

Wednesday, November 15, 2023
6:00 pm

1. WELCOME AND CALL TO ORDER

Vice-Chair White called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL

The following members and representatives were present.

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT IN PERSON / PHONE / VIDEO

Commissioner Alan Agundez-Castillo
Commissioner Lisa Osborne
Commissioner Linda Warren
Vice-Chair Larry White

COMMISSIONERS EXCUSED ABSENT

Chair Christopher Thompson
Commissioner Alisha Meginnis
Commissioner Denise Stanfield
Alternate Julia Arnette

CITY STAFF PRESENT

Catherine Lorbeer, Deputy Director of Planning
Arrianna Ramirez, Administrative Assistant
Stephen Kemp, Attorney
Jodie Novak, Development Services Director
Joshua Orton, Senior Planner
Michelle Simerdla, Senior Planner
Marcella Carrillo, City Clerk

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Vice-Chair White called for a motion on the October 18, 2023, meeting minutes. Commissioner Agundez-Castillo moved to approve the minutes as written; Commissioner Osborne seconded the motion.

Chair Christopher Thompson	N/A
Vice-Chair Larry White	Aye
Commissioner Lisa Osborne	Aye
Commissioner Alisha Meginnis	N/A
Commissioner Denise Stanfield	N/A
Commissioner Linda Warren	Aye
Commissioner Alan Agundez-Castillo	Aye
Alternate Julie Arnette	N/A

Upon vote, the motion passed 4 to 0

4. PUBLIC HEARING: Discussion Items

a. APPLICATION PL-22-0230, McDowell Villas Planned Area Development

Joshua Orton, Senior Planner, provided an overview of the proposed rezone for the McDowell Villas Planned Area Development and discussed deviations. The 12.34-acre property is located west of the northwest intersection of McDowell Road and Avondale Boulevard. The first thirty feet of property immediately adjacent to McDowell Road is owned by the Federal Government for use of their own improvements.

The site plan is for a 164-unit development of two-story townhomes including two-car garages, which is 13.29 dwellings per acre. The buildings will be clustered into three- to six-unit buildings. Initially, these will be rental units that will ultimately be for sale. Primary and secondary access is along McDowell Road, and the applicant is required to install a raised median at the eastern access to allow for a right-in and right-out traffic flow.

The project will have a connected open-space element with sidewalks and open space between individual units as well as standard amenities for a single-family attached subdivision. Deviations and mitigations proposed by the applicant include:

- Setback from single-family zoned (Agricultural) property 75' to 15'
- Setback from 30' USA fee land 25' to 15'
- Landscape coverage increased from 25% to 40%
- Building coverage reduced from 50% to 40%
- Increase landscape buffer from 25' to 30'
- All "front" setback deviations are measured from the USA fee land

Staff analysis finds this project conforms with the General Plan Land Use Designation and the Single-Family and Multi-Family Residential Design Manual. It is compatible with land use relationships with the adjacent Avondale Commons and the single-family properties to the west. A virtual neighborhood meeting was held on June 13, 2023, with no attendees and no public comments were received.

In response to questions from the Commissioners, Mr. Orton explained the parking space calculations were done for a single-family subdivision, and additional space is provided across the street and clustered throughout the development. The applicant stated an additional 69 parking spaces are available. Mr. Orton stated the normal procedure is to provide outlets in the garage for EV charging. According to the site plan, trash enclosures are provided; however, additional information will be obtained from Public Works to determine if alternative trash and recycling bins are provided. Kurt Waldier, Planning Consultant with Beus Gilbert McGroder, PLLC, stated residents will be able to purchase an upgrade for the installation of EV chargers in the garages.

There were no public comments.

Vice-Chair White called for a motion.

Commissioner Agundez-Castillo made a motion to recommend approval of Application PL-22-0230, a request to rezone the property from agricultural (AG) to McDowell Villas Planned Area Development (PAD) to allow the development of a 164-unit townhome subdivision, subject to the six conditions of approval; Commissioner Warren seconded the motion.

Chair Christopher Thompson	N/A
Vice-Chair Larry White	Aye
Commissioner Lisa Osborne	Aye
Commissioner Alisha Meginnis	N/A
Commissioner Denise Stanfield	N/A
Commissioner Linda Warren	Aye
Commissioner Alan Agundez-Castillo	Aye
Alternate Julie Arnette	N/A

Upon vote, the motion passed 4 to 0

b. APPLICATION PL-21-0140 Ashley Furniture Minor General Plan Amendment

Michelle Simerdla, Senior Planner, provided an overview of the Ashley Furniture Minor General Plan Amendment (MGPA) and Rezoning for Ashley Furniture. The site is approximately 75 acres located at the northwest corner of 107th Avenue and Roosevelt Street. The property was annexed into the city in 1986 and is currently used for farming. The applicant is requesting to rezone the property from Avondale Gateway PAD to Ashley Furniture PAD.

The surrounding zoning, including north of the I-10 Freeway from west to east, consists of C2 vacant land, C3 hospital, two medical facilities zoned PAD, and a future commercial site zoned C3 and PAD. East of 107th Avenue are vehicle dealerships and the Avondale Automall PAD. South of Roosevelt Street are single-family homes zoned Roosevelt Park PAD, vacant land zoned PAD, and multi-family communities zoned The Boulevard. To the west is vacant land and Avondale Gateway PAD.

Proposed uses include a call center, office space, light manufacturing and assembly, retail sales, warehousing, and distribution. The remaining vacant pads will have C3 Freeway Commercial uses. The Ashley Furniture component will follow Commerce Park (CP) standard with the following deviations: reducing the rear building setback from 15 feet to 10 feet to accommodate a security building; a zero-foot internal building setback in case the project remains two parcels; and increasing permitted parking by 388 spaces, taking into consideration similar large-format warehouses and the number of employees. The vacant pads will comply with C3 Freeway Commercial standards.

Current land use designations include High Intensity Office, Mixed Use, and Freeway Commercial. The proposed land use is Business Park to accommodate light manufacturing and corporate commerce uses and Freeway Commercial to accommodate more intense uses of the freeways. An overview of the site plan was provided.

The developer is required to construct a raised median on 107th Avenue between Dealer Drive and Roosevelt Street and a traffic signal at the intersection of 107th Avenue and Roosevelt Street. There will be two driveways, right-in and right-out only, on 107th Avenue and four driveways on Roosevelt Street with several deceleration lanes. A stipulation is included that semi tractor trailers and heavy trucks must enter the property on Roosevelt Street from 107th Avenue and shall not use Roosevelt Street west of 111th Avenue to enter and exit the property. This will prevent trucks from heading west on Roosevelt Street toward Avondale Boulevard. An 80-foot-wide landscaping buffer on Roosevelt Street will screen the truck parking area.

Both requests result in a development that is compatible with and complementary to existing uses in the area, provides an adequate buffer to the residential area south of Roosevelt Street, and will meet Commerce Park standards with the requested deviations as well as C3 standards for the Freeway Commercial sites. This site's proximity to the Freeway is ideal for this use. The rezoning and GPA meet all required findings and is consistent with many goals in the General Plan and Freeway Corridor Specific Plan, including prioritizing the City's appearance with the I-10 Freeway, as well as growing Avondale's economy and employment base.

A neighborhood meeting was held on Zoom on February 21, 2023, with no attendees. One comment was received on Avondale Connect suggesting the property be used for a grocery store. A public comment was received from a representative of The Village at The Boulevard regarding buffering and truck traffic on Roosevelt Street. These concerns were addressed in a meeting with the representative, City staff, and the developer.

In response to commissioner's questions, Ms. Simerdla responded this property is its own PAD and is not in the Boulevard zoning district or in the Boulevard Specific Plan. This is a single-user project, and Ashley Furniture will be using both proposed buildings. Although two retail pads have been carved out, there are no plans at this time to use both. Trucks will be using entrances located on Roosevelt Street.

Adam Baugh, with Whitney Morris Baugh, PLLC, stated this project will bring in a furniture store, office, manufacturing, and a distribution component for Ashley Furniture, something that has not been done before. This will be a huge benefit for the City of Avondale by creating 500-plus jobs and attracting patrons who will bring in approximately \$40 million in revenue.

There were no public comments.

Vice-Chair White called for a motion.

Commissioner Warren made a motion to recommend approval of Application PL-21-0140, a request for a Minor Amendment to the General Plan 2030 Land Use Map, changing the land use designation of the subject property from Freeway Commercial, High Intensity Office, and Mixed Use to Business Park. Commissioner Osborne seconded the motion.

Chair Christopher Thompson	N/A
Vice-Chair Larry White	Aye
Commissioner Lisa Osborne	Aye
Commissioner Alisha Meginnis	N/A
Commissioner Denise Stanfield	N/A
Commissioner Linda Warren	Aye
Commissioner Alan Agundez-Castillo	Nay
Alternate Julie Arnette	N/A

Upon vote, the motion passed 3 to 1

c. APPLICATION 22-0141 Ashley Furniture Rezone

Vice-Chair White called for a motion.

Commissioner Warren made a motion to recommend approval of Application PL-22-0141 Ashley Furniture, a request to rezone approximately 75.7 gross acres of land located at the northwest corner of Roosevelt Street and 107th Avenue from Avondale Gateway Planned Area Development (PAD) to Ashley Furniture PAD, subject to the eight (8) conditions as listed in the staff report. Commissioner Osborne seconded the motion.

Chair Christopher Thompson	N/A
Vice-Chair Larry White	Aye
Commissioner Lisa Osborne	Aye
Commissioner Alisha Meginnis	N/A
Commissioner Denise Stanfield	N/A
Commissioner Linda Warren	Aye
Commissioner Alan Agundez-Castillo	Nay
Alternate Julie Arnette	N/A

Upon vote, the motion passed 3 to 1

d. APPLICATION 23-0260 General Plan 2030 Update

Jodie Novak, Development Services Director, provided an overview of proposed revisions to specific elements in the General Plan that will provide current information to staff and the public. New data, terminology, background information, and updated plans and policies have been accounted for since the readoption of the 2012 General Plan. Updated data and mapping, developments, City projects, and land use will be incorporated into the General Plan while maintaining the required and elective elements going forward.

The City has worked with consultants from Michael Baker International on this initiative for over 1 ½ years. Per State Statute, a 60-day review was conducted from July 25, 2023, through the end of September 2023 and promoted on Avondale Connect. Eighty-six unique comments were received, which provided valuable feedback that helped with updating the references, surrounding areas, facilities, and the maps.

An overview of the updates includes reflecting current dates, dataset maps, plans, and terminology. Examples of terminology updates include the following:

- ▶ Phoenix Raceway
- ▶ The BLVD
- ▶ Old Town Avondale
- ▶ Removal of Transit Oriented Development references

The Land Use Element theme had major changes to the map. The language, layout of land use categories, and densities were updated and modified. Goals and policies were revised to reflect the city's growth. Urban Residential was removed, as this was an outdated land use category. The Land Use Category for Medium Low Density Residential was added to the map, non-residential land uses along SR-30 corridor were refined, and the recently approved General Plan Amendments were reflected. There was a second page added with a land use map of the South Planning Area.

A map showed land uses the city is proposing to make modifications to. There are seven key changes highlighted in the Staff Report.

Many new school sites, public civic sites, and other facilities have been added to the map since they are now part of the community. The key areas previously discussed and incorporated in the Staff Report were part of the southern part of the community south of Lower Buckeye Road. Updates were made to the Las Ligas neighborhood, which has an R1-6 zoning designation because it was a built-out community that includes map alignment to be consistent with the legally adopted zoning that is proposed as Medium Density Residential. Land uses have been cleaned up in the Alamar master plan community with the city parks, elementary schools, the modified Broadway Road alignment, and Council's approved amendment to medium density. The property on the east side of Avondale Boulevard, north and south of Broadway Road, is being recommended for a Medium Density Residential land use. There are two parcels on the west side that are nearly 80 acres and currently on the map planned for Mixed use. Amendments to the land use for the northeast corner of the freeway intersection are recommended as Medium Density Residential and Medium High Density Residential for the southeast and southwest corners. These amendments would align with residential uses that are planned in the Alamar Master Plan community to the west and will offer a variety of housing opportunities in this part of the city.

The Gardner family property owner has indicated a desire to have the southern property designated for Freeway Commercial. The staff is not opposed to this modification, as this would allow Freeway Commercial on all four corners of the freeway intersection. There is a desire to have the northern parcel at a higher residential density rather than Medium Density Residential. All land use in Alamar is Medium Density, and an alignment is consistent with the use currently there along the frontage of Avondale Boulevard.

The southern part of the Southern Avenue and SR-30 alignment is currently Rural Low Density Residential and Corporate Park, which allows employment and industrial uses. The Gila River Scenic District has been expanded and includes Freeway Commercial on the southern side of the freeway alignment to have more commercial opportunities in the community off the freeway. In communication with the property owner of the mining operation called Quinn Enterprises, they are interested in having Freeway Commercial along their frontage. This is not a proposed land use change; however, the City is not opposed to adding some Freeway Commercial along the freeway frontage for this property. These changes were not able to be made on the map because the document had already been published for the public hearing; however, the Commission can recommend the land use change, and if approved by City Council, those changes can be made.

Maricopa Association of Government, in 2022, noted Avondale's housing stock consists of 76% single-family housing, 20% multi-family housing, and 4% mobile homes. These numbers have increased because of continued development and will be updated once current data is published. The City of Avondale is developed at 94%, with 6% vacant, and there is room for opportunities that could be annexed for future development.

The economic development table was updated to reflect the current desires for growth and development by the Economic Development Office. The growth comparison and sales tax revenue data are updated frequently by the Finance and Budget Office. The BLVD growth area was added to the map to ensure everyone knows where it is located. In the neighborhood theme section, language, current housing values, and dwelling unit projections were updated. The City adopted a new Community Sustainability Plan, and the desired goals and policies established by the Sustainability Commission were incorporated into this plan along with new initiatives. For the Parks and Recreation Department, new language and updates that include new parks in Avondale, such as Alamar Park and Festival Fields, as well as updates to other parks have been included in this plan. The active transportation element that includes various multimodal transportation within the community with a focus on multi-purpose trails for recreation and activity have been added to this plan. Zoom routes were removed, and WeRide routes that expand to south of Lower Buckeye were added. The latest Integrated Utility Master Plan, which includes information related to water, was incorporated into the plan. References to community art that may be required with developments as well as other public art installations were added to the plan.

The General Plan conforms with State Statute 9-461.0 for General Plan Amendments, which is mentioned within the plan. This new statute states when an applicant submits a Major General Plan Amendment, they must be at a public hearing, starting with the Planning Commission, within 12 months of their proposal, which keeps them on an appropriate timeline. It appears older language was left in this document and will be removed in the final version upon City Council's approval. Upon the Planning Commission's recommendation for approval, this will be forwarded to City Council on December 4, 2023.

Vice-Chair White opened the public hearing.

Jessica Sarkisian, UPFRONT Planning and Entitlements, LLC, on behalf of a property owner from the Las Ligas area, presented a concern with a particular 10-acre parcel. She is asking the Commission to change the parcel to Medium High Density Residential to allow further development of this site and eliminate a PAD request.

Attorney Sean Lake from Pew & Lake, P. L. C. spoke on behalf of the Gardner family, owners of the parcel at the northwest corner of SR-30 and Avondale Blvd. They are not requesting an increase or decrease in allowable density or development of this site. The property owner simply objects to the proposed significant decrease from the existing General Plan and asks the Commission to be patient, leave it for now, and review it again after the freeway matures. Should the Commission want to do something, they could support splitting the property with Medium High Density on the top and maintain the Mixed use on the southern portion. They support all proposed amendments except for this property because, in their opinion, it does not meet the requirements.

Vice-Chair White closed the public hearing.

In response to the Commissioners' questions, Ms. Novak stated the General Plan is readopted or updated every 10 years in accordance with State Statute. The City may proactively look at future amendments or create a new General Plan, and it would not be unusual to have further amendments being requested. This does not preclude a landowner going through a Minor or Major General Plan Amendment process to change land use designations and/or zoning. There are no active applications for the Las Ligas parcel; however, there were internal discussions with the landowner looking at what options are available for residential housing on that property.

Commissioner Warren made a motion to recommend approval of Application PL-23-0260, Avondale General Plan 2030 Major General Plan Amendment, update subject to staff's recommendations as outlined in the Staff Report with a couple exceptions, the Las Ligas neighborhood will remain R1-6 zoning, and the Gardner property would also be left as in the previous General Plan. Motion failed for lack of a second.

Commissioner Agundez-Castillo made a motion to recommend approval of Application PL-23-0260, Avondale General Plan 2030 Major General Plan Amendment, update subject to staff's recommendations as outlined in the Staff Report. Commissioner Osborne seconded the motion.

Chair Christopher Thompson	N/A
Vice-Chair Larry White	Aye
Commissioner Lisa Osborne	Aye
Commissioner Alisha Meginnis	N/A
Commissioner Denise Stanfield	N/A
Commissioner Linda Warren	Nay
Commissioner Alan Agundez-Castillo	Aye
Alternate Julie Arnette	N/A

Upon vote, the motion passed 3 to 1

5. **COMMISSIONER ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Ms. Lorbeer stated there are no items planned for the December meeting; therefore, it will be canceled.

6. **PLANNING DIVISION REPORT**

No report provided.

7. **CALENDAR**

- Regular Meeting January 17, 2024

8. **ADJOURNMENT**

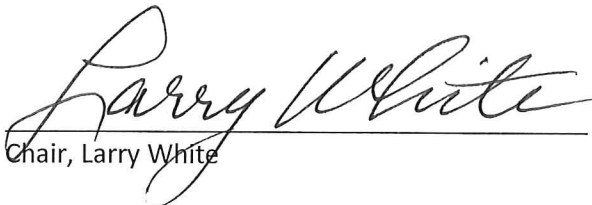
There being no further business, Vice-Chair White called for a motion to adjourn.

Commissioner Agundez-Castillo made a motion to adjourn; seconded by Commissioner Warren.

Chair Christopher Thompson	N/A
Vice-Chair Larry White	Aye
Commissioner Lisa Osborne	Aye
Commissioner Alisha Meginnis	N/A
Commissioner Denise Stanfield	N/A
Commissioner Linda Warren	Aye
Commissioner Alan Agundez-Castillo	Aye
Alternate Julie Arnette	N/A

Upon vote, the motion passed 4 to 0

Meeting adjourned at 7:23 p.m.


Chair, Larry White


Date