



Design Review Subcommittee (DRSC)

Meeting Date: August 24, 2016

PLANNER: Jim Pechous, City Planner

SUBJECT: **Sign Exception Permit 15-428, Amendment to Discretionary Sign Permit 05-176 and Administrative Sign Permit 16-128 Outlets of San Clemente Freeway Oriented Signs**, a request for 23 freeway oriented tenant signs and three project Identification signs, 20 of which are over 64 square feet for the Outlets at San Clemente, located at 101 West Avenida Vista Hermosa.

BACKGROUND:

On February 20, 2007, the City Council approved a Sign Exception to allow a freeway oriented sign package for the Outlets at San Clemente. In May of 2007, Citizens for Integrity in Development filed a suit in Orange County Superior Court in opposition of the Sign Exception approval. On June 24, 2008 the Court determined that the City did not complete adequate CEQA review for the project and issued a writ of mandate ordering the City to set aside and void its approval of the freeway oriented signs. On July 15, 2008 the City Council rescinded the action approving the freeway signs.

Because the court only invalidated approvals of the freeway oriented signs, the project has an approved master sign program that regulates all the entry monument signs and all interior signage for the project (all non-freeway oriented signs) for the Outlets. See Attachment 1 for a copy of the master sign program.

Project Description

The applicant, Craig Realty Group has submitted a new application for 26 wall mounted freeway oriented signs. The signs include: 23 tenant signs and three project identification signs. A Sign Exception Permit is required to allow the freeway orientated signs, 20 of the proposed signs to exceed 64 square feet in area, and the total sign area to exceed the one square foot for each liner foot of building frontage.

Why is DRSC Review Required?

The Sign Exception process includes review by the DRSC. The DRSC evaluates and makes recommendations on how the project can best comply with polices and design guidelines that relate to visual impact, architectural design, compatibility and aesthetics.

This is the initial review of the proposed 26 wall mounted freeway oriented signs. The City has contracted with CAA Planning to prepare the CEQA document for the project

that will evaluate potential environmental impacts and potential mitigation for the project. Once this evaluation is completed, staff will present this information to the DRSC for final consideration prior to scheduling this item for Planning Commission review. At this future meeting more detail analysis will be provided on lighting, glare, views, number of signs and other design related issues.

ANALYSIS:

Table 1 below list of all the proposed freeway oriented wall signs.

Table 1 – Proposed Freeway Oriented Signage

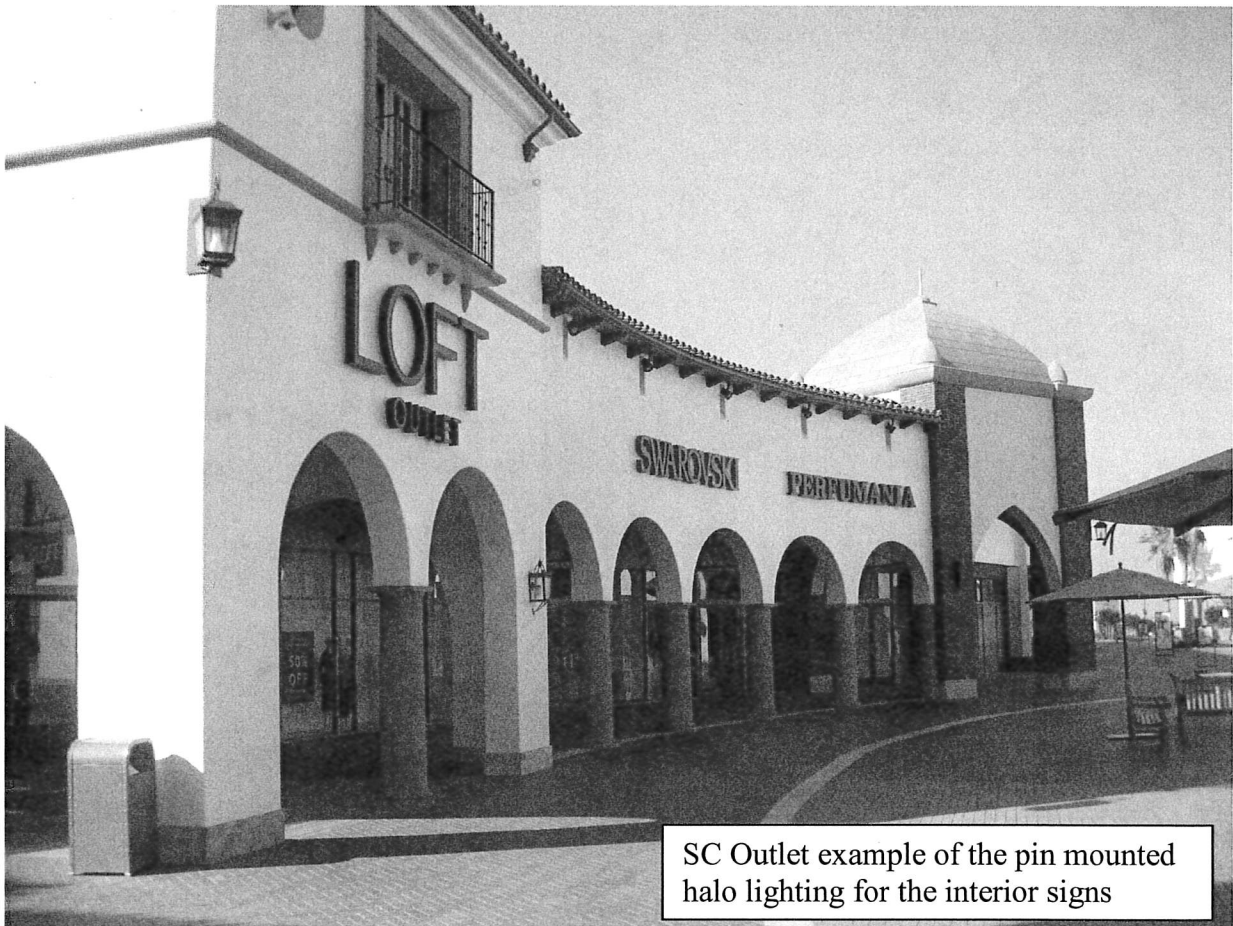
Proposed Signage	Maximum Sign Sq. Ft.	Maximum Sign Height
Sign 1	130.5	5.0'
Sign 2	72	7.0'
Sign 3	97.5	7.0'
Sign 4	75.0	7.0'
Sign 5	88.5	7.0'
Sign 6	90.0	7.0'
Sign 7	81.0	5'-9"
Sign 8	81.0	5'-9"
Sign 9	36.0	7.0'
Sign 10	80.25	5'-4"
Sign 11	108.0	7.0'
Sign 12	54	7.0'
Sign 13	100.5	7.0'
Sign 14	120.0	7.0'
Sign 15	91.5	7.0'
Sign 16	58.5	5.0'
Sign 17	130.5	7.0'
Sign 18	77.6	7'-6"
Sign 19	90.0	7.0'
Sign 20	63.0	7.0'
Sign 21	31.5	7.0'
Sign 22	31.5	7.0'
Sign 23	112.5	7.0'
Three Project Id Signs	300.0 each	8.0'
Total Signage Proposed	2800 square feet	
Zoning Max Total Sign Area	2660 square feet*	

**Note: The MCSP and ZO can allow for more area with approval of a SEP and Sign Program. The approved Master Sign Program for the interior signs allows 1.5 square feet of signs for each liner foot of building.*

Proposed Signage Description

The material of the wall mounted signs are aluminum and are proposed to be individual pin mounted with halo illumination. The halo lighting is a neutral white and the tenant signs will be automatically shut off one hour after closing. The proposed color pallet for the signs allows Black, Navy Blue, Brown, Grey Copper, and Bronze. It also allows additional colors when determined acceptable in consultation between the owner and the Community Development Director and provides the owner up to four color exceptions at their own discretion.

The maximum size of 20 of the proposed 26 signs is larger than 64 square feet. 16 of the proposed tenant signs and two of the proposed project identification signs are placed on the exterior walls that face I-5 on the already constructed Phase I of the project. The other 7 tenant signs and one project identification sign, will be located on the yet to be constructed Phase 1 of the project. The dimensions and location of each of the signs is shown on the attached plans. The tenant signs are limited to nationally trademarked logos and signs. In addition to the sign elevations the applicant has provided both day and night visual simulations of the signage as viewed from the I-5.



SC Outlet example of the pin mounted halo lighting for the interior signs

The freeway sign proposal is subject to the development standards and guidelines of the Marblehead Coastal Specific Plan, Zoning Ordinance and Design Guidelines. In general these standards and guidelines require the signs to be designed in a manner where their scale, color and materials are compatible with the building and are consistent with the character and image of San Clemente. See Attachment 2 for pertinent sections from these three documents.

View and Architectural Context

Both the visual and architectural context of the project site is important to review to evaluate how well the proposed freeway signs harmonize with both the community and architectural character. Located in plain view from both the north and south lanes of the I-5 freeway, the Outlets at San Clemente buildings are seen by thousands of travelers each day. Due to the amount of exposure the proposed signs would get, their design and placement needs to balance the centers need for identification with the City's image as the Spanish Village by the Sea.

During the discretionary review of the Outlets at San Clemente, the City worked with the project team to create a quality Spanish architecture design for the project that is consistent with the City's Spanish Village by the Sea theme. The project includes towers, domes, cornices, arches, smooth white stucco, clay barrel tile roofs, deep inset windows and doors, wrought iron details and light fixtures, finials and other quality design elements. The buildings range in height between 28 and 40 feet with towers and other elements ranging between 35 to 50 feet. There is over 2,660 linear feet of building facing the freeway. The buildings have been purposely designed to vary the Spanish architectural facades so they don't read as one long continuance long building, but rather, a series of Spanish building built over time. As part of the architectural review approval for the Outlets buildings, conceptual signs (although not part of the application) were depicted on the building elevations to ensure signs could be successfully integrated into the buildings architecture in the future.



RECOMMENDATIONS:

Staff has the following design related comments and recommendations regarding the proposed freeway oriented signs.

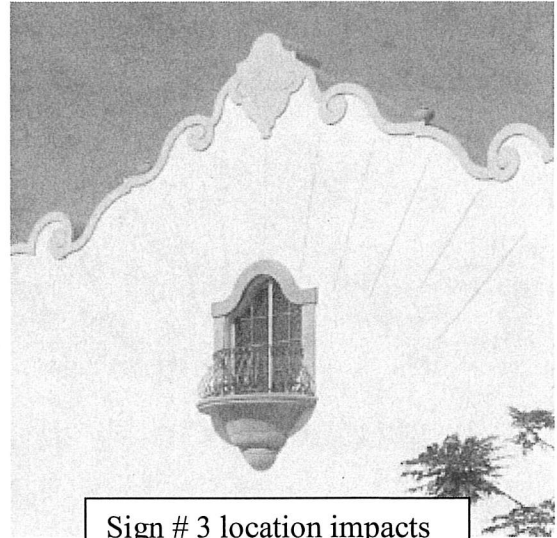
1. Sign Color

Due to the exceptions included in the sign program, any sign color could be allowed under the proposal. The buildings Spanish design and high quality materials should also be reflected in the sign program. The bright colors, such as red, allowed through the exception clause is inconsistent with this goal. For consistency with the character of the building and the City's Spanish Village by the Sea image, staff supports a dark bronze or black lettering. For an example, in the view simulations provided by the applicant below, the signs are depicted with uniform black which compliments the architecture. Also provide below is an example of a commercial project in the community of Westlake Village that is visible along the 405 freeway that has a uniform bronze color signage.



2. Sign Locations

Careful placement of signs on a building can accentuate the building design. The majority of the sign placements proposed are on open wall areas where the signs placement is complimentary to the building architecture. The placement of signs 3, 21 and 22 however are located on building features where the placement of signs in these area detract from the buildings architectural design and should be eliminated.



Sign # 3 location impacts the character of this architectural feature

3. Scale of the Signs

There are several signs in the proposal that appear to be too large for the space that they are located. For a sign to look proportionate to the space that it is located there needs to be enough space around the sign where there are no pinch points along the signs exterior edges. When this occurs the sign appears to over crowd the space. The outlet identification sign on sheet MSP3.2 and tenant sign numbers 11, 12, and 16 in staff's view should be reduced in scale to better fit in the space they are located. Also dimensions of the proposed Outlet Identification signs should be provided on sheet MSP 3.2 and 3.3 for staff and DRSC evaluation.



Staff seeks DRSC comments and any additional recommendations regarding the proposed freeway oriented signs.

Attachments:

1. Master Sign Program
2. Standards and Guidelines
3. Visual Simulations
4. Sign Plans

These minutes were approved at the DRSC meeting of September 14, 2016.

**CITY OF SAN CLEMENTE
MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE
DESIGN REVIEW SUBCOMMITTEE
AUGUST 24, 2016**

Subcommittee Members Present: Bart Crandell, Wayne Eggleston, Zhen Wu

Staff Present: Jim Pechous, Amber Gregg, Cliff Jones, John Ciampa, Kirt Coury

1. MINUTES

The minutes of the Design Review Subcommittee meeting of August 10, 2016 were approved.

2. ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW OF THE FOLLOWING ITEMS;

**A. Minor Cultural Heritage Permit (MCHP) 16-109, Utopia Tools Roof
(Coury)**

A request to install a metal roof where a shake roof was permitted and new paint for Utopia Tools located at 1625 North El Camino Real within the Mixed-Use zoning designation with a Central Business District and Architectural overlay MU2(A-CB-CZ).

Contract Planner Kirt Coury summarized the staff report.

The Design Review Subcommittee made the following comments either individually or as a group:

- Noted the Subcommittee's perception of the project was more of a maintenance project rather than remodel.
- Discussed the colors of the building and how they should be of a white color, more consistent with Spanish Colonial Architecture, and the frames around the windows should be painted a dark brown as an accent color.
- Confirmed that changes to the roof were made that were not consistent with the approved building permit. It was discussed that the applicant obtained a permit for a shake roof material and installed a metal roof instead.
- Supported staff's recommendations with modification regarding the roof permit.

The Subcommittee recommended the project move forward to the Zoning Administrator for consideration with the suggested modifications:

- All Subcommittee members recommend to paint the building white with brown accent colors on the window frames.
- Two Subcommittee members are not supportive of the metal roof. They recommend going back to the original building permit with approval of a shake roof or equivalent.
- One Subcommittee member recommended to paint the metal roof a red or terra cotta color more consistent with Spanish Colonial Revival Architecture.

**B. Amendment to Site Plan Permit 98-63, Reserve Landscaping
(Ciampa)**

A request to modify the approved landscape plan for the Reserve community in the Residential Low (RL) zoning designation of the Forster Ranch Specific Plan. The project site is located at the corner of Avenida Vista Hermosa and Avenida Vera Cruz.

Associate Planner John Ciampa summarized the staff report.

The City's Landscape Architect, Pat Murphy, summarized the history of the Reserve development and why there were restrictions limiting the removal of tree on the common area slopes. He outlined the steps that have taken place in the process and reviewed the proposed amendment to the landscape plan. He also stated that the City and the applicant have worked together to develop a win-win design for the community and the City.

The applicant, Matt Davenport, requested that there be no City oversight and that the community provide quarterly reports to the City on the tree removals.

The DRSC supported the proposed concept plan and recommended that the Maintenance Plan require City oversight for the removal of skyline trees to ensure there is administrative review to ensure compliance with the Guidelines and the Hillside Development Ordinance.

The DRSC recommended the above modifications be included into the project proposal and move forward to Planning Commission for consideration.

C. New Monument Sign for Ole Hanson Beach Club (Gregg)

A request to review the design of the Ole Hanson Beach Club monument sign.

Senior Planner Amber Gregg summarized the staff report and presented a graphic showing a proposed design.

Resident, Larry Culbertson, requested the existing sign remain and brought in historical pictures of the Ole Hanson Beach Club.

The Design Review Subcommittee made the following comments either individually or as a group:

- Noted that the wayfinding sign designs should not be applied to all signs.
- Expressed support for the existing sign or a new sign that replicates the look of the existing sign.
- Supported moving the sign to improve vehicular and pedestrian light-of-sight.

The Subcommittee recommended the sign maintain its existing design and supported the relocation to address safety concerns.

D. **Sign Exception Permit 15-428, Amendment to Discretionary Sign Permit 05-176 and Administrative Sign Permit 16-128 Outlets of San Clemente Freeway Oriented Signs** (Pechous)

A request for 23 freeway oriented tenant signs and three project Identification signs, 20 of which are over 64 square feet for the Outlets at San Clemente, located at 101 West Avenida Vista Hermosa.

City Planner Jim Pechous summarized the staff report.

A member of the public, Jim Ruehlin, suggested the Subcommittee consider the following: 1) Is freeway signage in character with the community?; 2) Should we have freeway signage?; and 3) Perhaps the appropriate signage is to identify the center not each tenant. Mr. Ruehlin indicated if freeway signage is allowed it should be a consistent color. Mr. Ruehlin also indicated that the number of signs they are proposing is not in character with the community.

Richard Boyer, resident, agreed with comments made that freeway signage is not in character with the community.

The Design Review Subcommittee made the following comments either individually or as a group:

- The architecture of the building is very attractive and the signs should match in quality and aesthetics.

- They noted that the Carlsbad Outlets do not have individual tenant signs and they are successful.
- If freeway signs are approved, they need to be in harmony with the quality Spanish Design of the center and the Spanish Village by the Sea image of the City.
- They support a reduced color pallet for the signs. Staff suggested Bronze and Black, they suggested that perhaps a range of metallic colors consistent with the Spanish architecture of the buildings would be appropriate. The DRSC commented that the other colors proposed are too bright and not appropriate with the Spanish Colonial Revival architecture of the building. Applicant needs to submit color samples (rather than just the name of the color) so it is clear what the actual colors for the signs are.
- #s 3, 21 and 22 should be eliminated because the conflict with architectural features.
- Sign program should prohibit the allowance of freeway oriented banners in the future.
- #s 11, 12, 16 and 23 sign need appropriately scaled for the wall space they are located.

The DRSC requested the applicant incorporate the requested modifications and come back to the DRSC for review.

3. NEW BUSINESS

None


4. OLD BUSINESS

None

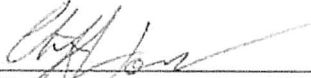
ADJOURNMENT

Adjourn to the Regular Meeting of the Design Review Subcommittee to be held September 14, 2016 at 3:00 p.m., at the Community Development Department, Conference Room A, located at 910 Calle Negocio, Suite 100, San Clemente, California.

Respectfully submitted,


Bart Crandell, Chair

Attest:



Cliff Jones, Associate Planner