



CITY COUNCIL STAFF REPORT

DATE: April 18, 2012

PUBLIC HEARING

SUBJECT: LUNDIN DEVELOPMENT – AN APPEAL OF THE DECISION BY THE PLANNING COMMISSION TO DENY A SIGN PROGRAM AMENDMENT TO ALLOW ADDITIONAL TENANT IDENTIFICATION ON THE EXISTING MONUMENT SIGNS AT THE RALPHS CVS PHARMACY SHOPPING CENTER LOCATED AT 425 SOUTH SUNRISE WAY. CASE SP 06-084 SIGN PROGRAM AMENDMENT APPEAL

FROM: David H. Ready, City Manager

BY: Department of Planning Services

SUMMARY

Best Signs, Inc., representing Lundin Development Co., is requesting that the City Council overturn the Planning Commission's decision of February 22, 2012, denying a sign program amendment to an approved sign program for the Ralphs CVS / Pharmacy shopping center located at 425 South Sunrise Way. The proposed amendment includes the replacement of the two monument signs on the existing foundations to allow tenant identification signs in addition to anchor tenant identification.

RECOMMENDATION

Adopt Resolution No. ____ "A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PALM SPRINGS, CALIFORNIA, DENYING THE APPEAL BY BEST SIGNS, INC. AND UPHOLDING THE DECISION OF PLANNING COMMISSION TO DENY A SIGN PROGRAM AMENDMENT TO ALLOW TENANT IDENTIFICATION ON EXISTING MONUMENT SIGNS AT 425 SOUTH SUNRISE WAY."

PRIOR ACTIONS

On May 14, 2003, the Planning Commission approved a sign program for the shopping center. The sign program allowed individual tenant signs, freestanding complex identification signs and incidental accessory signs.

On December 13, 2006, the Planning Commission reviewed an amendment to the sign program to accommodate the CVS Pharmacy tenant signage on the building and monument signs.

ITEM NO. 13

On December 13, 2006, the Planning Commission reviewed an amendment to the sign program to accommodate the CVS Pharmacy tenant signage on the building and monument signs.

On December 27, 2011, the Architectural Advisory Committee (AAC) reviewed the proposed amendment and restudied the project with the following comments:

1. Propose new monument signs that are in keeping with the same vernacular of the shopping center architecture; or
2. Use way-finding sign within center to direct traffic to tenant locations.

On January 23, 2012, the AAC reviewed the revised sign program amendment and by a vote of 4-3 recommended approval to the Planning Commission, subject to allowing different font types but no logos for the tenant signage on the monument signs.

On February 22, 2012, the Planning Commission reviewed the amendment and by a vote of 4-2 denied the proposal (Commissioners Munger and Roberts opposed the denial).

On March 8, 2012, the applicant filed an appeal of the Planning Commission’s decision. The appeal letter is attached to this staff report.

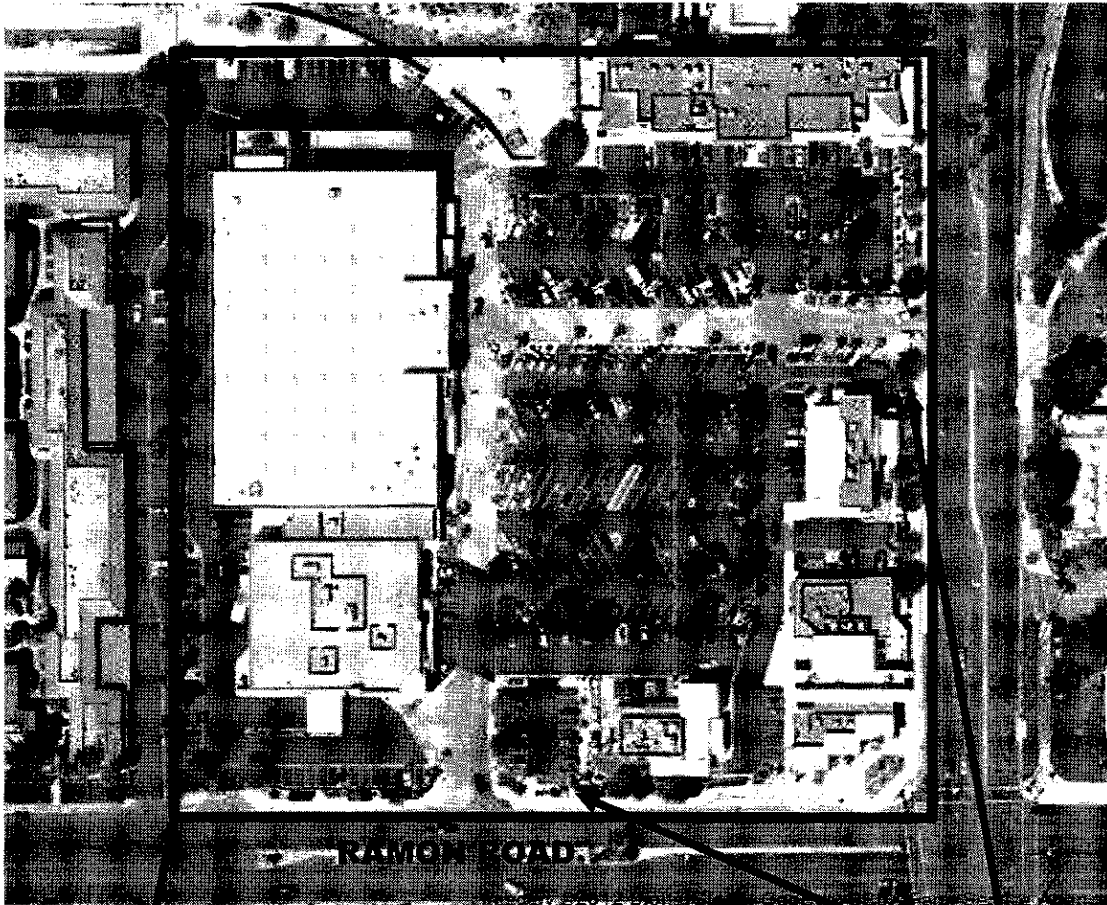
BACKGROUND AND SETTING:

The subject shopping center is located on an eight acre site at the northwesterly corner of Ramon Road and Sunrise Way. The shopping center was constructed in 2003 and is anchored by a grocery store and pharmacy. A mix of smaller retail, restaurant and service tenants are located along both streets and then northerly perimeter.

In 2003, the Planning Commission approved the monument signs with only the “Ralph’s” name identified. This decision was appealed to the City Council which overturned the Commission’s decision and allowed the center to be named the “Ralph’s Sav-On Center”. In 2006, the Commission approved an amendment to the sign program to allow the new CVS Pharmacy tenant signage.

Surrounding land uses, Zoning, and General Plan designations are detailed below:

	Land Use	Zone	General Plan
North	Multi-family Residential & Vacant	HR (Residential High by Section 14 Master Plan)	HDR (High Density Residential)
South	Shopping Complex & Low Density Residential	PD 183 & RMHP (Mobile Home Park)	NCC (Neighborhood / Community Commercial) & MDR (Medium Density Residential)
East	Senior Center & Boys & Girls Club	O (Open Space)	P / QP (Public / Quasi Public)
West	Multi-family Residential	HR	HDR



SHOPPING CENTER SITE

EXISTING MONUMENT SIGNS

STAFF ANALYSIS:

The proposed amendment is to modify the existing monument signs by enlarging the background cabinets and allowing tenant identification signs below the anchor tenants' identification signs. This would allow any tenant within the center main signage on each monument sign.

Staff notes that the proposal does not conform to the Zoning Code and the applicant is seeking relief through the sign program process. Signs for large-scale commercial centers are allowed based on a center's size. Centers that are three and one-half acres to fifteen acres in size are allowed complex identification signs that are up to fifty square feet in size; centers that are over fifteen acres in size are allowed complex and tenant identification monument signs that are up to 125 square feet in size. Section 93.20.05(C)(3)(a) of the zoning code states,

In addition to the sign area allowed for individual businesses, commercial and industrial centers in excess of three and one-half (3 1/2) acres of land shall be allowed one (1) identification sign on each street frontage. Such signs shall not extend beyond the property or into the right-of-way and shall be used solely to identify the center. The allowable sign area shall be ten (10) square feet of sign per acre to a maximum area of fifty (50) square feet per face. Signs shall not exceed a maximum height of eight (8) feet. One (1) additional sign may be permitted if the street frontage is greater than, and the signs are separated by a distance of no less than, four hundred fifty (450) feet; if multiple signs are allowed, they shall be located at street intersections or access drives.

- i. Commercial and industrial centers in excess of fifteen (15) acres of land shall be allowed one (1) identification sign on each street frontage not to exceed one hundred twenty-five (125) square feet per face. Such signs shall not extend beyond the property or into the right-of-way and shall be used solely to identify the center and its anchor stores which individually exceed twenty thousand (20,000) square feet in gross floor area. Signs shall not exceed a maximum height of twelve (12) feet. One (1) additional sign may be permitted if the street frontage is greater than, and the signs are separated by a distance of no less than, five hundred (500) feet; if multiple signs are allowed, they shall be located at street intersections or access drives.*

The shopping center is approximately eight acres in size and would only be permitted two complex identification signs by the code. The proposed monument signs are eight feet in height and contain approximately fifty square feet of sign area per side.



After initial review of the proposal, the Planning Commission rendered a split decision to deny the proposal. Commissioners Munger and Roberts were in favor while the rest of the Commission opposed the project. Staff has summarized some of the Commissioner's points on the project below (see attached meeting minutes):

- Due to existing site layout and driveway congestion conditions, wayfinding signs may further cause congestion if used or placed in the wrong location.
- There was a discussion on the history of monument signage requests for this center when it was reconstructed.
- The size of the center does not appear to justify the need for additional tenant identification on the monument signs.
- A Commission member noted that a similar approval was granted for the Smoke Tree Village shopping center.
- There is a need to assist businesses within shopping centers with street identification in some instances. This proposal will assist the businesses and the business users.
- The sizes of the proposed signs in this case are not much larger than they currently exist today.
- The particulars of this site and the physical characteristics do not support the need for additional signage.
- The small businesses near the corner have signs that face a street.

The applicant has submitted an appeal and requested that the City Council overturn the Planning Commission's decision to deny the project (see attached letter). The appeal letter states specific grounds for overturning the Commission's decision. Staff has summarized the appellant's reasons for overturning the Planning Commission's decision and responded below:

1. *The proposal is a tasteful design keeping with the same vernacular architecture of the shopping center and stays within the same allotted square foot area recommended by the AAC. The AAC reviewed the proposal on two occasions and recommended approval.*

The proposed monument signs are similar to the existing; however, the Commission's grounds for denial were not solely based on the aesthetics of the proposed signs.

2. *The initial sign program approved from years ago was controversial with regard to the monument signs. This persuaded the Commission to deny the sign program amendment. The economy today is well different than the economy from years ago when the sign program was approved. Small business today face a number of challenges and exposure is a must.*

The proposed sign program amendment was reviewed under the current findings necessary for a sign program which deviates from the zoning code and it was

determined that existing characteristics of the center did not warrant further deviation from the zoning code.

3. *Nine years of landscape growth has caused further lack of visibility for businesses located at the back of the center away from the streets. This has contributed to failure of many businesses within the shopping center.*
4. *National brand name companies such as Papa John's, PostNet, Check N Go, and Taco Del Mar have failed in this location. Additional visibility would have prevented these failures.*
5. *New businesses in these locations state that consumers are unable to locate their business.*
6. *The anchor stores do not bring enough traffic and exposure for the smaller tenants.*

The tree growth may have caused some lack of signage visibility, but it is not significant enough to validate the proposed deviation for a center of this size. There are only a small number of tenants on the north side of the center that do not have street visibility. These tenants are permitted signage above their storefront which commonly provides many businesses success in other shopping centers within the City.

7. *The subject shopping center should be allowed the same additional tenant signage that has been granted for the Smoke Tree Village shopping center.*

The Smoke Tree Commons shopping center is approximately 15.5 acres in size, or nearly double the size of the Ralph's CVS shopping center. The zoning code allows larger shopping centers additional on monument signs.

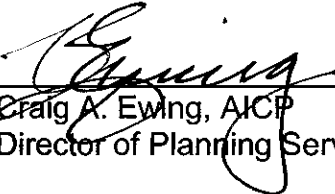
CONCLUSION:

The Planning Commission could not identify any physical characteristics of the property that necessitate the need for additional monument signage. Small businesses near the street corner have street visibility and there are only a small number of businesses in the center that do not have street visibility. Any further departure would appear to be excessive for a center of this size, and the approved program is compatible with the design of the property.

Staff recommends that the City Council uphold the Planning Commission's decision denying the proposed sign program amendment to allow additional tenant signage on the monument signs at the Ralph's CVS Shopping Center. A draft resolution of denial is attached to this report.

FISCAL IMPACT:

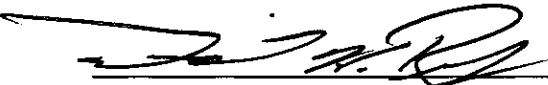
No Fiscal Impact.



Craig A. Ewing, AICP
Director of Planning Services



Thomas Wilson, Assistant City Manager



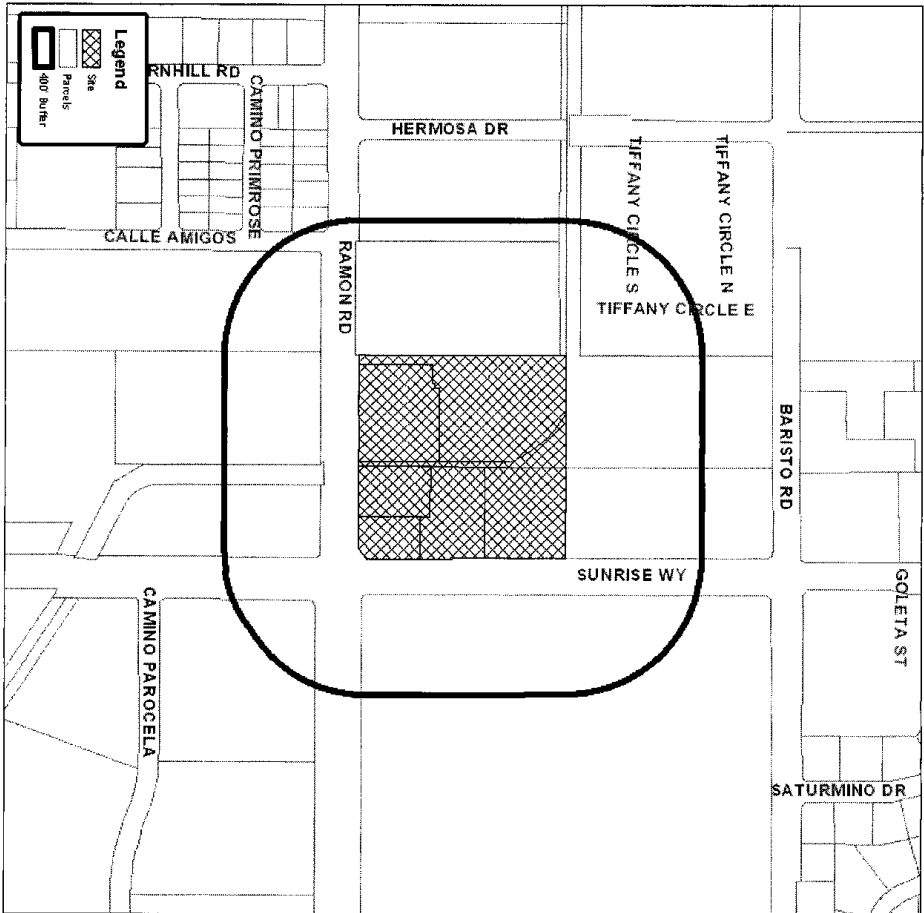
David H. Ready, City Manager

Attachments:

1. Vicinity Map
2. Draft Resolution
3. Sign Program Amendment Exhibit
4. Letter of Appeal
5. Planning Commission Minutes (excerpt), February 22, 2012
6. Planning Commission Staff Report, February 22, 2012



Department of Planning Services
Vicinity Map



Legend

- Site
- Parcels
- 400' Buffer

CITY OF PALM SPRINGS

CASE NO: SP 06-084 AMEND

APPLICANT: Best Signs, Inc.

DESCRIPTION: Appeal of the Planning Commission's action on February 22, 2012 to deny a sign program amendment to install additional monument signage for the Ralphs CVS Pharmacy shopping center located at 425 South Sunrise Way, Zone NC, Section 14.

RESOLUTION NO.

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PALM SPRINGS, CALIFORNIA, DENYING THE APPEAL BY BEST SIGNS, INC. AND UPHOLDING THE DECISION OF PLANNING COMMISSION TO DENY A SIGN PROGRAM AMENDMENT TO ALLOW TENANT IDENTIFICATION ON EXISTING MONUMENT SIGNS AT 425 SOUTH SUNRISE WAY, CASE NO. SP 06-084 AMEND.

WHEREAS, Lundin Development Co. ("Applicant") filed an application with the City pursuant to Section 93.20.00 of the Zoning Code for a sign program amendment to allow additional tenant identification on the existing monument signs for the Ralph's CVS Pharmacy shopping center located at 425 South Sunrise Way, Zone NC (Neighborhood Commercial – Section 14 Specific Plan), Section 14; and

WHEREAS, on February 22, 2012, a public meeting was conducted by the Planning Commission in accordance with applicable law; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission carefully reviewed and considered all of the evidence presented in connection with the meetings on the project, including but not limited to the staff report, and all written and oral testimony presented and voted 4-2 to deny the application; and

WHEREAS, on March 8, 2012, the Best Signs, Inc. ("Appellant") on Lundin Development Co., filed an appeal with the City Clerk, pursuant to Chapter 2.05 of the Municipal Code, of the Planning Commission's decision to deny the proposed sign program amendment for the Ralph's CVS Pharmacy shopping center located at 425 South Sunrise Way; and

WHEREAS, on April 18, 2012, a public hearing on the appeal was held by the City Council in accordance with applicable law; and

WHEREAS, the City Council has carefully reviewed and considered all of the evidence presented in connection with the appeal hearing on the project, including, but not limited to the staff report and all written and oral testimony presented.

THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PALM SPRINGS DOES HEREBY RESOLVE AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION 1. Section 93.20.05 of the Palm Springs Zoning Code stipulates three findings that are required for a sign program to be approved that deviates from the strict provisions of the Sign Ordinance:

1. *Due to the physical characteristics of the property and the orientation and design of the structures on the property, strict application of the*

regulations of the sign ordinance will not give adequate visibility to the signage.

- 2. The approved program will be compatible with the design of the property and will represent the least departure from the standards of the sign ordinance necessary for the effectiveness of the program.*
- 3. The approved program is compatible with the surrounding property and not contrary to the purpose of the sign ordinance.*

There are no identifiable physical characteristics of the property that necessitate the need for additional monument signage. Small businesses near the street corner have street visibility and there are only a small number of businesses in the center that do not have street visibility. Any further departure would appear to be excessive for a center of this size, and the approved program is compatible with the design of the property.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that, based upon the foregoing, the City Council hereby denies the appeal and upholds the Planning Commission's decision to deny a sign program amendment application for additional monument signage at the Ralph's CVS Pharmacy shopping center located at 425 South Sunrise Way.

ADOPTED this 18th day of April, 2012.

David H. Ready, City Manager

ATTEST:

James Thompson, City Clerk

CERTIFICATION

STATE OF CALIFORNIA)
COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE) ss.
CITY OF PALM SPRINGS)

I, JAMES THOMPSON, City Clerk of the City of Palm Springs, hereby certify that Resolution No. _____ is a full, true and correct copy, and was duly adopted at a regular meeting of the City Council of the City of Palm Springs on _____, by the following vote:

AYES:
NOES:
ABSENT:
ABSTAIN:

James Thompson, City Clerk
City of Palm Springs, California



EXISTING SIGNS QTY. 2
 SIGNS TO BE REMOVED AT
 NORTH AND EAST ELEVATIONS.
 KEEP EXISTING STONE BASE.

SCALE: 1/2" = 1'.0" (50) TOTAL SQ FT. EAST / NORTH ELEVATION



RETRO FIT (2) EXISTING D/F SIGNS FOR ADDITIONAL TENANT PANELS

TENANT PANELS ROUTED FROM 3/16" CLEAR CAST ACRYLIC. PANELS ARE PAINTED ON FACE OPAQUE BACKGROUND COLOR AND BACKED-UP WITH TRANSLUCENT VINYL ON BACKSIDE. RALPHS/CVS TO BE FABRICATED CABINETS WITH PUSH-THRU ACRYLIC LETTERS.

Client:
LUNDIN DEVELOPMENT

Project:
MONUMENTS

Project Address:
PALM SPRINGS, CA

Account Representative:
JESSE CROSS

Designer:
CRISTINA FLORES

Date:
01/02/12

Scale:
 1/2" = 1'.0"

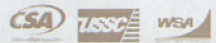
File name:
**LUNDIN DEVELOPMENT/
 MONUMENT REFURBISH
 010212.CDR**

Revisions:

Client Approval:



1550 S. Gene Autry Trail
 Palm Springs, CA 92264
 TEL: (760) 320-3042
 FAX: 760-320-2090

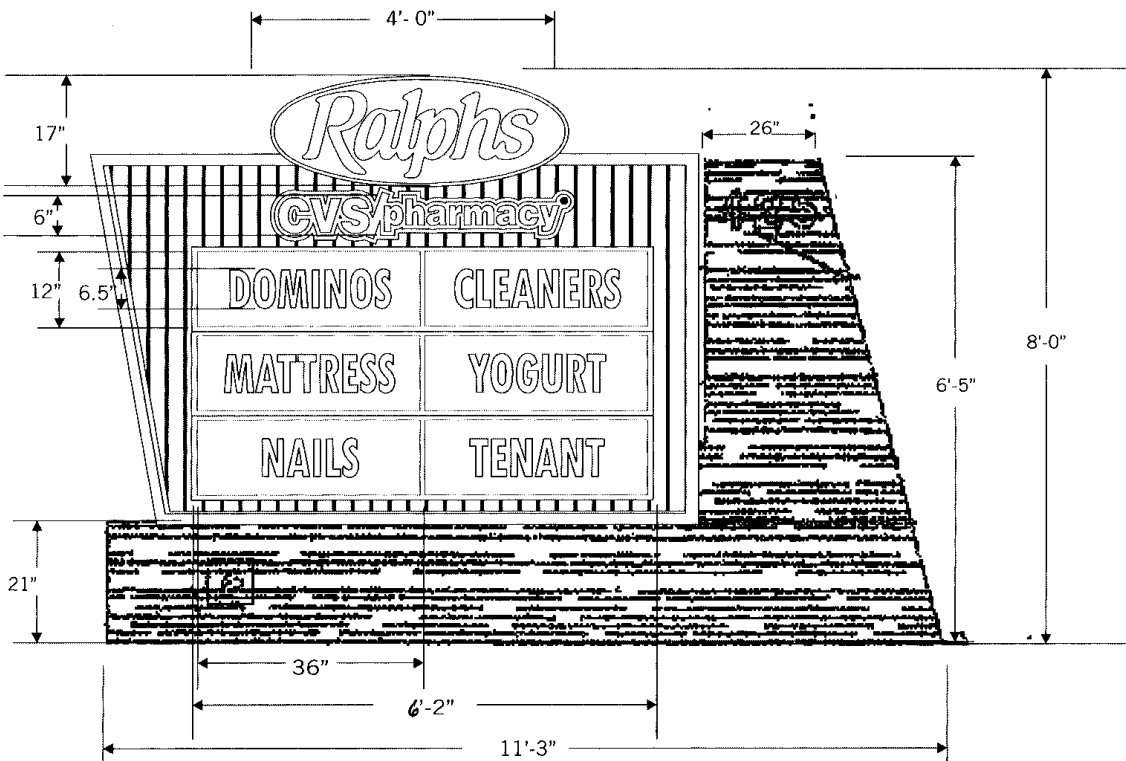


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Drawing No. **1**



RETRO FIT (2) EXISTING D/F SIGNS FOR ADDITIONAL TENANT PANELS

NO CHANGES TO BE MADE TO EXISTING STONE BASE. ANCHOR TENANT LOGOS TO BE INTERNALLY ILLUMINATED CABINETS WITH PUSH-THRU ACRYLIC LETTERS. TENANTS TO BE DETERMINED.

13

Client:
LUNDIN DEVELOPMENT

Project:
MONUMENTS

Project Address:
PALM SPRINGS, CA

Account Representative:
JESSE CROSS

Designer:
CRISTINA FLORES

Date:
01/02/12

Scale:
1/8" = 1'-0"

File name:
**LUNDIN DEVELOPMENT/
MONUMENT REFURBISH
010212.CDR**

Revisions:

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Drawing No. **2**

2012 MAR -8 PM 2: 16

JAMES THOMPSON
CITY CLERK

March 7, 2012

Palm Springs City Council
Attn: Palm Springs City Clerk
3200 East Tahquitz Canyon Way
Palm Springs, CA 92262

Re: Ralph's CVS Pharmacy Shopping Center
425 South Sunrise Way
Case SP 06-084
Project Planner: David Newell, Associate Planner

Dear Palm Springs City Council:

Please accept this letter on behalf of Lundin Development Company as an appeal of the Planning Commission's decision on February 22, 2012 to deny our request to amend a previously approved sign program to allow tenant identification signs on the existing monument signs for the Ralph's CVS Pharmacy Shopping Center located at 425 South Sunrise Way. We believe the project should be approved and that the Planning Commission's decision be overturned for the following reasons.

- The sign program amendment was brought before the Architectural Advisory Committee on two occasions, December 27, 2011 and January 23, 2012. On December 27th, we were asked to return to the Architectural Advisory Committee for a restudy with the following:
 1. Propose a new monument design keeping with the same vernacular of the shopping center's architecture; or
 2. Use way-finding signs within the center to direct traffic to the tenant locations.

We returned on January 23rd before the Architectural Advisory Committee with a tasteful design keeping with the same vernacular architecture of the shopping center as well as staying within the allotted square foot area recommended by the AAC.


Way-finding signage was not an option as there is already traffic congestion as you enter the shopping center from patrons attempting to locate the businesses they are driving to. (This fact was also stated by Commissioner Munger at the February 22nd, 2012 Planning Commission Meeting.)

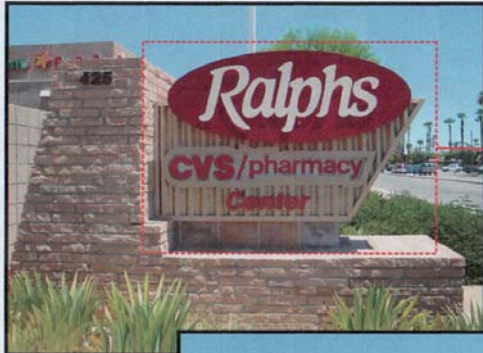
The sign program amendment received a recommendation for approval at the January 23, 2011 Architectural Advisory Committee meeting.

- The Ralph's CVS Shopping Center sign program amendment was brought before the Palm Springs Planning Commission on February 22, 2012. Comments were made in regards to the initial sign program application from years ago. It seems as though there was some type of controversy and compromise in the approval of the monument signs. These comments seem to persuade the commission to deny the sign program amendment. The economy today is well different than the economy from years ago when the sign program was approved. Small business today face a number of challenges and exposure is a must.
- This center has a nine year history over which the landscape has blossomed causing additional lack of visibility for businesses located at the back of the center away from the streets. This has contributed to the failure of many businesses within the shopping center.
- Most of the business failures within the center have come from strong national brand name companies such as Papa John's, PostNet, Check N Go, and Taco Del Mar. Had these businesses had more visibility, this would not have happened.
- Although these spaces have been replaced with new businesses, they continue to struggle. They along with their adjacent neighbors complain that ..."People don't know we are here..." Consumers are more apt to utilize the services these businesses have to offer if they knew they were there and accessible. Ralph's and CVS do not bring in enough traffic and exposure for these small businesses to survive.
- The applicant should be granted the same opportunity for additional tenant signage that the other Ralph's center located within the city (Smoke Tree Village Shopping Center) was granted. The vote to approve their signage was 5-0 with 2 commissioners absent.

I have attached a photo of the existing signage at the Ralph's CVS Shopping Center as well as a rendering of the proposed signage for your review. Should you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,


Jesse Cross
Vice President
Best Signs, Inc.



EXISTING SIGNS QTY. 2
 SIGNS TO BE REMOVED AT
 NORTH AND EAST ELEVATIONS.
 KEEP EXISTING STONE BASE.

SCALE: 1/2" = 1'.0" (50) TOTAL SQ. FT. EAST / NORTH ELEVATION



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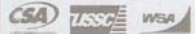
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Revisions:

Client Approval:



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Drawing No. **1**

REQUEST FOR TREASURER'S RECEIPT

TO: FINANCE DEPARTMENT, CASHIER

DATE: 3/8/12

FROM: CITY CLERK'S OFFICE

PLEASE ACCEPT \$ 546.00 + TAX

FROM: Best Signs

FOR: Appeal of Decision to Council

MAPS & PUBLICATIONS - 001-34106

OTHER CHARGES - CURRENT SERVICE - 001-34110

CREDIT ACCOUNT NO. - CIRCLED ABOVE

BY ORDER OF CB

MAR 8 2012

PAID

MAR 08 2012

CITY OF PALM SPRINGS

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TO: FINANCE DEPARTMENT, CASHIER

DATE: 3/8/12

FROM: CITY CLERK'S OFFICE

PLEASE ACCEPT \$ 546.00 TAX

FROM: Best Signs

FOR: Appeal of Decision to Council

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BY ORDER OF CB

MAR 8 2012

PAID

MAR 08 2012

CITY OF PALM SPRINGS



City of Palm Springs

Department of Planning Services

3200 E. Tahquitz Canyon Way • Palm Springs, California 92262
Tel: (760) 323-8245 • Fax: (760) 322-8360 • Web: www.palmspringsca.gov

April 5, 2012

VIA E-MAIL [jesse@bestsignsinc.com]
AND FIRST CLASS MAIL

Jesse Cross
Best Signs, Inc.
1550 South Gene Autry Trail
Palm Springs, CA 92264

**RE: Appeal of Planning Commission Decision on Case SP 06-084
Ralph's CVS Pharmacy Shopping Center Sign Program Amendment
425 South Sunrise Way**

Mr. Cross,

This letter is notice to you that the public hearing on your appeal in the above matter has been scheduled for the City Council meeting of Wednesday, April 18, 2012. The meeting begins at 6:00 p.m. and will be held in the Council Chambers of City Hall, 3200 E. Tahquitz Canyon Way. A staff report on the matter will be forwarded to you approximately five (5) days prior to the hearing.

Feel free to contact me at 323.8269 if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

David A. Newell
Associate Planner

cc: City Clerk

~~Motion J.R. Roberts seconded by Leslie Munger and unanimously carried on a roll call vote.~~

~~AYES: Leslie Munger, Tracy Conrad, Philip Klatchko, J.R. Roberts, Chair
Donenfeld, Vice Chair Hudson~~

2. OTHER BUSINESS:

2A. Case SP 06-084 AMEND - An application by Lundin Development Co. for an amendment to a previously approved sign program to allow tenant identification signs on the existing monument signs for the Ralph's CVS Pharmacy shopping center located at 425 South Sunrise Way, Zone NC (Section 14 Master Plan). (Project Planner: David A. Newell, Associate Planner)

David A. Newell, Associate Planner, provided background information as outlined in the staff report dated February 22, 2012.

Commissioner Munger noted vehicular congestion at the ingress/egress at Sunrise Way and Ramon Road and suggested the way-finding signs are to be placed in the appropriate location not in this hazardous area.

Commissioner Conrad recalled when the original sign program was heard for this shopping center and provided background history on the issues with the signage. Ms. Conrad noted that she could not support the request to add tenant identification signs.

Commissioner Roberts spoke in favor of allowing the tenant identification signs; noting the benefit to the public and building tenants by increasing visibility of the businesses.

Commissioner Klatchko concurred with Commissioner Conrad; he recalled that the original sign program was controversial and expressed difficulty making the findings to deviate from the sign program.

ACTION: To deny Case SP 06-084 AMEND.

Motion Tracy Conrad, seconded by Philip Klatchko and carried 4-2 on a roll call vote.

AYES: Tracy Conrad, Philip Klatchko, Chair Donenfeld, Vice Chair Hudson
NOES: Leslie Munger, J.R. Roberts

~~2B. Case SP 10-006 AMEND - An application by Best Signs, Inc. on behalf of Eisenhower Health Center for an amendment to the existing sign program to allow modifications to existing signage for the medical office at the~~



Planning Commission Staff Report

Date: February 22, 2012

Case No.: SP 06-084 AMEND

Type: Sign Program Amendment

Applicant: Lundin Development Co.

Location: 425 South Sunrise Way

APN: 508-110-040, 508-110-059, 508-110-060, 510-110-061,
508-110-062, 508-110-063 & 508-110-065

General Plan: NCC (Neighborhood / Community Commercial)

Zone: NC (Neighborhood Commercial) by Section 14 Specific Plan

From: Craig A. Ewing, AICP, Director of Planning Services

Project Planner: David A. Newell, Associate Planner

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

A request by Lundin Development Co. for an amendment to an approved sign program for the Ralphs CVS / Pharmacy shopping center located at 425 South Sunrise Way. The proposed amendment includes the replacement of the two monument signs on the existing foundations to allow tenant identification signs in addition to anchor tenant identification.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Planning Commission approve Case No. SP 06-084 AMEND, to allow an amendment of the approved sign program for the Ralphs CVS / Pharmacy shopping center located at 425 South Sunrise Way.

PRIOR ACTIONS:

On May 14, 2003, the Planning Commission approved a sign program for the shopping center. The sign program allowed individual tenant signs, freestanding complex identification signs and incidental accessory signs.

On December 13, 2006, the Planning Commission reviewed an amendment to the sign program to accommodate the CVS Pharmacy tenant signage on the building and monument signs.

On December 27, 2011, the Architectural Advisory Committee (AAC) reviewed the proposed amendment and restudied the project with the following comments:

1. Propose new monument signs that are in keeping with the same vernacular of the shopping center architecture; or
2. Use way-finding sign within center to direct traffic to tenant locations.

On January 23, 2012, the AAC reviewed the revised sign program amendment and by a vote of 4-3 recommended approval to the Planning Commission, subject to allowing different font types but no logos for the tenant signage on the monument signs.

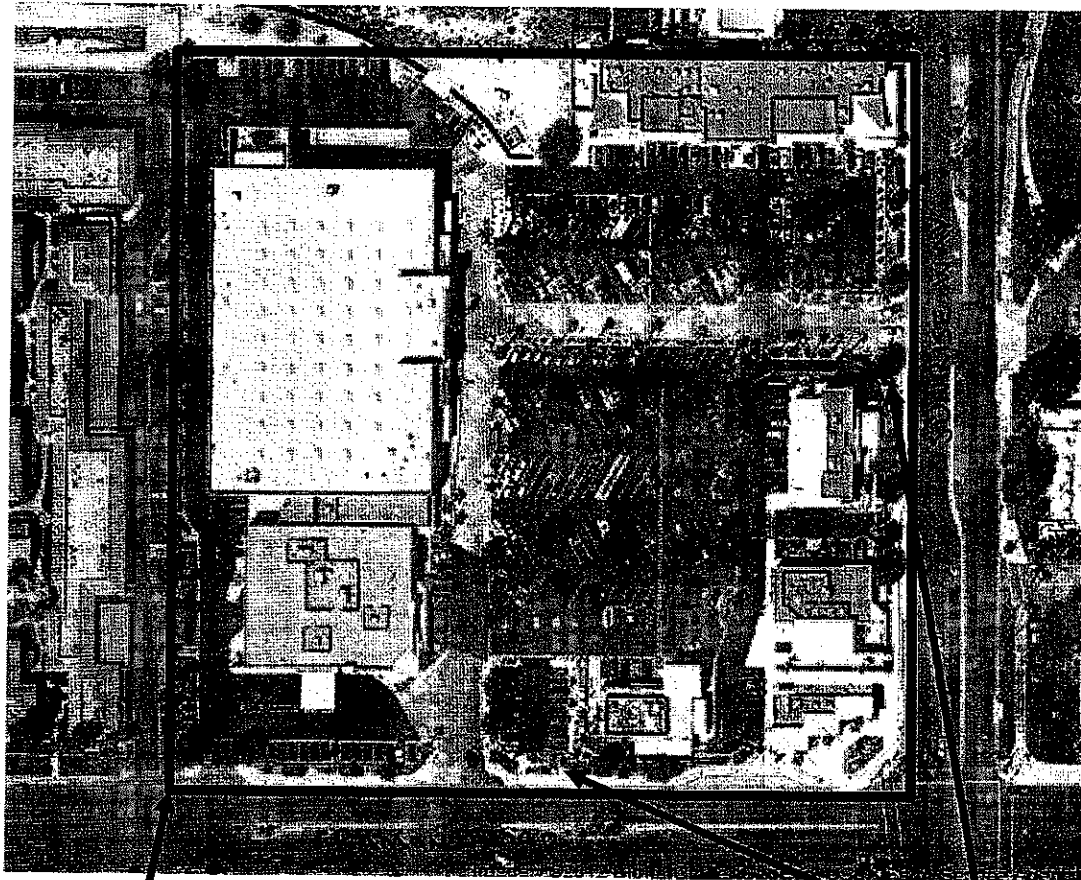
BACKGROUND AND SETTING:

The subject shopping center is located on an eight acre site at the northwesterly corner of Ramon Road and Sunrise Way. The shopping center was constructed in 2003 and is anchored by a grocery store and pharmacy. A mix of smaller retail, restaurant and service tenants are located along both streets and then northerly perimeter.

In 2003, the Planning Commission approved the monument signs with only the "Ralph's" name identified. This decision was appealed to the City Council which overturned the Commission's decision and allowed the center to be named the "Ralph's Sav-On Center". In 2006, the Commission approved an amendment to the sign program to allow the new CVS Pharmacy tenant signage.

Surrounding land uses, Zoning, and General Plan designations are detailed below:

	Land Use	Zone	General Plan
North	Multi-family Residential & Vacant	HR (Residential High by Section 14 Master Plan)	HDR (High Density Residential)
South	Shopping Complex & Low Density Residential	PD 183 & RMHP (Mobile Home Park)	NCC (Neighborhood / Community Commercial) & MDR (Medium Density Residential)
East	Senior Center & Boys & Girls Club	O (Open Space)	P / QP (Public / Quasi Public)
West	Multi-family Residential	HR	HDR



SHOPPING CENTER SITE

EXISTING MONUMENT SIGNS

ANALYSIS:

The proposed amendment is to modify the existing monument signs by enlarging the background cabinets and allowing tenant identification signs below the anchor tenants' identification signs. This will allow any tenant within the center main signage on each monument sign. All other signage in the shopping complex will remain the same.

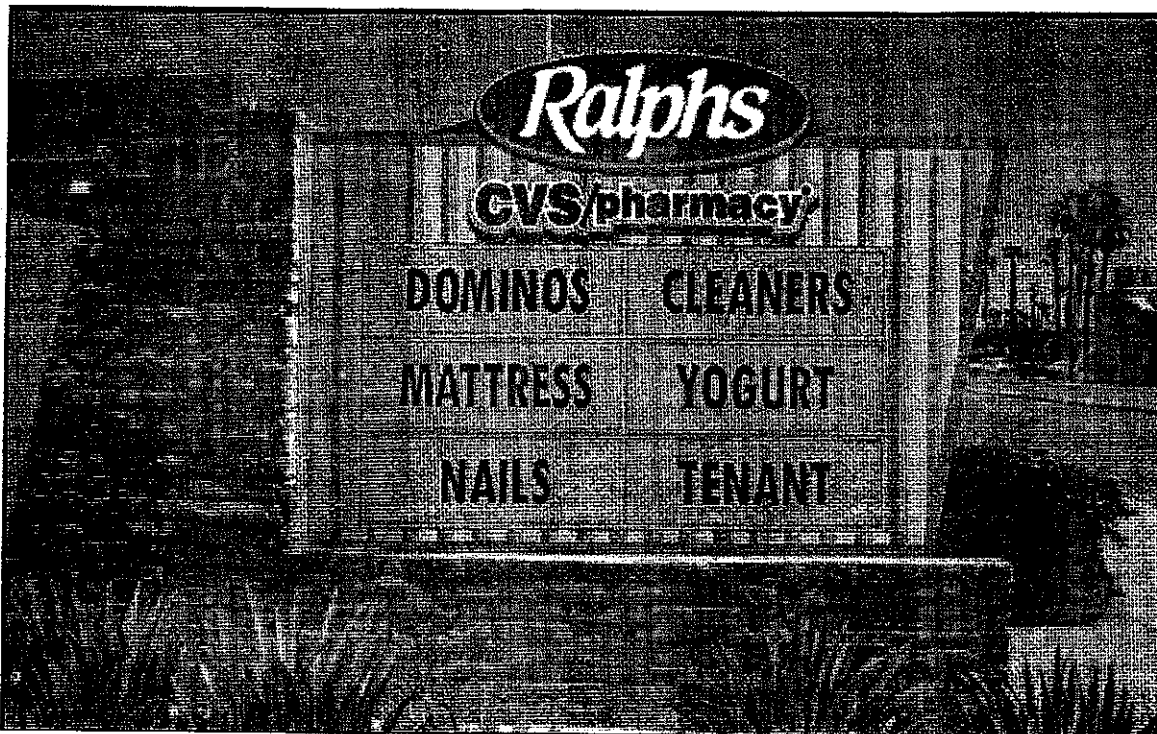
Signs for large-scale commercial centers are allowed based on a center's size. The Zoning Code's threshold for the amount of signage permitted on a monument sign is fifteen acres. Section 93.20.05(C)(3)(a) of the zoning code states,

In addition to the sign area allowed for individual businesses, commercial and industrial centers in excess of three and one-half (3 1/2) acres of land shall be allowed one (1) identification sign on each street frontage. Such signs shall not extend beyond the property or into the right-of-way and shall be used solely to identify the center. The allowable sign area shall be ten (10) square feet of sign per acre to a maximum area of fifty (50) square feet per face. Signs shall not exceed a maximum height of eight (8) feet. One (1) additional sign may be permitted if the street frontage is

greater than, and the signs are separated by a distance of no less than, four hundred fifty (450) feet; if multiple signs are allowed, they shall be located at street intersections or access drives.

- i. Commercial and industrial centers in excess of fifteen (15) acres of land shall be allowed one (1) identification sign on each street frontage not to exceed one hundred twenty-five (125) square feet per face. Such signs shall not extend beyond the property or into the right-of-way and shall be used solely to identify the center and its anchor stores which individually exceed twenty thousand (20,000) square feet in gross floor area. Signs shall not exceed a maximum height of twelve (12) feet. One (1) additional sign may be permitted if the street frontage is greater than, and the signs are separated by a distance of no less than, five hundred (500) feet; if multiple signs are allowed, they shall be located at street intersections or access drives.*

The shopping center is approximately eight acres in size and would only be permitted two complex identification signs by the code. The proposed monument signs are less than eight feet in height and contain approximately fifty square feet of sign area per side.



REQUIRED FINDINGS:

A sign program may be approved which varies from the specific limitations of the sign ordinance. Based on the above analysis, one deviation would be approved as part of this sign program:

1. Allow identification of tenants on center identification monument signs

Section 93.20.05 of the PSZC stipulates three findings that are required for a sign program to be approved that deviates from the strict provisions of the Sign Ordinance. Staff has analyzed the required findings in order below:

- 1) *Due to the physical characteristics of the property and the orientation and design of the structures on the property, strict application of the regulations of the sign ordinance will not give adequate visibility to the signage.*

The eight-acre site contains two larger anchor tenants at the rear with a mix of smaller retail, service and restaurant tenants on the street fronts and side property. Various smaller tenants have no street exposure and limited visibility with tree growth within the shopping center. If strict application of the Zoning Code is followed, there would be only limited exposure within the center of individual tenants. Therefore, the proposed amendment will provide adequate visibility to smaller tenants near the street.

- 2) *The approved program will be compatible with the design of the property and will represent the least departure from the standards of the sign ordinance necessary for the effectiveness of the program.*

The sign program proposes signage adjacent to the Major Thoroughfares (Sunrise Way and Ramon Road), which allows easy identification of various tenants to vehicular traffic. The proposed signage will allow three-square foot tenant signs on up to six uniform locations on each side of the monument signs, while maintaining the maximum center identification sign area of fifty square feet per side. Furthermore, the Architectural Advisory Committee reviewed the amendment and recommended approval. Therefore, the sign program will be effective as well as compatible with the design of the property, while representing the least departure from the standards of the sign ordinance.

- 3) *The approved program is compatible with the surrounding property and not contrary to the purpose of the sign ordinance.*

The stated purpose of the sign ordinance as provided by Section 93.20.02(B) "is to provide standards to safeguard life, health, property and the public welfare and to provide the means for adequate identification of business and other sign users by regulating and controlling the design, location and maintenance of all signs in the city".

The sign ordinance encourages adoption of sign programs to provide consistency and ease of permitting for multi-tenant signage. The deviations

from the ordinance are for the purpose of providing adequate identification for businesses and sign users; therefore, the proposed sign program is not contrary to the purpose of the sign ordinance, and represents the least departure from the standards of the sign ordinance necessary for the effectiveness of the program.

CONCLUSION:

Staff is able to provide a favorable recommendation for the required findings and the Architectural Advisory Committee recommended approval of the project. Therefore, staff is recommending approval of the proposed sign program, Case SP 06-084 AMEND.

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT:

Pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the project is Categorically Exempt under Section 15311(a) (Accessory Structures).



David A. Newell
Associate Planner



Craig A. Ewing, AI/CP
Director of Planning Services

ATTACHMENTS:

- 1) 400' Radius Map
- 2) Draft Resolution
- 3) Sign Program Amendment Exhibit