

LAKE COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

MINUTES

REGULAR MEETING

October 26, 2017

Commission Members

P John Hess, District I
P Bob Malley, District II
P Eddie Crandell, District III
P Matt Levesque, District IV
P Daniel Suenram, District V

Staff Members

P Robert Massarelli, CDD Director
P Michalyn DelValle, Principal Planner
A Byron Turner, Principal Planner
P Shanda Harry, Deputy County Counsel
P Danae Bowen, Office Assistant III

9:38 a.m. Public Hearing on consideration of a Major Use Permit (UP 17-10) and Design Review (DR 17-05). The project applicant is RICHARD KUEHN proposing an off-site billboard sign containing two sign faces, each 200 square feet in area. The project is located at 13550 E. State Highway 20, Clearlake Oaks and further described as APN 006-510-31. Environmental Evaluation: Exempt. (Eric Porter)

Eric Porter, Associate Planner, provided background information and a power point presentation of the project application.

Comm. Malley said the sign at this site, which was approved by the Planning Commission was smaller and for specific reasons and there was no intent for more signage to go into place there. He said if we need to, we can review the previous hearings staff report to clarify the conditions of the signage details.

Comm. Crandell spoke to the CEQA process and that it is not going to be looked into if we deny this project. He asked if it is proposed the same way it is written and when they apply again, will it still be exempt from CEQA or will they have to apply again.

Mr. Porter said CEQA is only applicable if there is an approval recommendation given to a project and if the Commission decides to reject or deny this sign; CEQA is not applicable, because there is no purpose in doing the CEQA review.

Comm. Crandell said if the applicant appeals and they go further and its denied again, then they reapply, will they still be exempt.

Mr. Porter said if it ever reaches a point where the sign would be approved then staff would have apply CEQA, but if it continues to be denied, there is no point in applying CEQA to it.

Exhibit C

Michalyn DelValle, Principal Planner, said if they received a brand new application, then staff would need to evaluate it.

Comm. Hess said for consistency sake, this Commission would have to deny this application as the prior application was denied. He said the circumstances presented by planning staff are essentially the same and he thought it was useful, that it would clarify the Board of Supervisors position on signs going forward. He said the Commission is in an awkward situation for signs going into certain locations and in Mr. Kuhen's situation there has already been a sign approved. He added that Area Plans are advisory in nature and do not carry the same standing that the General Plan does, yet citizens in good faith have spent in some cases multiple years putting those area plans together and in some cases it has led to violent, angry confrontations about which prevails. He said for consistency sake, the Commission would vote to deny, the same way they denied the previous item.

Comm. Suenram asked Greg Redeker who spoke on the last item, if three quarter plywood is standard for billboard signs. He said when plywood is left out in the elements for years it seems to deteriorate.

Greg Redeker, Stott Outdoor Advertising, said that they use MDO, which has a resin imbedded in the face and the panels are reinforced with tubular steel around the edge, and they typically last fifteen to twenty years before they need to be replaced.

9:51 a.m. Opened Public Hearing

Richard Kuehn, the applicant, spoke to the sign at his site, which was previously approved by the Planning Commission was an existing onsite advertising sign and one of the limitations from the Planning Commission was that it not be enlarged. He said he was advertising his vineyard on the sign and there was also offsite advertising on his sign and the purpose was to change the offsite advertising sign and put their name on his sign and that was the rationale behind that application. He said there was an existing sign there that was permitted for onsite advertising and they simply changed it to offsite advertising. He said he knows that offsite and billboards are synonymous terms under the Zoning Ordinances, but in many ways it needs to be remembered that you are simply advertising someone else's vineyard.

Mr. Kuehn said what he is proposing on this sign is slightly larger in square footage and what was done before they allowed and the area below the sign to be used for change in copy, so any special events that were being done at the winery, they could advertise and also the hours of operation that would change throughout the seasons could be advertised in that area. He said the sign will be approximately 150 square feet and he was proposing 200 square feet, not including the lower portion, because it is setback further from the highway and it is not as easy to see. He said there is one single 78 watt panel light in the middle and on both sides and the same variegated steel structure. He further described the sign and said the design is not to intentionally look like a billboard sign and also reviewed permitted uses.

9:59 a.m. Closed Public Hearing

Comm. Hess thought the presentations for the project were well prepared and informational. He said he anticipates what the Commission is about to do, but hopes that the applicants receives some clarification and guidance from the Board of Supervisors as a result of the Planning Commissions actions.

Comm. Suenram said he feels the same way as Comm. Hess and is looking forward to clarification on how we should treat these matters in the future and he is not necessarily opposed to billboard signs, but would like to like to have clarification and guidelines as to which way to move forward with these in the future.

Comm. Crandell said he appreciates what Mr. Kuehn has brought forth to the Commission and it was very professional and there were a lot of key points. He said along with direction from the Board of Supervisors he also urged direction from the folks that make the Area Plans to stimulate their minds to enhance or change the document to accommodate for the signs.

Comm. Crandell moved, 2nd by Comm. Levesque that the Planning Commission find that the Use Permit (UP 17-10) applied for by Richard Kuehn for an off-site sign proposed to be located at 13550 E. Highway 20, Clearlake Oaks does not meet the requirements of Lake County Zoning Ordinance Section 51.4 and therefore the Use Permit be denied with the findings listed in the staff report dated October 10, 2017.

USE PERMIT DENIAL 5 Ayes 0 Noes

Comm. Crandell moved, 2nd by Comm. Levesque that the Planning Commission find that the Design Review (DR 17-05) for an offsite sign (billboard) applied for by Richard Keuhn on the property located at 13350 E. Highway 20, Clearlake Oaks, does not meet the requirements of the Lake County Zoning Ordinance Section 54.5 and therefore the Design Review be denied with the findings listed in the staff report dated October 10, 2017.

DESIGN REVIEW DENIAL 5 Ayes 0 Noes

Comm. Malley noted that there is a seven (7) calendar day appeal period provided by the Lake County Zoning Ordinance.