



Design Review Board
P.O. Box 27210
Tucson, Arizona 85726-7210
Phone: (520) 791-4213
TDD: (520) 791-2639

Legal Action Report – Meeting Minutes Design Review Board (DRB)

Members of the Design Review Board (DRB) held a meeting, which was open to the public on:

Date and Time: Friday, August 21, 2026, 8:30 AM

Location: Meeting was held virtually using Microsoft Teams

1. Call to Order / Roll Call, 8:31 AM

Members Present:

- Rosemary Bright (Vice Chair)
- Caryl Clement
- Daniel Maher
- Chris Stebe (Chair)
- Cade Hayes (arrived at 8:38 am)

Members Absent:

- Paige Anthony
- Grace Schau

A quorum was established.

2. Review and Approval of the 7/10/26 Draft LAR and Meeting Minutes

Action Taken

A motion was made by Chair Stebe to approve the 7/10/26 Meeting Minutes and the Legal Action Report. The motion was duly seconded by Vice Chair Rosemary Bright. All in favor, motion passed unanimously 4-0.

3. Call to the Audience

No speakers came forward.

4. [TP-ENT-0626-00012](#) – New Tucson South Stake Church Building, Steeple Height Exception

Related Activity #: [TP-PRE-0226-00049](#)

Address: [5259 S Midvale Park Rd](#)

Parcel #: [13711430K](#)

Zoning: [O-3](#)

Height Special Exception Review

Action Taken

Staff Clarification

Staff introduced the project and reiterated the limited purview of the Design Review Board in this case, which is limited to the Use-Specific Standards for a Height Special Exception only.

Applicant's Presentation

The applicant team presented, showing an aerial rendering of the site and delivering a description of the project and height exception. The applicant also asked about utility boxes located at the street frontage, but staff reminded the applicant that those were beyond the purview of the DRB.

DRB Discussion

The Board asked for additional drawings, to which the applicant displayed a site plan, elevation drawings, and an additional rendering. Presentation showed the steeple set back well beyond code minimums (between 40 to 50 feet vs. required 27 feet) and compared favorably in height to nearby utility poles. The DRB asked staff to confirm the setback requirements were met, which staff answered affirmatively.

The DRB asked about landscaping – staff reiterated the limits of the DRB purview in this case and expressed that the project would be required to adhere to landscaping and zoning requirements specified in the Unified Development Code (UDC).

The Board also asked about neighborhood feedback, to which the applicant described their two neighborhood meetings, and stated a letter of approval from the Homeowners Association was included with their Special Exception materials. Staff confirmed the submittal. The applicant further clarified that a public hearing was scheduled for next week.

The Board questioned the utility boxes. Staff reiterated the DRB's purview but informed the applicant and board that they could pursue right-of-way permits for additional landscaping in the right-of-way to camouflage the utility boxes from view if the utility owners were unwilling or unable to facilitate relocating the equipment.

Motion

A motion was made by DRB Vice Chair Bright to recommend the project for approval with no additional conditions. The motion was duly seconded by DRB Member Clement. Motion passed unanimously 4-0.

5. [TP-ENT-0226-00004](#) – Costco Wholesale

Related Activity #: [TC-COM-0624-01147](#)

Address: [9688 E Old Vail Rd](#)

Parcel #: [141186730](#)

Zoning: [I-2](#)

Large Retail Establishment Design Standards Special Exception Review

Action Taken

Staff Clarification

Staff introduced the case and gave the staff findings on the project's conformance to the Large Retail Establishment (LRE) use-specific standards. Staff clarified the DRB purview for the LRE Special Exception and gave more information on the Special Exception process.

Staff continued to explain that after the DRB hearing, an additional hearing is scheduled before the Zoning

Examiner in October before the Mayor & Council consider the matter at a Mayor & Council meeting later in the Fall.

Applicant's Presentation

The applicant team presented the project, using site plans and renders to demonstrate conformance with the Large Retail Establishment Design Standards, zoning requirements for EV parking, landscaping and rainwater harvesting requirements.

DRB Discussion

Native plant survey: The DRB requested clarification on where the one pineapple barrel cactus indicated on the NPPO site inventory would be transplanted to. The applicant team clarified they were reaching out to local nurseries to take the specimen to, as they are fragile and replanting would likely result in losing the specimen.

Plant materials: Also, the DRB commented on the Nerium Oleander (poisonous, non native) and Mexican Feathergrass (invasive) species in the landscaping palette, asking that non-native or invasive species not be used in site landscaping, and should be replaced with Sonoran Desert natives (e.g., desert milkweed/*Asclepias subulata*).

Rainwater Irrigation: Questions were raised about rainwater irrigation in the parking lot, and the applicant team described how planter islands in the parking areas would use an inlet and outlet flow point to passively water landscaping and facilitate water flow through the site to the large basins on the southern edge of the property.

Detention basins: Another question posed by the DRB was why no trees were included in the large basins (not just on slopes) to support urban tree canopy goals, and recommended 2 trees per 1000 square feet. Staff commented that, because of the basin size, 120 trees would be required; DRB members discussed and agreed was unreasonable. Staff described how basin planting had been required as a condition in previous Special Exception cases, and a condition was also reasonable in Large Retail Establishment Special Exception cases. Board ultimately landed on qualitative wording (natural aesthetic, using transplanted material where possible) rather than a strict tree-count formula.

Julian Wash Greenway: DRB members also requested clarification on connectivity to the nearby Julian Wash Greenway. The applicant team clarified that the greenway was on the other side of active railroad tracks, and they decided against pedestrian or bike connectivity to the Greenway.

Bike parking: The DRB also asked about long-term bicycle parking; the applicant confirmed short-term racks will be located near entrance and long-term (locker-style) parking near loading dock, on the north side of the building.

Parking counts: The DRB held discussion on approximately 863 proposed stalls; concerns were raised about excess asphalt/urban heat island; the DRB raised the idea of shared/overlapping parking with future

outparcel tenants for future exploration.

EV charging placement: The DRB also asked about EV parking spaces being located far from entrance/handicap parking; applicant explained this is intentional to prevent non-EV vehicles from occupying the spots, and to keep charging near the fuel island for shared infrastructure/operations.

Community/central features: Board felt the entrance canopy/portico alone was insufficient. Suggestions included dog-friendly areas, small play areas, outdoor food-court seating, and shaded respite areas within the parking field (not attached to the building). The applicant team clarified that outdoor amenities were geared towards the typical needs of Costco members, as the warehouse was not open to the public and there has not been any demand for those kinds of amenities in other locations. The team stated they would further explore amenities along pedestrian routes further.

Rendering clarifications: Finally, the DRB questioned why the renderings did not show the inlet and outlet points for passive rainwater harvesting. Applicant confirmed landscape islands will be recessed (not raised) to allow proper stormwater inlets/sheet flow, contrary to conceptual renderings.

Motion

A motion was made by DRB Chair Stebe to recommend the project for approval with the following conditions: 1) Native trees and vegetation shall be incorporated into basin interiors to achieve a natural aesthetic; on-site transplanted materials shall be used in these areas to the greatest extent possible; 2) Oleander and Mexican Feathergrass shall not be used and shall be substituted with Sonoran Desert-adapted plant material; and 3) The developer shall include two additional respite areas with shaded seating along pedestrian routes within the parking area, and not adjacent to any structure. The motion was duly seconded by DRB Vice Chair Bright. Motion passed unanimously 5-0.

4. Staff Announcements

Staff did not have any announcements. DRB Chair Stebe relayed that DRB Member Paige Anthony had opted to continue her membership on the Board.

6. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 10:22 AM.