



**Cochise County**  
**Community Development**  
 Development Services Department

Public Programs...Personal Service  
 www.cochise.az.gov

**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** Cochise County Board of Adjustment, District 2  
**FROM:** Robert Kirschmann, Planner II  
**FOR:** Daniel Coxworth AICP, Development Services Director  
**SUBJECT:** Docket BA2-19-04 (Thunder Mountain Church)  
**DATE:** September 17, 2019 for the October 2, 2019 Meeting

**APPLICATION FOR VARIANCE**

**Docket BA2-19-04 (Thunder Mountain Church)**

The Applicant is requesting the following variance:

All lighted text on digital signs must be red or green on a black background. The applicant is requesting full color. If granted all other regulations will apply, including sign size, height, and the prohibition on moving images.

The subject parcel, 107-56-002N, is located at 4300 Golden Acres Drive in Sierra Vista, Arizona. The Applicant is Thunder Mountain Church.

**I. DESCRIPTION OF SUBJECT PARCEL AND SURROUNDING USES**

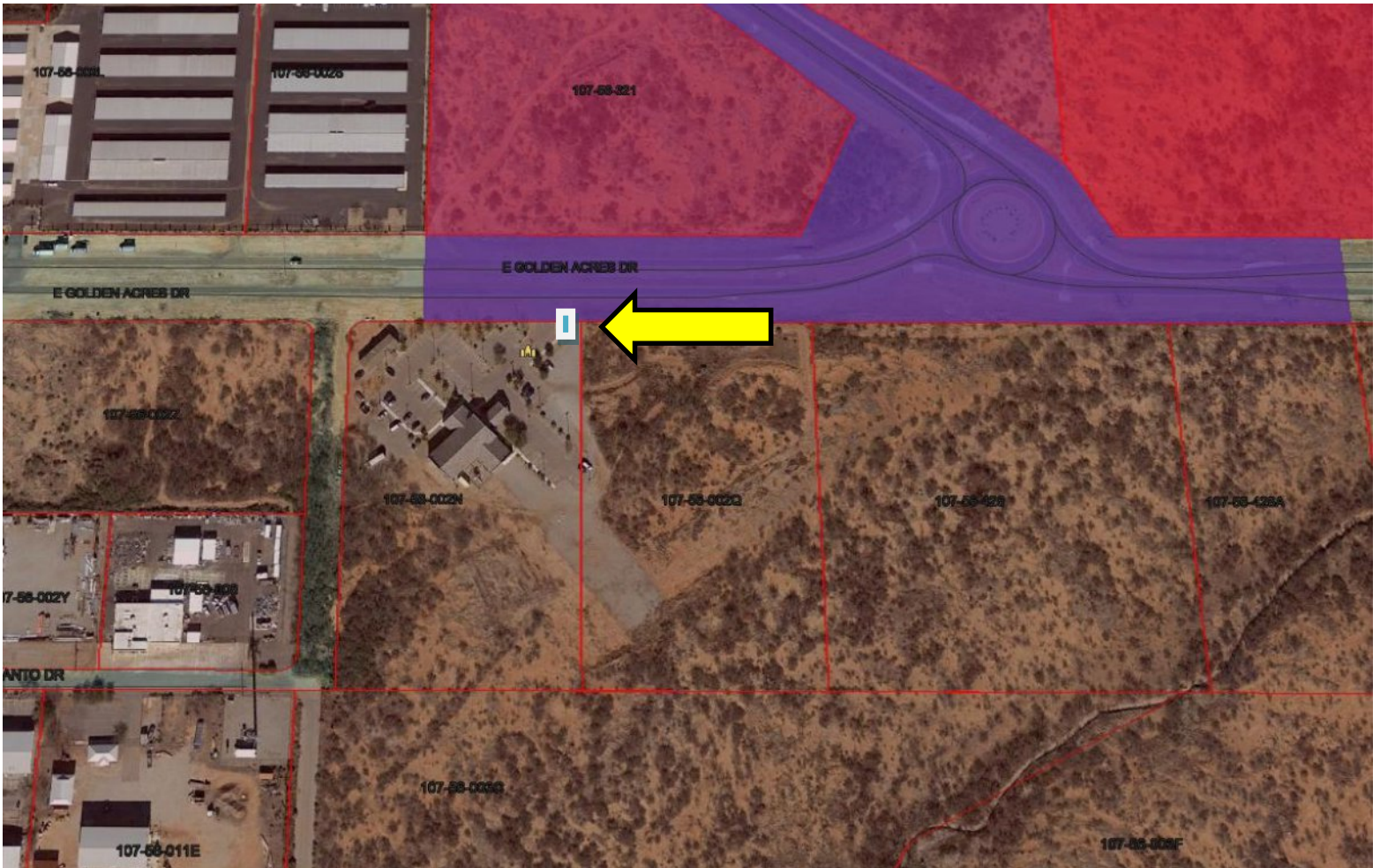
**Site Size:** 5.01 Acres  
**Zoning:** GB (General Business)  
**Growth Area:** Category A – Urban Growth Area  
**Plan Designation:** Neighborhood Conservation  
**Area Plan:** None  
**Existing Uses:** Church and Accessories, including Legal Non-Conforming Digital Sign  
**Proposed Uses:** Same, with additional color capacity on the sign

**Surrounding Zoning and Uses**

Relation to Subject Parcel	Zoning District	Use of Property
North	Golden Acres Drive/GB/GC (City)	County Maintained Road/Vacant/Mini Storage
South	GB	Vacant
East	GB	Vacant
West	GB	Vacant/Contractor Yard

**Planning, Zoning and Building Safety**  
 1415 Melody Lane, Building E  
 Bisbee, Arizona 85603  
 520-432-9300  
 520-432-9278 fax  
 1-877-777-7958  
 planningandzoning@cochise.az.gov

**Highway and Floodplain**  
 1415 Melody Lane, Building F  
 Bisbee, Arizona 85603  
 520-432-9300  
 520-432-9337 fax  
 1-800-752-3745  
 highway@cochise.az.gov  
 floodplain@cochise.az.gov



**II. SITE HISTORY**

- 2003 – Church built
- 2006 – Accessory structure built
- 2007 – Sign installed
- 2008 – Accessory structures built
- 2011 – Classrooms installed
- 2018 – Church expanded

**III. PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

The applicant is requesting to replace an existing amber on black digital sign with a full color digital sign. There will be no alteration to size, height, or location of the sign. The existing sign is damaged and cannot be repaired. The sign face is 32 inches tall by 144 inches wide, and the top is approximately 8 feet off the ground.



**IV. ANALYSIS OF IMPACTS**

The project site is within a commercially zoned area and all existing development is commercial. Golden Acres drive provides access to the Golden Acres subdivision but is not otherwise a through street so traffic is minimal. The current amber on black sign does not comply with height or color restrictions, as such signs are limited to five feet high and red or green on black. If there were no color change the sign replacement would be done as a matter of right so only the color is being examined.

The Applicant is proposing a full color sign. In and of itself the addition of the additional colors create a minimal impact on a small street such as Golden Acres Drive, particularly in a commercial area. The sign does however have full motion video capability which is prohibited under the zoning regulations, with any image being required to be displayed a minimum of four second before changing. If the color change is approved, staff requests that a condition be included restricting the ability to play video to further reiterate this regulation.

Staff finds that the proposed addition of full color with no other changes will have minimal negative impacts on the neighborhood.



**V. PUBLIC COMMENT**

The Department mailed notices to neighboring property owners within 300-feet on July 31, 2019. Staff posted the property and published a legal notice. To date, the Department has received one letter in support. The property was re-noticed on September 10, 2019. No additional comments were received.

## **VI. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION**

### **Factors in Favor of Approving the Variance**

1. The proposed addition of color will have minimal impacts;
2. No other changes are proposed; and
3. One letter in support had been received.

### **Factor Against Approving the Variance**

The potential for full video exists, creating unsafe distraction.

## **VII. RECOMMENDATION**

Based on the Factors in Favor of Approval as Findings of Fact, Staff recommends **Approval** of the Variance as requested, with a condition that full motion video remains prohibited.

Sample Motion: *Mr. Chairman, I move to approve Docket BA2-19-04, granting the Variance as requested by the Applicant, with the condition recommended by Staff the Factors in Favor of approval constituting the Findings of Fact.*