

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE DESIGN COMMISSION
OF THE CITY OF LA CANADA FLINTRIDGE
HELD ON MAY 5, 2016**

- I. **CALL TO ORDER:** Chairman Moldafsky called the meeting to order at 7:33 a.m.
- II. **ROLL:** Also present were Vice Chairman Hoopes and Commissioners King and Roberts. Commissioner Balcazar was absent.
- III. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** The Flag Salute was recited.
- IV. **COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC:** There was none.
- V. **CONSENT CALENDAR:** 3-3-2016 Design Commission minutes. Approved 4-0.
- VI. **CONTINUED PUBLIC HEARINGS:** There were none.
- VII. **PUBLIC HEARINGS:**

A. Design Review 16-05; Unocal 76; 1001 Foothill Blvd.; canopy and monument sign revisions; trade dress changes for dispensers.

Consultant, Roger Cantrell gave a brief staff report and spoke of a proposed new monument sign, pump, and shade canopy design. He shared an example of similar designs at a Unocal 76 station in the City of Chatsworth. Mr. Cantrell explained that the new design would incorporate a wave graphic that would be visible from Angeles Crest Highway. He indicated that staff is concerned that the proposed design results in the crowding of fascia and elimination of the cornice. Mr. Cantrell informed the Commissioners that a monument sign is also proposed to be relocated. He said that staff recommends that the proposed design be narrowed down and flattened out and that the graphic be pulled in from the top and the bottom. He believed that adding neon strips to the building would be beneficial and would add to the continuity. This could also help to direct patrons to the building. He recommended that metal materials be used as opposed to plastic and that it be halo-lit as what is proposed is not in keeping with the City's Sign Ordinance.

Mr. Cantrell went on to indicate that staff favors the proposed Option A as it is more aesthetically pleasing. He asked if the Commission had any concerns with the proposed lighting. He said that staff recommends conditional approval of the project and that he believes that positive findings can be made.

Commissioner Roberts asked if a color board had been provided to which Mr. Cantrell replied, "No." He indicated that the proposed color was more orange in color than red.

The public hearing was opened.

The applicant's representative, Sorin Enache, with Promotion Plus Sign Company, spoke. He said that the applicant prefers Option B. He explained that the strips are LED, rather than neon.

Commissioner King commented on the City's Alternate Design #2 and on the placement of the band on the sign as well as the size. She asked the applicant to clarify the LED light color and the color on the canopy. The applicant's representative replied that the LED is usually white in color, that the sign, itself, is orange, and that the canopy is grey. He explained that the new corporate colors are orange and silver.

The Commission went on to discuss the colors further and about meeting the size requirements of the code. Planner Gjolme said that he would work with the applicant to ensure that the signs meet code. He clarified that the price sign's specifications are State-regulated.

Commissioner Roberts questioned whether there were illumination elements incorporated into the gasoline pumps to which the applicant's representative stated that there would be illumination at the pumps and they would be down-lit. Planner Gjolme explained that such signage has typically been considered as non-incident. Commissioner Roberts expressed that he believes this type of lighting should be addressed in the Ordinance.

Commissioner King asked if the monument sign would be refaced to which the applicant replied that, "yes, it would be."

The Public Hearing was closed.

The Commission said that they were happy that orange was proposed to be used rather than red. The service station is located at a very sensitive and prominent corner that is a gateway to the City. However, concern was expressed about silver being used and that it would not work well with orange. The Commissioners also felt that the wave design should be thinned out to be more pleasing to the eye. Concerns were also expressed over the halo lighting being bright enough. The Commission agreed that the decisions that are made on these elements would be setting precedence for future service station requests. The Commission did agree that going forward, that any proposals for digital signage would first need to be reconsidered by the City Council who would then provide policy direction to City staff and the Planning Commission.

M/S/C – Roberts/King to approve relocating signs on the canopy, approve with orange color as well as new coloration of the pumps, illuminate valance with perforated light, (If excessive lighting occurs, then the applicant would need to coordinate with staff on how to address the issue), continue review of monument (non-reader board signs) to see the color and material board in order to determine how the cabinet is proposed to be refaced. Approved 4-0.

B. Design Review 16-07; The Baked Bear; 965 Foothill Blvd. #A2; new wall and blade signs.

Planner Gjolme gave a staff report. He explained that the request is for internally illuminated signs with the “Baked Bear” copy being the prominent feature. The sign request includes channel letters. Staff is concerned about a proposed light bar providing too much illumination which could result in oversaturation and distortion of the sign. Staff has given some thought to using a black field so that it will tie in with the bear’s sunglasses. It is suggested that white letters be used which would tie in with the light-colored bear. Baked Bear’s corporate office is amenable to the suggested change. The overall proposed signage request is aesthetically pleasing, rich and sophisticated. The logo height and copy complies with code and meets the sign program for the entire center. With regards to the blade sign, it would not be illuminated. It is proposed to be placed on the west elevation above the new dining patio. Staff believes that the overall design is good, that positive findings can be made, and that approval could be granted.

Vice Chairman Hoopes asked if there are other colors for the light bar. Planning Gjolme said that his preference is that it matches the sunglasses.

The applicant, Dave Mahn, agreed with staff. He said that the black works well and ties in with the bear’s sunglasses. The letters would then be reversed in an opaque background.

Commissioner Roberts asked if it is recommended that the lozenge-like graphic be illuminated as he was concerned with readability.

Vice Chairman Hoopes asked if the font for the wording, “custom ice cream sandwiches” could be thicker and spaced out more.

Commissioner King asked if lighter letters on the “Baked Bear” wording could be considered and that enough black letters pinned off of the wall could be possible instead of the lozenge.

The applicant indicated that he prefers staff’s recommendations for the wording and that he believes it would help to make the signs more legible. He said that he could round off the corners and that he likes the blue color suggested for the perimeter of the blade sign.

Vice Chairman Hoopes said that he likes the blade sign design.

M/S/C – Hoopes/Roberts to approve the sign at the discretion of the designer to lengthen the lozenge in white, extending it to the “r” in “bear” and increase the stroke size of the letters at the sign maker’s discretion, in addition to the requirement that the dimensions of the sign indicated on Sheet 1 be held for the size of the sign above the door of the south-facing elevation; that the blade sign, with staff’s recommendation contain an irregular line surrounding the bear and be

selected at the sign makers discretion around the corners of the sign. Approved 4-0.

VIII. OTHER BUSINESS:

A. Discussion: 2016-2017 Budget requests.

Director Stanley explained the budget process and asked the Commission if there were any conferences they might like to attend like the International Conference of Shopping Centers (ICSC). Mr. Stanley informed the Commission that he attended an APA conference recently and spoke with sign companies that were present about industry standards. Vice Chairman Hoopes indicated that training on landscaping could be helpful. Commissioner King asked about funding for improving streets to which Director Stanley replied that the City Council gives direction on capital improvement projects of that type. The Commission also asked about funding for possible improvements to Foothill Boulevard and that staff could possibly identify locations on the street that could use funding for commercial improvements.

IX. COMMENTS FROM THE COMMISSIONERS:

Vice Chairman Hoopes raised a concern about furniture being dropped off on sidewalks south of the 210 Freeway bridge along Florencita, the western edge of the City as well as off of La Granada.

Commissioner King indicated that the new U-Code business sign is not yet in place and that the only issue remaining is that the Angel's Nest business sign is still existing.

Commissioner Roberts asked staff about what is listed in the code with regards to gloss or matte finishes and if there is not something currently reflected in the code, that a standard condition be added to require clarification.

Chairman Moldafsky raised the suggestion that more outdoor spaces be permitted in front of storefronts along Foothill Boulevard and mentioned that he believes that Los Angeles County has funding available for such events like "Cyclevia." He said that he thought the City should explore whether or not adding walk or bike routes along the boulevard would be beneficial.

Commissioner Roberts indicated that the City's Master Plan discusses reducing portions of Foothill Boulevard to a single lane. He said that doing so does help to bring the community together. He suggested that the concept be raised by staff to the City Council.

X. COMMENTS FROM STAFF:

There was none.

XI. ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting was adjourned at 9:07 a.m.