

**Wednesday, March 20, 2024
6:00 pm**

1. WELCOME AND CALL TO ORDER

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

Chair Larry White

Commissioner Linda Warren

Commissioner Julia Jewell

Alternate Ryan Benson

COMMISSIONERS EXCUSED ABSENT

Commissioner Denise Stanfield

Commissioner Alan Agundez-Castillo

CITY STAFF PRESENT

Catherine Lorbeer, Deputy Director of Planning

Arrianna Ramirez, Administrative Assistant

Stephen Kemp, Attorney

Joshua Orton, Senior Planner

Jodie Novak, Development Services Director

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chair White called for a motion to approve the minutes.

Commissioner Warren made a motion to approve the Planning Commission Meeting Minutes for February 7, 2024, and February 21, 2024, seconded by Commissioner Jewell.

Chair Larry White	Aye
Commissioner Julia Jewell	Aye
Commissioner Denise Stanfield	N/A
Commissioner Linda Warren	Aye
Commissioner Agundez-Castillo	N/A
Alternate Ryan Benson	Aye

Upon vote, the motion passed 4 to 0

4. PUBLIC HEARING ITEMS

**a. HERMOSA RANCH TECHNOLOGY CAMPUS NORTH – MAJOR GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT
– APPLICATION PL-23-0299**

Joshua Orton, Senior Planner, provided an overview of Application PL-23-0299 for an amendment to the General Plan Land Use Designation of estate/low density residential and medium density residential to business

park. This would allow, among other things, a large campus development that would provide an abundance of employment opportunities and other amenities to maintain a healthy lifestyle for all employees. Additionally, part of the request is to increase the existing local commercial land use from 16.45 acres to 28 acres to provide for the daily needs of goods and services, such as grocery stores, to the residents in adjacent residential areas.

The approximately 239-acre property currently used for agriculture is located at the southwest corner of Avondale Boulevard and Lower Buckeye Road. To the north of Lower Buckeye Road is the Del Rio Ranch PAD; along Buckeye Road is Raceway Rancheros subdivision to the east and Shadow Ridge PAD south of that; to the south is Hermosa Ranch Technology Campus South PAD, the Sierra Estrella Energy Storage Project, and SRP Substation; and to the west is Cantada Ranch PAD.

Staff analysis found this amendment would have a lower demand for water and sewer, the site is adjacent to power support and transportation infrastructure, and the current General Plan does not have other business park sites with these advantages that are of suitable size. The developer is required to construct infrastructure and make necessary improvements.

The proposed amendment meets four required findings established by the Avondale General Plan 2030:

- Facilitates employment uses at an appropriate location where no alternatives are available
- Improves the General Plan with supportive land uses designed to attract employment investment
- Does not significantly alter acceptable land use patterns or affect land uses in the area
- Is consistent with the overall intent of the Avondale General Plan 2030

A Neighborhood Meeting was held on January 30, 2024, at City Hall. There were seven attendees aside from the applicant's team, City Staff, and one member of City Council. Topics that were discussed included security, data center scale, right-of-way improvements, commercial development, and project timeline. As part of the 60-day review process, notices were sent, and one agency, Southwest Gas Corporation, indicated they had no conflicts with the project, although the review is still underway until April 8, 2024. On Avondale Connect, 43 comments were received; most were in opposition, with concerns about the grocery stores, increased water usage, and traffic impacts.

Staff recommends approval of Application PL-23-0299, a request for a Major General Plan Amendment changing the land-use designation of the subject property from medium density residential and estate/low density residential to business park, and expanding the existing local commercial General Plan Land Use. This item is for discussion only because it is the first of two public hearings.

Chair White opened the hearing to the Commissioners for questions and comments.

In response to Commissioner Warren's questions, Mr. Orton responded that site-specific details will be provided at the next meeting because this is a request for a change to the land use designation. They will be using a cooling method called an air-chilled system that uses water to charge the system, and then air chills and circulates the water. The proposal is for 212 acres and shows eight buildings. The medium density and low density would be removed, and the nearest housing product would be adjacent to this property and to the south on the other side of Broadway Road. It will be confirmed at the next meeting if this includes the estate/low density designation. The narrative and information provided suggest this is a business park area and the campus area is more the data center usage along with the local commercial portion.

Carolyn Oberholtzer, Esq. addressed the Commission on behalf of the owner/applicant and provided background information on the owner's plans for the development of this property. This is a two-fold application for the business park designation and local commercial. Expanding the local commercial area will allow more than a grocer, and the data campus will wrap around that area with its eight two-story buildings of 200,000 square feet each. Next month's presentation will incorporate the PAD amendment. The air-chilled coolers are not a water-chilled system; therefore, the demand on City water resources will be significantly

reduced. There is a significant area south of the Estrella Mountains designated for estate/low density residential; however, the General Plan does not have a business park designation.

In response to the Commissioner's questions, Ms. Oberholtzer explained they are working with a data center developer that will build the entirety of the project for a specific tenant. They are working with inducer groups for the commercial center that will happen at the same time as the data center. It is anticipated that at full build-out, there will be several hundred high-paying jobs available. Realistically, construction would not begin until mid- to late 2025, with a long construction period. Construction truck traffic is anticipated, but after that, there will only be employee and service vehicles. They are not aware of a new high school; however, the anticipated K-8 elementary school on Miami Street would not be adjacent to this project, and the school district will get a lot of value from this project in terms of tax revenue. A traffic study was conducted and reviewed by the City, and it is projected that new signals will be installed at 119th Lane and Miami Street. The building height is 50 feet and will not impact the view for residents at Del Rio Ranch, which will be depicted on the site plan at the next meeting.

Chair White opened the Public Hearing.

- ▶ Hector Hernandez is for this item. He is with a carpenter company and was in attendance with his team. They live in Avondale and want to work in Avondale. He has lived in Avondale all his life. He has built great projects, and his team has experience in building this type of project. They would be proud to build this project and want the opportunity to show Avondale they can do it.
- ▶ Desiree Contreras is opposed to this project. She believes this will obstruct their views of the mountains. She expressed concern with the property value of the homes and the traffic that will be incurred by this project.
- ▶ Kenneth Martin stated he and his wife Bobbie are opposed to this project. He would like to keep his view of the Estrella Mountains. He requested to see more facts and statistics of this plan and stated they need more family entertainment, restaurants, and diversity—more of what makes Avondale what it is today.

Chair White closed the Public Hearing.

Ms. Oberholtzer clarified the City is intent to work with and demand things such as traffic, water, sewer, drainage, infrastructure, and power studies prior to a recommendation for approval. They appreciate the opportunity to continue an open dialogue and will be back next month. She invited anyone with additional questions to email her.

5. COMMISSIONER ANNOUNCEMENTS

No announcements made.

6. PLANNING DIVISION REPORT

Mrs. Catherine Lorbeer, Deputy Director of Planning, stated the next Planning Commission meeting, which will include the hearings for this item, will be held April 17 at the normal location. There is a public records request process on the website for those who may like to submit a request. An appeal was filed on the Extra Space Storage request for a Conditional Use Permit, which will be heard by the City Council on April 29, 2024.

7. CALENDAR

The next Planning Commission meeting is scheduled for April 17, 2024.

8. ADJOURNMENT

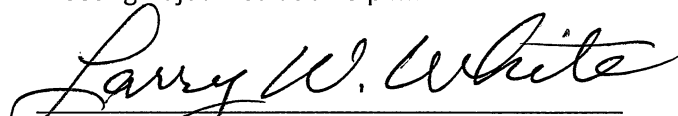
There was no further business; Chair White called for a motion to adjourn.

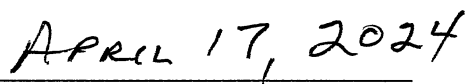
Commissioner Jewell made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Commissioner Warren.

Chair Larry White	Aye
Commissioner Julia Jewell	Aye
Commissioner Denise Stanfield	N/A
Commissioner Linda Warren	Aye
Commissioner Agundez-Castillo	N/A
Alternate Ryan Benson	Aye

Upon vote, the motion passed 4 to 0

Meeting Adjourned at 6:43 p.m.


Chair, Larry White


Date