

SIGN PROGRAM INFORMATION SHEET

Name: Walnut Creek Plaza

Location: 1990 N. California

S.R. No.: 79-69

Reso. No.:

General Plan:

Zoning:

Conditions of Approval

(1) **Design:**

(2) **Size:**

(3) **Colors:**

(4) **Copy:**

(5) **Illumination:**

(6) **Mounting:**

(7) **Quantity:**

(8) **Location:**

(9) **Comments:**

WALNUT CREEK DESIGN REVIEW COMMISSION
STAFF REPORT

ITEM NO. 1

JANUARY 16, 1980

SUBJECT: SR NO. 79-69 - WALNUT CREEK PLAZA SIGN PROGRAM
A request for a tenant sign program for the two-story retail addition to the high-rise office building located at 1990 North California Blvd. (R-O, Retail and Office Commercial).

APPLICANT: DAON CORPORATION, JEFF WHITE
DESIGNER: NICKERSON SIGNS

BACKGROUND:

The DRC approved this two-story retail addition as well as the multi-story parking garage at the rear on April 5, 1978. Construction is now being finalized and the developer is requesting approval of a sign program in order to guide their future tenants.

The developer was initially concerned with obtaining signing for Grubb & Ellis Realty, which will locate on the second floor of this structure. At that time, the developer was also contemplating signing on the first and second floor facing onto the interior of the courtyard and towards the parking structure. Staff had a concern whether or not an application could be accepted since these requests involve signing for second-floor businesses. Staff requested an interpretation of the Sign Ordinance from the City Attorney on whether or not second-floor businesses could obtain signing under our ordinance; however, an opinion has yet to be forthcoming.

In the meantime, the DRC reviewed this sign program concept as a correspondence item on October 17, 1979. The Commission felt that the signing for the second floor, as well as signing attached for the canvas awning and entry canopy identifying both the business allowed for a non-ground floor business and the center were basically acceptable if the applicant could get around the constraints of the sign ordinance. Ironically, Grubb & Ellis filed for a sign permit meeting the maximum size allowance for non-ground floor businesses.

At this time, the applicant is merely asking for approval for nine signs that will be mounted on the North California frontage. A master identification sign and signing for the interior court (if necessary) will come at a later time.

SIGNS:

Design - Single-face, internally illuminated, sheet metal cabinets with rounded corners and plexiglas faces.

Size - 2' x 16' (32 sq. ft.).

Copy and Colors - Undetermined; per the needs of the individual tenants (the businesses shown on the plans are illustrative).

Placement - One sign to be mounted in each of the nine recessed panels between first and second floor windows and the vertical pilasters on the second story addition facing North California Blvd. (west elevation).

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff's only concern with the proposal is that the architectural detailing achieved with the recessed panels is destroyed by the flush-mounted canister signs that take up the entire volume of the recession. The net effect is an entirely even surface with no relief. Staff would prefer to see individual letter signs mounted within these panels; staff suggests reducing the size of the sign canisters so that there is at least a 3" space between the canister and the panel on each side. This will also accomplish another concern that some or all of the businesses may not have sufficient frontage to justify a 32 sq. ft. sign (each ground floor business is allowed at least 30 sq. ft. of signing).

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Plans
2. Proposed resolution
3. DRC minutes - 10/17/79

DRC ACTION REQUIRED:

Move to adopt the proposed resolution approving the sign program; OR

Move to adopt a resolution denying the sign program; OR

Move to continue the application.

Prepared by *R* Randy Jerome/mr

WALNUT CREEK DESIGN REVIEW COMMISSION
Resolution No. 838
S.R. No. 79-69 - Walnut Creek Plaza Sign Program

WHEREAS the Walnut Creek Design Review Commission on January 16, 1980, reviewed a request for a tenant sign program for the two-story retail addition to the high-rise office building located at 1990 North California Blvd.; and

WHEREAS this project is categorically exempt from the requirements of CEQA under Class 11 of the Guidelines and Processing Procedures for the Review of Projects in the City of Walnut Creek; and

WHEREAS the two-story addition and parking garage were approved by the Design Review Commission on April 5, 1978; and

WHEREAS the Commission reviewed some sign concepts for the Walnut Creek Plaza on October 17, 1979.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Walnut Creek Design Review Commission makes the findings as outlined under Sec. 10-4.301, Chapter 4 (Design Review), Title 10 of the Walnut Creek Municipal Code; and

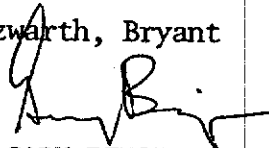
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Walnut Creek Design Review Commission reviewed the sign program pursuant to Sec. 10-2.1918(i); and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the proposal as shown on the drawings labeled "Exhibit A" and dated January 16, 1980, be approved subject to the following conditions:

1. The size of the individual sign cabinets shall be reduced as acceptable to staff.
2. Copy and colors for the individual tenant signs shall be reviewed and approved by staff. Placement of the signs shall be located as close as practicable over the identified business.
3. Any proposed master office sign and/or signing facing the interior courtyard shall be reviewed and approved by staff.

The foregoing resolution was adopted on January 16, 1980, by the Walnut Creek Design Review Commission at a regular meeting thereof upon motion by Commissioner Davis, second by Commissioner Gates.

Ayes: Davis, Gates, Holzwarth, Bryant
Noes: None
Absent: Watt


GARY BINGER, Secretary
Walnut Creek Design Review Commission



1445 CIVIC DRIVE - WALNUT CREEK, CALIFORNIA 94596 415-935-3300

January 21, 1980

Daon Corporation
One Market Plaza, Spear Street Tower, Suite 2301
San Francisco, California 94105
Attention: Jeff White

Gentlemen:

The Walnut Creek Design Review Commission took the following action on your item on January 16, 1980:

Design Review No. 79-69

Approved

Approved with Conditions XX

Denied (without prejudice)

Denied

Held Over To _____

If the Design Review Commission took final action on your application, Resolution No. 838 setting forth the Commission's decision and findings in regard to this item will be enclosed.

For additional information regarding disposition of this application, please refer to the reverse side of this letter.

Very truly yours,

LESTER R. FOLEY
Senior Planner

LRF/mr

cc: Nickerson Signs
2314 Bates Ave.
Concord, CA 94520

WALNUT CREEK DESIGN REVIEW COMMISSION MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING

79-69
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 16, 1980
7:30 P.M.

OPENING

Chairman Bryant called the meeting to order at 7:40 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Commissioners Present: Gates, Davis, Holzwarth, Bryant
Commissioner Absent: Watt
Staff Present: Foley, Grant, Jerome, Finigan, Dunne

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion by Commissioner Davis to approve the minutes of December 19, 1979, as written; second by Commissioner Gates.

Ayes: Davis, Gates, Holzwarth, Bryant
Noes: None
Absent: Watt

PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS

None.

STAFF REPORTS

City Manager Thomas Dunne spoke to the Commission on the two-year budget process and the state of the City, then commented on the results of the recent citizens survey pertaining to City services.

COMMISSION CONSIDERATIONS:

1. S.R. NO. 79-69 - WALNUT CREEK PLAZA SIGN PROGRAM. A request for a tenant sign program for the 2-story retail addition to the high-rise office building located at 1990 No. California Blvd. (R-O, Retail and Office Commercial).

Randy Jerome, Assistant Planner, reviewed this proposal, advising that the developer is requesting approval of a sign program in order to guide their future tenants. Staff recommended approval subject to the size of the sign cabinets being reduced. Jeff White, applicant, was present to answer questions. He indicated he had no objection to reducing the size of the cabinets. Following discussion regarding the colors for the background and the letters, motion by Commissioner Davis moved that the Design Review Commission adopt a resolution (Resolution No. 838), approving S.R. No. 79-69 as conditioned and amended; second by Commissioner Gates.

Ayes: Davis, Gates, Holzwarth, Bryant
Noes: None
Absent: Watt

2. S.R. NO. 79-70 - CUSTOM ENGRAVERS AND JEWELERS OFF PREMISE ROOF SIGN.

A request for one roof tenant identification sign not placed on a portion of the building occupied by the tenant, located at 1463-A Newell Avenue. (P-D-C, Core Area Planned Development District).

Chairman Mulvihill advised that the Commission seemed to agree that additional work should be done on the plans, that the "eyebrows" should be restudied, and that changes should be made to the landscape treatment. The applicant indicated they would make revisions and hopefully return to the DRC at its November 7 meeting.

7. D.R. NO. 8233 - KAISER HOSPITAL SERVICE BUILDING (FINAL SESSION). A proposal for a two-story, 10,170 sq.ft. building for service facilities to the hospital located at 1425 South Main Street, being on the southwest corner of South Main Street and Newell Avenue. (P-D-C, Core Area Planned Development District)

Mr. Jerome reviewed this proposal and the background of the project. The applicants have changed the metal exterior to stucco, but the site plan and landscaping are virtually the same as previously presented to the DRC on May 16, 1979.

Lawrence Merrion, applicant, showed a model of the project, photos of the site and introduced James Weber, architect, and Robert Babcock, landscape architect, for the project. Mr. Weber discussed the basic changes and presented a color and material palette.

The Commission felt the architect had designed an interesting building, the landscaping was an improvement and that the project was a good solution for the site.

Motion by Commissioner Bryant that the DRC adopt the proposed resolution (No. 820) approving D.R. No. 8233 as conditioned and amended; second by Commissioner Davis.

Ayes: Bryant, Davis, Gates, Noe, Mulvihill
Noes: None
Absent: None

CORRESPONDENCE:

a. Walnut Creek Plaza Sign Program Concept. Mr. Jerome advised that Grubb & Ellis Realtors desire to sign a lease to occupy offices on the second floor of the building and will need a certain amount of identification signing. Mr. Jerome noted that staff is waiting for word from the City Attorney regarding whether an application can be accepted by staff under the "exception clause" of the ordinance, which precludes second-story signs. Jeff White, of Daon Corp., and Bob Allen, architect, were present to discuss this request. Dick Clark, manager for Grubb and Ellis, presented a color rendering of the sign and logo, and spoke to the need for identification. The Commission was sympathetic to the need of the applicant and felt the signing would be acceptable if the applicants can get around the ordinance.

b. Santina & Thompson Office Building Details (D.R. 8126). Mr. Bryant stepped down from the Commission on this item. Dick Dobell, architect, requested approval for removal of the fins from the building, the use of egg shell color for the stucco, and permission to remove the Short Street entrance. Following discussion, the Commission felt these changes would be acceptable.

INTER-OFFICE MEMORANDUM

TO: CITY ATTORNEY

FROM: COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPT. - PLANNING DIVISION

SUBJECT: SIGN ORDINANCE INTERPRETATION

DATE: 9/5/79

A request was made last week by the developers of the two-story retail addition to "Walnut Creek Plaza" on North California Blvd. for a signing program that raises a number of questions as to the legality of their proposal in terms of our Sign Ordinance.

The primary dilemma involves a major tenant who will have offices entirely on the second floor. The business is a real estate company that does not require ground floor store frontage but does need high visibility by way of exterior signing. Their intention is to have a 24 sq.ft. freestanding sign in an existing planter and at least two, six sq.ft. signs painted on awnings over the second floor windows. Sec. 10-2.3406(f-5) permits a non-ground floor business a maximum of six sq.ft. of signing to be mounted only at the access point to the upstairs.

While it is obvious that the proposed signs are not consistent with the above cited provision, staff's concern is whether or not an application for an "exception" pursuant to Sec. 10-2.1918(j) can be accepted. The last sentence of subparagraph (3) states, "This provision shall not apply to businesses not on a ground floor." Strictly interpreted, it would appear these signs would be allowed only if the ordinance were amended to allow such cases.

Two preceding cases filed under Sec. 10-2.1918(j) regarding second floor businesses have been "Dean Witter" on South Broadway and "Red Carpet" in Civic Park Plaza. Dean Witter originally applied for a 16 sq.ft. freestanding sign which was denied by the DRC; a resubmittal for a 6 sq.ft. sign was later approved by Council on appeal. The Red Carpet case involved an approval of a 10 sq.ft. wall sign (the maximum for more than one non-ground floor business) located on a wall not occupied by the tenant nor at the entry.

A second issue deals with signs attached to the awning. Sec. 10-2.1918(a-4) prohibits temporary or permanent signs painted on awnings. The DRC and staff, however, have recently allowed cloth-painted signs for Crogan's Restaurant and a fabric store on North Main. But, in order to get around the ordinance, the condition was that these signs had to be separate materials attached to the awning by snaps or stitching. The question here is whether this tactic violates the intent of the law and whether these signs can be considered "permanent signs" (which must be of a rigid material by definition); the Sign Ordinance states that "Awnings shall not be classified as temporary signs."

Finally, the "W.C. Plaza" will have an open interior plaza between its new parking garage and the two-story addition; it is intended to have signs for the first and second floor businesses attached to the building and facing into this plaza area. The signs apparently will not be visible from the street or outside of the plaza. The predominant issue here is whether or not these signs are to be governed by size, placement and design review requirements (building permits notwithstanding). The definition of "sign" includes, "any device designed to inform or attract the attention of persons not on the premises on which the device is located, . . ."

9/5/79

In summation, the three Sign Ordinance issues requiring City Attorney interpretation are:

1. Will Sec. 10-2.1918(j) permit consideration of signs for non-ground floor businesses in excess of that which is allowed?
2. Can non-rigid signs be "attached" to awnings?
3. Do signs not visible outside of the premises require design review and zoning approval?

It is also desired to know if the City acted properly in approving the previously mentioned second floor business and awning signs?

RLJ:hn

cc: City Manager



