

PLANNING & REDEVELOPMENT STAFF REPORT
DESIGN COMMITTEE MEETING November 15, 2007

Prepared by: Elisa Reynolds, Associate Planner

ITEM II-B: SIGN VARIANCE - 2030 DOUGLAS BOULEVARD - ROCKY RIDGE TOWN CENTER -

FILE # 2007PL-175 (V-000049)

REQUEST

The applicant requests approval of a Sign Variance to allow an increase in sign area for the monument signage fronting on Douglas Boulevard. The increase to 61.2 square feet and 6 feet, 6 inches, (6'6") in height exceeds the 60 square foot allowable sign area and six foot (6') height limit prescribed by the Southeast Roseville Specific Plan but is within the 150 square foot area and 15 foot height limits prescribed by the City's Sign Ordinance. Additionally, the applicant requests approval for six (6) tenants to be identified on the proposed monument sign, where the Southeast Roseville Specific Plan allows only

four (4) tenants to be identified.

Applicant: Greg Curtis, Fulcrum Management Group

Owner: Mark Friedman, Rocky Ridge Venture, LLC

SUMMARY RECOMMENDATION

The Planning & Redevelopment Department recommends that the Design Committee:

A. Adopt the three (3) findings of fact for the Sign Variance; and

B. Approve the Sign Variance with three (3) condition of approval.

SUMMARY OF OUTSTANDING ISSUES

There are no outstanding issues associated with this Sign Variance request. The applicant is in agreement with staff's recommendation.

BACKGROUND

On September 15, 1994, the Design Review Commission approved a Use Permit (UP-94-28) for the Rocky Ridge Town Center allowing construction of in-line retail space and two restaurant pads totaling 101,670 square feet. The project was constructed in phases; all but one restaurant pad have been developed. A Planned Sign Permit Program (PSPP) was approved for the project in November of 1995, which outlined criteria for wall-mounted and free-standing monument signs consistent with the Sign Ordinance and the Southeast Roseville Specific Plan (SERSP). In 1997, the PSPP was modified to allow larger wall signs for commercial uses.

The SERSP signage guidelines are much more restrictive than the Sign Ordinance with respect to monument sign standards. The applicant is requesting a Variance to permit a monument sign that slightly exceeds the permitted height and area criteria for monument signs, as well as to allow six tenants to be identified on the monument sign, when only four are allowed by the SERSP Signage Guidelines (Exhibit B). However, the request is consistent with criteria described in the Sign Ordinance related to the area and height of monument signs.

The SERSP Sign Guidelines limit free-standing monument signs to 60 square feet in area and six feet (6') in height. The applicant proposes to replace the existing free-standing monument sign located at the Douglas Boulevard entrance to the center with a 61.2 square foot and six feet, six inches, (6'6") tall sign (see Exhibit A, Site Plan). The existing monument sign at the Douglas Boulevard entrance is 48 square feet in area, four feet (4') in height, and offers center identification only (See Attachment 1). The proposed sign is large enough to accommodate both center and tenant identification (Exhibit B).

VICINITY MAP & ADJACENT ZONING



EVALUATION

The Variance evaluation discusses the height and area of the proposed monument sign in excess of the Southeast Roseville Specific Plan Guidelines requirements and also evaluates the proposed sign's conformance to the Sign Ordinance.

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 and are followed by an evaluation.

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

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 applicant believes that the Rocky Ridge Town Center is at a competitive disadvantage with the existing retail to the west, across Rocky Ridge Drive, and other retail centers throughout the City. The Rocky Ridge Town Center is located just inside the extreme southwest boundary of the Southeast Roseville Specific Plan. The retail to the west, across Rocky Ridge Drive, is located within the Infill area of the City and is subject to sign criteria described in the Sign Ordinance, which is much less restrictive that the Sign Guidelines of the Southeast Roseville Specific Plan.

The Rocky Ridge Town Center has nearly 1,500 linear feet of frontage inclusive of Douglas Boulevard and Rocky Ridge Drive. However, it is difficult to identify the tenants of the Rocky Ridge Town Center because the center's frontage is heavily landscaped with two rows of mature trees along Douglas Boulevard (see Attachments 2a and 2b). This impacts visibility into the center and contributes to the difficulty in identifying the center's tenants. Combined with the larger signs permitted at the surrounding retail (the retail that is in the Infill area), these exceptional circumstances put the Rocky Ridge Town Center at a competitive disadvantage in relation to tenant identification. The granting of this Sign Variance will allow the Center full enjoyment of their property rights.

The proposed sign exceeds the SERSP requirements by 1.2 square feet in area, six inches (6") in height, and two tenant identifiers on the proposed monument sign. Staff had requested that the applicant reduce the sign size slightly to comply with the SERSP area requirements. The applicant declined this request and wishes to proceed with the Variance. As noted above, staff believes that unique circumstances exist that would warrant approval of the Variance request.

CONCLUSION

As noted above, the findings can be made for the approval of the Sign Variance as conditioned.

As described above, staff believes that unique circumstances exist and a hardship has been demonstrated that justifies the increased monument sign area. The Sign Ordinance standards regulating monument signs have been uniformly and successfully applied to similar retail centers throughout the City. As

discussed in the Evaluation section above, this request is consistent with the Sign Ordinance standards. Therefore, staff recommends approval of the Sign Variance.

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 - 2030 DOUGLAS BOULEVARD - ROCKY RIDGE TOWN CENTER - FILE # 2007PL-175 (V-000049); and
- B. Approve the SIGN VARIANCE 2030 DOUGLAS BOULEVARD ROCKY RIDGE TOWN CENTER –FILE # 2007PL-175 (V-000049) with the following three (3) Conditions of Approval.

CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL FOR FILE# V-000049:

- 1. The free-standing monument sign is approved as shown in Exhibits A-B. (Planning)
- 2. A revised Planned Sign Permit Program for Rocky Ridge Town Center shall be submitted to the Planning & Redevelopment Department for review and approval prior to issuance of any Sign Permit. The PSPP shall be modified to incorporate the signage approved with this Variance (V-000049) to the satisfaction of the Planning & Redevelopment Director. (Planning & Redevelopment, Building)
- 3. A Sign Permit is required prior to installation of any sign. (Planning & Redevelopment, Building)

ATTACHMENTS

- 1. Photo of existing monument sign
- 2a. Photo demonstrating grade variation and dense landscaping from Douglas Boulevard
- 2b. Photo demonstrating grade variation and dense landscaping from Douglas Boulevard

EXHIBIT

- A. Site Plan
- B. Proposed free-standing monument sign

Note to Applicant and/or Developer: Please contact the Planning & Redevelopment Department staff at (916) 774-5276 prior to the Committee meeting if you have any questions on any of the recommended conditions for your project. If you challenge the decision of the Committee in court, you may be limited to raising only those issues which you or someone else raised at the public hearing held for this project, or in written correspondence delivered to the Planning & Redevelopment Director at, or prior to, the public hearing.