
Wednesday, October 20, 2021
6:00 P.M.

Note from the Clerk: The October 20, 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
Alisha Meginnis, Commissioner
Denise Stanfield, Commissioner
Linda Warren, Commissioner
Larry White, Commissioner
Alan Agundez Castillo, Alternate

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT

Blanca Uvari, Commissioner

CITY STAFF PRESENT

Jodie Novak, Assistant Director
Eric Fitzer, Planning Manager
Mary Grace McNear, Deputy City Attorney
Michelle Simerdla, Senior Planner
Brandon Cartwright, Attorney
Barbara Cason, Administrative Assistant

3. OPENING STATEMENT

Chair Thompson read the Opening Statement.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

a. September 15, 2021

Vice Chair Osborne moved to approve the September 15, 2021 minutes as presented; Commissioner White seconded the motion.

Upon vote, the motion was carried 6 to 0.

Christopher Thompson, Chair	Aye
Commissioner Osborne, Vice Chair	Aye
Commissioner Meginnis	Aye
Commissioner Stanfield	Aye
Commissioner Warren	Aye
Commissioner White	Aye

5. PUBLIC HEARING ITEMS

a. SHADOW RIDGE - MAJOR GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT - (APPLICATION PL-21-0021)

Prior to the commencement of the presentation, DES Assistant Director Jodie Novak introduced new Planning Manager, Eric Fitzer. Chair Thompson welcomed Mr. Fitzer.

Michelle Simerdla, Senior Planner, stated that the property site is located within the jurisdiction of Maricopa County and that the amendment includes a request for annexation. The property is 118.4 gross acres, located at the southeast corner of Miami Avenue and Avondale Boulevard. The site includes an irrigation canal that runs along Avondale Boulevard and is adjacent to an irrigation canal to the south, which is not part of the project. There are above-ground utility lines along Avondale Boulevard and power lines that bisect the property. Surrounding uses were reviewed, including a site reserved to the north for the Littleton Elementary School District. North of Miami Avenue are larger lots located on County land. To the east is the Entrada Master Planned Community, not yet constructed. To the south is the Verde Trails Master Planned Community, as well as larger lots under the jurisdiction of the County. West of Avondale Boulevard are projects that were entitled in 2005 and 2007. South of that is the Alamar Master Planned Community.

The current designation for the subject property is Estate Low Density Residential (ELDR), which allows 1 to 2.5 dwelling units per acre. The request is to change the designation to Medium Density Residential (MDR), which allows 2.5 to 4 dwelling units per acre.

Ms. Simerdla reviewed the next steps in the process, which include a presentation of the findings of the Major General Plan Amendment at the next Planning Commission meeting on November 17th as well as presentation of the concurrent Planned Area Development (PAD) rezone for the project. The City Council hearing will take place on December 13th, which will include both the Major General Plan Amendment as well as concurrent PAD rezone application. Staff recommends holding a public hearing on Application PL-21-0021 with no action to be taken.

Chair Thompson invited comments from the applicant. No comments were provided from the applicant.

Chair Thompson opened the public hearing. There were no public comments and the City Clerk has received no requests to speak. There being no questions, Chair Thompson closed the public hearing on Application PL-21-0021.

b. HERMOSA RANCH - MAJOR GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT - (APPLICATION PL-21-0001)

Mr. Fitzer stated that the purpose of the item is to review the proposed request for a Major General Plan Amendment and conduct a public hearing. No action will be taken. At the next Planning Commission meeting, the findings of fact and recommendation will be provided to the Commission. The property is located at the southeast corner of Lower Buckeye and Avondale. There is currently a dairy on the property site in conjunction with agricultural uses. To the south is the Alamar Master Planned Community and single family development to the north. The current General Plan land use shows the site as Low Density Residential (LDR), Medium Density Residential (MDR) and Local Commercial (LC). The proposed General Plan land use is Business Park (BP), which allows for light manufacturing, corporate commercial, hotel, multistory office, research and development industries, solar and renewable energy manufacturers, motor sports-related industry manufacturers and limited service uses that support the primary employment uses. The overall site is approximately 208 net acres. A subsequent PAD application has been, which will also be heard at the November meeting.

Mr. Fitzer reviewed next steps. The next Planning Commission meeting is on November 17th and there is the potential for a concurrent PAD rezone application. There will be City Council review with potential concurrent PAD rezone application. Staff recommends a public hearing on Application PL-21-0001. No other action will be taken at this time.

Chair Thompson invited the applicant to speak. Carolyn Oberholtzer, Bergin, Frakes, Smalley & Oberholtzer, stated that the applicant will return next month for the action item, likely with the companion PAD request. The applicant has been engaged with the community in the process thus far.

Mr. Fitzer invited questions from Commissioners.

Commissioner White stated that during its last meeting, the Planning Commission recommended approval to the City Council for a battery storage facility in the purple area indicated on the area map. He inquired whether battery storage facilities are designated as an allowable use for a business park. Ms. Novak confirmed that a battery storage facility is a permitted use. There is also zoning entitlement request filed for a nonresidential land use. The Sierra Estrella battery storage facility will be going before City Council for approval in November.

Commissioner Agundez Castillo stated that he lives in the area and asked what impacts the changing designation will have on the residential area surrounding this site. Mr. Fitzer stated that this is a definite area of focus as staff makes recommendations and provides findings of fact. There is a concurrent zoning request. The zoning request include further recommendations, such as buffering and other mitigation efforts proposed by the applicant. Findings of fact will be presented at the next meeting.

There were no further Commission questions.

Chair Thompson opened the public hearing. There were no public comments and the City Clerk has received no requests to speak. Chair Thompson closed the public hearing on Application PL-21-0001.

c. SOUTH AVONDALE - MAJOR GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT - (APPLICATION PL-21-0014)

Mr. Fitzer stated that the application is being submitted on behalf of the City of Avondale. The site location was reviewed. Ownership consists of private and public property, both federal and state. The current General Plan land use designation consists of three designations: Estate Low Density Residential (ELDR), Local Commercial (LC) and Open Space and Parks (OS). The intent of the application is to greater define land uses in order to guide future development. The proposed General Plan land use is a mix of Rural Residential, Estate Low Density Residential (ELDR), Medium Low Density Residential (MLDR), Medium Density Residential (MDR), Medium High Density Residential (MHDR), High Density Residential (HDR), Local Commercial (LC), Resort, Open Space, Parks, Floodway and Washes. The City worked with a design firm to specifically designate the land uses as well as provide for population and future growth. Next steps in the process include a second Planning Commission hearing on November 17th, 2021. At that time, the Planning Commission will make a recommendation to City Council. No other zoning or applications are associated with the process, which is purely a Major General Plan amendment. There is the potential for the item to go before the City Council on December 13th, 2021. Staff recommends a public hearing on Application PL-21-0014. No other action will be taken at this time.

Chair Thompson noted that the zoning allows for a resort and asked whether the City has been approached by a developer for resort construction. Mr. Fitzer stated that the goal is to have a resort in the area, however the City has not yet been approached by a developer. Ms. Novak stated that one of the goals is to have a destination area at the site. The plan has not yet been adopted, but when this occurs, there will be efforts to begin promoting for this goal. The process may take up to 10 to 15 years.

There were no further Commission questions.

Chair Thompson opened the public hearing. There were no public comments and the City Clerk has received no requests to speak. Chair Thompson closed the public hearing.

6. ACTION ITEMS

There were no action items discussed.

7. PLANNING DIVISION REPORT

There was no report.

8. CALENDAR

The next meeting is November 17, 2021.

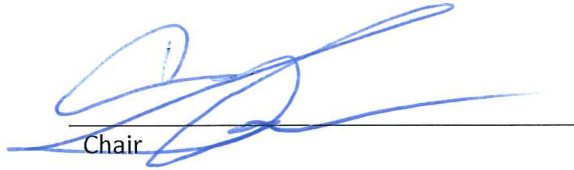
9. ADJOURNMENT

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

Upon vote, the motion was carried 6 to 0.

Christopher Thompson, Chair	Aye
Commissioner Osborne, Vice Chair	Aye
Commissioner Meginnis	Aye
Commissioner Stanfield	Aye
Commissioner Warren	Aye
Commissioner White	Aye

Meeting adjourned at 6:28 p.m.


Chair


Date

