It complies with the zoning ordinance and meets or exceeds development standards for landscaping, lighting and setbacks. Because it is unstaffed, other than occasional maintenance, it will generate minimal traffic. All public notifications were provided. Planning staff recommends approval.

Chair Thompson invited the applicant to speak. Carolyn Oberholtzer, Bergin, Frakes, Smalley & Oberholtzer, the applicant, stated that the 11-acre battery facility, when fully operational, can power 150,000 homes.

There were no Commission questions.

Chair Thompson opened the public hearing. There were no public comments, and the Planning Commission Clerk has received no requests to speak.

Chair Thompson closed the public hearing and invited a motion.

Vice Chair Osborne moved to approve Application PL-21-0116 subject to two (2) recommended conditions of approval; Commissioner White seconded the motion.

Upon vote, the motion was carried 5 to 0.

Christopher Thompson, Chair	Aye
Commissioner Osborne, Vice Chair	Aye
Commissioner White	Aye
Commissioner Stanfield	Aye
Commissioner Uvari	Aye

6. ACTION ITEMS

a. ALAMAR PHASE 3 - PRELIMINARY PLAT - (APPLICATION PL-21-0128)

Ms. Novak stated that the purpose of the preliminary plat is an engineering document for Phase 3 of the Master Plan Community, which includes 345 single family lots. An overview of the Alamar Master Planned Community was provided. The development overall will have 3,600 new single-family homes in one community. Phase 3 consists of 110 acres. A site history was given. The preliminary plat for Phase 3 was approved in 2019 and expired in May of 2021. It was not developed, due to conditions of the cost prohibitive Alamar Parkway, a street which was crossing over an effluent line. Changes needed to be made to the plat, which is the purpose for today's application. Phase 3 consists of 345 lots. Design details and amenities were discussed. City Staff believes the plat is in conformance with the adopted PAD zoning for Alamar, meets the subdivision standard regulations as well as the zoning ordinance. Theme and design are consistent with Phases 1, 2 and 4. Staff recommends approval.

Chair Thompson welcomed Commission questions or comments. There being no questions, he invited a motion.

Vice Chair Osborne moved to approve Application PL-21-0128 subject to four (4) conditions of approval; Commissioner White seconded the motion.

Upon vote, the motion was carried 5 to 0.

Christopher Thompson, Chair	Aye
Commissioner Osborne, Vice Chair	Aye
Commissioner White	Aye
Commissioner Stanfield	Aye
Commissioner Uvari	Aye

7. COMMISSION ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chair Thompson introduced himself as new Commission Chair and Lisa Osborne as new Vice Chair.

8. PLANNING DIVISION REPORT

Ms. Novak discussed staffing changes within the Division, including Mr. Galica and Mr. Craig's move to Buckeye. A new planning manager will begin with the City on Monday. Two new planners have also come onboard. The position of principal planner has been posted for hiring. She congratulated Mr. Thompson for his new role as Chair and Ms. Osborne in her position as Vice Chair. The upcoming meeting agenda will include major General Plan amendments.

9. CALENDAR

The next meeting is October 20, 2021.

10. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the Commission, Commissioner White moved to adjourn the regular meeting; Vice Chair Osborne seconded the motion.

Upon vote, the motion was carried 5 to 0.

Christopher Thompson, Chair	Aye
Commissioner Osborne, Vice Chair	Aye
Commissioner White	Aye
Commissioner Stanfield	Aye
Commissioner Uvari	Aye

Meeting adjourned at 6:46 p.m.


Chair
Date

