



City of Sebastopol
Incorporated 1902
Planning Department
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APPROVED MINUTES

TREE/DESIGN REVIEW BOARD
CITY OF SEBASTOPOL
MINUTES OF October 20, 2021
4:00 P.M.

The notice of the meeting was posted on October 14, 2021.

DESIGN REVIEW BOARD:

1. CALL TO ORDER: Chair Luthin called the meeting to order at 4:00 P.M. and read a procedural statement.

2. ROLL CALL:

Present:	Ted Luthin, Chair Lars Langberg, Vice Chair Christine Level, Board Member Cary Bush, Board Member
Absent:	Marshall Balfe, Board Member
Staff:	Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director Jeff Setterlund, Contract Planner John Jay, Associate Planner

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: None.

4. PLANNING DEPARTMENT UPDATE ON MATTERS OF GENERAL INTEREST:

Associate Planner Jay advised the Board that he is working on the City of Sebastopol Housing Element Update and will be asking the DRB for its input on project sites and anything within City limits relating to housing.

Director Svanstrom updated the Board on the following:

- Request for photographs of housing for the Housing Element.
- Presentations to the Planning Commission at upcoming October 26th meeting:
 - Draft of Local Hazard Mitigation Plan
 - Calder Creek naturalization project.
- City Council approval of sculptures for Ives Park sculpture garden.
- Upcoming DRB term expirations.

5. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC REGARDING ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA: None.

6. STATEMENTS OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST: None.

7. REGULAR AGENDA:

- A. MAJOR SIGN REVIEW / SIGN PROGRAM / SIGN EXCEPTION: 700 Gravenstein Highway North (Redwood Marketplace)** – This project will update the Sign Program for the Redwood Marketplace shopping center contained within Design Review Application (2016-87) previously approved by the Design Review Board on March 16, 2016. The project also includes updating the existing monument sign at the entrance of the Redwood Marketplace shopping center, existing tenant wall signs, and installing a new monument sign at the northeast corner of the subject property.

Contract Planner Setterlund presented the staff report.

Chair Luthin asked for Board questions of staff.

Christine Level, Board Member

The requests are for signs that have been in the past internally illuminated, so there are no internally illuminated signs, correct?

Jeff Setterlund, Contract Planner

Correct.

Ted Luthin, Chair

It appears that this is really a makeover of the existing sign.

Jeff Setterlund, Contract Planner

Correct. It's basically a facelift of the existing signage with the exception of the proposed monument sign.

Lars Langberg, Vice Chair

I'm looking at these different sign types, so the one that says "Lucky" is an internally illuminated sign and they're proposing that all of those on that fascia will still stay like that?

Jeff Setterlund, Contract Planner

Exactly, yes.

The applicant gave a presentation and was available for questions.

Lars Langberg, Vice Chair

The new second monument sign is not at the corner of that street, but it's sort of in front of what was a bank.

Aaron Friedman, Applicant

It's actually too close to the sidewalk. If you go farther over you have the five-foot rule, because that sidewalk kind of angles, so it was easier for us to move it in a little bit than try to figure out another option.

Christine Level, Board Member

How tall is the original tall sign? Is it 12 feet?

Aaron Friedman, Applicant

It's going to say the exact same thing. It's 152 inches, so about 12.5 feet.

Ted Luthin, Chair

Where you have tenant names, are those going to be using the tenant's logos or is that going to be just a standard typeface?

Aaron Friedman, Applicant

It depends, because they're dealing with some national brands, like Starbucks, proposing things in there. Just text, but they're stylized text, so it's almost like it's their logo. That one we don't have 100% defined, and those spots are only for specific anchor tenants that have a larger footprint, which is noted in there. Most likely it's not going to be just logos, but it will be text and it may incorporate a logo.

Ted Luthin, Chair

Are they going to be the tenant's colors, or are they all going to be one color?

Aaron Friedman, Applicant

They're going to be one color. That's the way it's proposed: white on that burgundy or that off-brown kind of color.

Ted Luthin, Chair

And on the other one it would be the color on a beige or tan background?

Aaron Friedman, Applicant

Yes. It's an actual Pantone color. It doesn't look nearly as bad in person as it does on these drawings.

Ted Luthin, Chair

And then the internal tenant signs aren't changing at all, right?

Aaron Friedman, Applicant

No, I just put tenants on them because I didn't want to put some generic thing on there.

Ted Luthin, Chair

All the tenant stuff, the individual letters, all the on-building stuff, stays the same, but you're adding a hanging projecting sign?

Aaron Friedman, Applicant

Yes, and that was approved in the 2016 program but was never implemented. Some people put up random hideous things on their own that they're going to get rid of. And again, if you look back up, the main tenants are only allowed three signs maximum anyway, so it's going to be either a monument sign, a hanging sign, or their building sign, and if their building sign has two, that already counts as two signs.

Ted Luthin, Chair

I think those hanging projecting signs would be pretty nice if you're walking down the arcade.

Aaron Friedman, Applicant

Yes, it makes it easier.

Ted Luthin, Chair

Yes, tenant sign is outboard of you, so I think that all makes sense.

Cary Bush, Board Member

My question is about the uplights; I think you call them upshot lighting. How does that affect the night sky ordinance and that sort of thing? Is it a shrouded uplight? Is it on a timer as well? How does that work?

Aaron Friedman, Applicant

Technically, we're not legally able to do those, so that's not in the sign program. We're electrical contractors, but we can't do lighting, but as far as I know they would be focused lighting so it doesn't go past the top of the monument. I believe the main lighting, as we've talked with Mike Wright, is pointed toward the tenant portion versus the actual upper portion, so there shouldn't be any upward light pollution as far as I know from them; it would be a soft floodlight.

Cary Bush, Board Member

My question for Planning might be is that allowable?

Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director

We do have design guidelines regarding that, and we don't have an actual dark sky ordinance yet, but it is in our General Plan and it is in our design guidelines. I would suggest that we add a condition of approval that ensures that the lights are adjustable to make sure that they don't bleed past any awnings or overhangs. Then when John goes out to do the final inspection make sure we have the lights on so he can see the level of lights. If it happens during the wintertime, then schedule the inspection at like 4:30-5:00 P.M. and he'll be able to actually see it and adjust those easily.

Aaron Friedman, Applicant

I think the good thing about today's technology and LEDs that we use is it's much easier to get a focused light specifically where we need it. The lights are also adjustable, but we still have to go to the design and building permit after this anyway for these signs, so if it's possible we could put it within the building permit to redo the signs and we can then put the lighting into there, and that would suffice for the actual permit, right? Would that be easier?

Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director

What we would want to do is put a condition of approval onto this overall sign program. That way people know if you're doing the individual designs when they come in, they write signage stuff to the Planning Department when you do the building permit, and John will be reminded he needs to check and make sure that the lighting meets the criteria.

Aaron Friedman, Applicant

And that's easy for me to say, because I'm just going to pass it along to Wright Contracting and say, "This doesn't happen unless you guys do this."

Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director

I have a question for Aaron, and this may be a question for the owners, but you talked about the tenants removing the signs that aren't allowed. When I did my site visit I also noticed some yard signs for the smoke shop, which is absolutely not allowed. Do you know how these regulations would be communicated to the tenants so they know what the rules are and know what they have to take down?

Aaron Friedman, Applicant

That's not really me or in the purview of any of this. I have no control over the tenants. I do know that Mike talked about getting rid of all that when we were at their meeting. He

couldn't stand it that they were just putting stuff up, but I think that's more of them as the owners to enforce that. I can't even go touch the signs.

Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director

Maybe you can provide us with the folks to contact and we can talk to them about that.

Aaron Friedman, Applicant

I didn't see any of the little yard signs. I only saw some of the hanging signs that that looked like they had been there for 20-some-odd years. I don't even know how long some of those have been there. But if those are going to be put into the sign program, then as long as they meet the guidelines, those are allowed. Do you need me to say anything to the Wrights, or is that something you guys would do?

Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director

Yes, definitely communicate that the not allowed signs need to come down as part of this, and thank you for saving us the time of writing them a code compliance letter. When Jeff issues the approval letter I'll ask him to add a text reminder, but if you could communicate to the Wrights, that would be great. This is a good opportunity to clean up the site.

Aaron Friedman, Applicant

For clarity for me, because I'm a sign guy, are there any temporary signs allotted? Do even all yard and banners have to go through the permitting department?

Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director

We allow sandwich boards, but they do need to go through the Planning Department. It's an administrative permit, because we want to make sure they're not blocking the sidewalks and they're not plastic junk, that's they're actually nicely designed. The flag signs, stuff that wave in the air, and yard signs, if they are commercial signage they are not allowed. If it's protected free speech, Black Lives Matter, We All Live Here, or The Drought is Here, that kind of stuff, we do allow non-commercial signage. But in a commercial center we don't generally see those; those are usually in residential areas.

Aaron Friedman, Applicant

Yes, I would think it's only like Burger King or something like that might actually do that.

Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director

We have in our code that most of the temporary signs we allow are within the windows. There is a certain percentage and amount we allow in the windows.

Chair Luthin asked for additional Board questions. Seeing none, he asked for Board deliberations.

The Board discussed the application as follows:

Ted Luthin, Chair

I feel it's unfortunate that this is a makeover of an existing sign program that's got to be going back to the late-eighties or early-nineties. I'm going to be a little surprised if they go out there in the field and start removing faces and find out that the cabinets and the structure is just completely shot, so it's a little unfortunate. It's a great opportunity to really make over and breath some new life into the center. It's just kind of a missed opportunity. It will look fresh and clean, and I guess that's an improvement, but it's not really adding to the experience of the place, so in that regard it makes me a little sad, but I get it. If you're going to do something like this and you need to get tenant names out there, I like that it's

externally lit. The tenant logos in one color I think are fine. Maintaining the status quo on the tenant signs kind of is what it is. I do think we probably should add a condition of approval relative to lighting, that it be shielded and adjustable to allow focusing on the signage surfaces. I think timers and dimmers are a good idea. I think we might want to document that the tenant names on the monument signs are going to be all one color, because I know that there's going to be a lot of pressure from national brands to use their colors, and getting blues and yellows and other reds on red background, that would be a problem, and they're going to get friction about it. I fight that fight all the time with national brands, especially the beige background and the red letters, because a lot of people are going to be opposed to reddish, brownish, those sorts of things, so we probably should document the fact that they are going to be project standard colors.

Cary Bush, Board Member

Do you think there's some merit to there being a monument sign now when there wasn't one before? Before it was a sign that said Redwood Marketplace. Now we know who the tenants are and possibly how that identifies the place itself. I think there's some value to the sign.

Ted Luthin, Chair

Yes, there is. I think if I had a choice I would probably bring the Redwood Marketplace importance down and bring up your major tenant names. That's how people navigate. I'm sure most people will refer to that as the Lucky shopping center, the Safeway shopping center. Redistributing some of the emphasis would probably be a wise thing to do, but given the existing structure, it's difficult. Yes, I do agree that there's some value to bringing those tenant names forward out onto the street. I do think there's value in bringing the address out onto the street, because a lot of people are also navigating by address. And I think there's value in just freshening it up and making it nice and new and clean with a fresh coat of paint.

Aaron Friedman, Applicant

I 100% agree with Ted. The first thing we presented was pulling everything out and redoing everything, and then we gave them the six-figure budget that it was going to cost to go through that, and with not having full tenancy and having big tenants in and out and other issues, they weren't comfortable with the money, because obviously we're doing this during COVID and all the other stuff. It is our future intent to see you guys again for us to revamp the whole facility, and it's their intent to do that also, but as you said, in order for us to even change the monument we have to come to you to redo the program, because the original 2016 program didn't allow for us to do what we want to do, at least just for even a temporary. So, this is actually our temporary and the only way for us to even get it done in any kind of timely manner. But as a sign guy who loves to sell signs, I am 100% with Ted to push for Mike and them to redo the whole center in the next couple of years.

Ted Luthin, Chair

Great. That's good to hear, because the place needs it and I do think that signage could go a long way to really improving the arrival experience at the place. To tell you the truth, signage and landscaping would go a long way. Re-landscaping that front edge and creating some nicer, more inhabitable places on this site would be great, so I hope they find a way to do that and maybe get some new tenant prospects that allow them to move forward with that.

Chair Luthin moved to approve the application as submitted with the condition that the lighting be shielded and adjustable to allow focus of the lighting on signage surfaces only, that all lighting be on timers and dimmers, that the tenant signs on the monument signs

may utilize the tenants logo type but the names and logos shall all be in project-standard colors, and existing non-compliant signage shall be removed prior to final approval of the building permit.

Board Member Bush seconded the motion.

Christine Level, Board Member

Well done, Ted. I wholeheartedly approve of your motion.

AYES: Chair Luthin, Vice Chair Langberg, and Board Members Bush and Level

NOES: None

ABSTAIN: None

ABSENT: Board Member Balfe

8. SUBCOMMITTEE UPDATES

Lars Langberg, Vice Chair

Public Arts Committee. There is now a community sculpture garden at Ives Park with eight poured concrete pads. Six entries were deemed worthy of those new pads and the City Council approved them yesterday. We have to figure out which one goes where, and how to do outreach for two more sculptures, but the six are great and it will be a really awesome variety of artwork in the park. It was a lot of hard work for our committee to put that all together over many months and it's nice to see it come together.

- 9. ADJOURNMENT:** Chair Luthin adjourned the meeting at 4:54 p.m. The next regularly scheduled Tree/Design Review Board meeting will be held on Wednesday, November 3, 2021 at 4:00