

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**

9:06 a.m. Public Hearing on consideration of a Major Use Permit (UP 17-06) and Design Review (DR 17-07). The project applicants are LARRY & FRANCES MONTGOMERY proposing an off-site billboard sign containing two sign faces, each 300 square feet in area. The project is located at 2325 E. State Highway 20, Nice and further described as APN 004-055-37. Environmental Evaluation: Exempt. (Eric Porter)

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

Comm. Malley noted for the record that his colleagues were not part of the previous meetings over the last few years, and Commissioner Cliff Swetnam had a prepared statement when billboard signs were on the Agenda. He was against of all forms of highway signs, because they are an unattractive distraction and a detriment to the driving public. He said he knows that the Board of Supervisors at one point made a decision that they would not allow any new signage and wanted to eliminate the existing signage. He said the Commission has approved extensions of the use permits and he has not heard any further direction from the Board of Supervisors and he is looking for some direction on future and existing signage.

Robert Massarelli, Community Development Director, said staff is not aware of any further direction from the Board of Supervisors.

Comm. Levesque asked about the statement that Commissioner Swetnam said before each hearing, so that we can continue reading that statement. He agreed with former Comm. Swetnam and he was also opposed to the billboard signs for various reasons.

Comm. Hess also agreed with former Comm. Swetnam. He said he paid particular attention to the billboard signs on his way to the hearing today, because of the nature of the items on the agenda. He said there were many signs from Middletown to Lakeport and many are not well maintained.

He said that those are serious issues to consider, and appreciated the background about the Board of Supervisors position, because he was not aware of that.

Comm. Suenram agreed with the comments from the Comm. Hess and Levesque.

9:20 a.m. Opened Public Hearing

Greg Redeker, the applicant with Stott Outdoor Advertising, provided a power point presentation. He reviewed the requirements for spacing, size and lighting and that it is possible at this location. He pointed out the legislative findings, general plan and zoning of the subject property and the allowed uses with no use permit needed. He also reviewed the Upper Lake – Nice Area Plan.

Comm. Suenram asked if the signs will be used for local advertising.

Mr. Redeker said the vast majority of the signs are for Lake County businesses.

Comm. Hess spoke to the height of the signs, which are typically 20 feet in height and the Planning Commission would have to find that a 22 foot height for the sign to be in compliance in order for this to move forward.

Mr. Redeker said that it is unclear in the code on height limitations. He reviewed the standards for the height of the signs.

Mr. Porter stated what Mr. Redeker stated was true and that height limit can be twelve feet or less from the base of the sign. He said he could not find any total height limit, other than just the base of the sign, and they can exceed twenty feet, but it would need an exception by the Planning Commission.

Michalyn DelValle, Principal Planner, noted in conformance with the performance standards in the sign section of the Zoning Ordinance, it specifically sites: *“That signs permitted by this chapter shall conform to the size, location, height and other development, and performance standards established in the zone in which they are located.”* She added in the zoning district, the maximum height is twenty feet and that is the reason why they would need this exemption.

Comm. Suenram asked about square footage and if there was consideration for smaller signs with the same height.

Mr. Redeker said they could do smaller and one sign is 10’ x 30’ and the other is 10’ x 24’, he said that they chose the one that is shorter for this location. He said in the application materials, this is the same size as the one which currently exists in Upper Lake.

Comm. Hess asked how the signs were maintained.

Mr. Redeker said they maintain them on a regular basis and change the copy once a year. He said they do a ride inventory of their signs and determine if there are any maintenance issues, tree trimming, repainting and repairs and they get those taken care of in a timely manner.

Comm. Levesque said that the billboards are by nature designed to distract drivers to look at them, unlike businesses in the area. He said there has been some discussion on where the Board of Supervisors sits on the issue of signs. He said if this were to be denied by the Planning Commission, it would probably be appealed to the Board of Supervisors, which would provide the Planning Commission an opportunity to get a response from the Board as to their direction regarding signs.

9:35 a.m. Closed Public Hearing

Comm. Crandell moved, 2nd by Comm. Levesque that the Planning Commission find that the Use Permit (UP 17-06) applied for by Larry and Frances Montgomery for an off-site sign proposed to be located at 2325 E. Highway 20, Nice, 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 11, 2017.

USE PERMIT DENIAL 5 Ayes 0 Noes

Comm. Crandell moved, 2nd by Comm. Hess that the Planning Commission find that the Design Review (DR 17-07) for an offsite sign (billboard) applied for by Larry and Frances Montgomery on the property located at 2325 E. Highway 20, Nice, does not meet the requirements of Lake County Zoning Ordinance Section 54.5 and therefore the Design Review be denied with the findings listed in the staff report dated October 11, 2017.

DESIGN REVIEW DENIAL 0 Ayes 0 Noes

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