

Planning Commission

MEETING DATE: 9/7/2016

TITLE:

CASE NO. SP No. 16-053, The Crossing at Bob Hope Master Sign Program

APPLICANT: Mirage Bob Hope Varner LLC, Brent Ogden

STAFF PLANNER:

Salvador Quintanilla, Associate Planner

RECOMMENDATION:

Approval

REQUEST:

Staff recommends approval of the Master Sign Program for The Crossing at Bob Hope based on the following findings:

1. The proposed sign does not constitute a detriment to public health, safety and welfare;
2. The proposed sign is in compliance with all applicable City codes, including but not limited to electrical codes;
3. The Master Sign Program complies with the purpose and intent of Chapter 9.62 (Signs), including all requirements and other special provisions as specified in this chapter and the North City Extended Specific Plan;
4. The proposed Master Sign Program is in harmony with and enhances the overall development and surrounding structures; and
5. The Master Sign Program complies with the standards of Chapter 9.62 and North City Extended Specific Plan.

FINDINGS:

Section 9.62.030E(5) of Cathedral City's Sign Regulations contains provisions for a sign program signs and authorizes the Planning Commission to approve such signs through the application of a Master Sign Program, subject to the following findings:

Staff has provided the finding in italics and staff's response to the finding in regular type.

1. The proposed signs do not constitute a detriment to public health, safety and welfare.

The proposed signs will not be a detriment to the public health, safety, and welfare since the applicant will be required to obtain a building permit and meet all the requirements of the electrical code, building code, specific plan and the zoning code. In staff's opinion this finding has been satisfied.

2. The proposed signs are in compliance with all applicable city codes, including, but not limited to, electrical codes.

The applicant will submit the construction plans and obtain a building permit for the installation of the proposed signs. The proposed plans will be reviewed by the Planning Department and the Building Department. The proposed signs will meet the requirements of Title 24, fire code, electrical code, building code, specific plan and the zoning code. Therefore, this request satisfies the finding has been satisfied.

3. The master sign program complies with the purpose and intent of this chapter, including all requirements and other special provisions as specified in this chapter.

The Master Sign Program will comply with the purpose and intent of Chapter 9.62 (Signs), including all requirements and other special provisions as specified in this chapter and the North City Extended Specific Plan. Therefore, this finding will be satisfied.

4. The proposed master sign program is in harmony with and enhances the overall development and surrounding structures.

The proposed signs within the Master Sign Program will enhance the overall development of the commercial center. Additionally, the signs will be designed to complement the architecture, materials and colors of the proposed building façade of the Best Western Plus Hotel, McDonald's, Taco Bell, and ARCO AM/PM buildings. If approved, this finding will be satisfied.

5. The master sign program complies with the standards of this chapter, except that flexibility is allowed in the planning commission's interpretation of appropriate sign area, number, location, and/or height to the extent that the master sign program will enhance the overall development, achieve superior quality design, and will more fully accomplish the purposes of this chapter.

The proposed Master Sign Program complies with the regulations set forth by Chapter 9.62 (Signs) and the North City Extended Specific Plan. The proposed signs will be designed to complement the architecture, materials and colors of the proposed building façade of the Best Western Plus Hotel, McDonald's, Taco Bell, and ARCO AM/PM buildings.

The applicant is requesting flexibility on the sign area of the freeway sign, the proposed freeway sign is approximately 693 square feet, where code allows a sign area of 150 square

feet. Therefore the applicant is requesting a flexibility of approximately 543 square feet from the sign code. The Planning Commission has the flexibility to allow the increase in sign area as part of this master sign program. Based on the location of the sign, the function, type of the development, design, and the enhancement of the overall development, staff is satisfied with the proposed increase.

The master sign program will enhance the overall development and provide superior quality sign design. Therefore, this requirement of the Code and the finding has been satisfied.

BACKGROUND:

The City of Cathedral City's Sign Regulations include a provision under Section 9.62.030(E), which permits the master sign program to integrate project signs into the architectural design of the site, thereby creating an architectural statement of high quality. A master sign program provides flexible means of applying and modifying the sign regulations of this chapter to ensure high quality in the design and display of multiple permanent signs for a project or use and to encourage creativity and excellence in the design of signs. It is expected that the design of the signs proposed under a master sign program will be of a superior quality and creativity to those that might result through the normal sign permit process.

Based on the previously approved commercial development, the applicant was conditioned by the Planning Commission to submit a master sign program and the program be approved by the Planning Commission.

The previously approved commercial development project (Crossing at Bob Hope) was recently approved by the Planning Commission on May 4, 2016. The development is a traveler-oriented commercial center consisting of three drive-thru restaurants: McDonald's, Taco Bell, and a Starbucks and Subway located in a multi-tenant building; an Arco AM/PM service station with a convenience store and a food service area; a Best Western Plus Hotel; and three additional pads for future development. The Crossings at Bob Hope commercial center is located at the southeast corner of Bob Hope Drive and Varner Road, within the North City Extended Specific Plan (NCESP).

ANALYSIS:

The property owner is proposing to construct a 56 foot high freeway sign (overall) and four (4) monument sign of approximately seven feet high. The freeway sign will be along the Bob Hope Drive off-ramp and the monument signs will front along Bob Hope Drive on east side and Varner Road on the south side of the property.

Pursuant to Zoning Code Section 9.62.030 (Procedures), the maximum height for a freeway sign shall be determined by the Planning Commission, based on the height needed by the traveling public to view the sign, but shall not exceed 50 feet and a maximum sign area of 150 square feet. The maximum height for a monument sign shall not exceed seven feet and the maximum sign area shall not exceed 32 square feet. Additionally, pursuant to Zoning Code Section 9.62.030(E)(3), a master sign program may allow for less restrictive sign regulations so long as those regulations are approved

by the planning commission and supported by findings. The planning commission may allow modifications relating to sign area, number of signs, height, and location.

The proposed freeway sign will be located at the southeast corner of the property, adjacent to Interstate 10, Bob Hope Drive off-ramp. The architectural style of the proposed freeway sign is related to Mid-Century Modernism that is reflected in their boxiness design. The sign has three proposed earth-tone colors that accent the character of the Mid-Century Modernism. Furthermore, as stated above the overall height of the freeway sign is 56 feet, however, the maximum height of where the sign will be located is 49'-4", which meets the height requirement of the zoning code. Consequently, the proposed sign area of the freeway sign is approximately 693 square feet, an increase of approximately 543 square feet from what the zoning code allows. However, the Planning Commission has the flexibility to allow the increase in sign area as part of this master sign program. Based on the location of the sign, the function, type of the development, architecture, and the enhancement of the overall development, staff is satisfied with the proposed increase of the sign area. Furthermore, the freeway sign has been designed to complement the architecture, materials and colors of the proposed traveler-oriented commercial center.

Pursuant to the zoning code Section 9.62.080(B)(6) (Permitted Signs), the maximum height for a monument sign is seven feet and the maximum sign area is 32 square feet. The proposed monument sign for the center has an overall height of seven feet and a sign area of approximately 26.9 square feet. The McDonald's and Taco Bell monument signs will have an overall height of approximately six feet and sign area of approximately 28 square feet. The ARCO AM/PM monument sign will have an overall height of approximately seven feet and sign area of approximately 30 square feet. All signage will be the same on both sides of the monument signs.

The monument signs have been designed to complement the architecture, materials and colors of the proposed building façade of the Best Western Plus Hotel, McDonald's, Taco Bell, and ARCO AM/PM buildings.

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS:

Since there is no physical activity associated with this project, it is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act Section 15061 (b) (3) in that the project is covered by the general rule, where it can be seen with certainty, that the project will not have a significant effect on the environment.

PUBLIC NOTIFICATION:

This is not a public hearing item and does not require public notification.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. The Crossing at Bob Hope Master Sign Program