

ITEM III-C: PLANNED SIGN PERMIT PROGRAM & SIGN VARIANCE – NERSP PARCEL 15 STONE POINT CORPORATE CENTER – FILE # 2005PL-122 (V-000024 & PSP 000034)

REQUEST

The applicant requests approval of a Sign Variance to allow an increase in the number of building directory signs and to allow an increase in the number, area, and height of wall signs permitted by the Sign Ordinance. The application also includes a request to modify the Planned Sign Permit Program for the Stone Point Corporate Center.

Applicant: Nancy McMurchie, McMurchie Design
Owner: Brian Natov, Stone Point Properties, LLC.

SUMMARY RECOMMENDATION

The Planning & Redevelopment Department recommends that the Design Committee:

- A. Adopt the three (3) findings of fact for the Sign Variance;
- B. Approve the Sign Variance;
- C. Adopt the two (2) findings of fact for the Planned Sign Permit Program; and
- D. Approve the Planned Sign Permit Program with four (4) conditions of approval.

SUMMARY OF OUTSTANDING ISSUES

There are no outstanding issues associated with this proposal.

BACKGROUND

The subject property is Parcel 15 of the Northeast Roseville Specific Plan (NERSP), located at 1445 Eureka Road between North Sunrise Avenue and Rocky Ridge Drive. The 130-acre property is zoned Planned Development for Research & Development (PD 178) and has a land use designation of Business Professional/ Light Industrial (BP/LI).

On May 23, 2002, the Planning Commission approved Major Project Permit applications for the site allowing construction of up to 21 buildings totaling 1.65 million square feet. The Stone Point Master Plan established development guidelines and standards for the project. A Planned Sign Permit Program (PSPP) was approved by the Planning Department on July 26, 2002.

The current request is to amend the existing PSPP and allow a Variance for additional signage. Note that the proposed PSPP only pertains to the commercial/office portion of the Stone Point Campus. It is anticipated that a future amendment to the sign program will be needed to address the retail component of Parcels 8 & 9 (Richland office buildings). The applicant had attempted to coordinate the incorporation of parcels 8 & 9 with this application; however, these efforts were unsuccessful.

EVALUATION

The signs described in this PSPP have been evaluated using the standards for building complexes contained in the City of Roseville Sign Ordinance and the NERSP. The proposed PSPP establishes guidelines for the installation of freestanding signs and wall signs for the Center. The PSPP specifies the number, height, area, and location of all signs. Several of the proposed PSPP provisions deviate from the NERSP and Sign Ordinance. As such, a Sign Variance is required. The Variance evaluation discusses the number of directional signs and the number, area, and height of building mounted signs that are in excess of the Sign Ordinance and NERSP standards. Evaluation of the Sign Variance is discussed first, since it is necessary to approve the Sign Variance in order to approve the PSPP.

VARIANCE

Building Directory Signs

The Sign Ordinance states that one directional sign is permitted for every building with two or more tenants. The proposed sign program calls for two directional signs per building. Based on the size of the office buildings located within the Stone Point Center (i.e. more than three floors and over 50,000 square feet), the applicant has requested approval of a Sign Variance to allow two freestanding building directory signs for buildings with more than three floors. Due to the size of these multi-story office buildings, and the size restrictions of the building directory signs square footage one directory sign per building would not provide sufficient space for every building tenant. In addition, the buildings that will have two directional signs also have two main building entrances that are oriented towards different parking fields. Given the size of the buildings, one building directory sign would not provide adequate direction for visitors entering the building from either side; therefore, staff believes one sign located at each entrance of the building is appropriate (total of two signs).

Tenant Wall Signs - Office Buildings

Sign Area: The Sign Ordinance restricts the total area of wall signs to twenty percent (20%) of the front tenant space façade, not to exceed two (200) hundred square feet per building. The proposed Variance will allow an increase in sign area to 300 square feet for buildings with three to four floors, and 500 square feet for buildings with five or more floors. Due to the size of these buildings, a total sign area of 200 hundred square feet would not adequately address the signage needs of various tenants occupying these buildings. In addition, the Blue Ribbon Corporate Center Committee, in attempting to establish Roseville as a regional job center that is able to sustain office/professional development, requested that Council consider amending the Sign Ordinance to allow more sign area for five and six story office buildings.

Precedence for allowing 300 square feet of sign area for buildings of four stories or less has been established with previous approvals, such as the Panattoni Office Building (located on the corner of Pleasant Grove and Highway 65). That approval allowed 300 square feet of sign area for a four-story building. In addition, staff has determined that 500 square feet is reasonable for buildings with five or more stories. This area is based on a letter height of five feet, which is necessary to be read on a five-story building. This will allow for approximately five signs per building at 20' in length. Based on the floor area, mass, and height of the buildings, the increased sign area will allow signs that are proportional to the building size and will address the needs of the individual building tenants.

Sign Height: The NERSP allows for a maximum letter height of three feet, six inches and a maximum symbol height of four feet. The proposed Variance allows buildings with three or more floors to increase the maximum letter height to five feet. The buildings over three floors will be up to 80 feet tall. As noted above, allowing signs with increased letter heights of five feet will create a proportional balance between

the buildings and the attached signs. Further, anything less than a five-foot tall sign would not be easily discernable on an 80-foot tall building.

Tenant Wall Signs – Retail Buildings (G, H, J, K)

Number of allowable Signs: The Sign Ordinance allows uses that are neither major tenants nor freestanding pad buildings one wall sign. However, a tenant that occupies a corner space is permitted two wall signs, provided each sign is located on a different side of the building and faces a public entrance, a public street, or a parking lot. The current request is to allow in-line tenants (buildings H, J, and K) two wall signs each. Based on the location of the retail buildings that are located in a prominent area, facing both Eureka Road and internal parking fields, the additional signs are necessary to adequately communicate the businesses location to the public passing by, in addition to customers within the campus. The city is attempting to achieve certain design objectives by placing buildings on the street. Additional signage is necessary to achieve these objectives while ensuring the viability of the center. Based on the buildings location and design, two signs per tenant are warranted, and justifies the Variance request.

FINDINGS

In accordance with the provisions of the Sign Ordinance, three (3) specific findings must be made in order to approve a Sign Variance. The required findings for a Sign Variance are listed below.

1. *There are exceptional or extraordinary circumstances or conditions applying to the land, building or signs involved which do not generally apply to other land, buildings or signs in the neighborhood.*

The Sign Ordinance provides standards for commercial and office centers related to sign quantity, size and placement. Typically, the Sign Ordinance criteria are most applicable to more traditional strip centers and building complexes with significantly smaller buildings and site area than the Stone Point Corporate Center, which is approximately 130 acres and consists of multi-story buildings (including two (2) six-story buildings and three (3) five-story buildings). With buildings of this scale (both in height and floor area), the Stone Point Corporate Center is unique from other uses and warrants special consideration for the reasons cited in the evaluation above.

2. *The granting of this variance is necessary for the preservation and enjoyment of substantial property rights of the applicant.*

As noted throughout the report, the size of the Stone Point Corporate Center is extraordinary in comparison to other building complexes in the City, primarily due to the building height and size. To hold the Stone Point Corporate Center to the same standards and sign criteria as these other uses would be unreasonable. The campus has four buildings under construction and eight buildings planned for construction in the near future, all with associated parking lots on site. Because of the many different buildings, parking lots and various entrances for employees, visitors, and deliveries, it is reasonable that more signs would be needed to provide a clear way finding system on the campus in comparison to a site with only two or three buildings on a smaller parcel. Therefore, staff finds that the granting of the variance is necessary for the preservation and enjoyment of substantial property rights for the center.

3. *The granting of this variance will not materially and adversely affect the health, safety or welfare of persons in the neighborhood, nor be materially detrimental or injurious to property or improvements in the neighborhood.*

The wall sign materials and colors are designed to be compatible with surrounding buildings. As discussed previously, the variance is warranted due to the special circumstances involving the building height and floor area. Staff finds that the additional signs and increased size, height and area will not affect the health, safety or welfare of persons in the surrounding neighborhood, nor be materially detrimental or injurious to

property or improvements in the neighborhood.

PLANNED SIGN PERMIT PROGRAM MODIFICATION

Sign Installation: The NERSP requires that all signs be internally illuminated halo lit letters or non-internally illuminated letters. The applicant requests that all letters, numbers, and logos be attached to 2' x 2' aluminum square tubes attached between window mullions for letter support. In addition, each letter, number, and logo will use white non-exposed neon tubing. The signs will be designed to present the appearance of halo lit letters. Halo illuminated letters installed on glass would not illuminate properly at night; the halo illumination letters on glass would create too much glare and would make the signs unreadable. A Variance is not required for this change, but is part of the PSPP modifications.

As noted above, the modification of the PSPP is to incorporate the items discussed in the Variance discussion. In accordance with the provisions of the Sign Ordinance three specific findings must be made in order to approve the Planned Sign Permit Program Modification. The required findings for a Planned Sign Permit Program are listed below and are followed by a brief evaluation.

1. *The proposed PSPP is consistent with the provisions and intent of the Roseville Sign Ordinance.*

In conjunction with the Planned Sign Permit Program the applicant is requesting a Sign Variance to allow directional and wall-mounted signs in excess of the Sign Ordinance criteria. However, if the requested Sign Variance is approved, the proposed signs are consistent with the Sign Ordinance.

2. *The proposed PSPP is in harmony with, and visually related to, the buildings within the Planned Sign Permit Program and the surrounding development.*

The proposed signs are designed to be compatible with the buildings and other existing signs within the campus. The Planned Sign Permit Program will provide continuity throughout the center through use of design and colors.

3. *The proposed PSPP is consistent with the Northeast Roseville Specific Plan and other applicable signage guidelines.*

The NERSP sign guidelines limit the overall wall sign area to 200 square feet per building. The guidelines also limit freestanding signs to one per parcel and one directory sign per building. However, with approval of the Variance, the PSPP will meet all the guidelines of the NERSP pertaining to design, materials, colors and size of freestanding and wall signs. Therefore, staff finds the proposed PSPP consistent with the intent of the NERSP.

CONCLUSION

Given the goals of the Sign Ordinance, direction from the Blue Ribbon Corporate Center Committee to the City Council, and past Sign Variance approvals for buildings over three stories, staff supports the request for the Stone Point Corporate Center. Based on the unique nature of the Stone Point Corporate Center and the need to provide clear directional and information signage, approval of the Sign Variance is consistent with the intent of the Sign Ordinance.

ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION

The project is categorically exempt pursuant to Section 15311(a) of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines pertaining to on-premise signs.

RECOMMENDATION

The Planning & Redevelopment Department recommends that the Design Committee take the following actions:

- A. Adopt the three findings of fact, as stated in the staff report, for approval of the SIGN VARIANCE - NERSP PARCEL 15 STONE POINT CORPORATE CENTER – 1445 EUREKA ROAD - FILE # V-000024;
- B. Approve the SIGN VARIANCE - NERSP PARCEL 15 STONE POINT CORPORATE CENTER – 1445 EUREKA ROAD - FILE # V-000024;
- C. Adopt the three (3) findings of fact, as stated in the staff report, for the PLANNED SIGN PERMIT PROGRAM – NERSP PARCEL 15 STONE POINT CORPORATE CENTER – 1445 EUREKA ROAD - FILE # PSPP-000034; and
- D. Approve the PLANNED SIGN PERMIT PROGRAM – NERSP PARCEL 15 STONE POINT CORPORATE CENTER – 1445 EUREKA ROAD -FILE # PSP-000034 with the following three (3) Conditions of Approval.

CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL FOR FILE# 2005PL-122 (V-000024 & PSP-000034):

- 1. The PSPP is approved as shown in Exhibit A and as conditioned or modified below. (Planning & Redevelopment)
- 2. A Sign Permit and Building Permit are required prior to installation of any signage. (Planning & Redevelopment, Building)
- 3. A revised Sign Criteria for Stone Point shall be submitted to the Planning & Redevelopment Department prior to issuance of any Sign Permit. (Planning & Redevelopment, Building)
- 4. The maximum sign height for retail building mounted signs, including logo, for retail buildings shall not exceed four feet, six inches. (Planning & Redevelopment, Building)

ATTACHMENTS:

- 1. Vicinity Map
- 2. Applicant's justification letter

EXHIBIT:

- A. Proposed Planned Sign Permit Program