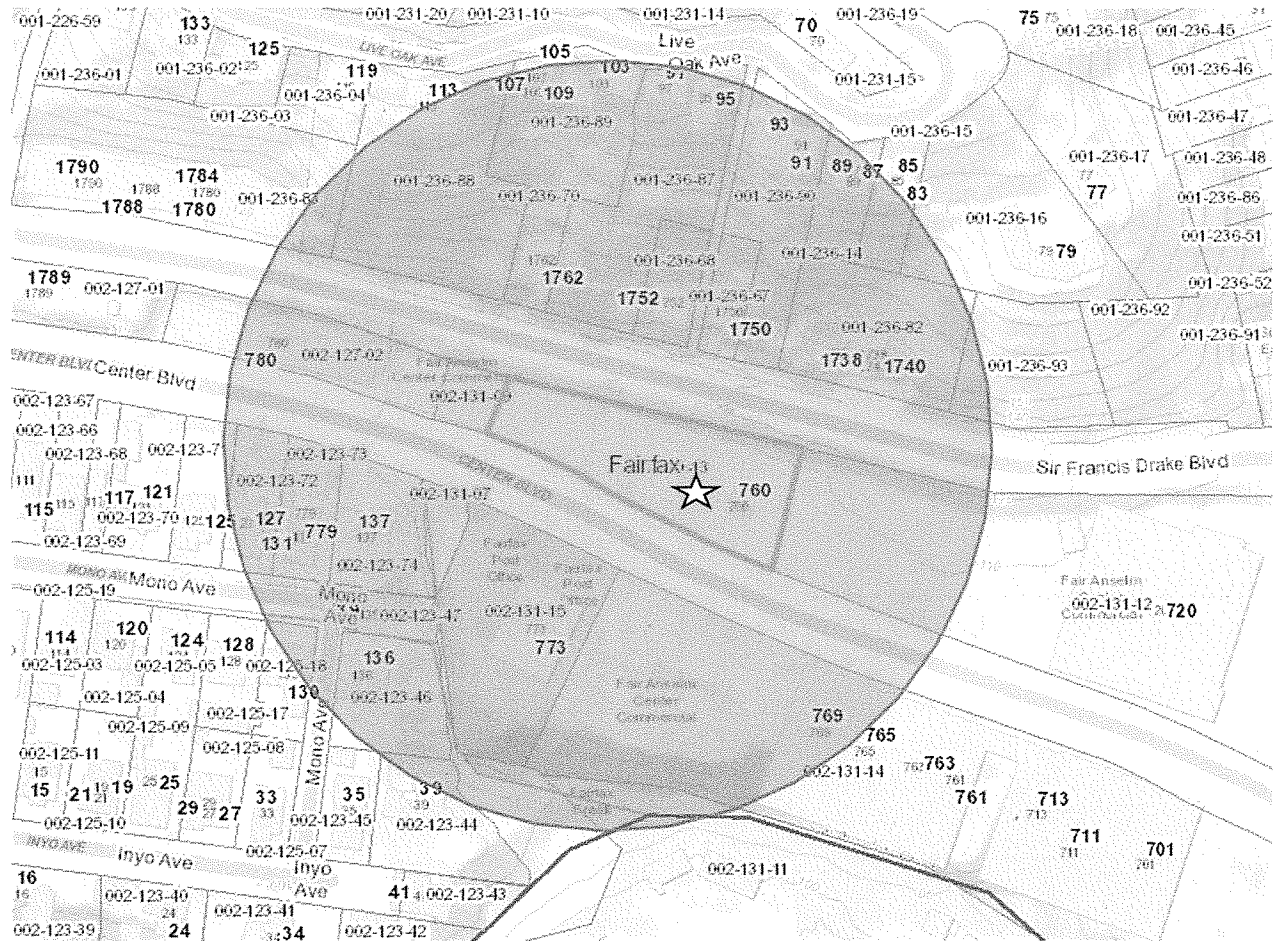


**TOWN OF FAIRFAX  
STAFF REPORT**  
Department of Planning and Building Services

**TO:** Fairfax Planning Commission  
**DATE:** September 21, 2017  
**FROM:** Michelle Levenson, Assistant Planner  
**LOCATION:** 760 Center Boulevard; Assessor's Parcel No. 002-131-13  
**ZONING:** Central Commercial CC Zone  
**PROJECT:** Permanent Business Identification Sign  
**ACTION:** Exemption to Sign Permit Regulations; Application # 17-30  
**APPLICANT:** Richard Dowd  
**OWNER:** Rich Hall  
**CEQA STATUS:** Categorically exempt, § 15305(a).



**760 Center Boulevard**

## **BACKGROUND**

The project site is the location of the Java Hut, a drive-through coffee kiosk located at 760 Center Boulevard. On March 20, 2014, the Planning Commission issued a Conditional Use and Design Review Permit(s) to demolish the existing 200-square-foot kiosk and two, drive-up window coffee cart enclosure, and install a 320-square-foot, four-window, drive-up structure with a 160-square-foot canopy and a 350-square-foot trellis structure above a 500-square-foot outdoor seating area. (Planning Application 14-06).

## **DISCUSSION**

The applicant proposes to install two (2) permanent identification signs along the north and south sides of the new building. The proposed signs would each be 2-feet-wide and 6.16-feet-long (each 12.32 square feet). The signs would be fabricated of powder-coated steel and mounted in a steel box frame with jet cut steel letters mounted in "space off black". The text would read "Java Hut" and the font color would be "sunrise red". The signs would be illuminated by two rows of LED lights located on the top and bottom of the sign box front edge surround. The light source would be in front of the individual sign letters and would project light onto the front of the letters. The signs would not be internally illuminated.

## **REQUIRED DISCRETIONARY APPROVALS**

With regard to the purpose and intent of the sign regulations Town Code Section 17.064.010 states, "...to protect the ... general welfare of the town...the design of all signs will be compatible with the town's unique character...protect and enhance the town's natural setting and small-scale residential character...protect the high-quality of architectural design of the newer buildings...".

Town Code Section 17.064064.050 states that two permanent business identification signs are allowed, given that one of those signs is projecting. The applicant proposes to place two signs on the walls of the building, therefore an exemption to the sign regulations is required.

While the material and background color of the proposed sign would harmonize with the wood and stone materials of the new building as well as the steel of the outdoor arbor, Staff believes that the "sunrise red" color of the text does not "protect and enhance the town's natural setting" and does not "protect the high-quality of architectural design of the newer buildings" as directed by the Town's Sign regulations. Staff requested additional information from the applicant regarding the use of the materials and color of the sign. In a letter dated August 30, 2017, the applicant states that the font and color are the same as those used in the original Java Hut signs that had existed for over 20 years and are therefore "a tribute to the buildings past". (Attachment A)

Based on the Town's records, a sign permit was issued on December 4, 1996, for the Java Hut. The permit indicates that the sign text was to be "dark-green letters". (Attachment B) The Town has no record of authorizing a sign at this location with the proposed red lettering.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

1. Open the public hearing and take testimony.
2. Close the public hearing.
3. Approve Sign Application No. 17-30 subject to the following conditions: (1) the sign copy color shall be revised to a color that complements the natural materials and hues of the new building and shall be subject to approval by the Director of Planning and Building Services; and (2) After the Director of Planning and Building Services approves the revised sign font color, the applicant shall obtain a Building Permit for sign installation.

## **ATTACHMENTS**

- A. Applicant's Additional Information
- B. December 6, 1996-Notice of Design Review Board Action

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**RD Architecture**

27 Creek Rd. Fairfax CA 94930 (415) 256-9131

TOWN OF FAIRFAX

August 30, 2017

AUG 30 2017

**Michelle Levenson**Town of Fairfax  
Assistant Planner  
142 Bolinas Road  
Fairfax, CA 94930  
P: (415) 453-1584

RECEIVED

APN: 002-131-13  
Project Address: 760 Center Boulevard  
Description: Java Hut Sign Permit Application**Dear Michelle;**

Per your letter requesting additional information see my comment as noted below;

*(2) Project Information-Sign Illumination and Sign Design*

Please verify whether the signs would be internally illuminated. Historically, the Planning Commission has been very selective in granting approval of internally illuminated signs. In addition, please explain how the proposed signs complement the architecture of the building and “protect the high quality of architectural design of ... newer buildings ...”. (Town Code Section 17.064.010)

The sign is lit by two rows of LED strip lights located on the top and the bottom of the sign “box” front edge surround (see Section A-A on attached plans). The light source is in front of the individual signs letters and projects light onto the front of the letters and is therefore not internally illuminated.

The proposed signs complement the buildings architectural design by incorporating a steel “box beam” similar to other steel elements incorporated into the design e.g., the steel canopy at the building and the steel trellises in the landscape and seating areas. The steel sign is painted black to tie into the other steel features providing continuity. The sign letters are the exact same font and color from the previous Java Hut sign that existed for over 20 years and are a tribute to the buildings past.

Sincerely,

*Richard T. Dowd*Richard T. Dowd  
RD ArchitectureATTACHMENT 



# TOWN OF FAIRFAX

142 BOLINAS ROAD, FAIRFAX, CALIFORNIA 94930  
(415) 453-1584 / FAX (415) 453-1618

December 6, 1996

Richard Carson  
760 Center Boulevard  
Fairfax, CA. 94930

## NOTICE OF DESIGN REVIEW BOARD ACTION

Re: Java Hut - 760 Center Boulevard; application for design review and a sign application to expand an existing commercial building and erect a new business identification sign; Richard Carson, applicant/owner; application # 96-DR-10 and 96-S-7; AP # 2-131-12; CH Zone; CEQA cat. ex. sec. #'s 15311(a) and 15301.

Dear Mr. Carson,

At their December 4, 1996, meeting, the Fairfax Design Review Board approved the above referenced applications subject to the following conditions:

1. The applicant must obtain a building permit that complies with all the requirements of the Marin County Health Department, Fairfax Building Official and the Ross Valley Fire Department prior to the start of construction.
2. If the business ever closes, the addition shall be removed by either the business owners or the property owners.
3. The sliding glass doors and windows shall be bronze in color.

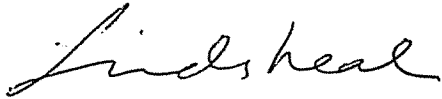
## GENERAL INFORMATION

There is a five calendar day appeal period during which any citizen dissatisfied with a decision of the Fairfax Design Review Board can appeal that decision to the Fairfax Planning Commission. Contact the Fairfax Planning Staff for information on how to appeal a Design Review Board decision.

**ATTACHMENT B**

If you have any questions regarding this matter, please feel free to contact the Fairfax Planning Services Department.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Linda Neal". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned to the left of the typed name.

Linda Neal  
Senior Planner