

**CITY OF SAN CLEMENTE  
MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE  
DESIGN REVIEW SUBCOMMITTEE  
DECEMBER 15, 2021**

Subcommittee Members Present: Bart Crandell and Scott McKhann

Subcommittee Members Absent: M. Steven Camp

Staff Present: Senior Planner Stephanie Roxas, Economic Development Officer Jonathan Lightfoot, Contract Planner Kirt Coury

**1. MINUTES**

The Subcommittee approved the minutes from the October 27, 2021 regular meeting with no changes.

**2. ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW OF THE FOLLOWING ITEMS:**

**A. Discretionary Sign Permit 21-245, Casablanca Inn Signs, 1601 N. El Camino Real (Lightfoot)**

A request to add a freestanding sign and reface other existing signage, including the use of neon on an existing pole sign. The new sign puts the commercial property above the 25 square-feet of cumulative allowed signage by right per business within the Architectural Overlay.

Economic Development Officer Jonathan Lightfoot summarized the staff report. The property ownership was represented by Nik Kafetzopoulos, and the Applicant's representative, Justin Henderson of Yesco Signs. Mr. Kafetzopoulos clarified that the hotel has left the Best Western affiliation and will simply be known as the Casablanca Inn moving forward; hence the motivation to update on-site signage. They noted that the original Casablanca signage included neon illumination and that one of the remaining wall signs still includes exposed neon.

Chair Crandell opened the item for public comments. Staff stated no public comments were received.

The Design Review Subcommittee (DRSC) discussed the project, and made the following comments either individually or as a group:

- Questioned whether the Discretionary Sign Permit would be part of a Master Sign Program. Staff clarified that both a DSP and MSP would be a part of the Planning Commission review.
- Requested clarification from staff on how the Zoning Code differentiates between pole and monument signs.
- Agreed that many customers and residents do not realize that the northern parking lot belongs to the hotel and supported additional signage.

- Supported a monument sign at the location where the applicant had proposed a new pole sign.
- Suggested locating the monument sign on the right side of the El Camino Real driveway to improve site visibility and designing the monument with an elevated pedestal to be seen above the taller surrounding shrubs.
- Expressed concern about a potential precedent for neon signage on El Camino Real. Also noted that the DRSC recently supported an exposed neon sign at the Casino.
- The Subcommittee supported neon illumination, with two members preferring reverse channel and one preferring exposed neon.

The DRSC directed staff to review the potential monument sign and line of sight with Public Works and then proceed to Planning Commission for a hearing on the item.

**B. Minor Architectural Permit 21-228, 309 Commercial, 309 Calle de Los Molinos (Coury)**

A request to alter the exterior of an industrial building for property located at 309 Calle De Los Molinos in the I2 (Light Industrial) Area of the West Pico Corridor

Contract Planner Kirt Coury summarized the staff report. The property ownership was represented by the applicant's representatives Steve Powell and Jonas Dyer. Mr. Powell spoke of the project, describing the proposal for the building façade, site, and overall improvements.

Chair Crandell opened the item for public comments. Staff stated no public comments were received.

The Design Review Subcommittee (DRSC) discussed the project, and made the following comments either individually or as a group:

- Directed staff to research and evaluate whether the proposed roof vents could be considered as architectural vents and not as cupolas.
- Determined that the use of patina treatment was sufficient as a paint/treatment for the proposed corrugated metal roof.
- Expressed concern over the proposed colors of the building and accent trim. Suggested using a darker but warm shade of wall color (e.g., warm gray) that complements the roof material and darker red trim colors. Requested to review a color and materials board of the proposed stucco treatment and paint chips of the proposed colors.
- Discussed increasing the amount of site landscaping to bring the overall site percentage closer to the Code requirement (10%). Suggested adding landscape diamonds within the parking lot, adding vines with a metal trellis between the proposed on-site retaining wall and corrugated metal fence along the property frontage, and additional potted plants and planters on-site.

- Suggested exploring options to add a wall mural on the north side of the retaining wall between the parking lot and driveway to the storage/basement area below street level.

The Subcommittee generally concurred with staff's recommendations and provided additional comments and suggestions. The Subcommittee requested to review the project revisions at a future DRSC meeting, after the applicant incorporates any changes resulting from the Development Management Team (DMT) review.

### **3. NEW BUSINESS**

#### **A. Minor Design and Material Standards for Outdoor Dining (Lightfoot)**

The City Council is requesting DRSC feedback on a review of potential design and development standards for temporary outdoor dining uses in 2022 and 2023 under the enabling legislation of AB61.1 and SB314.2.

Economic Development Officer Jonathan Lightfoot summarized the staff report.

Chair Crandell opened the item for public comments. Several members of the public commented on the design standards:

- Aaron Radman, General Manager of Avila's El Ranchito, stated that decks/platforms have a better curb appeal than dining in the street. He acknowledged the need to maintain street drainage along the curb. He also stated a preference that approvals be permitted to continue through the winter because breakdown, storage, and reconstruction is prohibitively expensive for businesses. Commented that they did not add tables, just relocated them from indoors and spread out. Agreed that some decks may have blocked visibility to some retail spaces; but also commented that increased foot traffic and captive audience was helpful for all businesses.
- Chris Aitken, President of the DBA, stated that the DBA conducted several surveys regarding opinions on outdoor dining and that most retailers were supportive of the parklet dining. The downtown became a destination. Agreed that some decks could have better designed in the future to reduce view blockage of retail spaces (such as Brussels Bistro in front of Mikii's on Del Mar). Noted that not all restaurants will pay to build out a deck space which may naturally reduce the number of parking spaces used.
- Julie Heinze, Executive Director with the Downtown Business Association, stated that the decks should have a height limitation and that there should be limits to the number of umbrellas, heaters, and signs. Believes it starts to feel like a yard sale with too many elements. She referenced the louvered wood and wire decks at Forest Avenue in Laguna Beach as a good example.
- Alexandra Limber and Simon of Rider's Club gave another example of Spring Street in LA. Commented that they built a deck on private property on a challenging site that was a former gas station. Stated that he has concerns about

the viability of the restaurant if they have to remove the deck while Omicron and other variants are spreading. Asked for more flexibility on private property. Also noted that Riders has not increased seating, but have moved them outdoors.

The Design Review Subcommittee (DRSC) discussed the project, and made the following comments either individually or as a group:

- Clarified that the outdoor dining began under the City's state of emergency; that the program initially intended to allow for recapturing full capacity during social distancing regulations; that about ¼ of the on-street parking spaces on Del Mar were used in 2020 (and no off street public parking spaces were used); that the intent of the new State legislation (AB 61, SB 314) is to allow for a reduction in parking requirements to allow flexibility in either reduced parking or increased seating; that the legislation sunsets one year after the State's end of the declared emergency due to COVID, or by December 31, 2023.
- Restaurants that are fully parked (as opposed to relying on waivers) may be deserving of higher priority for outdoor patios.
- New guidelines for parklets present an opportunity to create a consistent street scene and rhythm.
- Parklets should not use the full depth of the parking spots, but rather designate some space on the street interior side for plants or protective barricades.
- Recommended about 14' of depth for dining area and 4' of depth for a "buffer zone" of planters and/or barricades.
- Large concrete planters can serve as a barricade and would provide consistency, greenery, and added safety.
- Consistent materials for barricades at the edge of decks should also be prioritized.
- Decks should be limited to 3 parking spaces in the "angle in" context of Del Mar. Businesses with frontage along parallel parking areas should only use two spaces (about 40-45'). Private businesses can be a case by case consideration.
- No more than two consecutive decks should be placed consecutively and then should be broken up by parking stalls.
- Roofs or overhead elements should be discouraged.
- Supported temporary relocations of on-street accessible parking spaces to allow for businesses to use spaces in front of their restaurant for dining.
- There should be continuity in any allowed temporary signs; banners should be discouraged. Suggested only allowing signs for non-restaurant uses that block views of signs for retail or service businesses.
- Supported referring some cases to DRSC in limited instances when the location, size, and design present challenging considerations.
- Referenced the Smash Burger restaurant (806 Ave. Pico) as an example of a clean, permanent parklet. It has iron barricades and two natural gas heaters plumbed on either end. The space's simplicity provides a good model to follow.
- Supported consideration of the temporary use of the bulbouts on Ave. Del Mar.
- The DRSC then commented on the Santa Barbara parklet design guidelines:
  - Supported lighting for the parklets, but preferred dark sky friendly flood lights or low level lighting as opposed to string lighting overhead.

- Preferred infrared tower heaters if possible, but open to two portable propane heaters per deck.
- Shade should be limited to three 7-9' market umbrellas.
- Tent canopies may be appropriate for some private parking areas but should not be used on Ave. Del Mar. 10'x10' pop up tents should not be used in any context.
- Recommended incorporating the ADA recommendations from the guidelines.
- Planters should be 30" tall and maintained by the businesses.
- Decks should not have solid walls, so that police services can have visibility into the spaces.
- Deck and railings should use wood or plywood, not ropes or chains.
- Lighting should be shielded and at a temperature of 3500K. Solar lighting preferred to eliminate cords along the sidewalk areas.

The DRSC members indicated that they intended to do some additional research into fencing, lighting, and pots to relay additional recommendations to staff.

**4. OLD BUSINESS**

None

**5. ORAL AND WRITTEN COMMUNICATION**

None

**ADJOURNMENT**

Adjourned to the Regular Meeting of the Design Review Subcommittee to be held Wednesday, January 12, 2022 at 4:00 p.m., San Clemente City Hall, First Floor Community Room, 910 Calle Negocio, San Clemente, CA.

Respectfully submitted,

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Bart Crandell, Chair

Attest:

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Stephanie Roxas, Senior Planner