



CITY OF MONTCLAIR  
PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES  
REGULAR ADJOURNED MEETING  
April 22, 2019

COUNCIL CHAMBERS  
5111 Benito Street, Montclair, California 91763

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**CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Rowley called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Commissioner Martinez led those present in the salute to the flag.

**ROLL CALL**

Present: Chair Rowley, Commissioners Martinez and Sahagun, City Planner/Planning Manager Diaz, Assistant Director of Housing/Planning Manager Caldwell, Associate Planner Nemeth, and Deputy City Attorney Holdaway

Absent: Vice Chair Flores

**MINUTES**

The minutes from the March 25, 2019, regular meeting were presented for approval. Commissioner Sahagun moved to approve, Commissioner Martinez seconded, there being no opposition to the motion, the motion passed 3-0.

**ORAL AND WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS**

None.

## AGENDA ITEMS

### a. PUBLIC HEARING – CASE NUMBER 2019-02

(continued from the March 25, 2019 meeting)

Project Address: 5060 Montclair Plaza Lane

Project Applicant: 5060 Montclair Plaza Lane Owner, LLC

Project Planner: Christine Sanchez Caldwell, Assistant Director of Housing/Planning Manager

Request: Conditional Use Permit to allow construction of a new electronic message center sign, a variance for the installation of additional signs, and a Precise Plan of Design to amend the existing sign program

Assistant Director of Housing/Planning Manager Caldwell reviewed the staff report. The applicant is requesting four approvals: (1) a Conditional Use Permit for installation of a new Electronic Message Center (EMC) digital monument sign to replace the existing pylon sign, (2) a Variance to allow for an increased height of the EMC digital monument sign and an increased area for the electronic message screen, (3) a Variance for the installation of additional freeway secondary tenant identification monument signs for regional mall identification purposes, and (4) a Precise Plan of Design to amend the existing Master Sign program for the Montclair Place regional mall.

Commissioner Martinez commented the project was beautiful and commended everyone for all the hard work that staff and the mall has been doing.

Chair Rowley asked if the new EMC would be similar to the Citizens Business Bank Arena sign. Assistant Director of Housing/Planning Manager Caldwell replied she thought the Citizens sign may be larger. She pointed out that this sign will be a little bit shorter than the current height of the existing *Montclair Plaza* pylon sign and narrower by roughly four feet. Commissioner Martinez asked about the content of the sign. He realized there will be some tenants displaying their logos and wondered if people will pay to have ads on the EMC sign? Ms. Caldwell replied this approval is restricted to on-site advertising for existing tenants only. Commissioner Martinez asked if one of the tenants wished to advertise a sale, would it be within the scope of the intention of the proposed EMC sign? Ms. Caldwell replied yes, she believed it may be allowed.

Commissioner Sahagun stated he anticipates the Canyon Theater advertising its upcoming shows. To clarify a comment about the size of the proposed sign, he reiterated that this is a request to allow the sign to be 95 feet high, but was confused because the report states that the proposed new EMC sign will be shorter than what currently exists. Assistant Director of Housing/Planning Manager Caldwell apologized for the confusion, and stated that the current pylon sign is indeed 100 feet tall. She clarified that the EMC ordinance specifies EMC signs not be greater than 65 feet in height. Therefore, the applicant is requesting a Variance to allow for a 30-foot increase from the height restriction of the EMC ordinance. She was merely

advising the Commission that the proposed sign, upon construction, would be five feet shorter than the current pylon sign.

Commissioner Sahagun asked if staff heard from anyone from the public regarding the sign. Ms. Caldwell replied no. Notices were mailed to residences located within the required 300-foot notification radius of the project. Commissioner Sahagun stated it was a good-looking sign and that we need to do something to help the mall survive. He concluded by stating that if you go to the two malls in Ontario and Rancho Cucamonga, they are busy all the time, so he believes we need to help advertise the mall. He ended by stating that whoever designed the signs did an excellent job.

Commissioner Sahagun suggested that the existing sign be donated rather than scrapping it and recalled in the past that some signs were donated to a sign museum in Los Angeles. Chair Rowley mentioned that the existing sign has a real homegrown attachment to it because it was placed there by Ontario Neon and, at the time the sign was developed, Paul Eaton, Jr. was on staff with Ontario Neon and he is somewhat attached to the sign.

Chair Rowley opened the public hearing.

Bruce Culp, resident located at 9016 Sycamore Avenue, Montclair, California, wanted to echo what everyone else was saying that it is a beautiful sign and was looking forward to seeing it constructed. Mr. Culp added that he and other residents of The Paseos are frequenting and enjoying all the new places at the mall and are looking forward to new things coming. He asked whether there was any consideration as far as earthquake standards for the sign. Assistant Director of Housing/Planning Manager Caldwell commented that seismic and/or wind concerns regarding the signs are addressed by the Building Division during plan check. City Planner/Planning Manager Diaz commented that all the signs will require building permits and structural analysis which are all taken into consideration before a permit is issued.

Hearing no requests to comment, Chair Rowley closed the public hearing.

Commissioner Sahagun moved that, based on the evidence submitted, a finding is made that the project is categorically exempt from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Section 153302(b) and 15303(e) Class 2, in that the new digital monument sign and three secondary tenant identification monument signs will be located on the same site as the existing sign replaced, and adjoining landscape area, and will have substantially the same purpose and capacity as the structure replaced, including but not limited to the replacement of a commercial structure with a new structure of substantially the same size, purpose, and capacity; and, accessory (appurtenant) structures. Further, the project does not result in the physical expansion of any existing building and the project site (regional mall) is in an area where all public services and facilities (including ample supply of off-street parking) are available to allow for maximum development allowed by the underlying commercial zoning and the regional commercial land use designation assigned by the Montclair General Plan, seconded by Commissioner Martinez, there being no opposition to the motion, the motion passed 3-0.

Commissioner Martinez moved to approve a Conditional Use Permit to allow for the installation of a new 95' high by 25' wide electronic message center (EMC) freeway digital monument sign to replace the existing pylon sign to read "montclair place," a Variance to allow for an increased height of the EMC digital monument sign to 95 feet and an increased electronic message screen area of 1,200 square feet, a Variance for the installation of three additional freestanding secondary tenant identification monument signs for regional mall identification purposes to complement the existing Master Sign Program for Montclair Place, and a Precise Plan of Design request under Case No. 2019-02, adding a freeway EMC digital monument sign, three secondary tenant identification monument signs, and a 165' long and 11'8" high illuminated ledge sign reading "**MONTCLAIR PLACE**" to the existing Master Sign Program under Case No. 2017-05 "A," subject to the conditions of approval contained in Resolution No. 19-1928, Commissioner Sahagun seconded, there being no opposition to the motion, the motion passed 3-0.

- a. **PUBLIC HEARING - CASE NUMBER 2018-21**  
Project Address: 10830 Ada Avenue  
Project Applicant: JNT Group LLC  
Project Planner: Yvonne Nemeth, Associate Planner  
Request: Precise Plan of Design to construct an addition to an existing industrial building

Associate Planner Nemeth reviewed the staff report and mentioned that members of the applicant's team, including the environmental consultant, who travelled all the way from Oregon, the traffic engineer, and Sylvia Tran from Qbek were available to answer any specific questions about the project.

Commissioner Sahagun commented that it meant a lot that the applicant had his team attend the meeting.

Commissioner Martinez clarified that there is already an existing building there. Was the acreage part of the five acres and that is why CEQA was triggered. Associate Planner Nemeth replied the reason why CEQA was triggered is that the applicants have to meet certain categories under Class 32 in order to obtain that exemption. While reviewing the project, it became apparent that CEQA would come into play because the project site exceeded five acres in size. Commissioner Martinez asked if that was an issue for the first project built there. City Planner/Planning Manager Diaz stated the project was approved a long time ago and that offhand he could not tell the Commissioners what the specific environmental review requirements were. Commissioner Martinez asked that when the first building was built, were there any archeological findings that staff had been made aware of. City Planner/Planning Manager Diaz replied he did not recall any. He also noted that CEQA laws have become more stringent. Commissioner Sahagun remembered approving many of the surrounding buildings but did not realize it was so far back in time. City Planner/Planning Manager Diaz stated that there are specific CEQA requirements now that have become more stringent and that we

ensure that all of our projects are in complete compliance with all CEQA laws, rules, and regulations.

Commissioner Sahagun asked about the area across Ada Avenue, the County area, and whether we should be considering annexing the property into the City. City Planner/Planning Manager Diaz replied that the area across the street is in the county and subject to their jurisdiction and approval processes. At some point in the future, that may become a part of the City through an annexation effort, but at this point, there are no plans to annex the area. Commissioner Sahagun asked because they surrounding properties are in the county, are they notified and able to comment on the project? City Planner/Planning Manager Diaz stated the property owners do receive a notice of public hearing because they are part of the public notification radius requirements and they have the opportunity to comment on the project. Commissioner Sahagun asked if anyone responded to the notifications. Associate Planner Nemeth replied that staff only heard from, and replied to, the Gabrielino Tribe.

Chair Rowley opened the public hearing.

Hearing no requests to comment, Chair Rowley closed the public hearing.

Commissioner Martinez moved and Chair Rowley seconded for environmental review, to take the following actions as responsible agency:

1. Certify the Commission has reviewed and considered the environmental assessment based upon the findings and proposed mitigation measures in the Initial Study prepared for the project, and that there will be no significant impact on the environment as a result of the proposed construction of the 69,182-square-foot industrial/warehouse building expansion and associated parking and landscaping improvements; and
2. Adopt the proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration and finding that there will be a DeMinimis impact on fish and wildlife; and
3. Direct staff to file a Notice of Determination (NOD) and the applicant to pay appropriate fees within five (5) days of this action;

There being no opposition to the motion, the motion passed 3-0.

4. Commissioner Sahagun moved to approve the Precise Plan of Design request for the site plan, elevations, conceptual landscape plan, colors and materials associated with the proposed 69,182 square-foot industrial/warehouse building expansion and associated site development improvements on the 6.15-acres site at 10830 Ada Avenue, per the submitted plans and as described in the staff report, subject to conditions of approval contained in Planning Commission Resolution No. 19-1927, Commissioner Martinez seconded, there being no opposition to the motion, the motion passed 3-0.

## INFORMATION ITEMS

City Planner/Planning Manager Diaz thanked the Commission for attending the General Plan Update Design Charrette and was pleased the Commissioners had the opportunity to participate in the process. Staff believes that many good ideas came out of the week-long charrette as to future development in the City and how to most effectively approach the General Plan update process.

City Planner/Planning Manager Diaz reminded the Commission that the second Planning Commission meeting in May is cancelled because staff will be out of town attending the ICSC convention, and Assistant Director of Housing/Planning Manager Caldwell's son is graduating from college so she, too, will be out of town attending graduation ceremonies.

Commissioner Martinez thanked Mayor Dutrey and Council Member Johnson, who was in the audience, for attending the meeting and for their support.

Mayor Dutrey announced that the City would be making appointments to the Planning Commission because of Council Member Johnson's appointment to the City Council and with the impending retirement of Vice Chair Flores. Mayor Pro Tem Raft and Council Member Johnson will be on the interview Committee and will make recommendations for appointment of the new Commissioners. He also wanted to announce that he used to be the liaison to the Planning Commission, but it will now be Council Member Johnson. Mayor Dutrey concluded by stating that great things are happening in Montclair and there is more to come—and that the Commissioners' leadership in is very important.

Chair Rowley adjourned the meeting at 7:41 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Laura Embree  
Recording Secretary