

ZONING INTERPRETATION RECORD

Subject of Interpretation:

Requirements for a Church

Zoning Ordinance Section Number:

11-13-2; 11-1-6; 11-5-3 (Pre-2011 Zoning Ordinance)

Title of Section:

Supplementary Provisions; Effect on Previously Approved Projects and Projects in Progress; Development Standards for RS Districts:

Cause for Interpretation:

The applicant requested storage room expansion of a worship center and the classification of the site as church.

Interpretation:

The site in question is currently zoned R1-6, Single Residence. Under Section 11-13-2 of the Mesa Zoning Ordinance, churches are permitted to be located in any zoning district, including R1-6. As such, a church is considered a permitted use at this location. However, a church is further defined in Section 11-1-6 as:

“A building or group of buildings or structures which by design and construction are intended for the conducting of organized religious services and limited accessory uses generally associated therewith. The term shall include synagogues, temples, mosques, and other similar recognized places of worship.”

At issue is whether this facility has regularly scheduled worship services. If this facility is not used for worship services, then the other ministry related activities conducted at this site would fall under the definition of “social service facility”. Without the worship service component to this facility, the property would be required to be rezoned to R-4, and a Council Use Permit would be required to be approved by the City Council (Sec 11-5-3M).

Based on the description of the activities as stated before by the applicant, Mesa Planning Division staff will continue to classify this site as a church. However, it is important that worship services continue to be conducted on these premises on a regularly scheduled basis. If such worship activities are halted, or become increasingly infrequent, and the remaining ministry activities to the underprivileged continue, then the facility will be required to be rezoned to R-4, and to receive approval of a Council Use Permit for a Social Service Facility. As for the storage building, the proposed size (about 1000 sq. ft.) is sufficient to require a variance or a Substantial Conformance Improvement Permit (SCIP).