

**CITY OF FOLSOM
PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES
June 15, 2011
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS
6:30 p.m.
50 Natoma Street
Folsom, California 95630**

CALL TO ORDER PLANNING COMMISSION: Chair Greg Eldridge; Vice Chair Ross Jackson; Commissioners: Thomas Scott, Dave Benevento, Lance Klug, Brian Martell

CITIZEN COMMUNICATION: None

MINUTES: Minutes of June 1, 2011 were approved as submitted.

NEW BUSINESS

1. **PN11-100, Palladio at Broadstone Sign Criteria Modification, Planned Development Permit Modification, 3001 East Bidwell Street**

Senior Planner Steve Banks introduced Rob Anderson, Field Paoli and Architect for the project, who gave a brief PowerPoint presentation regarding the sign program proposed for Palladio. Mr. Anderson stated that they were trying to create a classic European elegance. Important principals for the sign program include design variety, interesting colors, a mixture of colors, lighting (very important), and elements of interest (i.e. Elliott's art program). To make it a successful retail space each tenant needed an individual identity. He felt that they have created a rich palette of materials, color, art, fabrics, awning, light fixtures, signage, etc. There will be a variety of sign types by district that would give the area a pedestrian texture. The sign criteria will divide the site up into a number of different zones and there were different criteria for different signs depending on where they were located. Neon in a pedestrian environment adds color and interest that can't be added by modern sign techniques and is a very traditional material. Examples of neon in retail signage were shared with the Commission.

Senior Planner Banks gave the staff report stating that before the Commission was an application for a sign criteria modification for Palladio at Broadstone. A slide showing the project site was shared with the Commission. Key detail modifications for the sign criteria include: Tenant Signage Allowed in Each Zone; Signage Details and Specifications; Construction Requirements and General Signage Design Guidelines. Senior Planner Banks added that currently in the Sign Criteria, neon, LED, and similar lighting technologies have to come before the Planning Commission on a case-by-case basis. The applicant is proposing to create framework/guidelines so that they can use these technologies without coming before the Commission for every one of the signs. The language to the sign criteria would read, "All exposed neon, LED, or similar material must be backed with an opaque coating, and be approved in writing by the Landlord. All housings and post for exposed neon, LED, or similar lighting material signs must be painted out to match the sign background immediately behind."

Senior Planner Banks noted that there was an opaque coating on the neon and it also must have a background that would match the sign – it will not be an exposed neon tube with nothing around it. A tenant signage matrix was shared with the Commission. Senior Planner Banks noted that each tenant would have different guidelines and numbers of signs based on the size and scale of the tenant space.

Senior Planner Banks stated that it has been a policy of the City to review neon, LED, etc., on a case-by-case basis. The Folsom Municipal Code does not prohibit or dictate what types of lighting that could be used for signage. Examples of neon signs found in the City were shared with the Commission (Mel's, Tahoe Joe's, Palladio 16, and Taco Loco). In approving these signs, the Commission considered location of the signs (i.e. was it located next to an open space parkway or residential neighborhoods). The Commission also considered brightness, glare, possible negative impacts, sign compatibility and the overall architectural appeal of the signs. Staff also visited the Roseville region and other areas of Sacramento at night and took over 100 photographs of different types of signs. Staff also looked at the different lighting technologies (i.e.

neon, LED, etc.). Examples of signs from around the region were shared with the Commission, as well as current signage at Palladio.

Senior Planner Banks added that a number of the restaurants at Palladio will have outdoor seating; so the outdoor night life will be quite vibrant, and staff believes that signage was a key component. The illumination of Palladio creates a bright, vibrant atmosphere which encourages pedestrian activity at night. Most of the signs are focused on the interior to the site not on the exterior. From a location perspective, staff did not feel that the signage would have negative impact to the surrounding area. Staff further felt that it was an appropriate location for this type of lighting and the sign criteria had done a very good job in detailing this. Staff recommended approval of the sign criteria program.

Senior Planner Banks referenced the green sheet handout, stating that there were a number of statements in the proposed criteria that allowed the applicant to approve signs without staff approval, and staff has modified that language to reinforce that staff does and will review all signs.

Commissioner Martell commended staff on a good presentation.

Commissioner Jackson reference the photograph that staff felt was an example of "what not to do" and asked if there was going to be any regulation against "icicle" lighting and if temporary outdoor lighting would be addressed.

Senior Planner Banks replied that he was not aware of any additional lighting being proposed for the outdoor seating. He suggested that the applicant address the question. The outdoor areas were fairly well illuminated with the existing lighting.

Chair Eldridge reference the slide that showed the different lighting zones, asking what kind of lighting would be allowed along East Bidwell Street – would there be large exterior, neon-backed signs or would it just be limited to within the interior of the development.

Senior Planner Banks replied that as it was currently written, there was no limitation as to which businesses could or could not have that type of illumination. There were very few buildings actually on East Bidwell – a Chicago Fire sign would be on East Bidwell. That's not to say that every business would have neon- or LED-type of lighting.

Chair Eldridge added that he didn't want to see big wall-mounted neon signs along the big flat expanse of the wall. He added that the Commission has denied businesses the use of neon and he wondered what this would open up, especially along the commercial corridors.

Senior Planner Banks suggested that a modification could be discussed.

Commissioner Scott agreed with the Chair, stating that he didn't have a problem with the lighting on the interior, but wanted to know what could be expected on the exterior of the site along the thoroughfares.

Price Walker, Elliott Homes, stated that he was in complete agreement with the changes on the green sheet handout. He stated that based on the long-term relationship, he requested trust from the Commission. He stated that they would review all signs before submitting them for staff approval and he didn't want to see large neon signs on the exterior of the project site. He stated that the Chicago Fire sign would be out on East Bidwell, but it was very well done.

In response to Chair Eldridge, Mr. Walker stated that structures such as the parking garage and the stand-alone monument signs would never have neon signage. Mr. Walker added that this was tenant signage criteria only. The common monument-type signs have already been approved by the Commission.

Senior Planner Banks agreed stating that all the site-wide signage has already been installed.

Mr. Walker pointed out the structures that were along East Bidwell Street (i.e. Bank, Chicago Fire, and future buildings).

Commissioner Jackson noted that an interior tenant (not one of the four along East Bidwell Street) may want to put a neon sign on East Bidwell Street.

Mr. Walker replied that they had no intention of doing what Commission Jackson noted. Mr. Banks added that under the criteria a business is not allowed to put a sign on someone else's building – no offsite signage would be allowed.

In response to Chair Eldridge, Senior Planner Banks replied that a future owner could not change the sign criteria without coming back to the Commission.

Commissioner Martell asked if tenants would be allowed to put stand-alone neon signs up in their windows. He gave Mel's Diner as an example.

Mr. Walker noted that there was specific language about window treatments in the sign program and that would not be allowed.

Commissioner Jackson asked when LED lighting would be used in lieu of neon.

Mr. Walker explained that LED was a newer technology; there weren't very many people that have the craftsmanship to do the old-style neon. LED lasts longer and is fairly maintenance free. It doesn't have the same kind of sharp look as neon, but it's very similar. Commissioner Jackson added that LED was also 70% energy efficient.

In response to Commissioner Klug regarding regulating tenants on window signage, Planning Manager Johnson stated that the code was silent on this issue, but the criteria could be modified or a condition added if it were the desire of the Commission to prohibit interior neon signs. The sign code only prohibits interior signage in excess of 25% of the window space.

Mr. Walker agreed that language could be added to prohibit interior window neon signage. In response to Commissioner Martell, Mr. Walker listed some of the tenants that would be opening at Palladio.

Commissioner Scott clarified the process for signs at Palladio would start with the tenant submitting a sign for Elliott's approval and then it would be forwarded to City staff for approval.

Commissioner Jackson asked about setting precedence and asked if other centers in the area would be allowed neon signage. Senior Planner Banks replied that if another center wanted neon lighting, they would have to come before the Commission and make their case, and the Commission would make the decision. Chair Eldridge agreed stating that there was an issue of fairness. He rationalized that this was an entertainment district and most of the signs would be interior facing - Palladio was unique.

Chair Eldridge opened the Public Hearing; no one came forward to speak so the Public Hearing was closed.

Commissioner Martell commended staff on preparing the Commission to make this decision.

Director Miller stated that it was important to recognize the work done by Senior Planner Banks and that staff was taking the Commission's role in design review very seriously.

Planning Manager Johnson suggested the following addition to Attachment 4 (Sign Criteria), page 9, under Item K, be modified as follows:

4. No internal lighted signs facing outward are allowed.

CHAIR ELDRIDGE MOVED TO APPROVE THE PLANNED DEVELOPMENT PERMIT MODIFICATION FOR THE PALLADIO AT BROADSTONE SIGN CRITERIA MODIFICATION PROJECT (PN11-100) AS ILLUSTRATED ON ATTACHMENT 4 WITH THE FOLLOWING FINDINGS: GENERAL FINDINGS "A" THROUGH "C," PLANNED DEVELOPMENT PERMIT AND FINDINGS "D" THROUGH "H;" AND THE

MODIFICATION TO PAGE 9 OF THE SIGN CRITERIA TO ADD THAT NO INTERNAL LIGHTED SIGNS FACING OUTWARD ARE ALLOWED.

COMMISSIONER BENEVENTO SECONDED THE MOTION WHICH CARRIED WITH THE FOLLOWING VOTE:

AYES:	JACKSON, BENEVENTO, KLUG, MARTELL, ELDRIDGE, SCOTT
NOES:	NONE
ABSTAIN:	NONE
ABSENT:	NONE

2. **PN11-063, Chick-Fil-A Conditional Use Permit and Planned Development Permit Modification, 2675 East Bidwell Street**

Associate Planner Kei Zushi gave the staff report, stating that the application before the Commission is a Conditional Use Permit and Planned Development Permit Modification for Chick-Fil-A. In May of last year, the Planning Commission approved Sonic Burger for the same site, but the approval has expired. A site vicinity map was shared with the Commission. Commercial development is located across the street from the subject site and to the southeast is the Broadstone Market Place. An aerial photo of the site was shared with the Commission. Associate Planner Zushi pointed out a driveway that would be serving as primary access for the project. The site is partially developed with landscape, parking lot and other site improvements associated with Home Depot. Key project details include: 4,294-square-foot restaurant building; drive-thru components with dual order points; 90 indoor and 28 outdoor patio seats; site improvements and modifications to the configuration of the parking lot as well as landscaping area; lot-line adjustment; and hours of operation would be Monday-Thursday, 6:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m., Friday & Saturday, 6:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m., and closed on Sundays.

A revised site plan was shared with the Commission showing the project driveway from East Bidwell Street, proposed enter/exit driveway and proposed exit only driveway.

Existing surrounding uses are predominately commercial; the nearest single-family residential is 700 feet from the project site – therefore staff felt that the site was very compatible with existing uses.

As part of the project, the City's traffic consultant looked at onsite access and circulation. Recommendations included: staff to monitor the East Bidwell Street/Project Driveway intersection to determine the necessity of prohibiting inbound left turns from East Bidwell in the future; installing "do not enter" signs at the exit to the drive-thru lane and at the "exit only" driveway from the project parking lot at the southern end of the site; "stop" signs and corresponding pavement markings at both exits from the project site; centerline pavement markings on the Broadstone Power Center circulation aisle; and landscaping be kept low so as not to impede visibility. The consultant also recommended that the drive-thru lane be able to accommodate at least seven cars. Staff recommended that a condition be added that should the queuing of cars at the drive-thru area become a problem that Chick-Fil-A would provide staff to guide the traffic to ensure traffic flow.

Chair Eldridge clarified that the applicant would have staff direct traffic so that cars that are parked in the stalls could get out.

Principal Engineer Krahn added that staff had concerns whether there would be enough room to allow exiting and not have the cars in the drive-thru lane blocking parking stalls.

The proposed landscape plan, floor plan, building elevations and site photographs were shared with the Commission. Staff recommended approval of the project.

There was a brief discussion related to site design criteria and whether the building would "blend in" with the center.

Commission Klug voiced concern about the parking and traffic circulation of the project site and asked if the Commission could approve a variance to improve circulation.

In response to Commissioner Klug, Planning Manager Johnson explained that variance requirements would not apply at this location because it was in a PD zone. The Commission could reduce parking without having to make variance findings. There was reciprocal parking across the entire parcel.

Commissioner Scott shared Commissioner Klug's concerns – he supported the project, and felt that it would be a lot more successful than what people realized. He asked for clarification with regard to the outside dining; it seemed to face the drive-thru lane with a small wall between the two.

With regard to parking, Associate Planner Zushi explained that the applicant had to abide by the real estate agreement it had with Home Depot.

Don Ikler, Development Manager for Chick-Fil-A, stated that Home Depot sold this parcel to Sonic, and they are under a contract with Sonic to purchase the site with very tight timelines. In addition, they had to go back to Home Depot to ask for a small additional piece of property. They have to self-park – that was their agreement with Home Depot. He pointed out that there was a perception that they were going into a smaller site than they actually were – the site was reconfigured. He discussed studies done at other Chick-Fil-A facilities with regard to stacking and parking, and how they would handle any potential problems. He concurred with the conditions of approval.

In response to Chair Eldridge, Mr. Ikler stated that they would install the "bot-dots" to delineate the lanes leading to the drive-through.

A discussion ensued regarding possible remedies to alleviate the issue of cars queuing that would restrict other vehicles from exiting the site.

Debra Kerr, Development Consultant with Chick-Fil-A, explained that pursuant to the REA with Home Depot, they could not go below 46 parking spaces. She added backups, when they occurred, would be of a short duration, and it was handled at all the other Chick-Fil-A sites on a regular basis - they will do what is necessary to take care of the customers.

In response to Commissioner Jackson, Mr. Ikler replied that deliveries occur early in the mornings.

In response to Commissioner Scott, Mr. Ikler explained that the half wall between the outdoor seating and the drive-thru was for protection of the customers.

Chair Eldridge opened the Public Hearing; no one came forward to speak so the Public Hearing was closed.

COMMISSIONER KLUG MOVED TO APPROVE A PLANNED DEVELOPMENT PERMIT MODIFICATION FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF CHICK-FIL-A DRIVE-THRU RESTAURANT PROJECT, WHICH INCLUDES DEVELOPMENT OF A 4,296-SQUARE-FOOT CHICK-FIL-A DRIVE-THRU RESTAURANT AS ILLUSTRATED ON ATTACHMENTS 4 THROUGH 9 AND 11; AND MOVED TO APPROVE A CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT TO ALLOW THE CHICK-FIL-A DRIVE-THRU RESTAURANT TO OPERATE AT THE PROPERTY LOCATED AT 2675 EAST BIDWELL STREET WITH THE FOLLOWING FINDINGS AND CONDITIONS: GENERAL FINDINGS "A" AND "B," CEQA FINDING "C," PLANNED DEVELOPMENT PERMIT MODIFICATION FINDINGS "D" THRU "J," CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT FINDING "K;" AND CONDITIONS 1 THRU 50 ADDING ADDITIONAL DELINEATION AT THE DRIVE-THRU ENTRANCE.

COMMISSIONER SCOTT SECONDED THE MOTION WHICH CARRIED WITH THE FOLLOWING VOTE:

AYES:	JACKSON, MARTELL, BENEVENTO, KLUG, ELDRIDGE, SCOTT
NOES:	NONE
ABSTAIN:	NONE
ABSENT:	NONE

REPORTS:

Planning Commission/Director:

Director Miller briefly discussed the previous night's approval of the SOI EIR/EIS at City Council.

Commission Martell requested that Code Enforcement contact businesses that were abusing the use of banners for their businesses, noting that some banners were up as long as six months.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:06 p.m.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,



Omega Deppe, Administrative Assistant

APPROVED:



CHAIR GREG ELDRIDGE