



STAFF REPORT
SAN CLEMENTE PLANNING COMMISSION

Date: March 20, 2013

PLANNER: Sean Nicholas, Associate Planner *SN*

SUBJECT: **Discretionary Sign Permit 12-237/Minor Architectural Permit 13-052, USA Gasoline Master Sign Program**, a request for a new Master Sign Program and exterior building improvements to change from an Arco to a USA Gasoline service station located at 590 Camino de Estrella.

REQUIRED FINDINGS

Prior to approval of the proposed project, the following findings shall be made. The draft Resolution, provided as Attachment 1, and analysis section of this report provide an assessment of the project's compliance with these findings.

Discretionary Sign Permit, Section 17.16.250, is required for the Master Sign Program.

- a. The design, including lighting, scale, length and materials, of the sign is consistent with the intent of the design elements of the General Plan, Design Guidelines, respective specific plan or Architectural Overlay District in which the sign is to be located;
- b. The design, scale and materials of the sign harmonize with the architectural design and details of the building or site it serves;
- c. The design and scale of the sign is appropriate to the distance from which the sign is normally viewed;
- d. The design and materials of the sign provide a contrast between the background and letters;
- e. If a freestanding sign is included in the sign application, the design, scale or location of the building dictates the use of freestanding signs, rather than building-mounted signs.

Minor Architectural Permit, Section 17.16.100, is required for the exterior building improvements.

- a. The architectural treatment of the project complies with the San Clemente General Plan;

- b. The architectural treatment of the project complies with this title in areas including, but not limited to, height, setback, color, etc.;
- c. The architectural treatment of the project complies with the architectural guidelines in the City's Design Guidelines;
- d. The general appearance of the proposal is in keeping with the character of the neighborhood;
- e. The proposal is not detrimental to the orderly and harmonious development of the City.

BACKGROUND

In April 2012, the applicant began the process of updating the gas pumps for the service station. The service station is located adjacent to the Avenida De La Estrella on-ramp on the most northern on/off-ramp of San Clemente. As a part of the building permit review for the gas pump change out, planning staff noted that the signage on the plans was a different brand, changing from Arco to USA Gasoline. At that time, staff informed the applicant that a change in signage for a service station required a new Master Sign Program. The applicant submitted a Master Sign Program, including new signage for the convenience store, and a proposal to re-paint the convenience store. The proposal is a like for like replacement of the previous service station signage, other than a new monument and wall-mounted sign. All other sign changes are change of copy only.

The project requires a Discretionary Sign Permit for a new Master Sign Program, pursuant to Municipal Code Section 17.84.020.G.2.d, for, "Any gas/service station that proposes new signs or modifications to existing signs, except as allowed by State law." The Minor Architectural Permit is required for the repainting of the convenience store.


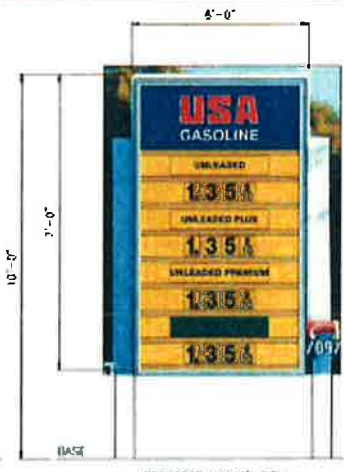


PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The applicant is proposing to change out the Arco/AMPM signs with USA Gasoline signs. The applicant has already removed the Arco/AMPM signs. The old price monument sign was hit by a car and was demolished. The applicant is proposing a new monument sign, consistent with current sign regulations and Design Guidelines. Table 1 provides images of existing and proposed signage.

The applicant is also proposing to re-paint the convenience store. Over the years, the exterior walls have gone through various modifications and "patches", and there are a variety of paint colors on the building. The applicant is proposing to paint the building white with a gray wainscot. The applicant is also proposing a new, internally illuminated cabinet sign above the front entry.

The site's maximum permitted sign square footage is 159 square feet; the applicant proposes 159 square feet.

Table 1: Existing and Proposed Master Sign Program Signage

Existing	Proposed (New Master Sign Program)
<p data-bbox="277 443 670 478">Mounment Sign (demolished)</p> <p data-bbox="375 512 573 548">42 square feet</p> 	<p data-bbox="1003 443 1218 478">Monument Sign</p> <p data-bbox="1013 512 1208 548">42 square feet</p> 
<p data-bbox="407 1110 534 1146">Pole Sign</p> <p data-bbox="354 1180 587 1215">62.45 square feet</p> 	<p data-bbox="1045 1110 1172 1146">Pole Sign</p> <p data-bbox="992 1180 1226 1215">62.45 square feet</p> 

<p>Canopy Sign</p> <p>8.90 square feet each (2 signs)</p> 	<p>Canopy Sign</p> <p>8.90 square feet each (2 signs)</p> 
<p>Pump Sign</p> <p>1.12 square feet each (8 signs)</p> 	<p>Pump Sign</p> <p>1.12 square feet each (8 signs)</p> 
<p>Building Sign</p> <p>28 square feet</p> 	<p>Building Sign</p> <p>28 square feet</p>  <p><small>SAND BLASTED WOOD SIGN</small></p>

Discretionary Sign Permit

Section 17.84.020.G.2.d of the Zoning Ordinance requires a Discretionary Sign Permit (DSP) to be approved for any new or modified service stations signage. The applicant is proposing to maintain and change out the copy of the existing signage except: 1) a new monument sign, conforming to current development standards and Design Guidelines, will be constructed as the previous monument sign was demolished due to an accident onsite; and 2) to improve the overall look of the convenience store, the applicant is proposing a new sandblasted wood sign, to replace the channel letter internally illuminated sign, with decorative goose neck lighting more in line with the architecture of the store and the City's design guidelines. The pole sign is an approved sign and is not being modified other than changing copy.

Below is a summary on how the project meets the findings:

- a. The sandblasted wood wall sign and decorative lighting will further enhance the look of the building. The other signage is primarily a change of copy of previously approved signs. The monument sign is proposed to the same dimensions as the one destroyed in the accident.
- b. The new sign on the building will improve the overall look of the building and is consistent with the architectural design. The other signage was previously approved and is located in areas on site to provide the information without blocking line of sight or being a distraction to drivers on Avenida Estrella.
- c. The monument sign is located near the front property line to provide a price guide for the station, the pole sign is set back away from Estrella closer to the freeway on-ramp, and the building sign is located above the front doors and designed to enhance the look of the building.
- d. The design and materials of the sign provide a contrast between the background and letters by utilizing the dark blue background with white and red copy.
- e. Because the use of the site is a service station, monument signs are commonly used to provide price information. The pole sign was previously approved and legally constructed and there are no modifications to the pole sign proposed other than a change of copy.

Minor Architectural Permit

Over the years the convenience store was patched, painted, and modified on the exterior without approvals. As a component of this project, in order to improve the overall look of the site, the applicant is proposing to paint the building white with a gray wainscot. Staff is supportive of this change as it will bring the building more in compliance with the design guidelines, and the findings for approval of an Architectural Permit as the two shades of white and gray paint are colors encouraged in the Design Guidelines.

Design Review Subcommittee

The project was reviewed by the DRSC on February 27, 2013. At that meeting DRSC reviewed the master sign package including staff’s recommendation to modify the building signage. The applicant was supportive of modifying the building signage to a sand blasted wood sign with decorative lighting staff and DRSC noted the design change was consistent with other service station building signage recently approved. No other modifications to signage were discussed.

GENERAL PLAN CONSISTENCY

The following table summarizes how the proposed project is consistent with policies in the City of San Clemente General Plan.

Table 2: General Plan Consistency

<i>General Plan Policy</i>	<i>Consistency Finding</i>
<i>2.IV.B Preserve and strengthen San Clemente’s unique atmosphere and historic identity as “The Spanish Village by the Sea.”</i>	Consistent. The new signage proposed for the site is consistent with the Design Guidelines which requires signs to be consistent with the architecture of the building. The building reflects Spanish Colonial Revival architecture as viewed from Avenida Estrella, and all other signage is existing and no change of use is proposed.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW/COMPLIANCE (CEQA):

The Planning Division completed an environmental assessment for the project in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and concluded the project is categorically exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) as a Class 3 exemption, pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15303, as the project involves minor exterior modifications to signage and will not impact the site in anyway.

CALIFORNIA COASTAL COMMISSION REVIEW

The project is not located within the Coastal Zone and therefore is not subject to their review.

ALTERNATIVES; IMPLICATIONS OF ALTERNATIVES

1. The Planning Commission can concur with staff and approve the new Master Sign Program and exterior improvements to the building.

This is the recommended action. This action would result in the applicant constructing a new monument sign, installing new signage on the building consistent with the design

guidelines, replace the copy in the existing pole sign, and repaint the building consistent with the design guidelines.

2. The Planning Commission can, at its discretion, add, modify or delete provisions of the proposed project or conditions.

This action would result in any modifications being incorporated into the project.

3. The Planning Commission can deny the proposed Master Sign Program and exterior improvements.

This action would result in the applicant not being able to develop the new Master Sign Program or improve the exterior of the building as proposed. The applicant would have the option of appealing a denial to City Council.

RECOMMENDATION

STAFF RECOMMENDS THAT the Planning Commission approve DSP 12-237/MAP 13-052, USA Gasoline Master Sign Program, subject to the attached Resolution and Conditions of Approval.

Attachments:

1. Resolution No. 13-011
Exhibit A - Conditions of Approval
2. Location Map
Plans

RESOLUTION NO. PC 13-011

A RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF SAN CLEMENTE, CALIFORNIA, APPROVING DISCRETIONARY SIGN PERMIT 12-237/MINOR ARCHITECTURAL PERMIT 13-052, A REQUEST FOR A NEW MASTER SIGN PROGRAM AND BUILDING FAÇADE IMPROVEMENTS FOR A USA GASOLINE SERVICE STATION LOCATED AT 590 CAMINO DE ESTRELLA

WHEREAS, on July 3, 2012 an application was submitted, and deemed complete on February 28, 2013, by Tesoro Refining and Marketing, 19100 Ridgewood Parkway, San Antonio, TX, 78259, a request for a new Master Sign Program and building façade improvements located at 590 Camino de Estrella. The project site is within the Community Commercial zoning district (CC2). The legal description being Parcel 1, of Block 7, of Page 39, and Assessor's Parcel Number 691-101-21; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Division has determined that the project is categorically exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15303, as a Class 3 exemption as it consists of a new Master Sign Program for a service station and repainting of the existing building; and

WHEREAS, on February 27, 2013, the City's Design Review Subcommittee considered the proposed project and recommended approval of the project with the modifications the applicant agreed to; and

WHEREAS, on March 20, 2013, the Planning Commission held a duly noticed public hearing on the subject application, and considered evidence presented by the applicant, City staff, and other interested parties.

NOW, THEREFORE, the Planning Commission of the City of San Clemente hereby resolves as follows:

Section 1: The project is categorically exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15303, as a Class 3 exemption as it consists of a new Master Sign Program and repainting of an existing building in an urbanized commercial zone; and

Section 2: With regard to Discretionary Sign Permit (DSP) 12-237, the Planning Commission finds as follows:

- A) The design, including scale, length and materials, of the sign is consistent with the intent of the design elements of the General Plan and Design Guidelines, in that the sandblasted wood wall sign and decorative lighting will further enhance the look of the building. The other signage is primarily a change of copy of previously approved signs. The monument sign is proposed to the same dimensions as the one destroyed in the accident.

- B) The design, scale and materials of the sign harmonize with the architectural design and details of the building or site it serves in that the new sign on the building will improve the overall look of the building and is consistent with the architectural design. The other signage was previously approved and is located in areas on site to provide the information without blocking line of sight or being a distraction to drivers on Avenida Estrella.
- C) The design and scale of the sign is appropriate for the distance from which the sign is normally viewed in that the monument sign is located near the front property line to provide a price guide for the station, the pole sign is set back away from Estrella closer to the freeway on-ramp, and the building sign is located above the front doors and designed to enhance the look of the building.
- D) The design and materials of the sign provide a contrast between the background and letters by utilizing the dark blue background with white and red copy.
- E) The design, scale or location of the building dictates the use of freestanding signs, rather than building-mounted signs in that the use of the site is a service station, monument signs are commonly used to provide price information. The pole sign was previously approved and legally constructed and there are no modifications to the pole sign proposed other than a change of copy.

Section 3: With regard to Minor Architectural Permit (MAP) 13-052, the Planning Commission finds as follows:

- A) The architectural treatment of the project complies with the San Clemente General Plan in that the paint colors proposed are consistent with the Design Guidelines and give the building a unified look.
- B) The architectural treatment of the project complies with this title in areas including, but not limited to, height, setback, color, etc. in that the building is existing and meets all applicable development standards and the color palette chosen for the building is white and gray, consistent with the Design Guidelines.
- C) The architectural treatment of the project complies with the architectural guidelines in the City's Design Guidelines in that the building colors are white with a gray accent which is consistent with the recommendations of the Design Guidelines.
- D) The general appearance of the project is in keeping with the character of the neighborhood in that the surrounding area is commercial development and located near an off/on-ramp from I-5, and the updated façade will enhance the overall look of the site and area.

- E) The proposal is not detrimental to the orderly and harmonious development of the City in that the façade upgrade with the repaint and signage will improve the look of the site and area.

Section 4: The Planning Commission of the City of San Clemente hereby approves DSP 12-237/MAP 13-052, USA Gasoline Master Sign Program, subject to the above Findings, and the Conditions of Approval attached hereto as Exhibit A.

PASSED AND ADOPTED at a regular meeting of the Planning Commission of the City of San Clemente on March 20, 2013.

Chair

TO WIT:

I **HEREBY CERTIFY** that the foregoing resolution was duly adopted at a regular meeting of the Planning Commission of the City of San Clemente on March 20, 2013, and carried by the following roll call vote:

AYES:	COMMISSIONERS:
NOES:	COMMISSIONERS:
ABSTAIN:	COMMISSIONERS:
ABSENT:	COMMISSIONERS:

Secretary of the Planning Commission

EXHIBIT A

CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL
DSP 12-237/MAP 13-052, USA Gasoline Master Sign Program

1. The owner or designee shall develop the approved project in conformance with the site plan, elevations, and any other applicable submittals approved by the Planning Commission on March 20, 2013, subject to these Conditions of Approval.

Any deviation from approved submittals shall require that, prior to the issuance of building permits, the owner or designee shall submit modified plans and any other applicable materials as required by the City for review and obtain the approval of the City Planner or designee. If the City Planner or designee determines that the deviation is significant, the owner or designee shall be required to apply for review and obtain the approval of the Zoning Administrator, as appropriate. (PIng.)_____

2. The applicant or the property owner or other holder of the right to the development entitlement(s) or permit(s) approved by the City for the project, if different from the applicant (herein, collectively, the "Indemnitor") shall indemnify, defend, and hold harmless the City of San Clemente and its elected city council, its appointed boards, commissions, and committees, and its officials, employees, and agents (herein, collectively, the "Indemnitees") from and against any and all claims, liabilities, losses, fines, penalties, and expenses, including without limitation litigation expenses and attorney's fees, arising out of either (i) the City's approval of the project, including without limitation any judicial or administrative proceeding initiated or maintained by any person or entity challenging the validity or enforceability of any City permit or approval relating to the project, any condition of approval imposed by City on such permit or approval, and any finding or determination made and any other action taken by any of the Indemnitees in conjunction with such permit or approval, including without limitation any action taken pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act ("CEQA"), or (ii) the acts, omissions, or operations of the Indemnitor and the directors, officers, members, partners, employees, agents, contractors, and subcontractors of each person or entity comprising the Indemnitor with respect to the ownership, planning, design, construction, and maintenance of the project and the property for which the project is being approved. The City shall notify the Indemnitor of any claim, lawsuit, or other judicial or administrative proceeding (herein, an "Action") within the scope of this indemnity obligation and request that the Indemnitor defend such Action with legal counsel reasonably satisfactory to the City. If the Indemnitor fails to so defend the Action, the City shall have the right but not the obligation to do so and, if it does, the Indemnitor shall promptly pay the City's full cost thereof. Notwithstanding the foregoing, the indemnity obligation under clause (ii) of the first sentence of this condition shall not apply to the extent the claim arises out of the willful misconduct or the sole active negligence of the City. [Citation – City Attorney Legal Directive/City Council Approval June 1, 2010] (PIng.)_____

3. Thirty (30) days after project approval, the owner or designee shall submit written consent to all of these imposed conditions of approval to the Community Development Director or designee. *[Citation – City Attorney Legal Directive/City Council Approval June 1, 2010]* (PIng.)_____

4. DSP 12-237/MAP 13-052 shall become null and void if the use is not commenced within three (3) years from the date of the approval thereof. Since the use requires the issuance of a building permit, the use shall not be deemed to have commenced until the date that the building permit is issued for the development. *[Citation - Section 17.12.150.A.1 of the SCMC]* (PIng.)_____

A use shall be deemed to have lapsed, and DSP 12-237/MAP 13-052 shall be deemed to have expired, when a building permit has been issued and construction has not been completed and the building permit has expired in accordance with applicable sections of the California Building Code, as amended. *[Citation - Section 17.12.150.C.1 of the SCMC]* (PIng.)_____

5. The owner or designee shall have the right to request an extension of DSP 12-237/MAP 13-052 if said request is made and filed with the Planning Division prior to the expiration date as set forth herein. The request shall be subject to review and approval in accordance with Section 17.16.160 of the Zoning Ordinance. *[Citation - Section 17.12.160 of the SCMC]* (PIng.)_____

6. Building permits shall not be issued unless the project complies with all applicable codes, ordinances, and statutes including, but not limited to, the Zoning Ordinance, Grading Code, Security Ordinance, Transportation Demand Ordinance, Water Quality Ordinance, Title 24 of the California Code of Regulations as adopted by the City including, but not limited to the California Administrative, Building, Electrical, Plumbing, Mechanical, Energy, Green, and Fire Codes. (Bldg.)_____ *[S.C.M.C – Title 8 – Chapter 8.16 – Fire Code, Title 15 Building and Construction Chapters 15.08, 15.12, 15.16, 15.20, 15.21, Title 16 Subdivisions, Title 17 Zoning]*

7. A separate Building Permit is required for all signage. Plans to add or alter the existing signage must be reviewed and approved through a separate building plan check / permit process. (Bldg.)_____ *[S.C.M.C – Title 8 – Chapter 8.16- Fire Code, Title 15 Building Construction - Chapters 15.08, 15.12, 15.16, 15.20]*

8. Prior to issuance of building permits, code compliance will be reviewed during building plan check. (Bldg.)_____ *[S.C.M.C – Title 8 – Chapter 8.16- Fire Code, Title 15 Building Construction - Chapters 15.08, 15.12, 15.16, 15.20]*

- 9. Prior to the issuance of building permits, the owner or designee shall pay all applicable development fees in effect at the time, which may include, but are not limited to, Regional Circulation Financing and Phasing Program (RCFPP), park acquisition and development, water and sewer connection, drainage, Public Facility Construction, transportation corridor, Avenida La Pata Supplemental Road Fee and school fees, etc.

(Bldg.)_____

[S.C.M.C. – Title 15 Building and Construction, Chapters 15.52, 15.56, 15.60, 15.64, 15.68, 15.72]

- 10. Prior to the issuance of any permits the applicant shall submit for review and approval plans which show the location of the signage in relation to the currently being constructed frontage improvements being built by Caltrans. Signage shall be shown to meet County Standard 1117 for line of sight interface with the street right-of-way. *[Citation – Section 15.36 of the SCMC]*

■ (Eng.)_____

- 11. In the event Camino De Estrella is widened in the future or modified such that the City Engineer determines that the existing signage limits the line of sight for drive approaches, the property owner or its designee shall relocate the signage and its structures to an acceptable location as approved by the Planning and Engineering Departments. Modification to facilities may require the approval of the City Planner or further discretionary permits.

■■ (Eng.)_____

- 12. The applicant shall paint the building to match the approved white for the main building and gray for the wainscot.

■■ (Plng.)_____

- 13. The applicant shall submit for review and approval by the City Planner of the color, material, and specifications of the decorative goose neck lighting prior to issuance of building permits.

■■ (Plng.)_____

- 14. The applicant shall receive an approval of an Administrative Sign Permit for all signs to ensure consistency with the approved Master Sign Program.

■■ (Plng.)_____

* All Conditions of Approval are standard, unless indicated as follows:

- Denotes a modified standard Condition of Approval
- Denotes a project specific Condition of Approval



LOCATION MAP

DSP 12-237/MAP 13-052, USA Gasoline Master Sign Program
590 Camino de Estrella

