



## PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION MEETING

LIBRARY PROGRAM ROOM  
808 SOUTH 7<sup>th</sup> AVENUE, SAFFORD, AZ  
THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 2020  
5:30 PM

### MINUTE RECORD

**COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:** Tracey O'Donnal, Chairperson; Diane Junion, Vice-Chair; E.C. "Buff" Cunningham III, Commissioner; John Q. Figueroa, Commissioner; Jerry Hancock, Commissioner; Ed Ragland, Commissioner

**COMMISSIONERS ABSENT:** James F. Moser, Commissioner

**STAFF PRESENT:** Susan Anderson, Planning & Community Development Director; Amber Hogle, Administrative Events Liaison; Matt Platt, IT Specialist

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Mike Addis, Ashley Kingsland

1. **WELCOME AND CALL TO ORDER:** Chairperson O'Donnal called the meeting to order at 5:35 p.m.
2. **ROLL CALL:** All Commissioners were present except for Commissioner Moser who had a prior engagement.
3. **PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA:** None
4. **MINUTES:** It was motioned by Commissioner Hancock, seconded by Commissioner Figueroa and carried unanimously to approve minutes of the January 16, 2020 Planning and Zoning Commission Meeting. **MOTION ADOPTED**
5. **STAFF PRESENTATION:** The Planning and Community Development Director reviewed two proposed text amendments as follows.
  - 5.1 Ms. Anderson read the attached Communication Form aloud to the Commission regarding a proposal to amend the City of Safford Zoning Ordinance Chapter 17.82 - Sign Regulations, Section 17.82.070 - Signs allowed by permit in commercial and/or industrial zones to allow one additional freestanding directory sign for business centers and to increase the sign size for each business identified. The applicant is Addisigns.

5.2 Ms. Anderson read the attached Communication Form aloud to the Commission regarding a proposal to amend the City of Safford Zoning Ordinance Chapter 17.52 – C-2 Highway Commercial District, Section 17-52.020 – Use requirements - Permitted Uses to allow one conventional single-family dwelling on any lot or parcel in the C-2 Highway Commercial District, and, to remove the provision “dwellings when located above the ground floor, provided the ground floor is designed and used exclusively for a commercial purpose permitted in the zone.” The applicant is the City of Safford.

6. **PUBLIC HEARING:** Chairperson O’Donnal closed the regular meeting and opened a Public Hearing to hear comments from the public regarding the proposed text amendments.

6.1 **PUBLIC COMMENTS:** None

6.2 **CLOSE PUBLIC HEARING:** It was motioned by Vice-Chair Junion, seconded by Commissioner Ragland, and carried unanimously to close the public hearing and enter into regular session. **MOTION ADOPTED**

7. **TEXT AMENDMENT DISCUSSION AND ACTION BY THE PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION:** The Planning and Zoning Commission reviewed and discussed a proposal regarding a request to amend the City of Safford Zoning Ordinance Chapter 17.82 - Sign Regulations, Section 17.82.070 - Signs allowed by permit in commercial and/or industrial zones to allow one additional freestanding directory sign for business centers and to increase the sign size for each business identified.

Ms. Anderson provided photo examples of existing signage in the area of shopping centers such as the Windsong Building (2.7 square feet), Copper Plaza (4.6 square feet), and the Safeway Plaza signage, which consists of 2 signs and has higher visibility of 60 square feet.

Ms. Anderson explained this text amendment is a two part request: 1) The applicant is requesting an increase from 6 square feet to 12 square feet for signs 20 feet and lower in height, and 20 square feet for signs 20 feet and higher in height; 2) Does the Commission want to recommend to allow more than one directory sign at one location?

Chairperson O’Donnal inquired if the maximum directory sign size already sets a limit of how many individual signs can be placed within the sign? Ms., Anderson replied yes, depending on how the property owner is working the signage out with tenants, and also noted it changes on how much linear footage of property there is.

Mike Addis with Addisigns was in attendance and informed the Commission he has been doing business in the area for years. Mr. Addis explained logo identification is an interesting concept, mostly rectangular in shape, and often a tag line below them which takes up more space. Many national companies have requirements for name identification on the road and often smaller tenants are missed, which they should not be neglected. Mr. Addis does not want to see the City administer sign changes through a variance every time, and feels this is a forward thought for larger properties which makes it easier for City staff to administer. He does see a good plan before the Commission as presented but did suggest not restricting 250 feet between signs due to points of entry/exit.

Chairperson O’Donnal inquired if there is any way to word the 250 linear feet that is determined by the property? Ms. Anderson replied signs should not be back to back due to their visibility is

where she came up with 250 linear feet. Ms. Anderson also clarified corner lots include two frontages and is added together. Mt. Graham Shopping Center is unique in Safford as it is the only large multi-tenant property. There are four to five other properties that exceed 300 linear feet of street frontage, but they only include one tenant.

Chairperson O'Donnal agrees with the way it is currently written because it allows more flexibility for sizes. Mr. Addis noted the first thing they do for clients is ask they make a matrix of their tenants.

Commissioner Figueroa inquired if there are additional signs on a property, will businesses have duplicate signs? Mr. Addis replied it is possible, but not necessarily. It is theoretically based on who is leasing the property and/or the tenant's "national requirement" based on where they are going for future growth.

Ms. Anderson suggested Chairperson O'Donnal canvas the board on the questions of the text amendment. Should more than one directory sign be allowed, and what size should be allowed?

The Commission agreed with the proposal. Chairperson O'Donnal asked Ms. Anderson for sample verbiage for C (1). Ms. Anderson suggested under C-1 Size: signs under twenty (20) feet in height shall not exceed twelve (12) square feet in sign area for each business so identified and signs twenty (20) feet and above in height shall not exceed twenty (20) square feet in sign area for each business so identified.

Vice-Chair Junion suggested the Commission make two different motions.

Commissioner Ragland stated his appreciation to the Kai's for what they are doing for the city with their property, however wanted to make sure the motion will address what they are wanting to do? Mr. Addis replied yes, it will compliment what they are doing.

Vice Chair Junion motioned, seconded by Commissioner Hancock, and carried unanimously to recommend amending Municipal Code Section 17.82.070 C (4) to include business centers that exceed three hundred (300) linear feet in street frontage are allowed one additional freestanding directory sign provided that the freestanding directory signs be separated by a minimum of two hundred and fifty (250) linear feet. **MOTION ADOPTED**

Vice Chair Junion motioned, seconded by Commissioner Ragland, and carried unanimously to recommend amending Municipal Code Section 17.82.070 C (1) to allow the size of businesses listed on directory signs to be up to 12 square feet for signs that are lower than 20 feet in height and 20 square feet for signs that are 20 feet or higher in height to support the City's economic development plan within the General Plan. **MOTION ADOPTED**

8. **TEXT AMENDMENT DISCUSSION AND ACTION BY THE PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION:**  
The Planning and Zoning Commission reviewed and discussed a request to amend the City of Safford Zoning Ordinance Chapter 17.52 – C-2 Highway Commercial District, Section 17-52.020 – Use requirements - Permitted Uses to allow one conventional single-family dwelling on any lot or parcel in the C-2 Highway Commercial District, and, to remove the provision "dwellings when located above the ground floor, provided the ground floor is designed and used exclusively for a commercial purpose permitted in the zone."

Ms. Anderson stated this proposed text amendment will solve an issue of existing residential properties along Highway 191 that currently can't make changes to or expand on their properties.

Chairperson O'Donnal asked if this doesn't pass, do they have other options for variances? Ms. Anderson replied no, it burdens existing property owners.

Chairperson O'Donnal stated another concern is that other residential properties could still go in the C-1 District on a vacant property and she already sees issues with safety of exiting properties; are there ADOT requirements for residential? Ms. Anderson assumes ADOT requires a driveway permit.

Commissioner Ragland feels that in the past some municipalities and counties required those that built within one mile of a jurisdiction's boundary to build to code. Ms. Anderson is not aware of any overlap in our codes.

Chairperson O'Donnal inquired how many of the 68 properties need to expand? Ms. Anderson replied she has had two property owners request so far, but others may want to if this is passed.

Commissioner Cunningham stated when the General Plan was put together, the City did not have many C-2 properties; the Highway 191 corridor was set up more as that type of area.

Chairperson O'Donnal wishes we could allow existing homes to expand, but not allow new residential homes to come in since the area is zoned C-2. Ms. Anderson stated the real estate values won't entice new homes to be built.

Commissioner Hancock inquired who initiated this text amendment? Ms. Anderson replied staff did due to a few requests received.

Chairperson O'Donnal would like to see research on a recommendation to address her concern. Ms. Anderson stated an option is for the Commission to continue the public hearing and recommend staff return with additional information at a later date.

Commissioner Cunningham agrees; he is not sure what other issues this may open up.

Commissioner Ragland motioned, seconded by Vice-Chair Junion and carried unanimously to continue the public hearing at a later date to protect the 68 properties, but limit new homes from coming in to the C-2 zone. **MOTION ADOPTED**

9. **PROJECT UPDATES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

Jack in the Box rough plumbing is in; estimated 100 days completion.

Harbor Freight will be going in to the Mt. Graham Shopping Center.  
Vice Chair Junion inquired what is planned for the other building proposed at shopping center?  
Ms. Anderson stated there is not an additional building proposed at this time.

Mt Graham Regional Medical Center will be getting a new building.

The Conditional Use Permit for the assisted living facility was approved by City Council.

Chairperson O'Donnal stated it is good to hear new businesses coming in that will add new jobs.

- 10. **CALL TO THE PUBLIC – NON-AGENDA ITEMS:** None
- 11. **NEXT SCHEDULED MEETING:** Tentatively March 19; or March 26 if a quorum cannot be established for March 19 due to Spring Break. Mrs. Hogle will send out a follow up email on Monday to see when the majority can attend.
- 12. **ADJOURN:** It was motioned by Vice-Chair Junion, seconded by Commissioner Ragland and carried unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 6:58 p.m. **MOTION ADOPTED**

APPROVED:

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Tracey O'Donnal, Chairperson  
Planning & Zoning Commission

ATTEST:

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Amber Hogle, CMC, Administrative Events Liaison  
Planning & Community Development

STATE OF ARIZONA     )  
  )   ss  
County of Graham     )

**CERTIFICATION**

I hereby certify that the foregoing minutes are a true and correct copy of the Meeting of the Safford Planning & Zoning Commission, located in Safford, Graham County, Arizona, held Thursday, January 16, 2020, and approved at a Planning & Zoning Commission Meeting on **TBD**. I further certify the meeting was duly called, held and that a quorum was present.

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Date

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Amber Hogle, CMC, Administrative Events Liaison



**City of Safford, Arizona  
Planning and Zoning Commission Staff Report**

**Meeting Date: February 6, 2020**

**Subject: Zoning Ordinance Text Amendment**

**Department: Planning and Community Development**

**From: Susan Anderson, Planning and Community Development Director**

**REQUESTED ACTION:** Hold a public hearing on a text amendment of Zoning Ordinance Chapter 17.82 - Sign Regulations, Section 17.82.070 - Signs allowed by permit in commercial and/or industrial zones to allow one additional freestanding directory sign for business centers with over three hundred (300) feet of street frontage and to allow the sign size for each business identified to exceed the maximum of six (6) square feet. The Planning and Zoning Commission will need to provide a recommendation to the City Council on this text amendment along with a statement of the Commission's reasons for the recommendation.

**BACKGROUND:** The Planning and Community Development Department is in receipt of a text amendment application from Addisigns requesting that Zoning Ordinance Section 17.82.070 - Signs allowed by permit in commercial and/or industrial zones be amended to include provisions to allow an additional freestanding directory sign for a business center and to increase the square footage for each business identified on the sign.

Currently, Zoning Ordinance Section 17.82.070 allows one freestanding directory sign for a business center. A directory sign is a "a sign, or a set of similarly designed individual signs, placed or displayed in sequence, to list all or part of the businesses within said building or business center." A directory sign is also defined as "a sign designed to show the logos or symbols of several businesses on one structure; also it may be a sign designed to show the relative locations of the several commercial activities within a shopping center or other multi-tenant development." Additionally, the size of the sign for each business listed on a directory sign is limited to a maximum of six (6) square feet.

The applicant is requesting that an additional freestanding directory sign be allowed for properties with over three hundred (300) feet of street frontage, and, to change the allowed

size of the individual businesses listed on the directory sign from six (6) square feet to twelve (12) square feet for signs twenty (20) feet and lower in height and twenty (20) square feet for signs twenty (20) feet and higher in height.

The allowed height and total square footage of signage of a given freestanding sign is determined by the total linear feet of street frontage. For example, a property with one hundred and fifty (150) linear feet of street frontage is allowed a freestanding sign up to eighteen (18) feet in height and seventy (70) square feet in sign area on each face of the sign. A property with three hundred (300) linear feet of street frontage is allowed a freestanding sign up to thirty-five (35) feet in height and one hundred (100) square feet in sign area. For a freestanding directory sign, the square footage allowance may be increased by fifty (50) percent.

On December 9, 2019, City Council approved a variance from the maximum square footage for each individual sign for a freestanding directory sign located at Mt Graham Shopping Center. That variance allows two businesses listed with a maximum of twenty (20) square feet for each business, and eight (8) businesses listed with a maximum of 9.65 square feet for each business.

Staff will provide examples of sign square footage for discussion during the meeting.

**GENERAL PLAN:** Zoning Ordinance Section 17.20.020 (D) states that “all amendments to this title shall be made in accordance with the General Plan. It is public policy that this title shall not be amended unless it can be shown that the changed or changing conditions make the proposed amendments reasonably necessary to the promotion of the purposes of this title.”

The purpose of the Zoning Ordinance is to “promote the health, safety, morals, convenience, order, prosperity and general welfare of the present and future inhabitants of the city by guiding development within the city in accordance with the general plan...”

Goal #9 of the Safford Economic Development Element of the General Plan states to “create a positive climate for business and entrepreneurship.” Policy 1(a) of Goal #9 states to “collaboratively work with business to reduce barriers to investment, growth and expansion” and Policy 1 (e) states to “support shopping and buying locally as a region.”

By modifying the City of Safford sign regulations to reflect the needs of local businesses, the city is working with businesses to reduce barriers while also increasing the visibility of those businesses to local consumers.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Staff is recommending the following amendment. Additions are in red.

Zoning Ordinance Chapter 17.82 – Sign Regulations, Section 17-82.070 – Signs allowed by permit in commercial and / or industrial zones is hereby recommended to be amended to include the following:

C. Directory signs: a sign, or a set of similarly designed individual signs, placed or displayed in sequence, to list all or part of the businesses within said building or business center.

1. Size: shall not exceed six square feet in sign area for each business so identified. Total area of all signs, if mounted on building, shall not exceed thirty (30) square feet. *(To be discussed at the meeting.)*

2. Height: if mounted on-building, shall not extend above the roof line of the building on which it is placed or displayed.

3. Location: in all commercial and industrial zones.

4. Other Restrictions. Such signs may be in addition to an on-building identification sign. A freestanding directory sign may be approved for each business center combined with each center's business identification sign. **BUSINESS CENTERS THAT EXCEED THREE HUNDERD (300) LINEAR FEET IN STREET FRONTAGE ARE ALLOWED ONE ADDITIONAL FREESTANDING DIRECTORY SIGN PROVIDED THAT THE FREESTANDING DIRECTORY SIGNS BE SEPARATED BY A MINIMUM OF TWO HUNDRED AND FIFTY (250) LINEAR FEET.** Such signs will be in conformity with the matrix in subsection (D)(1) of this section with the addition of fifty (50) percent area increase. On-building directory signs shall be allowed in addition to the sign area permitted by subsection (C)(1) of this section.





**City of Safford, Arizona  
Planning and Zoning Commission Staff Report**

**Meeting Date: February 6, 2020**

**Subject: Zoning Ordinance Text Amendment**

**Department: Planning and Community Development**

**From: Susan Anderson, Planning and Community Development Director**

**REQUESTED ACTION:** Hold a public hearing on a text amendment of Zoning Ordinance Chapter 17.52 – C-2 Highway Commercial District, Section 17-52.020 – Use requirements - Permitted Uses to allow one conventional single-family dwelling on any lot or parcel in the C-2 Highway Commercial District, and, to remove the permitted use provision for “dwellings when located above the ground floor, provided the ground floor is designed and used exclusively for a commercial purpose permitted in the zone.” The Planning and Zoning Commission will need to provide a recommendation to the City Council on this text amendment along with a statement of the Commission’s reasons for the recommendation.

**BACKGROUND:**

During the November 15, 2019 City Council Work Session, staff informed the Council on the issue of existing single-family uses in the C-2 Highway Commercial District. Currently, the C-2 District permits “dwellings when located above the ground floor, provided the ground floor is designed and used exclusively for a commercial purpose permitted in the zone.” Any existing residential use that does not meet these conditions is considered a legal nonconforming use.

Non-conforming uses occur when a change is made in the Zoning Ordinance and that use is not specifically included. Another term used to describe this situation is that the existing use is “grandfathered.” Zoning Ordinance Chapter 17-16 Nonconforming Uses and Structures, under Section 17.16.020, provides that nonconforming uses shall not be increased or expanded. Therefore, an owner of an existing single-family residential use cannot increase the footprint of, or add any additions to, their residential building.

According to Graham County records, there are 68 residential properties that are zoned C-2 Highway Commercial along HWY 191 / South 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue. That number reflects 59% of all C-2 zoned properties along HWY 191 / South 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue. Although the C-2 district is intended to encourage heavier commercial establishments along highways, the transition from residential to commercial in this area has yet to happen. Additionally, many of the properties along this corridor do not contain enough

acreage to accommodate commercial development and would need to be combined with adjoining properties to increase the commercial potential.

The 1976 Zoning Ordinance did have a provision under C-2 Highway Commercial to allow single-family dwellings. At some point between 1976 and 2011 that provision was removed and “dwellings when located above the ground floor, provided the ground floor is designed and used exclusively for a commercial purpose permitted in the zone” was added. Requiring dwellings only above a commercial use is intended to replicate a typical downtown in the past when store owners lived above their commercial stores, and to encourage residential living options in a downtown area. Given the nature of the HWY 191 corridor, that type of development does not appear to be likely. Staff is recommending to remove the requirement of only allowing dwellings when above a commercial use and to add single-family residential as a permitted use so that the 68 existing residential properties along HWY 191 / South 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue would no longer be considered legal nonconforming.

**GENERAL PLAN:**

Zoning Ordinance Section 17.20.020 D states that “all amendments to this title shall be made in accordance with the General Plan. It is public policy that this title shall not be amended unless it can be shown that the changed or changing conditions make the proposed amendments reasonably necessary to the promotion of the purposes of this title.”

The purpose of the Zoning Ordinance is to “promote the health, safety, morals, convenience, order, prosperity and general welfare of the present and future inhabitants of the city by guiding development within the city in accordance with the general plan...”

Goal #1 of the Safford Neighborhood Character Area of the General Plan, which includes the HWY 191 / South 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue corridor, states to “support infill, land uses, strategies, and programs that enhance Safford’s existing neighborhoods and increase the quality of life of Safford’s residents.”

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff is recommending to delete under Section 17-52.020 (MM) - “dwellings when located above the ground floor, provided the ground floor is designed and used exclusively for a commercial purpose permitted in the zone” and add “one conventional single-family dwelling on any lot or parcel.”

**Zoning Ordinance Chapter 17.52 – C-2 Highway Commercial District, Section 17-52.020 – Use requirements - Permitted Uses is hereby recommended to be amended to include the following:**

*(Additions are underlined and deletions are struck-through)*

**17.52.020 - Use requirements—Permitted uses.**

Permitted uses include:

- A. Uses permitted in the C-2 zoning district;
- B. Retail and wholesale stores;
- C. Farm equipment and heavy machinery;

D. New and used car sales, service and rentals;

E. Secondhand goods;

F. Automobile, trailer, boat, airplane and parts, sales room and lot;

G. Nursery and greenhouse;

H. Nightclubs, subject to the approval of a conditional use permit;

I. Feed stores;

J. Public auction in enclosed building (livestock not included);

K. Pet shop;

L. Newspaper and printing office;

M. Service shops: shoe or bicycle repair, tool or cutlery;

N. Nursing home;

O. Hospital and clinic for small animals;

P. Bowling alley, pool, billiard room;

Q. Miniature golf course;

R. Practice golf driving tee and putting range;

S. Drive-in theater;

T. Art metal and ornamental iron shops;

U. Cabinet, carpenter, upholstery;

V. Ceramics;

W. Glazing, picture framing;

X. Plumbing, heating, ventilating, refrigeration;

Y. Sheet metal, tinsmith;

Z. Locksmith, gunsmith;

AA. Sign painting;

BB. Garments, fabric, carpet, furniture cleaning and dyeing, but all solvents, shampoos, detergents and other agents shall be noncombustible and nonexplosive having a rating of five (5) or under by the Underwriters Laboratories;

CC. Hotels and motels;

DD. Warehouse confined to closed building;

EE. Travel trailer park subject to the approval of a conditional use permit and development in accordance with the requirements in [section 17.72.130](#);

FF. Trade school with outdoor welding;

GG. Service station, automobile and truck repair with body and fender and paint shop if confined to a closed building;

HH. Tire recapping if confined to a closed building;

II. Public garage and parking;

JJ. Lumber yard, but not milling and planing operation;

KK. Liquor stores;

LL. Medical marijuana dispensary, subject to the requirements found in [section 17.12.240](#);

MM. ~~Dwellings when located above the ground floor, provided the ground floor is designed and used exclusively for a commercial purpose permitted in the zone;~~ **ONE CONVENTIONAL SINGLE-FAMILY DWELLING ON ANY LOT OR PARCEL;**

NN. Restaurants including restaurants with drive-up windows and outdoor dining;

OO. Car wash;

PP. Mini-warehouse, subject to the approval of a conditional use permit;

QQ. Swap meets;

RR. Other like businesses when approved by the zoning administrator. The zoning administrator's decision may be appealed to the board of adjustment.

SS. (Reserved for Hospital and clinic for large animals)

TT. (Reserved for Shelter facilities)