



ARCHITECTURAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
STAFF MEMORANDUM

DATE: August 11, 2014 NEW BUSINESS

SUBJECT: THE PALM SPRINGS ART MUSEUM REQUESTING APPROVAL OF A SIGN VARIANCE FOR THE MUSEUM'S ARCHITECTURE + DESIGN CENTER (AKA THE SANTA FE FEDERAL SAVINGS & LOAN BUILDING), A CLASS 1 HISTORIC SITE LOCATED AT 300 SOUTH PALM CANYON DRIVE (HSPB 54 / CASE 8.259 VAR, ZONE CBD) (KL).

FROM: Department of Planning Services

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SUMMARY

The sign ordinance allows one main sign on each street frontage. Monument signs are not a permitted sign type in the CBD. The site has two street frontages but museum seeks approval of a variance to have three main signs, two of which are monument signs. Pursuant to PSMC 8.05.180; approval by the HSPB is required for the erection, remodeling or replacing of a sign which affects the exterior appearance of a structure.

RECOMMENDATION:

Recommend approval by the Historic Site Preservation Board and the Planning Commission subject to the following:

- The proposed sign at the corner of Baristo Road and South Palm Canyon Drive extends into the roadway right of way. An encroachment agreement must be executed between the City and the PSAM prior to installation or permits.

ISSUES:

The Santa Fe Federal Savings & Loan Building (now the Palm Springs Art Museum Architecture + Design Center) is a Class 1 historic site. The requested signs must be approved by the Historic Site Preservation Board as a certificate of approval for alteration of a historic site and the Planning Commission must approve a sign variance.

**BACKGROUND AND ANALYSIS:**

<b>Most Recent Change of Ownership</b>	
2010	Purchase by the present owner.

<b>Neighborhood Meeting</b>	
None	Not required, the property is not in or near a recognized neighborhood organization.

<b>Field Check</b>	
July 2014	Site inspection by Planning Staff.

<b>Site Area</b>	
Net Area	31,363 square feet

<b>Sign Posting of Pending Project</b>	
None	Not required for a Variance, pursuant to Section 94.09.00(F)(3) of the Zoning Code.

<b>Related Relevant City Actions by Planning, Fire, Building, etc.</b>	
May 6, 2009	City Council designated 300 South Palm Canyon Drive as a Class 1 historic site (HSPB 54)
September 13, 2011	HSPB approved Certificate of Approval for re-facing an existing monument sign (since removed).
November 8, 2011	HSPB approved Certificate of Approval for the Rehabilitation of the SFF for the Palm Springs Art Museum's Architecture and Design Center.
January 10, 2012	HSPB approved Certificate of Approval for the design of the trash enclosure and color for the repaint of the exterior columns. .
August 20, 2012	Staff level approval of minor landscape revisions.
June 10, 2014	HSPB approved Certificate of Approval for outdoor event space south of building.

The Palm Springs Art Museum's (PSAM) Architecture and Design Center is seeking approval for new exterior main signage that varies from the code-allowed signage for buildings in the CBD. There are three main signs proposed as follows:

1. A wall sign mounted on the east wall of the building facing the parking lot of approximately 36 square feet.
2. A two-sided monument sign at the northwest corner of Baristo Road and South Palm Canyon Drive of approximately 3.7 square feet of sign text on each face, and
3. Another single-sided monument sign located on a free-standing wall at the south side of the building of approximately 36 square feet of sign text.

When the building was built and occupied by the Santa Fe Federal Savings & Loan Association there were three main signs. There are no permits on file for these original signs and they were removed many years ago by other tenants / owners of the building. The PSAM is proposing signage in roughly the same location and approximately the same general size.

Signs in the CBD are regulated by Section 93.20.09 of the Zoning Code. This section allows for one main sign per tenant. If the same tenant space fronts two streets, the tenant may have two main signs. Free-standing monument signs are permitted for commercial and industrial uses pursuant Section 93.20.05 but are not permitted in the CBD without approval of a sign variance.<sup>1</sup>

**ANALYSIS:**

*PSZC Section 94.04.00.("Architectural Review") Part D. Planning Commission Architectural Advisory Committee Review Guidelines.*

*The planning commission architectural advisory committee shall examine the material submitted with the architectural approval application and specific aspects of design shall be examined to determine whether the proposed development will provide desirable environment for its occupants as well as being compatible with the character of adjacent and surrounding developments, and whether aesthetically it is of good composition, materials, textures and colors. Conformance will be evaluated, based on consideration of the following:*

Item	Guideline	Conforms?	Staff Evaluation
1	Does the proposed development provide a desirable environment for its occupants?	Yes	The proposed signage would be easily visibility from all directions.
2	Is the proposed development compatible with the character of adjacent and surrounding developments?	Yes	The proposed signage is compatible with the character of the site, however there are few monument signs on other sites in the vicinity.
3	Is the proposed development of good composition, materials, textures, and colors?	Yes	The signage is proposed to be constructed of high quality durable materials.
4	Site layout, orientation, location of structures and relationship to one another and to open spaces and topography. Definition of pedestrian and vehicular areas; i.e., sidewalks as distinct from parking lot areas	Yes	The proposed signage provides ample visibility from both pedestrian and vehicular traffic.
5	Harmonious relationship with existing and proposed adjoining developments and in the context of the immediate neighborhood/community, avoiding both excessive variety and monotonous repetition, but allowing similarity of style, if warranted	Yes	The signage is proposed in materials that are harmonious with those found on the existing building. Each sign is slightly different, yet complementary.

<sup>1</sup> Those monument signs which do exist at older buildings in the CBD were likely installed prior to enactment of the current sign ordinance or were approved as sign variances.

6	Maximum height, area, setbacks and overall mass, as well as parts of any structure (buildings, walls, screens, towers or signs) and effective concealment of all mechanical equipment	No	Monument signs are not a permitted sign type in the CBD. The sign proposed at the northwest corner of the site encroaches into the street right of way and would require execution of an encroachment agreement with the City.
7	Building design, materials and colors to be sympathetic with desert surroundings	Yes	The signs are proposed in neutral tones and subtle materials.
8	Harmony of materials, colors and composition of those elements of a structure, including overhangs, roofs, and substructures which are visible simultaneously	Yes	The proposed signs are harmonious with the existing historic building.
9	Consistency of composition and treatment	Yes	There is consistency in the composition and treatment of the three proposed signs.
10	Location and type of planting, with regard for desert climate conditions. Preservation of specimen and landmark trees upon a site, with proper irrigation to insure maintenance of all plant materials	N/A	
11	Signs and graphics, as understood in architectural design including materials and colors;	Yes	The signs are architecturally complementary to the existing historic building.

*Area and size limitations for signage in the CBD:*

Pursuant to Zoning Code Section 93.20.09 (“*Uptown / Downtown signage*”), a main sign may be composed of individual letters applied to the building and may have a maximum area of 1 square foot per lineal foot of building frontage, not to exceed fifty (50) square feet. The letters may not exceed fourteen (14) inches and may not exceed in length 2/3rds of the length of the tenant space. The building is roughly 70 feet in width along the Baristo Road frontage and 90 feet in length along the Palm Canyon frontage. Maximum allowable sign area is therefore 50 square feet for a main sign.

The proposed lettering on all three signs conforms to these regulations. The letters do not exceed 6.5 inches in height, are not greater than 36 square feet in area and not greater than twelve (12) feet in length.

*Regulations for Monument signs.*

Pursuant to PSZC Section 93.20.05 (*Permitted Signs – Commercial / Industrial Business*), where monument signs are permitted, the area on each side of a monument side may not exceed 75% of the maximum allowable area for a main sign. In this case 75% of fifty square feet would be 37.5 square feet. The maximum sign area on each face of the two-sided monument sign is 3.7 square feet and thus conforms to the regulations for monument signs.

FINDINGS:

*Certificate of Approval for Alterations to a Class 1 Historic Site.*

Pursuant to Municipal Code Section 8.05.185: a person who desires to construct, alter, move or demolish a structure within or upon a Class 1 historic site shall file an application for approval of the project by the Historic Site Preservation Board.

Municipal Code Section 8.05.190 identifies the following factors to be considered by the historic site preservation board:

*(1) The historic value and significance, or the architectural value and significance or both, of the structure and its relation to the historic value of the surrounding area;*

Two of the three proposed signs are monument signs. These signs are proposed in locations on the site at which signs for the original owner/tenant of the building were located (The Santa Fe Federal Savings & Loan Company). The third is a wall sign on the east façade. It also is proposed in a location where the original building owner had mounted its sign. The signs are proposed to be installed in such a way as to complement and not distract from the historic defining characteristics of the site and the building.

*(2) The relationship of the exterior architectural features of any structure to the rest of the structure itself and to the surrounding area;*

The only "structures" that are proposed are (1) a new monument structure clad in silver travertine with bronze letters at the northwest corner of the site and (2) an existing monument "wall" clad in similar stone with clear anodized aluminum letters at the southwest corner. Both structures are proposed in materials that are complementary to the existing historic building and are low, horizontal structures that complements the horizontal lines of the building.

*(3) The general compatibility of exterior design, arrangement, texture and material which is proposed by the applicant;*

The three signs are generally compatible with the exterior of the existing building in terms of arrangement, size, texture, material, location, and visual appearance.

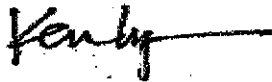
*(4) Archaeological or ecological significance of the area.*

There are no known archaeological or ecological aspects to the subject site.

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ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS.

The proposed sign variance is a project as defined by the guidelines of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Staff has evaluated the project against the requirements of CEQA and proposes that it be deemed "Categorically Exempt" from further analysis under CEQA as a Class 31 exemption (historic resource). The site is a Class 1 historic site and the proposed signage is complementary with the historic structure and the defining characteristics of the site. It does not adversely impact the historic resource and does not materially impair any aspect of the site.



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Ken Lyon, RA  
Associate Planner



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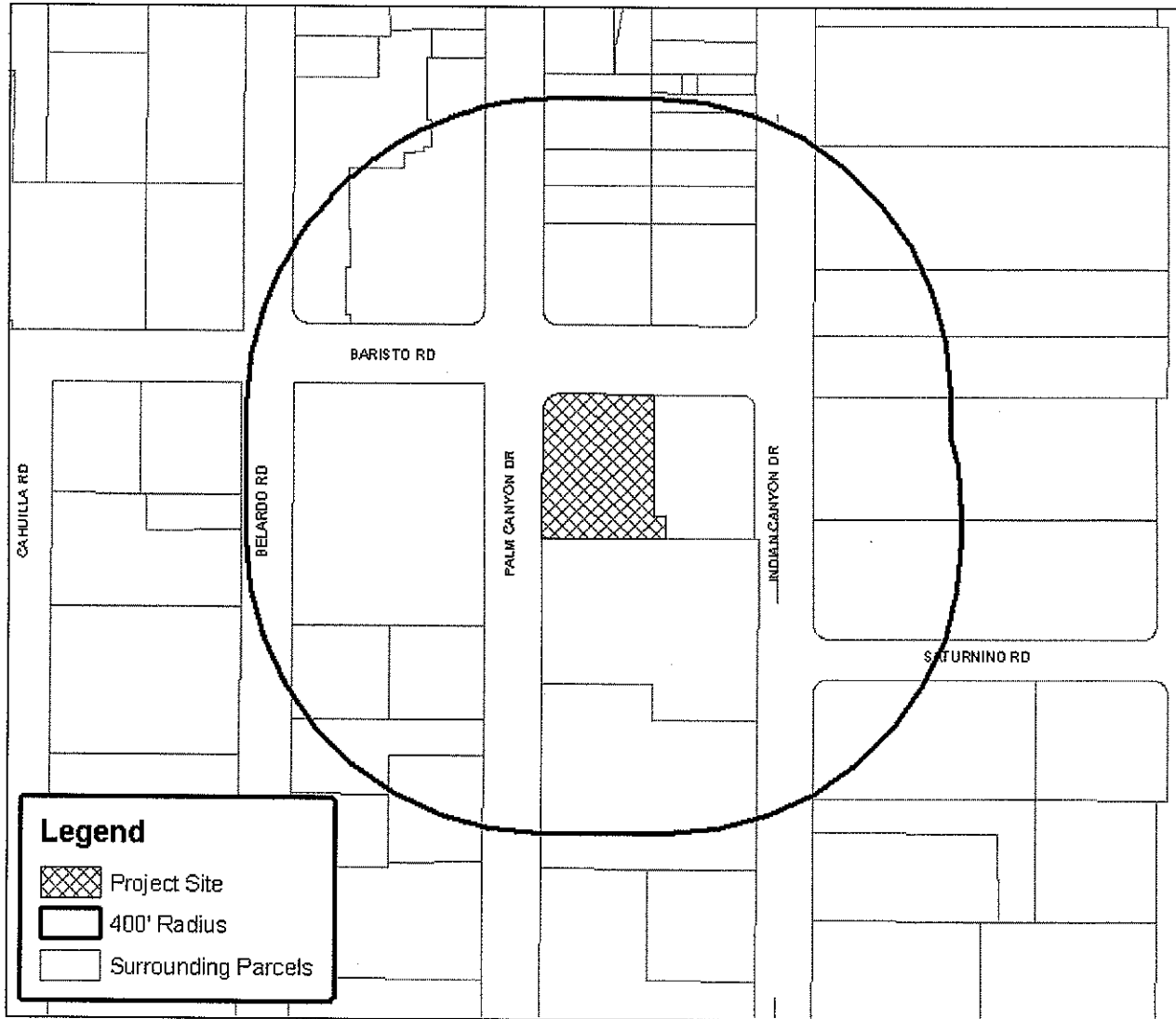
M. Margo Wheeler, FAICP  
Director of Planning Services

Attachments:




1. Vicinity Map
2. Applicant Justification Letter
3. Existing Site Photographs
4. Proposed Signage Exhibits



# Department of Planning Services Vicinity Map



**Legend**

-  Project Site
-  400' Radius
-  Surrounding Parcels

## CITY OF PALM SPRINGS

**CASE NO:** 8.259 Sign Variance

**APPLICANT:**  
Palm Springs Art Museum (PSAM)

**DESCRIPTION:** Sign Variance and Certificate of Approval request proposing three main signs, two of which are monument signs at the PSAM's Architecture + Design Center (a.k.a. The Santa Fe Savings Building), a Class 1 Historic Site, Zone CBD, Section 15 (HSPB 54)



THE KINER GROUP

RECEIVED

July 20, 2014

JUL 21 2014

PLANNING SERVICES  
DEPARTMENT

Mr. Ken Lyon  
Assistant Planner  
Dept. of Planning Services  
City of Palm Springs  
3200 Tahquitz Canyon Way  
Palm Springs, CA 92263

RE: 300 No. Palm Canyon Drive

Dear Mr. Lyon,

The Palm Springs Art Museum's Architecture and Design Center is requesting a variance to allow for the placement of a free-standing monument sign near the southeast corner of Palm Canyon Drive and Baristo Rd. We believe that the variance should be approved for the following reasons:

- 1) The building has been designated a Class 1 Historical site. It was designed by Stewart Williams originally for Santa Fe Savings & Loan. The building sits well off of the intersection of Palm Canyon Dr. and Baristo Rd. with a large raised planting area between the sidewalks and the building. In our opinion, a monument sign, placed in the landscaped planter perpendicular to Palm Canyon Drive is the only way to adequately identify the building at the intersection of the two streets. Placing a sign along the roof facade is not an option as this would compromise the original architectural design, as well as not being as effective as the proposed monument sign.
- 2) The proposed monument sign is the most compatible application with Mr. Williams' original design. We have included a photograph of the original building which shows a very large monument sign in basically the same location we are proposing for the new, smaller sign. In fact, all of the proposed signage for the A+D Center is consistent with Mr. Williams' original design.
- 3) The proposed monument sign is compatible with the surrounding property. The A+D Center is unique in that the building will function as a museum in the center of the Downtown/Uptown District. This is a 12,500 S.F. single use building positioned at one of the key intersections in downtown Palm Springs. The wall signage will not adequately identify the building in time to either access the parking lot, or the parking structure on





Mr. Ken Lyon

July 20, 2014

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Baristo Rd. from Palm Canyon Drive. In addition, the monument sign would be compatible with other similar buildings south of the A+D Center. There are a number of existing monument signs in the area. These include the Citibank building (also by Stewart Williams), south of our site on So. Palm Canyon Drive.

- 4) If approved, the A+D Center's monument sign would be consistent with the existing sign ordinance. The signage complements the building design, in fact the signage was an integral component of the original architecture. Without a monument sign, the signage for the A+D Center would be ineffective. A monument sign in the proposed location will not have a detrimental effect on any surrounding properties, and is consistent with the purpose of the sign ordinance.

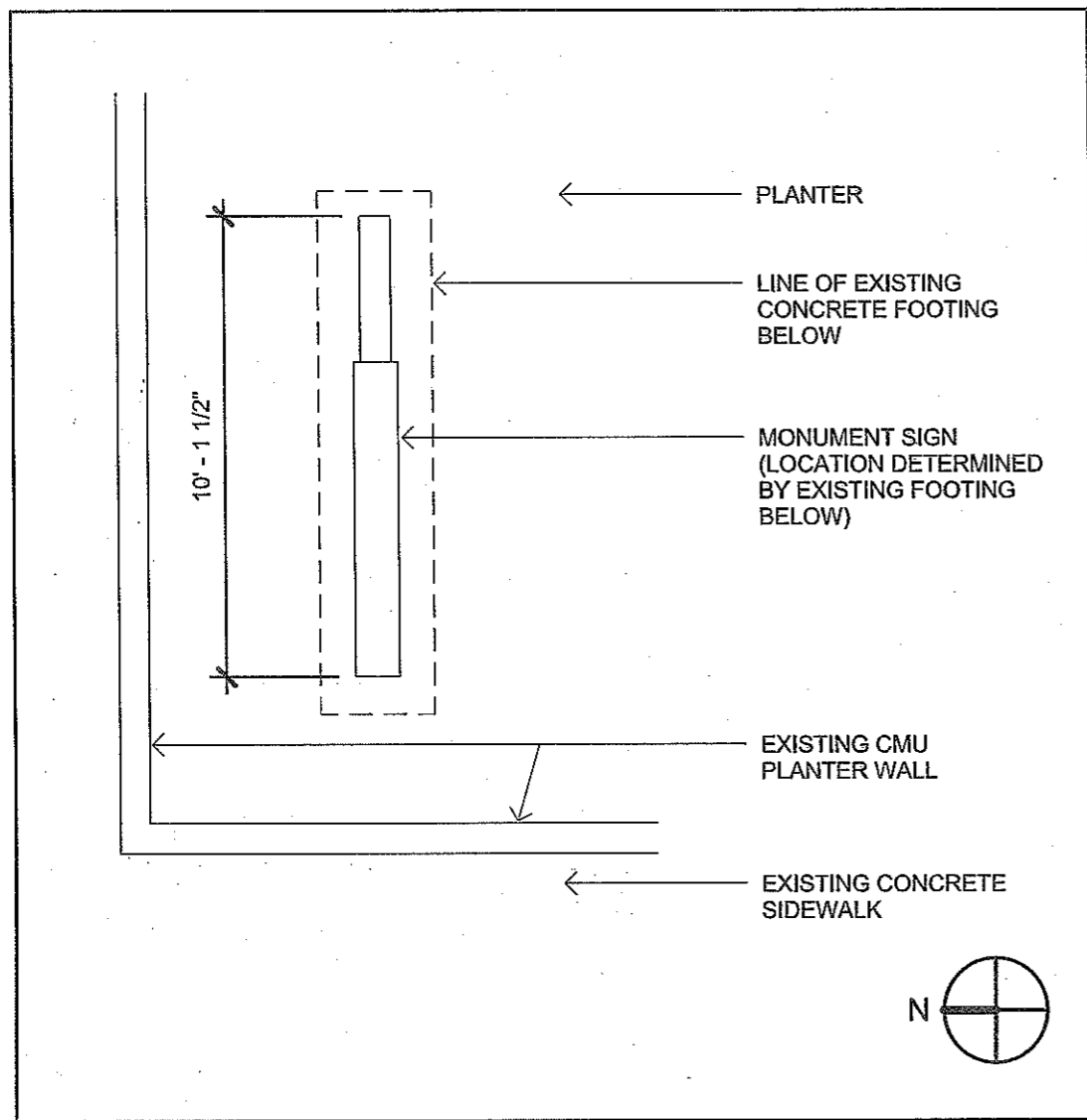
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We look forward to answering any questions you may have regarding our request.

Yours truly,

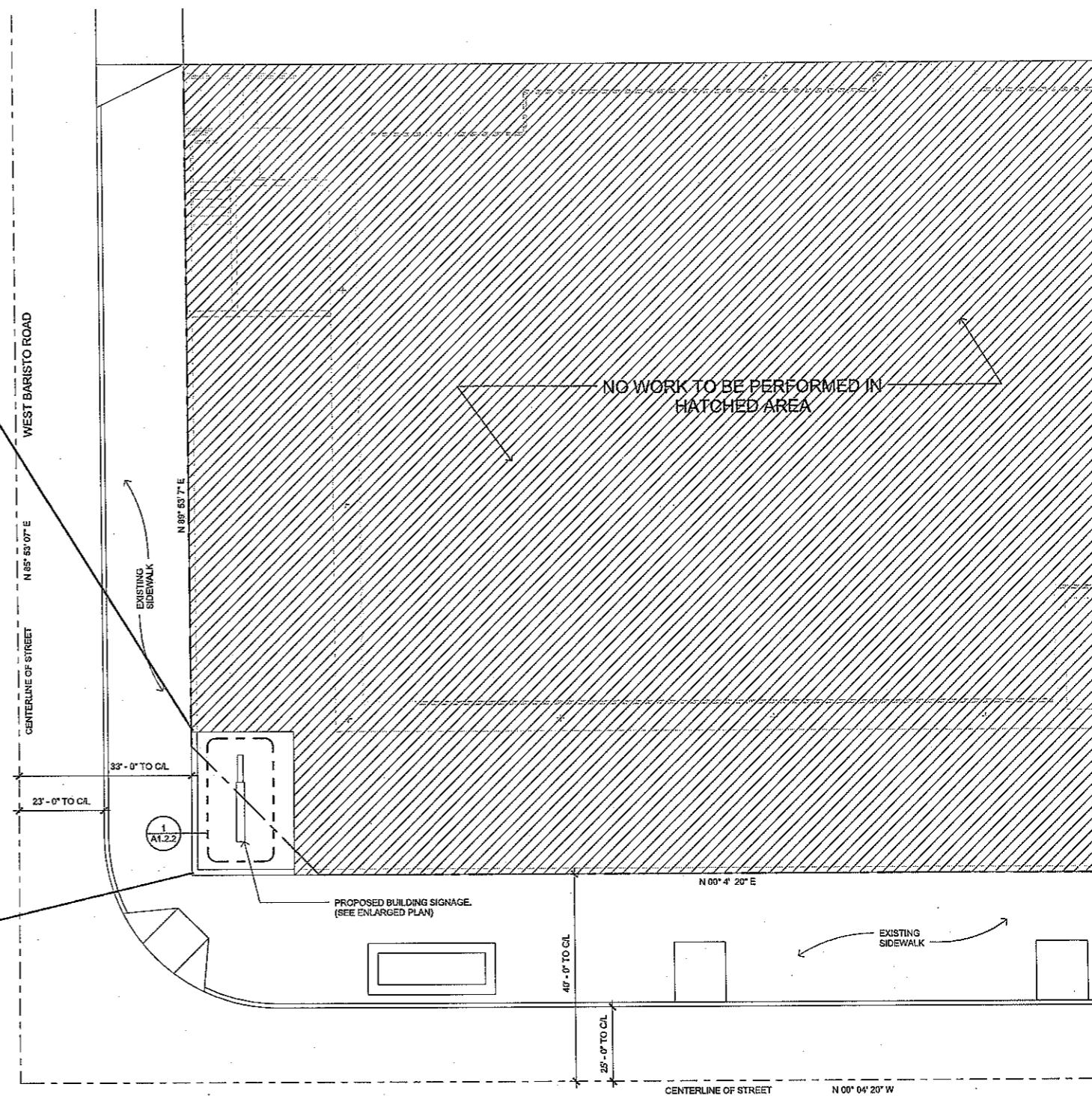


Michael Kiner  
Project Manager  
Palm Springs Art Museum  
Architecture and Design Center



ENLARGED PLAN - MONUMENT SIGN

1/4" = 1'-0"



PARTIAL SITE PLAN - NORTHWEST CORNER

1/16" = 1'-0"

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JUL 21 2014

PLANNING SERVICES  
DEPARTMENT

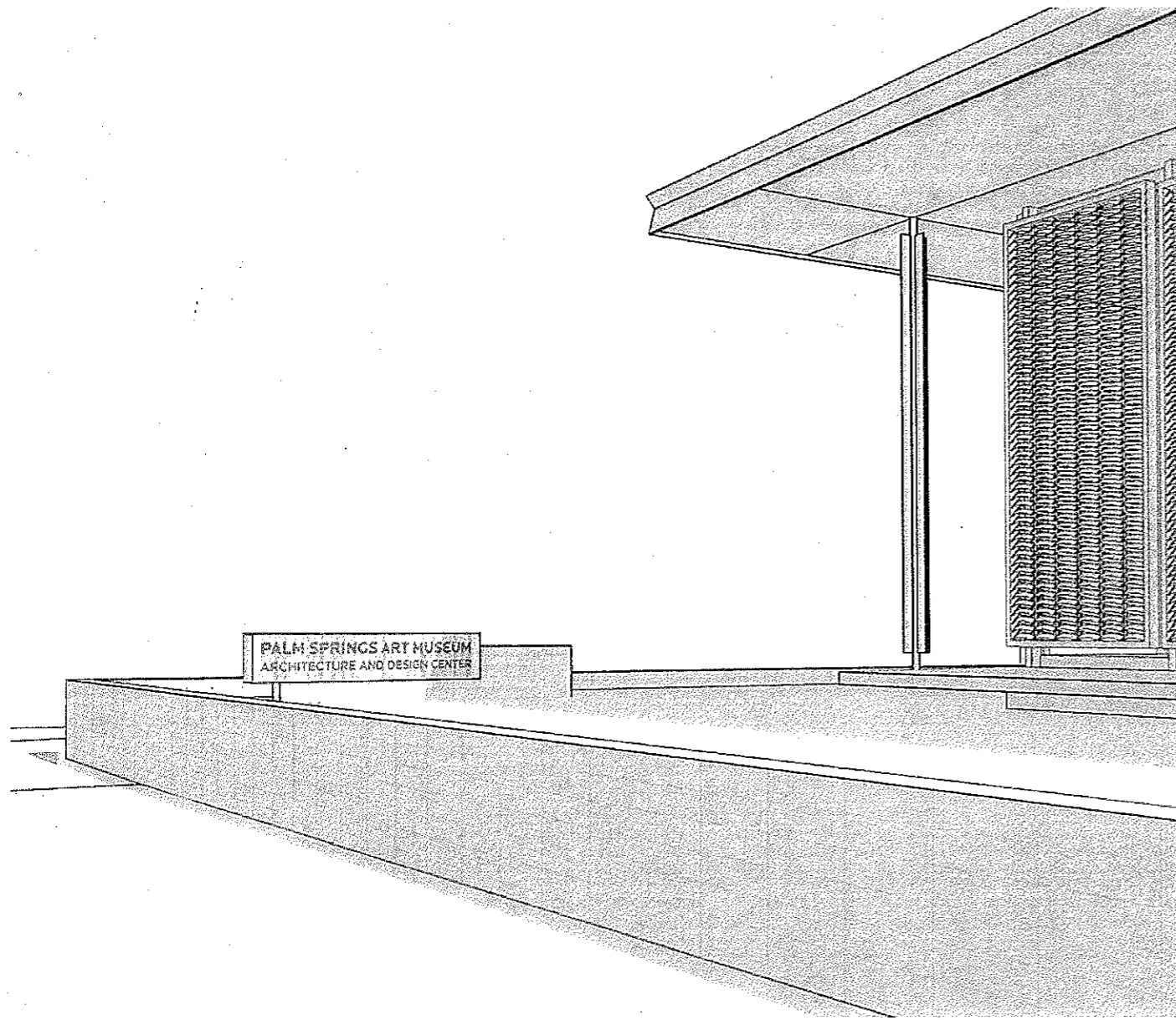
PSAM - Edwards Harris Pavilion  
MAY 23, 2014

MONUMENT SIGN PROPOSAL- SITE PLANS

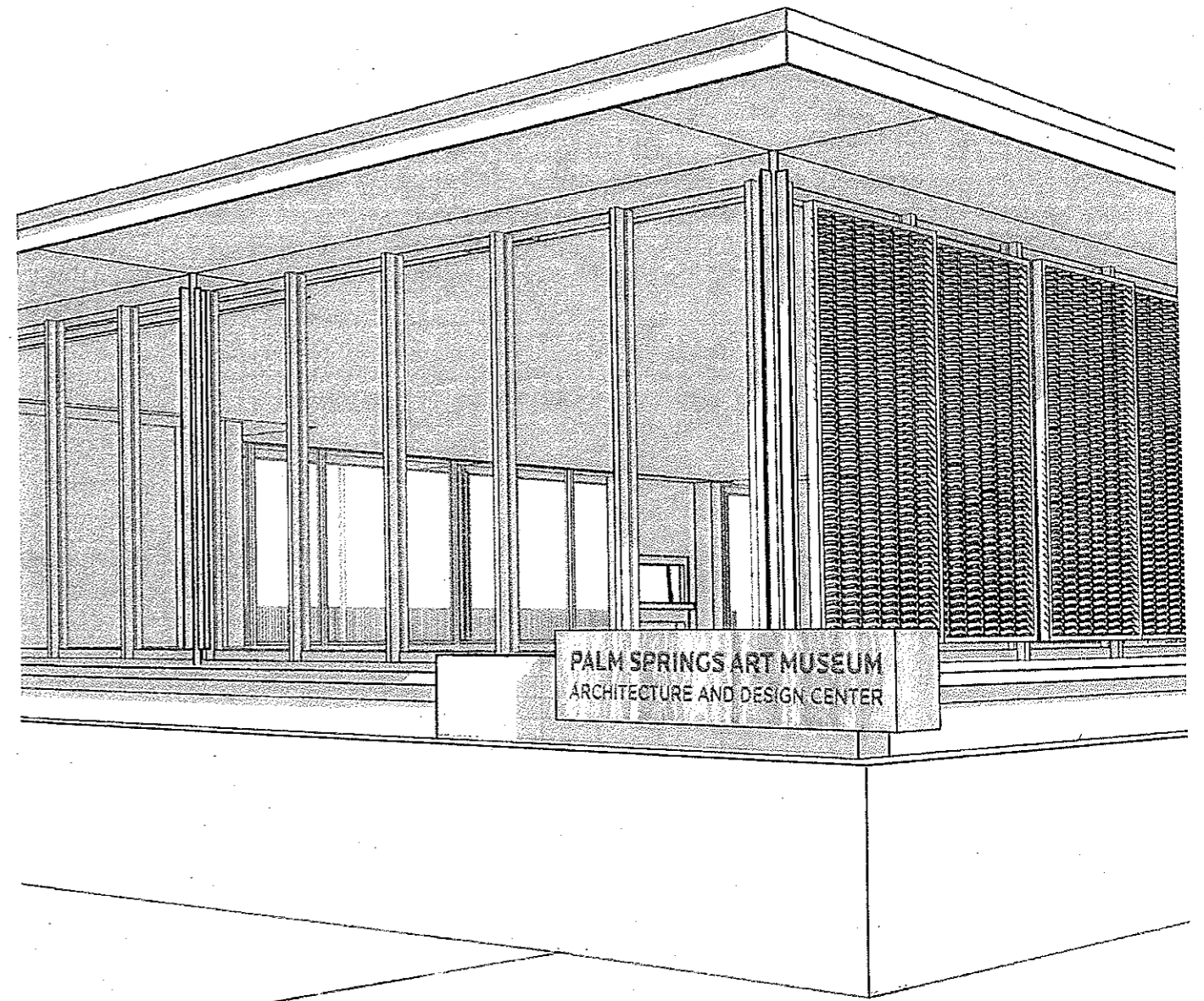
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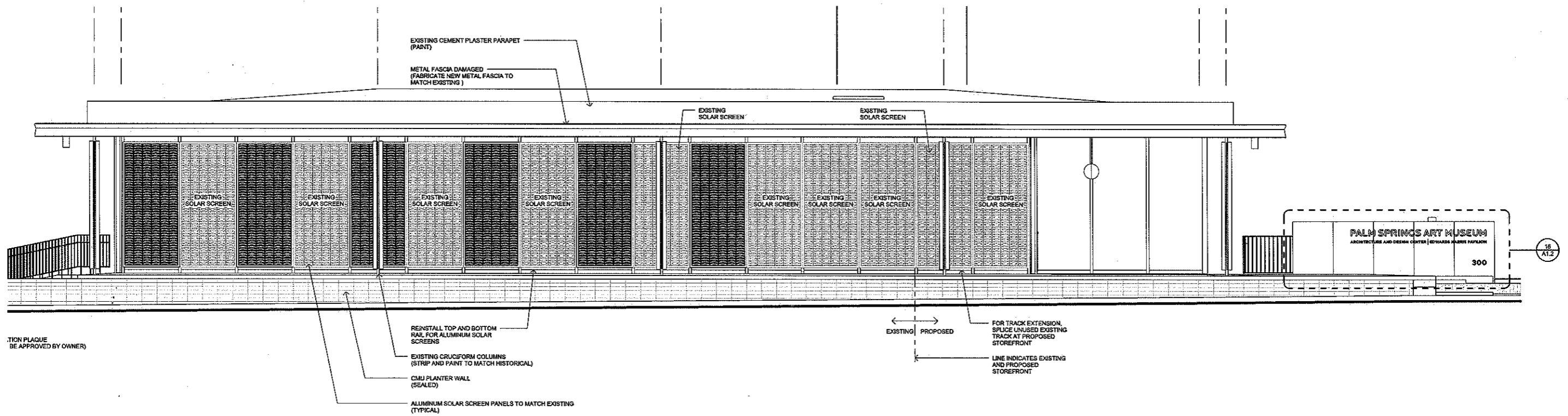


VIEW LOOKING NORTH



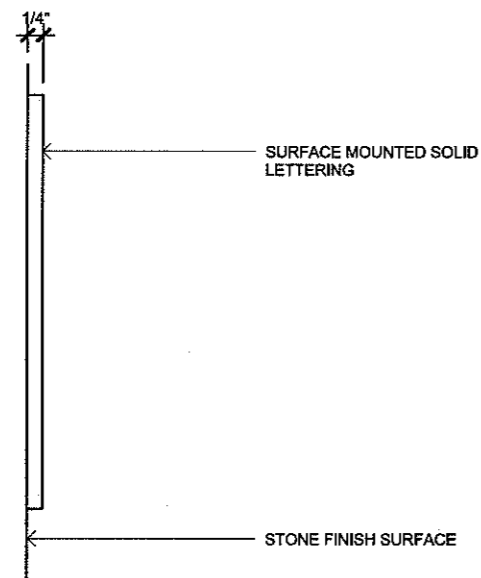
VIEW LOOKING SOUTHEAST





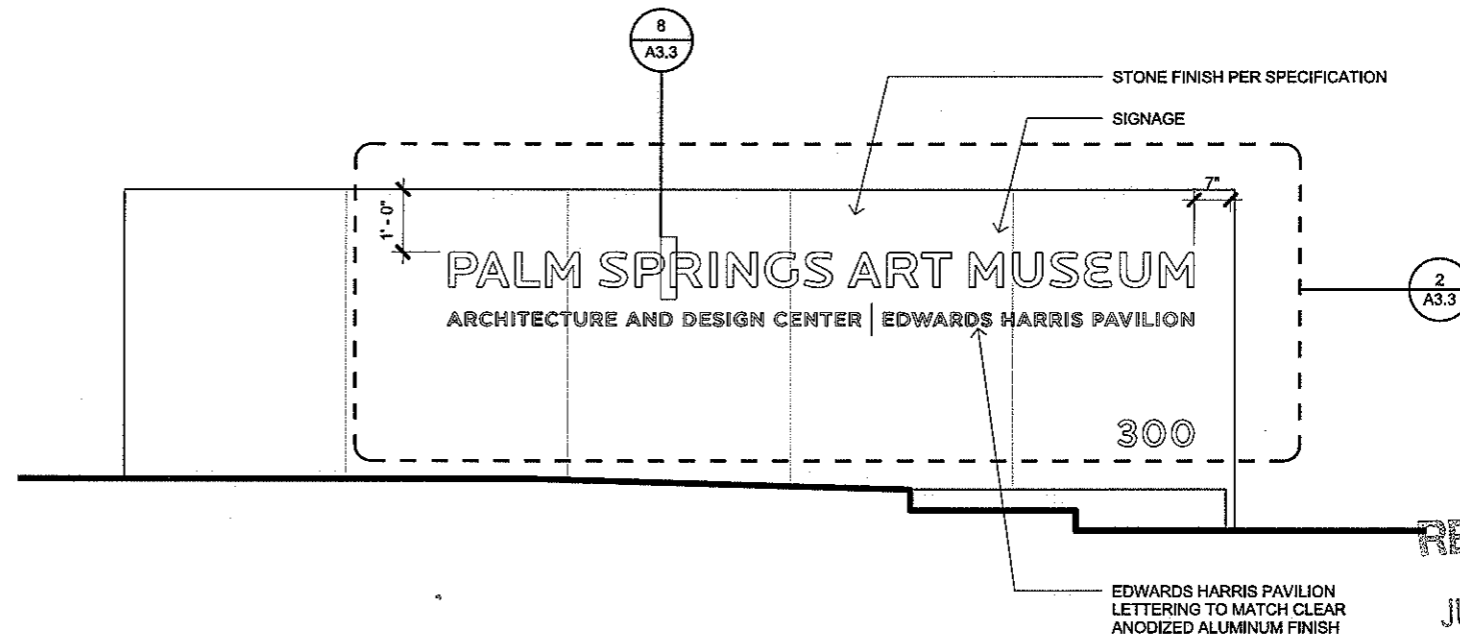
EXTERIOR ELEVATION - WEST - MAIN ENTRY SIGNAGE

1/8" = 1'-0"



MOUNTING DETAIL - MAIN ENTRY SIGNAGE

3" = 1'-0"



ENLARGED ELEVATION - MAIN ENTRY SIGNAGE

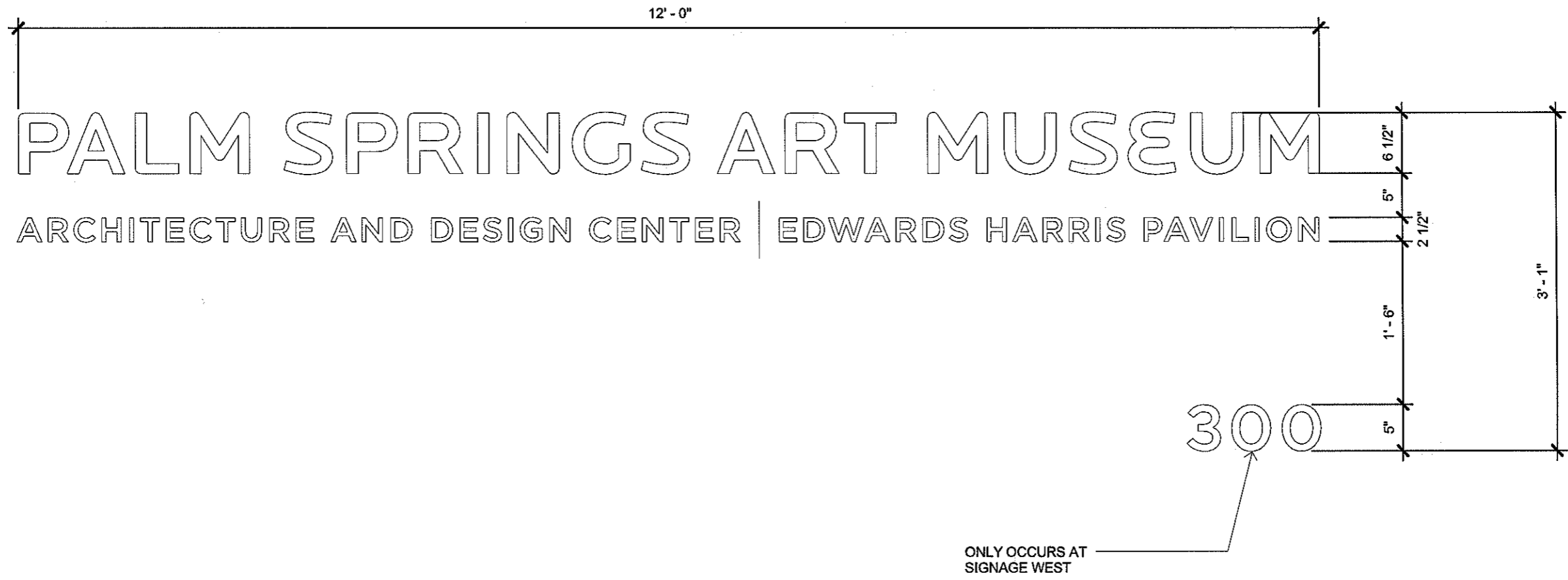
1/4" = 1'-0"

E. 14-049

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JUL 21 2014

PLANNING SERVICES  
DEPARTMENT

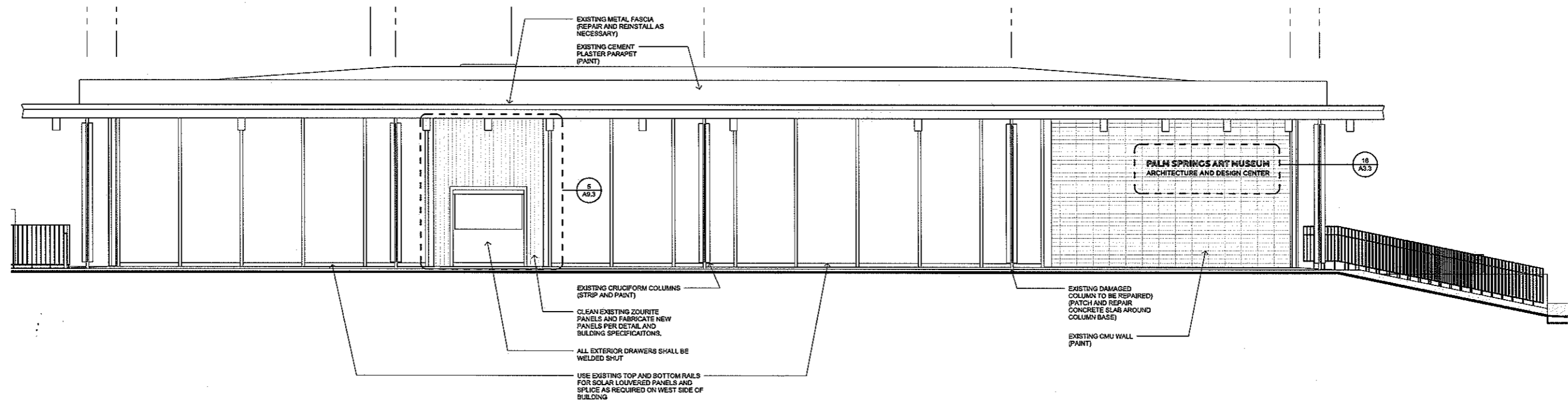


1" = 1'-0"

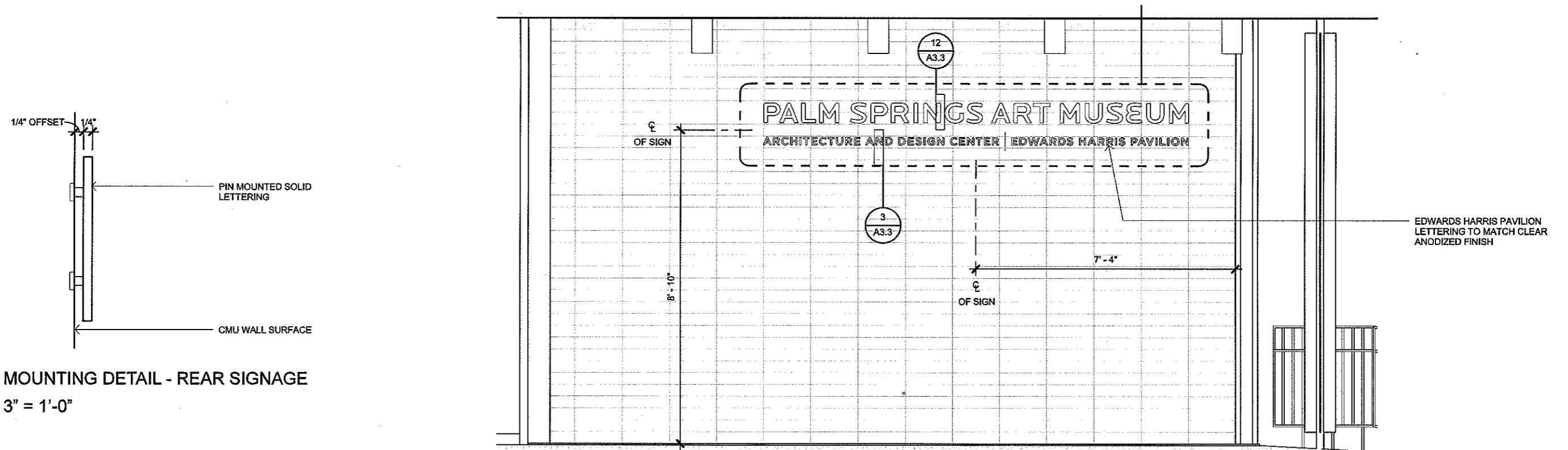








EXTERIOR ELEVATION EAST - REAR SIGNAGE  
 1/8" = 1'-0"



ENLARGED ELEVATION - REAR SIGNAGE  
 1/4" = 1'-0"

