

**DESIGN COMMISSION MINUTES
MAY 7, 2015 MEETING**

- I. **CALL TO ORDER:** Vice-chair Hoopes called the meeting to order at 7:33 a.m.
- II. **ROLL:** Also present were Commissioners Balcazar, King and Roberts. Chairman Moldafsky was absent.
- III. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** The Flag Salute was recited.
- IV. **COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC:** None
- V. **CONSENT CALENDAR:** April 16, 2015 meeting minutes. M/S/C Roberts/King to approve: 4-0
- VI. **CONTINUED PUBLIC HEARINGS:**
 - A. Design Review 14-18
La Canada Imports
1537 Foothill Boulevard:
New wall sign

Planner Gjolme mentions that the sign had gone through three prior reviews. He displays the current sign, installed without City approval. Mr. Gjolme reviews design alternates to deal with length and monotony issues, noting also that internal lighting is prohibited in the Old Town District. He mentions the subcommittee of Commissioners Balcazar and King.

Mr. Gjolme reviews the current submittal and staff alternate, with the difference being the submittal's left positioning of the business name followed the subcopy, and the staff alternate centering the business name and breaking up the subcopy. He mentions that the "La Canada Imports" copy would be ivory, with the subcopy white.

Planner Gjolme concludes by noting that positive findings could be made for either design, though staff is concerned that the submittal is off-balance and its subcopy has the look of a sentence.

Vice-Chair Hoopes opens the public hearing.

Arbi Manoukian - designer/applicant - distributed samples and recalls numerous discussions with the client. He states preference for the submitted design.

Vice-Chair Hoopes closes the public hearing.

Commissioner Balcazar expresses concern that the colors are too similar to each other. She states preference for the staff alternate, citing balance concerns.

Commissioner King shares concern about color differentiation and extent of copy, stating that she still prefers a pictograph.

Commissioner Roberts agrees with the other Commissioner comments, and states that the staff alternate is the best compromise. He also cites the importance of precedent with regard to length of copy. He states preference for changing the ivory color.

Vice-Chair Hoopes states that he could make positive findings for either design. He comments that the color differentiation is adequate, and pleasingly subtle, citing the need to maintain contrast to the background. Commissioner Roberts comments on the limited range of Lucite colors, and yields to the staff alternate with regard to color.

M/S/C Roberts/Balcazar to approve staff alternate design, with the understanding that staff will review it in the field, and with the customary matte finish condition and refinishing of the beam following removal of existing letters: 4-0.

VII. PUBLIC HEARINGS:

- A.** Design Review 15-05
Round Table Pizza
502 Foothill Boulevard
New wall sign

Planner Gjolme describes the single wall sign as basically similar to previous sign. He displays two options, each with channel letters flanking the 3-shield logo, and an illuminated pizza light bar. The first version has a painted aluminum panel behind the components, while the second version has no background panel. Mr. Gjolme states staff's preference for the background panel, noting its shorter, irregular shape as compared with the existing sign as fun, interesting, and dynamic. He notes that the standard channel letters could be converted to reverse, and the "pizza" could be opaque with only the letters

illuminated. Mr. Gjolme notes that the plans show the sign centered over entry, but that the currently intended proposal shows the sign shifted to left, centered within the taller parapet area. Staff has received no revised plan of the late revision. He states that the colors and composition are worthy of positive findings.

Vice-Chair Hoopes asks how close the sign is to the code limits. Mr. Gjolme states that it is far below the limits. Mr. Hoopes states a preference for the location over the door, noting also that the sign could be enlarged if moved left in order to be in better proportion with the fascia.

Vice-Chair Hoopes opens the public hearing.

Arbi Manoukian - designer/applicant - states a corporate preference for shifting the sign to the left. Mr. Gjolme recommends approval of the sign as submitted, with the applicant having the option to request an amended approval following resubmittal. Mr. Hoopes notes that it would give the Commission the opportunity to see that revision. Mr. Gjolme notes that the area can increase, but that letter height is near the code maximum. He confirms with the applicant that an approval with the option of amendment is preferable to a continuance.

Mr. Hoopes compliments the sign contractor on the other signs in the center, and closes the public hearing.

Commissioner Roberts states support for the design with refinements as suggested by staff.

Commissioner Balcazar notes that relocation should be indicated in a drawing in order to be approvable.

Commissioner King agrees with Commission comments and staff suggestions, noting that the more prominent logo and "pizza" components are beneficial.

Vice-Chair Hoopes agrees with the other comments, endorsing the use of reverse channel letters and an opaque "pizza" field.

M/S/C King/Roberts to approve the sign to be located above the door, with the option of amended review of a relocated sign, and with reverse channel letters and an opaque "pizza" field: 4-0.

**B. Design Review 15-06
T-Mobile
506 Foothill Boulevard**

New wall sign

Consulting Architect/Planner Cantrell describes the design as being familiar after many years of widespread use, but still fresh and dynamic with its crisp font and dynamic use of the dots. He states that the channel-letter sign is well within code for area and letter heights. Mr. Cantrell recommends positive findings, noting that in the case of this crisp design, matte finish is not even necessary.

Commissioner King confirms that there would be no visible raceway or box.

Vice-Chair Hoopes opens the public hearing.

Alberto Sanchez, sign contractor, states that he is available for questions.

Vice-Chair Hoopes closes the public hearing.

Commissioner King states that the sign would fit in well with the rest of the signs in the center, and that she prefers a matte finish.

Commissioner Roberts states that the thin stroke allows for attractive use of channel letters, and that he can make the findings. He also notes that T-Mobile probably has alternative sign designs for other locations.

Vice-Chair Hoopes states a preference for channel letters in this particular setting, noting that he could also make the findings as submitted.

Commissioner King moves approval as submitted with a matte finish. There is no second.

Commissioner Balcazar states a preference for reverse channel letters.

Mr. Cantrell states that a reverse channel halo would impair the sign's crispness, and that face lighting is appropriate with careful limitation of a halo if it is required.

Commissioner Roberts agrees, stating that the sign needs to be face lit to a degree.

Mr. Cantrell asks to discuss the matter with the sign contractor.

Vice-Chair Hoopes reopens the public hearing.

Mr. Cantrell confirms with Mr. Salazar that a limited halo would be created by one-inch spacing from the wall surface, and that changing that gap would not involve significant effort. Mr. Salazar offers to bring an illuminating letter sample to the next meeting.

Vice-Chair Hoopes closes the public hearing and invites a motion to reflect a reverse channel condition with one letter to be viewed to confirm appropriate halo intensity.

M/S/C King/Balcazar to continue review to the May 21 meeting in order to view a letter pinned at a 1-inch gap for halo effect prior to installation: 4-0.

C. Design Review 15-08
Private Fitness by Lacy Weston
520 Foothill Boulevard

New wall sign

Consulting Architect/Planner Cantrell displays the submitted design, describing the business' trademark components as assertive and no-nonsense. He notes problems with the sign as too reminiscent of the can sign that the shopping center is moving away from. He states that the copy is crowded horizontally and vertically.

Mr. Cantrell displays a staff revision to the design that retains the trademark components within a reduced and reshaped sign field. The ends of the field are slanted to correspond to the italic letters. The actual signature, which appears on Mr. Weston's website, replaces the standard script as submitted, as a cut-metal sign upon an extension of the lower bar, which would provide concealed backlighting for it. The small copy and crowded field justify normal channel letters. Mr. Cantrell notes that the sign area is at maximum for the narrow tenant space, and that the business owner is amendable to the staff alternate.

Commissioner Roberts confirms that the sign would consist of channel letters upon a routed background panel.

Vice-Chair Hoopes opens the public hearing.

Business owner Lacy Weston states his appreciation for the new look provided by the staff alternative, which he prefers to the submitted design.

Vice-Chair Hoopes expresses appreciation for Mr. Weston's view, stating that the staff alternate is "dynamite".

Commissioner Balcazar states that the double line atop "Private Fitness" constrains the sign, and that underlining the whole sign is excessive. She cites an uneven appearance.

Rene Alvarez, sign contractor, notes that the stripes are vinyl, and would not be illuminated. He states that the channel letter returns could be reduced from 4 inches to 3 inches.

Vice-Chair Hoopes closes the public hearing.

Commissioner Roberts states his desire to make the sign look different from Golden Donuts and Palace Cleaners, avoiding three similarly fabricated signs.

Mr. Hoopes comments that pulling out the sign's signature gives it a uniqueness never seen before.

Commissioner King states her approval of the changes.

Commissioner Balcazar states that she would like to see the slant of the sign increased.

Vice-Chair Hoopes states that the staff alternate is a great sign. He notes that the line work would be recessive, and that the channel letters would project more than enough. He reiterates his admiration for the signature on the side as unique.

Commissioner Roberts confirms that the return color would match the sign background, and recommends 3-inch returns.

M/S/C Roberts/Hoopes to approve the sign as modified by staff, with channel letter returns reduced to 3 inches: 3-1 (no - Balcazar).

VIII. OTHER BUSINESS:

A. STUDY SESSION

Streetscape Options Manual & Street Plantings Appendix

Discussion and revisions prior to document finalization

M/S/C Roberts/King to continue the item: 4-0

IX. COMMENTS FROM THE COMMISSIONERS:

Commissioner King inquires about the status of the “temporary” sign at Partner’s Trust. Planner Gjolme replies that staff will investigate.

Commissioner Roberts comments that he appreciates staff’s revisions to sign designs. He cites changes in sign technology in suggesting a presentation or study session with a sign designer. Consulting Architect/Planner recommends Gary Swanson of Dimensional Graphics as a designer and fabricator with long experience in La Canada Flintridge and a good sense of both design and technology.

X. COMMENTS FROM STAFF:

Director Stanley states that budget items will be reviewed at the next meeting. He also informs the Commission about the City’s water committee, formed in response to drought concerns.

Commissioner Roberts informed the Commission of a drought tolerant planting class to be held on June 2 in Arcadia.

XI. ADJOURNMENT:

M/S/C Roberts/King to adjourn meeting at 9:09 a.m.: 4-0