

**MINUTES
REGULAR PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
JANUARY 8, 2019
CORTE MADERA TOWN HALL
CORTE MADERA**

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Chair Peter Chase
Vice-Chair Phyllis Metcalfe
Commissioner Margaret Bandel
Commissioner Bob Bundy
Commissioner Charles Lee

STAFF PRESENT: Adam Wolff, Planning Director
Phil Boyle, Senior Planner
Judith Propp, Assistant Town Attorney

1. OPENING:

- A. Call to Order** – The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m.
- B. Pledge of Allegiance** – Commissioner Chase led in the Pledge of Allegiance.
- C. Roll Call** – All the commissioners were present

Chair Chase announced the meeting limitations, noting that the meeting would not go beyond 11 p.m.

2. PUBLIC COMMENT - None

3. CONSENT CALENDAR – None

4. CONTINUED HEARINGS – None

5. NEW HEARINGS

- A. 301 CORTE MADERA TOWN CENTER (FLORES) - PUBLIC HEARING FOR PERMIT AMENDMENT APPLICATION PL-2019-0003 TO AMEND A PREVIOUSLY-APPROVED PRECISE PLAN AND DESIGN REVIEW APPLICATIONS (PL-2018-0050 DRC AND PL-2018-0054 PP) AT 301 CORTE MADERA TOWN CENTER (FLORES RESTAURANT) (Planning Director Adam Wolff)**

Commissioner Lee recused himself because he lives within 500 feet of 301 Corte Madera Town Center, and Planning Director Wolff presented the staff report. Mr. Wolff discussed the proposed amendment to a previously adopted resolution that approved

exterior signage, design review and a Precise Plan Amendment request at the June 26, 2018 hearing. Mr. Wolff discussed the significant changes that have been made to the design, which he said mostly related to the exterior colors and the materials used for the entryway and the area above the window openings.

Mr. Wolff explained why staff felt it was appropriate to allow temporary occupancy of the interior space, but not the exterior patio. He said the Applicant is now proposing a permanent amendment to the original application, and that the commissioner's task is to review and determine whether the findings could still be made. Mr. Wolff said that staff believed the remodel created a visually pleasing presence in the community to enable the findings to be made.

Mr. Wolff discussed the exterior color and material changes, noting that the front door and patio doors appear to be a lighter brown than portrayed in the materials provided. Mr. Wolff noted that exterior speakers have been added that were not part of the original plans.

Commissioner Bundy stated that the trash storage area has been greatly improved with the addition of a creeping fig.

Adriano Paganini, Co-owner of Flores, discussed his concern that the original colors would appear to be too white, and said he believed the brown color and entryway design were more attractive. Mr. Paganini said he could not explain why the teak wood was changed to cedar, but that he favors the changes.

Chair Chase discussed the importance of bringing changes to approved plans to the Town's attention.

Vice-Chair Metcalfe and Mr. Paganini discussed the use of two different brown materials on the exterior.

Commissioner Bandel and Mr. Paganini discussed the use of the speakers. Mr. Paganini said the intention is to detract from the freeway noise and avoid the feeling of being seated beside a parking lot.

In response to Vice-Chair Metcalfe, Mr. Wolff stated that the noise ordinance addresses noise volumes, and he noted that the ambient noise is more significant than the noise from the speakers. He suggested a condition is added that the speakers are turned off when the lights are turned off.

Chair Chase discussed his concern that the cedar wood would degenerate with age, and he said the speakers appear like giant floodlights. He said they should be removed from the wall and suggested they are placed opposite the building. Chair Chase agreed with Mr. Wolff's suggestion that the speakers are turned off when the lights are turned off.

Commissioner Bandel stated she could support the findings, with the exception of the speakers, which she said should be removed from the wall.

Commissioner Bundy said he would not hold up the project because of the location of the speakers. He said the exterior colors are light and airy and work with the interior, and that he could support the findings.

Vice-Chair Metcalfe stated that the speakers are unattractive, and that they should be repositioned to a place opposite the building and turned off at the same time as the lights.

A discussion took place on volume. There was consensus amongst the commissioners that staff would contact the Town Center Management in 6 months to ascertain if there have been noise complaints.

Mr. Wolff noted that Town Center and its tenants make every effort to ensure that facades are maintained.

Vice-Chair Metcalfe discussed amending the resolution to reflect the materials presented and agreed upon.

MOTION: Motioned by Vice-Chair Metcalfe, seconded by Commissioner Bandel, to approve Permit Amendment No. PL 2019-003, to amend Planning Commission Resolution 18-010, adopted on June 26, 2018, allowing for exterior design modifications, including changes to colors at the restaurant entryway and building cornice at 301 Corte Madera Town Center for Flores restaurant with the following additional conditions:

1. That the speakers will be removed from the building and will preferably be positioned to face the building;
2. The speakers will be turned off when the lights are turned off;
3. Planning staff will review noise levels over a 6-month period;
4. This approval permits only those revisions noted in the exterior elevation plans, stamped "Official Exhibit", with a received stamp January 2, 2019, except for the front door and patio doors, which shall be modified as built and as shown in the photographic materials that were provided at the public hearing on January 8, 2019:

AYES: Metcalfe, Bundy, Chase, Bandel
NOES: None
RECUSED: Lee

B. 1400 REDWOOD HWY (MACY'S) - A PUBLIC HEARING FOR A DESIGN REVIEW, PRECISE PLAN AMENDMENT AND SIGN PERMIT APPLICATION (PL-2018-0093-DRC) REGARDING EXTERIOR PAINTING AND MODIFICATIONS TO THE FOUR EXISTING SIGNS OF THE MACY'S DEPARTMENT STORE AT 1400 REDWOOD HIGHWAY (Senior Planner Phil Boyle)

Commissioner Lee returned to the podium and Senior Planner Boyle presented the staff report. Mr. Boyle clarified two emails that have been provided to the commissioners and have been made available to the public.

Mr. Boyle discussed the Macy's building, which he noted is not managed by Macerich. He discussed the proposal to update, repair and paint the siding and replace the signs in the same locations. Mr. Boyle confirmed the signs conform to the Town's Municipal Code.

Mr. Boyle discussed the color changes to the elevations, which are proposed for the siding and the roof, and he explained why staff did not require the applicant to provide color samples on the building. Mr. Boyle noted that a color board has been included in the materials.

Mr. Boyle concluded his report by stating that staff could make the findings to support the project.

In response to Vice-Chair Metcalfe, Mr. Boyle confirmed that Macy's and the manager of The Village have met to discuss the proposed colors.

In response to Commissioner Bundy, Mr. Boyle said that the proposed color scheme consists of Macy's branded colors and no other colors were proposed.

In response to Commissioner Lee, Mr. Boyle confirmed the current signs are lighted.

In response to Commissioner Bandel, Counselor Propp stated that the Town does not regulate logos, and Planning Director Wolff noted that the Town does not prohibit logos.

David Boessenecker, Project Manager for Macy's, discussed the exterior branded colors, and he said the signage would match the monument sign. Mr. Boessenecker explained that they wish to upgrade both the interior and exterior of the building for maintenance purposes and to attract customers.

Mr. Boessenecker and Chair Chase discussed the roof materials and proposed treatment.

Commissioner Bundy and Mr. Boessenecker discussed the dark paint color of the roof. Mr. Boessenecker said there should be no increased heat gain.

Commissioner Lee discussed his concern relating to environmental impacts of dark roofs, albeit he noted that most of the roof is a taupe color that has aged. He said that white is more environmentally appealing. Mr. Boessenecker stated that they intend upgrading the parts of the roof that experience leaking and are visible.

Chair Chase opened the public comment period.

Jim Robinson, 25 Ash Avenue, stated his belief that the Town should do all it can to accommodate retail business because the sales tax base is important for Corte Madera. Mr. Robinson said that people of his generation might prefer to shop at a retail establishment, and that corporate logos are important.

Chair Chase closed the public comment period.

Commissioner Bandel expressed her support for the project, albeit she said the color choices are not to her liking because they are too contrasting. However, Commissioner Bandel noted the applicant's wish to use corporate colors, and she commented on the existence of other white stores in The Village that stand out.

Commissioner Lee stated that the colored printed materials appears to differ to the painted samples and that the end result might not be so stark. He said he liked the contrasting design and the signage, although he does not support a partially black roof for environmental reasons. He noted that the current muted tones of the building blend in better with the mountains, and he commented on the difficulty of enforcing expectations on different retail establishments. However, Commissioner Lee said that the proposal would be a great update to the façade and that he would support the project despite his misgivings.

Commissioner Bundy said he understood the importance of branding for those retail establishments that are not online, and that he could support the findings.

Vice-Chair Metcalfe discussed a preference for the lighter paint color used on other buildings at The Village, which she said would provide a better contrast to the dark color proposed.

Counselor Propp commented on the need to be concerned solely with the current design review project and whether or not it meets specific findings.

Chair Chase noted that different stores in both shopping centers have distinct color pallets that befit their corporate image, and that the two whites are not dissimilar.

MOTION: Motioned by Commissioner Bundy, seconded by Commissioner Bandel, to approve Resolution No. 19-002, Design Review, Precise Plan Amendment and Sign Permit application regarding exterior painting of the

building and replacement of the four existing signs for Macy's department store at 1400 Redwood Highway, PL-2018-0093-DRC:

AYES: Metcalfe, Bundy, Chase, Lee, Bandel
NOES: None

Mr. Boyle read the appeal rights and Chair Chase announced a 10-minute break at 8:30 p.m.

C. 1618 REDWOOD HWY (THE VILLAGE AT CORTE MADERA) - PUBLIC HEARING FOR DESIGN REVIEW, PRECISE PLAN AMENDMENT AND SIGN PERMIT APPLICATIONS (PL-2018-0078-PDP) REGARDING EXTERIOR PAINT COLORS, INCLUDING HIGHWAY FACING ELEVATIONS, FOR THE VILLAGE AT CORTE MADERA, AND REVISIONS TO THE PRECISE PLAN NO. 12-001 FOR HIGHWAY ORIENTED TENANT SIGNS AND THE MONUMENT SIGN AT 1618 REDWOOD HWY. (Senior Planner Phil Boyle)

Senior Planner Boyle presented the staff report. Mr. Boyle discussed the proposed exterior painting project to the buildings facing Hwy 101, in addition to other walls in the shopping center. He noted the provision of a color board and said that the painting project would take place in two phases, which he discussed.

Mr. Boyle provided a history of criteria for freeway-oriented signs, which were initially approved in 2012 and then revised in 2013. He noted that the applicant is requesting modifications to the criteria, which he discussed, including greater color choices and logos. Mr. Boyle discussed that the applicant is requesting the use of logos, and fonts and colors that reflect a tenant's identify. He noted that the maximum amount of kelvins is addressed, in addition to the letter and logo sizes.

Mr. Boyle discussed the monument sign-painting request, noting that the applicant would wish the choice of logos, colors and fonts to remain with the tenant. He concluded his report by noting that a resolution has been attached should the commissioner like to approve the project.

Commissioner Lee and Chair Chase discussed the current and proposed signage criteria with staff. Mr. Boyle confirmed the applicants are requesting that planning commission review is waived for signs facing the freeway if they meet the four proposed criteria, allowing the applicant to apply directly for a building permit.

Planning Director Wolff noted that if the Master Sign Program is amended as requested by the applicant, a building permit could be issued for a sign if planning staff determined the application met the Master Sign Program.

Stan Hoffman, Property Manager for The Village, discussed the need to update The Village with new paint and new signs. Mr. Hoffman said the current signs do not leave a

good visual impression, and that he has received no negative feedback from community outreach. He noted that they have met requests to tone down the original bright white color that he proposed for the main bodies of the buildings.

Sudhish Mohindroo, Project Architect, discussed the objective to make The Village more inviting, noting that the buildings are not distinctive in appearance. Mr. Mohindroo explained how the light and dark colors would be effective against the sky and landscaping.

Mr. Mohindroo discussed their wish to create cohesive signage. He discussed the problem of Hwy 101 drivers seeing only half the signs on the sides of the buildings, and the need to allow logos in different fonts. Mr. Mohindroo discussed the importance of high quality signs, and he said there would be consistency in how they are made and mounted.

Chair Chase opened the public comment period.

Jim Robinson, Ash Avenue, discussed a hope that The Village will continue to improve landscaping. Mr. Robinson also discussed his support for the changes to the guidelines if logos are considered important to the success of the tenants.

Mr. Mohindroo and Commissioner Lee discussed the architectural style of the buildings. Mr. Mohindroo explained that they wish to create an entrance on the freeway side of the center to break up the massing. They also discussed the proposed new colors.

In response to Commissioner Bandel, Mr. Hoffman discussed outreach for the project, noting they have spoken to approximately a dozen individuals, the Chamber of Commerce, and that they have posted information at The Village.

The Commissioners discussed the proposed color pallet. They were in agreement with the exception of Commissioner Bandel, who expressed a preference for colors that would be more harmonious with the surroundings. Chair Chase said the colors are good, and the landscaping will continue to grow and hide parked cars facing the freeway.

Chair Chase led a discussion on signs. Mr. Hoffman stated that some of the signs currently missing from the freeway side would be erected pending the outcome of the hearing.

Chair Chase said that he felt it is important for himself and commissioner Metcalfe to provide some history on the processes that have taken place regarding the freeway sign. Prior to that he would like to hear from the three other Commissioners.

Commissioner Bundy discussed the need for malls to function alongside online sales, which he said was different to the way people shopped when sign discussions took place 7 years ago. He said that signs and branding were important for retail

businesses, and that he could support the proposal to allow different colors and fonts on signs.

Commissioner Lee said he agreed with Commissioner Bundy's comments; that the current signs are ineffective, and that he supports any proposal to promote a brand's image if it is not detrimental to the community. Commissioner Lee said he would rather the Town not spend time determining sign applications; that logos are important and retail needs to deal with fast-changing environments. He noted that retail centers along Hwy 101 allow colored signs, which The Village should be allowed to use, and that he fully supports the proposal.

Commissioner Bandel said she agrees with most of what was said by Commissioner Bundy and Lee and she understands the need for stores to express their individuality to compete with the new Restoration Hardware store, and for new signage. She expressed approval of the quality of the signs and the proposed size and that the existing signs are not useful as they are. She also said that both shopping centers could do more to improve landscaping.

Vice-Chair Metcalfe provided background information on the contentious discussions in 2012 and 2013 on signs attached to the building on the freeway side. She also expressed a preference for a workshop to have been held before tonight's hearing.

The commissioners voted to continue the meeting for 30 minutes beyond 10 p.m.

Vice-Chair Metcalfe believes the former discussions concluded with the need for the fonts, colors and logos of the freeway signs to be identical. She also commented on previous landscaping discussions, noting that the intent of the landscaping on the freeway side was to provide screening from parked cars.

Chair Chase discussed the issues of proposed signs in previous discussions. He said it is his understanding that there had been overwhelming support for a unique identity for The Village by prohibiting colorful, trademarked signs and allowing low-key signs with certain paint colors. Chair Chase noted that there are a plethora of colorful, trademarked signs on the interior of the shopping center, which could be emulated on the sides of the buildings by the freeway.

Chair Chase discussed emails he had received asking that the rules not be changed, which he said would be made available to staff and the public. Chair Chase said the previous discussions in 2013 remain relevant, and that he would support allowing signs with different fonts and trademarks, but not a variety of colors. He made the point that all signs approved by the current commission for the Town Center facing the highway have been white.

Vice-Chair Metcalfe expressed a preference for using the same font for all signs, is ok the upper and lower case and is ok with allowing small logos.

In response to Chair Chase, Mr. Boyle confirmed the Planning Commission could request that they review each sign application be reviewed by the Planning Commission.

Counselor Propp noted that the commissioners would need to review the Precise Plan, and that she suggests the commissioners amend the Master Sign Program with the criteria they seek, rather than considering signs on a case-by-case basis. Mr. Wolff discussed the benefits of streamlining sign applications through an amendment to the Master Sign Program.

Chair Chase expressed that the commission is open to alternatives and would like to hear from the applicant.

Mr. Hoffman commented on the past issues with sign applications, and stated that their current request for changes to the sign rules contribute to their tenants relevance and success. He said it did not make business sense for sign applications to be considered on an individual basis and go before the Planning Commission, and that he hopes the commissioners would support their application. He is not going to amend his application. Mr. Hoffman discussed the importance an impression makes in 2 or 3 seconds when drivers pass by the shopping center, so that a variety of fonts and colors and designs are necessary, and he confirmed the current signage is not working.

Mr. Hoffman noted that they have budgeted \$1M for landscape upgrades this year.

Mr. Mohindroo commented on the assortment of tenants who rely on advertising their brand, and the lack of storefronts on the freeway side of the buildings that necessitate signage. He feels the application is a balance approach and the signs will be limited to one line of text.

Commissioner Bundy suggested that the Commission vote on the resolution to see if there are three votes to approve the application and if not then the applicant will have direction on how to move forward.

Chair Chase suggested conditions be added to the resolution.

Discussion followed about whether or not to continue the meeting for another half hour.

Commissioner Metcalfe moved to continue the meeting for one half hour, Bundy seconded. The vote was 3 to 2 to continue the meeting.

Commissioner Metcalfe moved to continue this item to January 22, 2019 and Commission Bandel seconded. The vote was 4 to 1 to continue to January 22, 2019.

MOTION: Motioned by Vice-Chair Metcalfe, seconded by Commissioner Bundy, to continue public hearing for Design Review, Precise Plan Amendment and Sign Permit applications (PL-2018-0078-PDP) regarding exterior paint colors, including highway facing elevations, for The Village at Corte Madera, and revisions to the Precise Plan No. 12-001 for highway oriented tenant signs and the monument sign at 1618 Redwood Highway, to the Planning Commission Meeting on January 22, 2019:

AYES: Metcalfe, Bundy, Chase, Bandel
NOES: Lee

Commissioner Lee and Chair Chase expressed a hope for more public participation, and Mr. Wolff reminded the commissioners to forward correspondence they might receive.

Vice-Chair Metcalfe requested a copy of materials relating to the current and proposed modifications to the Tenant Sign Criteria.

Due to the lateness of the hour, the remaining items on the agenda were continued to the meeting of January 22, 2019.

6. BUSINESS ITEMS - None

7. ROUTINE AND OTHER MATTERS

A. REPORTS, ANNOUNCEMENTS AND REQUESTS

- i. Commissioners
- ii. Planning Director
- iii. Tentative Agenda Items for January 22, 2019, Planning Commission Meeting
(PROPOSED ITEMS, AND ORDER, ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE)
 - A. 159 PRINCE ROYAL DR – REVIEW OF LANDSCAPING PLAN AS REQUIRED PER CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL FOR DESIGN REVIEW PL-2016-0007
- iv. Future Agenda Items
(PROPOSED ITEMS, AND ORDER, ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE)

B. MINUTES

- i. Planning Commission Meeting Minutes of November 13, 2018
- ii. Planning Commission Meeting Minutes of November 27, 2018

8. ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made, seconded, and unanimously passed to adjourn the meeting at 10:40 p.m.