



MILPITAS PLANNING COMMISSION STAFF REPORT

July 8, 2015

APPLICATION: **ULFERTS SIGN PROGRAM AMENDMENT - SA15-0002 – 648--794 BARBER LANE:** A request for a Site Development Permit Amendment to allow for modifications to an existing master sign program for a multi-tenant shopping center consisting of wall signs and a multi-tenant monument sign.

RECOMMENDATION: **Staff recommends that the Planning Commission: Adopt Resolution No. 15-023 approving Site Development Permit Amendment No. SA15-0002 to allow for an amendment to the master sign program for multi-tenant shopping center at 648-794 Barber Lane subject to the conditions of approval.**

LOCATION:
Address/APN: 648-794 Barber Lane (APN 86-01-035)
Area of City: Ulferts Shopping Center

PEOPLE:
Project Applicant: Jason Phung, Sign Express Manufacturing
Property/Business Owner: Karen Kam, Ulferts Center USA Inc.
Project Planner: Cindy Hom, Assistant Planner

LAND USE:
General Plan Designation: General Commercial (GNC)
Zoning District: General Commercial (C2)
Overlay District: Recreation and Entertainment Overlay and Site and Architectural Overlay (-RE-S)

ENVIRONMENTAL: Categorically Exempt from further environmental review pursuant to Section 15301 (Existing Facilities) and 15311 (Accessory Structures) of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The project request is a Site Development Permit Amendment to modify an existing a master sign program for a multi-tenant shopping center. The sign program modifications consist of adding a sign band on the east side of the building on the second floor and provisions for projecting signs for interior corner units. The sign program design criteria and sign allocation remains unchanged from the original sign program.

Map 1
Project Location



Map 2
Project Site



BACKGROUND

History

In May 1996, the City approved a General Plan Amendment changing the land use from industrial park to General Commercial.

In February 1997, the Planning Commission approved a Site Development Permit for a 39,100 square foot retail center known as the Ulferts Center.

In May 1997, the Planning Commission approved conditional use permit (UP1408) for the installation of a freestanding sign and master sign program.

In May 1998, the Planning Commission approved an amendment to the sign program to allow installation a fountain with a tenant directory. The improvement was never installed.

The Application

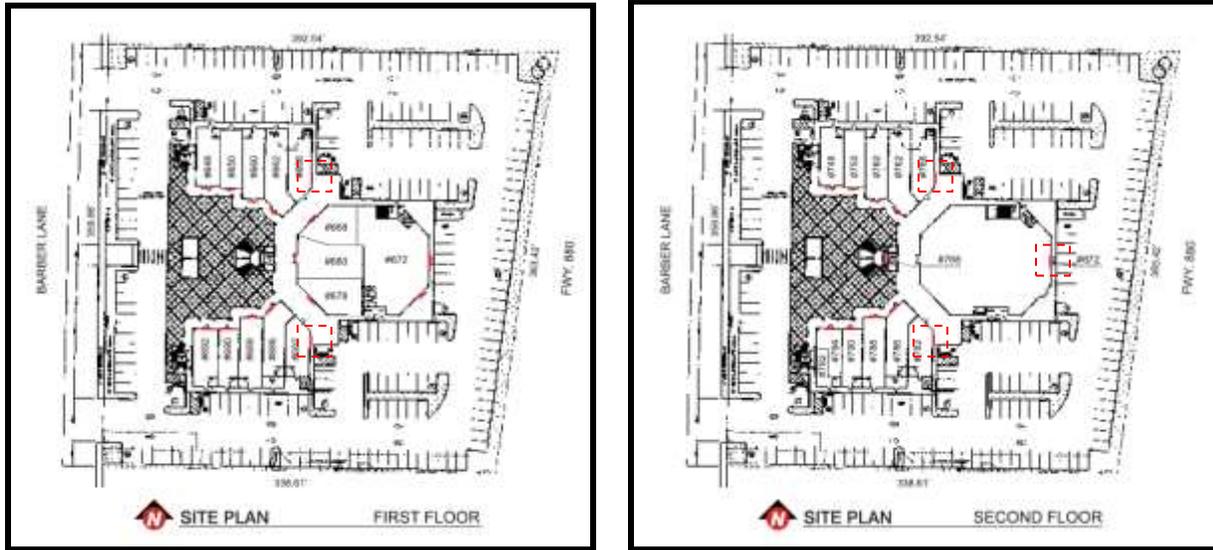
On April 24, 2015, the agent for the property owner, submitted an application for a sign program amendment to an existing multi-tenant shopping center. The application is made pursuant to Section 24 (Sign Ordinance) and 57 (Applications) of the Milpitas Zoning Code that require Planning Commission review and approval of a Site Development Permit Amendment for modifications to an existing sign program.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Overview

The project consists of an amendment to the existing sign program for an existing two story shopping center. The proposed amendment requests an additional sign band on the second floor east elevation and projecting signs for certain corner units. The existing sign program multiplier for sign area allocation and design and construction standards would remain unchanged. The exhibit below shows the sign band locations on the building.

Exhibit 1: Site Plan



Sign type, materials and location

Table 1 summarizes the sign types, illumination, and location that are proposed for the Ulferts Shopping Center sign program.

**Table 1:
Sign Type, Illumination, and Location**

| Sign | Sign Type | Illumination | Location |
|----------------|--|------------------------|--|
| Center ID Sign | Metal fabricated sign with stucco finish and internally illuminate Center ID and Major Tenant panels | Internally Illuminated | Southeast Corner |
| Tenant Sign | Individual Channel Letters | Internally Illuminated | Designated Sign Band on all elevations with interior courtyard and along the east elevation. |
| | Projecting signs | Non-illuminated | Interior corner units |

An elevation exhibit of the proposed monument signs is shown below. As depicted, the proposed signs provide design consistency and uniformity in terms of design, materials, fabrication, and illumination.



Location and Context

The project site is a three-acre parcel developed with a 39,100 square foot shopping center. The site is bounded by Barber Lane to the east, Milpitas Square Shopping Center to the north, Interstate I-880 to the east, and Cisco to the west. The Cisco daycare center and other industrial building and uses are located to the south. The project site is as zoned as General Commercial with a Recreation and Entertainment overlay and a Site and Architectural Overlay. An aerial photo of the project site and vicinity is shown on Page 2.

PROJECT ANALYSIS

General Plan and Zoning Conformance

Ulferts Shopping Center is designated and zoned as General Commercial. The purpose and intent of the General Commercial Zoning District is to provide for a wide range of retail sales, personal and business services primarily oriented to the automobile customer, and for general commercial needs of the City. The proposed sign program amendment is consistent with the purpose and intent in that it provides business identification for a multi-tenant shopping center and promotes a stable, attractive commercial development and pleasant shopping environment.

The proposed amendment is consistent with Chapter 24 (Signs) of the Milpitas Municipal Code in that it complies with the total allowable sign area, sign height, and appropriateness of the sign design by incorporating compatible colors, design, and scale with the building. The amended permit provides requirements for design consistency and uniformity that ensures for an attractive harmonious development.

Development Standards

Sign Area

Per MMC XI-10-24.03(B) (Maximum Permissible Sign Area), the site is allowed a maximum of 719.72 square feet for signs, based on two square feet of sign area for every lineal feet of street frontage. As demonstrated in Table 1, the proposed sign program would allow a total of 720 square feet of sign area. Based on the sign program, the total sign area is distributed proportionately to each tenant based on square footage. The sign program multiplier for tenant building square footage is determined by the following calculations:

719.72 (total allowable sign area) - 99.81 (Center ID sign) = 619.91 (sign area to be allocated to each tenant/ $39,100$ (total building square footage) = 0.0158

Table 2:
Sign Area Calculations

| Sign Type | Quantity | Sq. Ft. | Total Square Footage |
|------------------------------------|-----------------|----------------|-----------------------------|
| Existing Center ID Sign | 1 | 99.81 | 99.81 |
| Existing Tenant Signage | 19 | 270.18 | 270.18 |
| Existing Directional Monument Sign | 2 | 11.65 | 23.31 |
| Total Sign Area | | | 393.3 |
| Total Allowable Sign Area | | | 719.72 |

Sign Height and Number of Freestanding Signs

The existing freestanding sign was previously approved with original sign program and Conditional Use Permit No. 1408 and therefore complies with the Sign Ordinance requirements and development standards.

Sign Program

The applicant is requesting approval of a Site Development Permit for a sign program that will allow for a comprehensive tenant identification sign system for the Ulferts Shopping Center. Pursuant to MMC XI-10-24.05 (F) (Sign Programs), a sign program is required for multi-tenant buildings to ensure design consistency and uniformity. The Ulferts Center sign program (Attachment B) provides for the locations, dimensions, and styles of the exterior tenant signage. Based on the sign proposal, the sign program, sign type, illumination and locations provide orderly, harmonious, and effective signage.

Climate Action Plan Conformance

The Climate Action Plan (CAP) provides a policy framework for the City to reduce community-wide Greenhouse Gases emissions. Through the CAP, the City establishes mitigation strategies to address climate change. The project does not propose any major construction or building addition that requires conformance to the City's Climate Action Plan.

FINDINGS FOR APPROVAL (OR DENIAL)

A finding is a statement of fact relating to the information that the Planning Commission has considered in making a decision. Findings shall identify the rationale behind the decision to take a certain action.

Site Development Permit (Section XI-10-57-03(F)(2))

- 1. All elements of the sign, including design, lighting, scale, length and materials, are consistent with the intent of the General Plan, the Sign Ordinance and any applicable Specific Plan.*

The project is consistent with the General Plan's Implementing Policy 2.a-I-3 and Implementing Policy 2.a-I-7 in that the proposed signage would help promote the Ulferts Shopping Center, encourage economic pursuits and business retention by providing appropriate visibility, and business identification.

The Zoning Designation for this site is General Commercial, which allows various commercial and retail uses. The purpose and intent of the General Commercial Zoning District is to provide for a wide range of retail, personal and business services primarily oriented to the automobile customer. The project is consistent with this designation in that the project provides business identification for the shopping center and its tenants.

As further described herein, the project is consistent with Milpitas Sign Ordinance in that the proposed sign proposal complies with the total allowable sign area, number of freestanding signs, sign height, and appropriateness of the sign design as described above.

- 2. The design, scale and materials of the sign harmonize with the architectural design and details of the building or site it serves.*

The sign program includes a combination of illuminated individual channel letter wall signs, non-illuminated projecting signs for certain tenants, and one freestanding Center ID sign. The sign program includes specifications for the letter height, sign length, calculation for sign area, type of illumination and construction that will ensure design consistency and uniformity.

- 3. The design and scale of the sign is appropriate to the distance from which the sign is normally viewed.*

The proposed signs provide for visibility and legibility, and provide the appropriate relationship of scale and height to the building. The logo and lettering on the exterior wall are appropriate for the size of the building because the wall signs will be located within the designated sign bands. The sign depth and halo illumination adds to the visibility and architectural interest. The existing driveway monuments are appropriate and necessary to provide business identification and way-finding.

- 4. The design and materials of the sign provide a contrast between the background and letters.*

The signs include a combination of internally illuminated individual channel letters and logo with front and back halo illumination that are wall mounted and non-illuminated projecting signs. The sign depth and type of illumination provides an appropriate contrast between the background and letters.

Sign Program

5. *The provisions of the Sign Program ensure consistency in design and style of all new signs.*

The proposed sign program specifies the sign type, letter and logo heights, sign length and designates sign locations as well as construction requirements to ensure orderly, harmonious, and aesthetic business identification for the business park. The sign program includes a combination of internally illuminated wall signs, non-illuminated projecting signs, and monument signs. The proposed finish for the wall signs will consist of internally illuminated channel letters that face the interior courtyard and along the rear elevations. The non-illuminated projecting signs are located on the corner units that face the rear parking lot.

6. *The provisions of the Sign Program address compatibility of the design and style of any existing signs on the building or site.*

The proposed sign program addresses compatibility of materials and design continuity with existing signs in that the sign program remains relatively the same. The only change to the sign program is adding sign bands on the rear elevation for one of their major tenant (85-degree Bakery) for the purpose of business identification and better visibility. The other change was the addition of projecting signs which are provided for corner tenants that are adjacent to a walkway.

7. *All new signs within the Sign Program are in compliance with the design guidelines of this Chapter.*

- a. The project is consistent with Chapter 24 (Signs) of the Zoning Code in that the proposed sign area is within the total allow able sign area. The proposed logo and lettering on the exterior wall and monument signs are appropriate and proportionate to the scale and massing of the building. As proposed, the sign program establishes sign criteria that provide for design consistency and uniformity for signage. As proposed, signs are to be installed within the designated sign bands on the building and existing monument sign and comply with sign area and letter/logo height requirements.
- b. The proposed signs have the appropriate relationship of height to the building. The logo and lettering on the exterior wall and monument sign are appropriate for the size of the building and/or freestanding sign structure and provide for attractive business identification that is clear and legible.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

The Planning Division conducted an environmental assessment of the project in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The project is categorically exempt from further CEQA review under Section 15301 (Existing Facility) and 15311 (Accessory Structures) of the CEQA Guidelines. Staff determined that the project is categorically exempt per Section 15301 and 15311 because the project is an existing commercial development and includes the installation of on premise signs.

PUBLIC COMMENT/OUTREACH

Staff provided public notice the application in accordance with City and State public noticing requirements. At the time of writing this report, there have been no inquiries from the public. A notice was published in the Milpitas Post on 6/26/15. In addition, notices were sent to owners and occupants within 500-feet of the project site. A public notice was also provided on the project site, on the City's Website, www.ci.milpitas.ca.gov, and posted at City Hall.

CONCLUSION

The project proposes a master sign program for a multi-tenant shopping center that provides uniformity and design consistency. The proposed signage utilizes colors, materials and styles that complement the building architecture as well as provides for attractive and effective business identification.

RECOMMENDATION

STAFF RECOMMENDS THAT the Planning Commission:

1. Open Public Hearing to receive comments;
2. Close the public hearing; and
2. Adopt Resolution 15-023 to approve Site Development Permit No. to allow for a master sign program for multi-tenant commercial building at 648-794 Barber Lane subject to the conditions of approval.

ATTACHMENTS

A: Resolution No. 15-023

B: Project Plans