

**ACTION MINUTES OF THE DESIGN COMMISSION
OF THE CITY OF LA CANADA FLINTRIDGE
HELD ON OCTOBER 2, 2014**

- I. **CALL TO ORDER:** Vice-chair Hoopes called the meeting to order at 7:30 a.m.
- II. **ROLL:** Present were Commissioners Balcazar, King, Roberts, Senior Planner Buss and Planner Gjolme. Chairman Moldafsky was absent.
- III. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** The Flag Salute was recited.
- IV. **COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC:** There were no comments.
- V. **CONSENT CALENDAR:** Minutes – 9/18/2014 Design Commission meeting. M/S/C King/Balcazar to approve the minutes as submitted. 4-0.
- VI. **CONTINUED PUBLIC HEARINGS:** None.
- VII. **PUBLIC HEARINGS:**

A. Design Review 14-12; Verizon Wireless; 4515 Ocean View Blvd.; installation of roof mounted antennae and associated equipment.

Senior Planner Buss gave an overview of the request and the unique siting of the building, noting prior Planning Commission approval of the antennae location in June. The Design Commission was tasked with evaluating the appearance of the antennae with and without screened enclosures that were originally proposed but ultimately not required by the Planning Commission. The antennae would be painted a sky gray to blend with the sky that serves as a backdrop for the building as seen from numerous vantage points. At this time, staff requested the Design Commission's input on the best way to integrate the antennae with the building and buffer them from offsite view. A resolution was prepared in the event conditional approval could be granted.

Commissioner Roberts confirmed this was the first request on this building. He noted that this type of equipment was generally clustered and could proliferate in the future. He felt a plan to address future requests was important at this stage.

Senior Planner Buss responded that future co-locating on this building would depend on whether the building was suited to other carriers.

Commissioner Roberts asked if staff was aware of how other cities are dealing with the situation and if any had developed effective screening techniques.

Senior Planner Buss responded that there are many techniques, though none seem to have garnered widespread agreement as to being the best and most effective.

Commissioner Balcazar asked if other types of screening had been considered other than the enclosures currently shown.

Senior Planner Buss noted that the enclosures as shown were ultimately submitted by the applicant but not required by the Planning Commission.

Vice-chair Hoopes noted a large oak on the property immediately to the north that would buffer views from homes to the north. Much longer range views would be possible, but by this point it was not much of an issue given the distance involved.

Commissioner Roberts commented that the main views of the equipment would be north along Ocean View and west along Foothill Blvd.

Commissioner King agreed and was concerned that these were very prominent view corridors.

Bill Desmond - applicant with Delta Groups Engineering representing Verizon Wireless - responded to questions about alternative screening methods. This type of 'brick box building' limits types of stealthing to a degree. Pine needle 'socks' that would blend with trees in the background were considered. The background changes, however, depending on vantage points. Brick veneer for the screens never match the brick of the building. Rather, screens were designed to match the dark tile band and smoked glass of the building. More decorative elements just wouldn't work on this building. They proposed the screens but the Planning Commission opted to approve the project without the screens, given the mass and exposure of the screens.

Commissioner King asked if Mr. Desmond had considered screening the southwest corner of the entire building.

Mr. Desmond responded that the Planning Commission had considered this to be the worst solution given the mass of the screen that would be required.

Commissioner King acknowledged the concern but felt that something attractive and highly articulated might work.

Mr. Desmond responded that the type and size of screen is usually metal, but it cannot be placed in front of the antennae. Perforated fiberglass was originally proposed, but the antennae are visible through it and the overall effect is very awkward.

Vice-chair Hoopes asked about the ratio of increased height in relation to moving the antennae back from the parapet.

Mr. Desmond responded 1:5 - 1' in height for every 5' set back. Numerous engineers feel 2:5 is the more accurate estimation, however. He further noted that moving the equipment further to the center blocks coverage considering the slope to the south. The project is not viable from the center of the building.

Vice-chair Hoopes stated that this is the most visible location possible as currently approved. Taller equipment further back from the parapet would be less prominent and less visible.

Senior Planner Buss commented that the equipment location has been approved through a prior entitlement and was not subject to review at this point.

Vice-chair Hoopes acknowledged this but felt the Design Commission had been left with a difficult choice since relocation was not an option.

Commissioner Balcazar summarized the Commission's choice of the screened enclosure or solo antennae. She did not really like either option, but would choose the solo antennae since they were less obtrusive than the enclosures.

Commissioner King stated that a full screen along the parapet could be fashioned to look like another row of windows.

Commissioner Roberts was sensitive to the industry need, but felt a mockup on the roof was critical to understand and visualize the project.

Commissioner Balcazar agreed.

Vice-chair Hoopes did not think that the individual antennae would be that obvious. Adding more bulk via screens was not the right course to pursue. While future proliferation may occur, the current proposal is pretty minimal and a full screening strategy is not really needed at this time. He felt that painting the antennae the proper color would suffice.

Commissioner King did not agree. She noted that this was a highly visible building and noted the Allen Lund building and what could happen in the

future. A comprehensive strategy would definitely be needed at some point if more antennae are proposed and the Commission currently has the opportunity to fashion it to a degree.

Commissioner Balcazar mentioned the idea of landscaping atop the building to create the appearance of a rooftop garden.

Commissioner Roberts still felt a mockup was necessary.

Commissioner King confirmed that pine sleeves could be used on the poles, but wasn't sure how to dress the round dish.

Mr. Desmond stated that faux ivy wraps are sometime used to cover equipment. Pine needle socks are the best option, however. The best color to paint the equipment is generally battleship gray since it blends well with the background skyline.

Commissioner King noted that the socks would look identical on the antennae and this could be too obvious and problematic.

Mr. Desmond stated that one alternative is a rectangular ring that faux ivy drapes from.

Commissioner King was concerned that faux ivy could look too boxy and asked if there was a way to vary the height and shape of it.

Commissioner Roberts noted that the faux ivy could be offset to soften and vary the appearance.

Vice-chair Hoopes mentioned that a faux tree, bush or other element could be introduced for further variation.

Commissioner Roberts stated that adding too many elements to the roof may not solve the problem, but could indirectly intensify it.

Vice-chair Hoopes summarized that a mockup for the antennae and faux hedge/ivy, etc. with materials submitted to the Commission for review would likely be needed prior to any formal action.

Commissioner King requested that the mockup include at least one pine sock as well.

M/S/C King/Roberts to continue the item in order to provide a partial rooftop mockup of the antenna and associated faux screening, material samples and revised photo simulations. Unanimous 4-0.

B. Design Review 14-15, Design Review 14-16, Design Review 14-17; Palace Cleaners, Golden Donut Palace, La Canada Pool & Spa; 510½, 504, 514 Foothill Blvd.; new wall signs at remodeled Foothill/Gould center.

Planner Gjolme outlined the request for 3 new illuminated wall signs at the newly remodeled Foothill/Gould center. The signs were favorably regarded by staff given their rich variety in shape, composition and color. Approval was recommended.

Commissioner Roberts requested that the signs be reviewed individually.

Planner Gjolme agreed and noted that the staff report combined the three items since they were submitted simultaneously and involved the same building.

Vice-chair Hoopes suggested reviewing the 'Palace Cleaners' sign first.

Arbi Manukian - designer and applicant - was available for any questions. He explained the issue with the curved parapet and wall depth and need for the sign's raceway.

Commissioner Balcazar asked about the blue color proposed for the background panel.

Vice-chair Hoopes confirmed the composition, layering and depth of the sign's individual components.

Planner Gjolme explained the enlarged raceway detail included with the plans, but confirmed that the sign's total depth would be 8"-9", which was not problematic in his estimation.

Commissioner Balcazar confirmed that black returns were proposed.

Vice-chair Hoopes applauded the sign and thought it was very inventive. The only issue was confirming the blue color proposed since the printed sample and actual material sample were very different.

Vice-chair Hoopes and Roberts felt the blue panel color should match the blue/gray shown on the plans submitted.

Planner Gjolme noted a concern with the power source for the sign and felt a condition requiring it to be located behind the main sign panel was appropriate.

M/S/C Balcazar/Hoopes to approve the sign as submitted subject to: the sign's background panel color shall be blue/gray matching the printed plans submitted as part of DR 14-15 and approved on October 2, 2014; the white channel letters used for the "Cleaners" copy shall utilize black returns and borders; the power source and all associated equipment shall be housed entirely behind the main sign panel. Approved 4-0.

Golden Donut Place

Vice-chair Hoopes confirmed that the sign's basic construction and composition was identical to the 'Palace Cleaners' sign.

Commissioner Roberts liked the sign but thought it could be made a bit more 'fun'. He encouraged the use of reverse channel letters.

Vice-chair Hoopes felt the donut "O" needed stronger contrast.

Commissioner Roberts felt the "Golden" copy should have depth and dimension as opposed to being comprised by a simple light bar. He felt a separate pinned panel would add depth and nuance.

Mr. Manukian agreed and felt Mr. Roberts suggestions could be easily incorporated into the sign.

Commissioner Roberts stated that the donut "O" should be textured to the extent possible and have forward projection to emphasize it as an actual donut rather than just a letter.

Vice-chair Hoopes stated that letter returns should be white.

Commissioner King agreed and thought the returns for the donut "O" should be an alternate 'fun' color.

M/S/C Roberts/Balcazar to approve the sign as submitted subject to: white reverse channel letters and returns shall be used for the "Donut" copy, exclusive of the "O" which shall be fabricated to resemble a donut through creation of an irregular circumference and returns. The depth of the "O" shall be approximately 1/2" greater than the remaining donut copy; the letter "O" in the 'Donut' copy shall employ an alternate fanciful color in order to achieve better contrast with the background field color. Said color shall be used for the face

and returns of the "O" and shall be subject to confirmation by staff prior to issuance of permits and sign installation; the gold accent ribbon shall match the color shown on the plans submitted as part of DR 14-16 and approved on October 2, 2014. Said ribbon shall be composed of a separate painted aluminum panel pinned off the main sign panel; primary field color shall be light brown in accord with the sample submitted as part of DR 14-16 and approved on October 2, 2014; the power source and all associated equipment shall be housed entirely behind the main sign panel. Unanimous 4-0.

La Canada Pool & Patio

Commissioner Roberts confirmed that the main field color would match the fascia color of the building to the extent possible.

Commissioner King asked to review color samples for the tree and pool logo.

Mr. Manukian agreed that the horizontal scoring line was too heavy and agreed to reduce the thickness per staff's suggestion.

Vice-chair Hoopes questioned if the tree would be readily identifiable as such as night.

Planner Gjolme suggested some additional texture to improve its appearance and allow for better lighting at night.

M/S/C King/Roberts to approve the sign as submitted subject to: the sign's field color shall match the fascia color of the subject building/tenant space; additional texture, detail shall be added to the tree logo to improve its illuminated impression at night; the thickness of the horizontal green band separating the upper and lower copy shall be reduced by approximately 50%. Unanimous 4-0.

Vice-chair Hoopes stated that these were great sign submittals and thanked the applicant for his efforts.

VIII. OTHER BUSINESS: There was no other business.

IX. COMMENTS FROM THE COMMISSIONERS: There were no comments.

X. COMMENTS FROM STAFF:

Planner Gjolme reminded the Commission that Zone Change 13-01, regarding Electronic Message Centers, would be formally reviewed by the City Council at

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next Monday's meeting and urged the Commissioners to attend the meeting to voice their opinions.

- XI. ADJOURNMENT:** M/S/C Roberts/King to adjourn the meeting at 9:29 a.m.
4-0.