

# PLANNING & REDEVELOPMENT STAFF REPORT DESIGN COMMITTEE MEETING SEPTEMBER 21, 2006

Prepared by: Wayne Wiley, Assistant Planner

ITEM III-A: SIGN VARIANCE & PLANNED SIGN PERMIT PROGRAM – SERSP PARCEL 40 (GRANITE

BAY PAVILIONS) 9243 SIERRA COLLEGE BOULEVARD - FILE # 2006PL-094 (V-000029 &

**PSP 000049)** 

# **REQUEST**

The applicant requests approval of a Sign Variance to allow an increase in the number of wall signs and monument signs allowed by the Sign Ordinance and a Planned Sign Permit Program to establish sign criteria for Granite Bay Pavilions.

Applicant/Owner: Tim Schaedler, Panattoni Development Company

### **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 with one (1) condition of approval;
- C. Adopt the two (2) findings of fact for the Planned Sign Permit Program; and
- D. Approve the Planned Sign Permit Program with three (3) conditions of approval.

# **SUMMARY OF OUTSTANDING ISSUES**

The subject property is allowed two monument signs based on the center's lineal street frontage. However, the applicant is proposing a third freestanding monument sign at the corner of Sierra College Boulevard and Eureka Road. Staff does not believe the required findings can be made in order to approve the request, and recommends the site be limited to two monument signs per the Sign Ordinance. Condition #1 of the Sign Variance reflects this requirement. The applicant is not in agreement with this recommendation and wishes to proceed with the request for three monument signs.

#### **BACKGROUND**

The subject property is located on Parcel 40 of the Southeast Roseville Specific Plan (SERSP), at the southeast corner of Sierra College Boulevard and Eureka Road (see Attachment 1). The 12.8-acre property is zoned Community Commercial/ Special Area-Southeast Roseville Specific Plan (CC/SA-SE) and has a land use designation of Community Commercial (CC).

On February 23, 2006, the Planning Commission approved a Design Review Permit and other associated entitlements to allow development of 16 single story office buildings ranging in size from 3,600 to 7,500 square feet and 4 retail buildings ranging from 6,400 to 11,800 square feet in size; the total project square footage is 117,908.

The current request is for a Planed Sign Permit Program that establishes sign criteria for Granite Bay Pavilions and a Sign Variance that allows two wall signs per tenant (for buildings that back up to Sierra College Boulevard) and three project monument signs.

# **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 SERSP. The proposed PSPP establishes guidelines for the installation of freestanding signs and wall signs for the center and specifies the number, height, area, and location of all signs. However, two of the proposed PSPP provisions deviate from the SERSP and Sign Ordinance. As such, a Sign Variance is required. The Variance evaluation discusses the number of wall signs and monument signs in excess of the Sign Ordinance and SERSP 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**

### **Tenant Wall 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 retail tenants (in the buildings that back to Sierra College Boulevard) two wall signs each. The approved site design places the retail buildings at the landscape setback on Sierra College Boulevard and Eureka Road. The entrances to the retail buildings are oriented toward the internal parking field. In an effort to enhance the streetscape appearance and eliminate the "sea of parking" in front of traditional strip centers, the City encourages site designs that place buildings at the setback line. While achieving the City's design objectives, this also places building tenants at a disadvantage by internally orienting the building entrances and associated signage. Strict application of the Sign Ordinance in this case could result in a competitive disadvantage compared to other more "traditional" retail centers.

Similar Variance requests have been approved throughout the City, most recently the Stone Point retail project that backs to Eureka Road. The additional signs are architecturally compatible with the buildings and must comply with all other Sign Ordinance requirements with respect to size, length, and height. Approval of the Variance will not adversely affect the health, safety or welfare of persons in the neighborhood.

# Free Standing Monument Signs

The requested Variance is to allow a third freestanding monument sign. The Sign Ordinance allows all building complexes one (1) freestanding sign per street frontage if the project frontage exceeds one thousand lineal feet. In addition, one on-site freestanding sign is permitted for every one thousand lineal feet of frontage or portion thereof in excess of two thousand lineal feet. Granite Bay Pavilions has approximately 1,560 lineal feet of frontage and is only entitled to two freestanding monument signs.

The subject site fronts onto two main arterial streets (Eureka Road and Sierra College Boulevard). The site has approximately 970 lineal feet of frontage along Sierra College Boulevard and 590 lineal feet of frontage along Eureka Road. Access to the project site will be provided via one driveway on both streets and will be restricted to right turns in and out by a street median. Two proposed entrance monument signs (in compliance with the Sign Ordinance) will be located at each entrance; the monument sign adjacent to Sierra College Boulevard will be approximately 600 feet from the intersection and the monument sign adjacent to Eureka Road will be located approximately 300 feet away from the intersection (see Exhibit A page SL.1).

The applicant is also requesting a third freestanding monument sign at the northeast corner of the project site (see Exhibit A page 1). The proposed 18'10" x 1'10" sign will be attached to an existing 5'6" tall retaining wall and will include the name of the center in double layered letters located between two 3 1/4" aluminum cap and frames (see Exhibit A page 1). The applicant believes the variance for this project is warranted due to the topography of the site (it sits slightly higher than the roadways at the corner), which is unique and will hinder customers from locating the center safely. In addition, the applicant claims that the

corner on which the project site is located is a "very high traffic count intersection" and will require additional signage to allow for adequate visibility (see Attachment 2).

Staff does not believe the applicant has demonstrated any unique or extraordinary circumstances to warrant approval of a third monument sign. The project site enjoys an immediate frontage along both Eureka Road and Sierra College Boulevard and will have one monument sign located adjacent to both streets. In addition, the applicant has requested approval of a Variance to allow additional wall signs facing Sierra College Boulevard, which staff believes is warranted. Furthermore, staff has reviewed the grading plan (see Attachment 3) and visited the site and found no unique conditions that would impair passing motorists or pedestrians' views of the center. Based on the sites orientation, visibility, and proposed sign locations, there are no circumstances that would differentiate this center from other centers with similar street frontage. Therefore, an increase in the number of monument signs for the site is not warranted. Staff has included Condition #3 requiring the applicant to remove the third monument from the sign program.

#### **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 older, more traditional strip centers and building complexes that have site designs with buildings located away from the street. Because the subject building are in a prominent area, facing both a major arterial street and internal parking fields, the additional signs are necessary to adequately communicate the businesses location to the public.

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 orientation of the retail buildings adjacent to Sierra College Boulevard warrant additional wall signs. With the deletion of the third monument sign, 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 for wall signage is warranted due to the special circumstances involving the building orientation. Staff finds that the additional wall signs 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

The subject site is defined as a building complex in the Sign Ordinance and is required to receive approval of a Planned Sign Permit Program (PSPP) before the installation of any signs within the complex. The proposed PSPP for Granite Bay Pavilions establishes guidelines for the installation of wall signs and freestanding signs within the center. The guidelines specify the number, height, area, and location of all signs. The signs described in this sign program have been evaluated using the standards for building complexes contained in the City of Roseville Sign Ordinance.

As noted above, the proposed PSPP is to incorporate the items discussed in the Variance discussion. In accordance with the provisions of the Sign Ordinance two (2) specific findings must be made in order to approve the Planned Sign Permit Program. 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.

The Sign Criteria includes specifications for the design, construction and maintenance of all signs, including materials, colors, and dimensions. The proposed sign criteria for the Granite Bay Pavilions stipulate sign area to a maximum 50 square feet per tenant. Stacked copy is allowed, with a maximum 20-inch high sign height. Logos may be 20-inch high box type. In addition, the sign criteria governs directory signs and building address signs.

In conjunction with the Planed Sign Permit Program the applicant is requesting a Sign Variance to allow additional wall-mounted signs and freestanding monument signs in excess of the Sign Ordinance criteria. 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 Sign Criteria requires a consistent sign appearance throughout the center. The proposed signs are designed to be compatible with the buildings and will provide continuity throughout the center through use of design, colors and appropriate scale. In addition, the use of quality materials and architectural design harmonize with the development in the surrounding area. The PSPP is consistent with the Community Design Guidelines and SERSP sign guidelines. Staff supports the request as proposed.

The SERSP sign guidelines limit the number of wall signs to one per inline tenant. With approval of the Sign Variance, the PSPP will meet all the guidelines of the SERSP pertaining to design, materials, colors and size of wall signs. Therefore, staff finds the proposed PSPP consistent with the intent of the SERSP.

#### CONCLUSION

Based on the unique nature of Granite Bay Pavilions and the need to provide clear tenant signage, staff believes the portion of the Sign Variance allowing two wall signs per inline tenant adjacent to Sierra College Boulevard is consistent with the intent of the Sign Ordinance. As noted above, the findings can be made for the approval of the Planned Sign Permit Program with the approval of the Sign Variance.

However, staff has been unable to identify any unique circumstances or demonstrated hardship that affect the Granite Bay Pavilions to allow three project monument signs. The standard regulating monument signs is long-standing and has been uniformly applied to retail centers throughout the City. Approval of the third monument sign where a clear hardship has not been demonstrated would grant a right not enjoyed by other property owners. Therefore, staff recommends approval of a Sign Variance and Planned Sign Permit Program without a third monument sign, as conditioned below.

# **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 SERSP PARCEL 40 GRANITE BAY PAVILIONS 9243 SIERRA COLLEGE BOULEVARD FILE # V-000029;
- B. Approve the SIGN VARIANCE SERSP PARCEL 40 GRANITE BAY PAVILIONS 9243 SIERRA COLLEGE BOULEVARD FILE # V-000029 with the following Condition of Approval:
- C. Adopt the two (2) findings of fact, as stated in the staff report, for the PLANNED SIGN PERMIT PROGRAM SERSP PARCEL 40 GRANITE BAY PAVILIONS 9243 SIERRA COLLEGE BOULEVARD FILE # PSPP-000049; and
- D. Approve the PLANNED SIGN PERMIT PROGRAM SERSP PARCEL 40 GRANITE BAY PAVILIONS 9243 SIERRA COLLEGE BOULEVARD FILE # PSPP-000049 with the following three (3) Conditions of Approval.

#### CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL FOR FILE# V-000029:

1. The project shall be limited to two freestanding monument signs. (Planning & Redevelopment, Building)

# **CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL FOR FILE# PSP-000049:**

- The PSPP is approved as shown in Exhibit A and as conditioned or modified below. (Planning & Redevelopment)
- 2. A revised Sign Criteria for Granite Bay Pavilions shall be submitted to the Planning & Redevelopment Department prior to issuance of any Sign Permit. (Planning & Redevelopment, Building)
- 3. A Sign Permit and Building Permit are required prior to installation of any sign. (Planning & Redevelopment, Building)

# **ATTACHMENTS:**

- 1. Vicinity Map
- 2. Applicant's justification letters
- 3. Grading Plan

#### **EXHIBIT:**

A. Proposed Planned Sign Permit Program