



CITY OF LONG BEACH

DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

333 West Ocean Blvd., 5th Floor

Long Beach, CA 90802

(562) 570-6194

FAX (562) 570-6068

September 17, 2009

CHAIR AND PLANNING COMMISSIONERS

City of Long Beach
California

RECOMMENDATION:

Deny a Conditional Use Permit to allow a 1,089-square-foot double-faced illuminated freeway sign with electronic message center with a height of 60 feet from freeway grade at 3377-3399 Long Beach Boulevard. (District 7)

APPLICANT:

Cabe Toyota
c/o Sign Methods, Inc.
1749 E. 28th Street
Signal Hill, CA 90755
(Application No. 0901-06)

DISCUSSION

This item was continued from the July 16, 2009 Planning Commission meeting to allow the applicant to explore different options for the proposed sign. In addition, the project was presented to the Planning Commission on March 5, 2009 and April 16, 2009 as a study session item.

The project site is located on a 34,182-square-foot lot at 3377-3399 Long Beach Boulevard (Exhibit A – Location map). The site is in the CCA zone and contains two commercial buildings.

Cabe Toyota is proposing to operate a leasing office at the subject site and is requesting approval of a 1,089-square-foot double-faced illuminated freeway sign with electronic message center with an overall height of 80 feet (60 feet from freeway grade). The proposed sign contains three separate display areas that include two cabinet signs and one electronic full color message center (Exhibit B – Plans and photos). It would be located along the southern property line just east of the existing building and adjacent to the 405 freeway. No alternative designs have been presented to staff for review.

CHAIR AND PLANNING COMMISSIONERS

Application No. 0901-06

September 17, 2009

Page 2 of 3

The proposed sign is consistent in both height and size with the two other existing auto-related electronic message boards in the city (Cal Worthington and Circle Auto Group/Coast Cadillac). In addition, the sign would be subject to the following standard requirements:

- The sign messages shall be limited to text and static graphics.
- The display shall have no illumination that is in continuous motion or gives the appearance of being in continuous motion.
- The display message shall not change at a rate faster than one message per four seconds.
- The interval between messages shall not be less than one second.
- The intensity of illumination shall remain static. In the event that complaints arise with respect to the intensity of illumination, the City will have the authority to reduce the intensity, if appropriate, to avoid any negative effects of the sign.
- All messages shall be limited to on-site advertising of goods and services for the automobile dealership, except for the public advertising agreed upon in the lease agreement with the City of Long Beach.
- All signs must comply with the electrical code of the City of Long Beach.
- The applicant shall obtain all necessary approvals from Caltrans to the satisfaction of the Director of Development Services.

The applicant presented the proposed sign at a community meeting on June 30, 2009. Approximately 50 people were in attendance. The overall sentiment at the meeting was that the community supported the business but could not support the sign proposal due to the negative impacts that the sign would have on the area.

Staff believes that although the proposed sign is consistent in size and height with the other auto-related freeway signs in Long Beach (Coast Cadillac and Cal Worthington), it is not in keeping with the character of the neighborhood in which it is proposed and will negatively impact the community due to its size and height and proximity to residential properties. The other auto-related freeway signs in Long Beach are located in more intensely commercial areas with no adjacent residential neighborhoods that could be impacted. For these reasons, staff recommends the Planning Commission deny the Conditional Use Permit (Exhibit C – Findings).

PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

Public hearing notices were distributed on September 2, 2009, as required by the Long Beach Municipal Code. Opposition letters that have been received since this application was filed are attached (Exhibit D – Correspondence).

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

In accordance with the Guidelines for Implementation of the California Environmental Quality Act, a Categorical Exemption (CE 09-003) was issued for the proposed project (Exhibit E – Categorical Exemption).

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C. Beck', with a stylized flourish at the end.

CRAIG BECK
DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

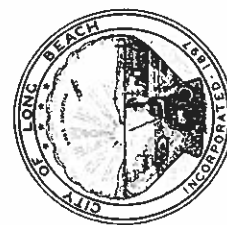
CB:DB:JW

Exhibits

- A. Exhibit A – Location map
- B. Exhibit B – Plans and photos
- C. Exhibit C – Findings
- D. Exhibit D – Correspondence
- E. Exhibit E – Categorical Exemption



Subject Property:
3377-3399 Long Beach Blvd
Application No. 0901-06
Council District 7
Zoning Code : CCA (HR-4)



CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT FINDINGS

3377-3399 Long Beach Boulevard

Application No. 0901-06

September 17, 2009

Pursuant to Section 21.25.206 of the Long Beach Municipal Code, a Conditional Use Permit can be granted only when positive findings are made consistent with the following criteria set forth in the Zoning Ordinance. These findings and staff analysis are presented for consideration, adoption and incorporation in to the record of proceedings:

A. THE APPROVAL IS CONSISTENT WITH AND CARRIES OUT THE GENERAL PLAN, ANY APPLICABLE SPECIFIC PLANS SUCH AS THE LOCAL COASTAL PROGRAM AND ALL ZONING REGULATIONS OF THE APPLICABLE DISTRICT;

The subject site is currently developed with a small neighborhood shopping center and is located within General Plan Land Use District #8 (Major Commercial Corridor). No specific plan applies to the site and the site is not located in the coastal zone. The site is located within the Central Redevelopment Project Area. Neither the site nor the proposed use is consistent with the CCA zone (Community Automobile-Oriented District) that permits retail and services uses for an entire community. The applicant is seeking a waiver of the minimum required site of 5 acres or a minimum building size of 150,000 square feet to allow an electronic message center sign. A Conditional Use Permit is consistent when it carries out the intent of the land use district in which it is located, and otherwise complies with the required findings of the Zoning Regulations. In this case, the proposal does not meet the specified requirements.

B. THE PROPOSED USE WILL NOT BE DETRIMENTAL TO THE SURROUNDING COMMUNITY INCLUDING PUBLIC HEALTH, SAFETY OR GENERAL WELFARE, ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY OR QUALITY OF LIFE; AND

The proposed freeway sign would negatively impact the quality of life for the surrounding residential neighborhoods based on its proposed size and location. The size and operation of the sign would further degrade the aesthetics of an area already in need of redevelopment. Although the sign is freeway oriented, it would be visible from the adjacent residential areas during both evening and daytime hours. The negative aesthetic impacts that the proposed 1,089-square-foot sign would have during daytime hours along with the potential negative light pollution impacts that the sign would have at night would be detrimental to the surrounding community.

C. THE APPROVAL IS IN COMPLIANCE WITH THE SPECIAL CONDITIONS FOR SPECIFIC CONDITIONAL USES, AS LISTED IN CHAPTER 21.52.

In addition to the above general findings, the following specific conditions pursuant to Zoning Code Section 21.52.201 apply to all electronic message center signs requiring a Conditional Use Permit:

- 1. The proposed design of the electronic message center sign is complete and consistent within itself and is compatible in design with the architectural theme or character of the existing or proposed development it will serve and the community in which it will be located.**

The proposed design of the electronic message center sign is not compatible in design with the architectural theme or character of the existing development nor will it will serve or the community in which it will be located. The sign is out of scale for the existing retail center in which it is proposed to be located and will effectively result in the sign being the architectural focal point for the center. Although the sign may increase business for the auto dealership, any positive community benefits that may be provided by the sign are severely diminished by the negative impacts of the sign.

- 2. The establishment of the proposed electronic message center sign will not adversely affect the character, livability or quality of life of the residential community it will be adjacent to or located in.**

The proposed 1,089-square-foot sign with an overall height of 80 feet will adversely affect the character, livability and quality of life of the adjacent residential communities. The height and size of the sign will negatively affect the overall character and aesthetics of the area that will negatively affect the livability and quality of life for the adjacent residential areas. The sign is designed for both day and night operations. During the day, the size of the sign that is out of scale with the area would be visible and, in turn, aesthetically detrimental to the surrounding residential properties. At night, the light pollution that the sign will produce will have a negative impact on those same residential properties.



CITY OF LONG BEACH NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENT SERVICES
333 W. OCEAN BLVD., 5TH FLOOR, LONG BEACH, CA 90802
(562) 570-6194 FAX: (562) 570-6068
lbds.longbeach.gov

TO: ☐ Office of Planning & Research
1400 Tenth Street, Room 121
Sacramento, CA 95814

FROM: Department of Development Services
333 W. Ocean Blvd, 5th Floor
Long Beach, CA 90802

☐ L.A. County Clerk
Environmental Fillings
12400 E. Imperial Hwy. 2nd Floor, Room 2001
Norwalk, CA 90650

Categorical Exemption CE- 09-003

Project Location/Address: 3377-4399 LONG BEACH BLVD.

Project/Activity Description: One double face illuminated pylon sign with color message center.

Public Agency Approving Project: **City of Long Beach, Los Angeles County, California**

Applicant Name: SIGN METHODS, INC./JOE CAVAZOS

Mailing Address: 1749 E. 28th STREET SIGNAL HILL, CA. 90755

Phone Number: (562) 989-5755

Applicant Signature: Joe Cavazos

BELOW THIS LINE FOR STAFF USE ONLY

Application Number: 0901-06 Planner's Initials: JW

Required Permits: CUP

THE ABOVE PROJECT HAS BEEN FOUND TO BE EXEMPT FROM CEQA IN ACCORDANCE WITH
STATE GUIDELINES SECTION 15303, Class 3, New Construction of
Small Structures

Statement of support for this finding: Appurtenant sign structure

Contact Person: Graig Chalcraft

Contact Phone: 562-570-6368

Signature: Graig Chalcraft

Date: 2/9/09