



City of Santa Barbara
Community Development Department

Memorandum

DATE: November 26, 2012
TO: Architectural Board of Review
FROM: Planning Division
SUBJECT: SIGN ORDINANCE EXCEPTION REQUEST FOR 1924 Cliff Drive (SGN2012-00085)

An application for signage for the new Chase Bank and changes to the Mesa Center sign program was reviewed on the Sign Consent Calendar in a concept review hearing on July 23, 2012.

- The application received general positive comments on the aesthetics of the signs.
- An exception request to allow 16 inch letters for a wall sign facing Cliff Drive was supported, justified by the large building setback from Cliff Drive and the large tenant space.
- A new additional sign location was approved for a wall sign facing Meigs Road, but the request for 16 inch letters for this sign was not supported.
- Because only one member of the two-person Committee indicated support for off-premises signs to be located on the McDonald's monument sign located in front of the restaurant at the corner of Cliff Drive and Meigs Road, the application moved forward and was approved without the off-premises signs.

On October 27, 2012 a request to reconsider the off-premises signs was received. Staff is referring this item to the ABR for consideration of the exception request.

Sign Consent Calendar concept review minutes July 23, 2012:

NEW ITEM

A. 1924 CLIFF DR

C-P/R-2 Zone

Assessor's Parcel Number: 035-141-009
Application Number: SGN2012-00085
Agent: Signs by Ken
Business Name: Chase Bank

(Concept review for signage for a new Chase Bank in the Mesa Center. Proposed are changes to the existing Mesa Center sign program to allow larger than 12 inch letters for this tenant space, the introduction of a wall sign on the Meigs Road side of the building at this tenant space, also with larger than 12 inch letters. Also proposed is a sign for the bank to be located off-premises on the existing McDonald's monument sign in front of the center. The requests for letters larger than 12 inches, and off-premises signage require exceptions to the sign ordinance. 38.30 square feet of signage is being requested. The linear building frontage is 90.00 feet. The allowable signage is 45.00 square feet.)

(Concept Review only. Project requires exception findings and changes to the Mesa Center sign program.)

Present: Peter Gudel, Owner's Representative; Ken Sorgman, Signs by Ken.

Continued to Conforming with comments: 1) Sign letters on the front of the Chase tenant space exceeding 12 inches are supportable. This requires an exception request and change to the Mesa Center sign program. 2) Reduce the proposed lettering for the sign facing Meigs Road to 12 inches or less. An additional wall sign on this side of the building is supportable and requires a change to the Mesa Center sign program. 3) Cunningham found no justification for an off-site Chase sign on the McDonald's monument sign and will not be able to make exception findings; Sherry found this to be acceptable because both properties appear to be part of the same center.

The Sign Ordinance provides that exception requests may be approved if three grounds for granting the exception are made. These grounds, or findings, are to be considered by the ABR in review of this application. The uniqueness of the site is a key consideration. If there are not exceptional or extraordinary circumstances, granting an exception may set a precedent for other applications to deviate from the Sign Ordinance.

From the Sign Ordinance:

22.70.070 Exceptions.

A. APPLICATION. When a person desires to erect a sign which does not comply with the provisions of this Chapter, he shall file an application for an exception. An application for an exception shall be filed with a sign permit application, shall be accompanied by a fee established by the City Council by resolution, shall state the specific section or sections of this Chapter which the applicant desires to have waived, and shall state the grounds for the exception.

B. GROUNDS. Before an exception may be granted, the following shall be shown:

1. There are exceptional or extraordinary circumstances or conditions applicable to the property involved, or to the intended use of the property, that do not apply generally to other properties in the vicinity.
2. The granting of the exception will not be materially detrimental to the public welfare or injurious to the properties or improvements in the vicinity.
3. The proposed sign is in conformance with the stated purpose and intent of the Sign Ordinance.

C. HEARING. A hearing on the exception application shall be held by the Sign Committee prior to considering the sign permit application. The time limits for the Sign Committee's action shall be the same as those set forth in Section 22.70.050.F of this Chapter.

D. APPEAL. The provisions for the appeal of the decision of the Sign Committee concerning an exception application shall be the same as those set forth in Section 22.70.050.I. (Ord. 4484, 1987; Ord. 4259, 1984; Ord. 4101, 1981.)

22.70.010 General Provisions.

B. PURPOSE AND INTENT. The City of Santa Barbara has a national and international reputation as a community of natural beauty, distinctive and historic architecture and historic tradition. Signs have a strong visual impact on the character and quality of the community. As a prominent part of the scenery, they attract or repel the viewing public, affect the safety of vehicular traffic, and their suitability or appropriateness helps to set the tone of the neighborhood. Since the City of Santa Barbara relies on its scenery and physical beauty to attract tourists and commerce, aesthetic considerations assume economic value. It is the intent of the City of Santa Barbara, through this ordinance, to protect and enhance the City's historic and residential character and its economic base through the provision of appropriate and aesthetic signing. In addition, it is the intent of the City to limit the size, type and location of signs in order to minimize their distracting effect on drivers and thereby improve traffic safety.

In view of these facts, the City of Santa Barbara adopts the policy that the sign should serve primarily to identify an establishment, organization or enterprise. As identification devices, signs must not subject the citizens of the City to excessive competition for their visual attention. As appropriate identification devices, signs must harmonize with the building, the neighborhood and other signs in the area.

From the Sign Review Guidelines:

D. POLICIES

The Sign Committee has established certain policy guidelines for each of the specific points of review. These are intended to provide general direction to an applicant coming before the Committee.

2. Colors, materials, graphic qualities and mountings:
 - n. Signs which do not relate to the entrance address of the building on which they are placed, but instead are intended to be seen from a nearby thoroughfare or freeway will not be permitted; and
5. Sign function and visibility:
 - c. Signs shall not detract from or interfere with other signs in the area, and should not be designed to compete with other signs in the area or the City;

Summary:

The ABR must consider whether there are extraordinary circumstances or conditions applicable to this property and determine that there is sufficient basis per 22.70.070 to allow off-premise signs for this tenant prior to granting the exception.