



CITY OF CARSON

PLANNING COMMISSION STAFF REPORT

NEW BUSINESS DISCUSSION: May 13, 2008

SUBJECT: Sign Program No. 100-08 for a shopping center located within the MU-CS (Mixed-Use – Carson Street) zone

APPLICANT/REPRESENTATIVE: Rex Bataller
13940 Paramount Boulevard
Paramount, CA 90723

REQUEST: A new sign program to replace an existing sign program for a shopping center in the MU-CS (Mixed-Use – Carson Street) zone and within Redevelopment Project Area No. 4.

PROPERTY INVOLVED: 131 W. Carson Street

COMMISSION ACTION

- Concurred with staff
- Did not concur with staff
- Other

COMMISSIONERS' VOTE

AYE	NO		AYE	NO	
		Faletogo – Chairman			Graber
		Hudson – Vice-Chair			Saenz
		Cannon			Verrett

I. Introduction

The applicant, Mr. Rex Bataller, on behalf of Seafood City Supermarket, Inc., is proposing Sign Program No. 100-08 to replace an existing sign program that was approved on November 27, 2001, for a 2.7-acre shopping center located at 131 W. Carson Street. On December 13, 2006, the City rezoned the subject property from CG-MUR (Commercial, General – Mixed Use Residential) to MU-CS (Mixed-Use - Carson Street). The proposed modifications to the sign program do not meet the standards that allow for administrative approval of business signs. Pursuant to Section 9138.17(F), in order to deviate from the signage requirements of the MU-CS zone, a sign program must be reviewed and approved by the Planning Commission. This application, if approved, fulfills that requirement.

II. Background

The shopping center was constructed in 1973 and is located at the northwestern corner of Main Street and Carson Street. Alpha Beta Supermarket was originally the anchor tenant prior to the Seafood City Supermarket's arrival in 2000. The new property owner renovated the shopping center and obtained approval of the current sign program from staff on November 27, 2001.

The subject property and all properties located along Carson Street from Avalon Boulevard to the east to the Harbor Freeway to the west were affected by the zone change from CG-MUR to MU-CS. The MU-CS zone regulates the type, size and placement of signs in order to provide aesthetic harmony within the district. The Planning Commission is specifically authorized to allow deviations from the mandatory standards in order to promote artistic flexibility while still maintaining continuity and appropriate scale to the district as a whole.

The purpose of the new sign program is to meet the requirements of the MU-CS zone in order to accommodate sign improvements for the anchor, major, and minor tenants. The new sign program proposes channel letter signs for all tenants. Existing cabinet signs are proposed to be eliminated as tenancy changes or tenants voluntarily choose to comply with the new standard for a channel letter sign. The proposed sign program is summarized as follows:

TABLE 1 – PROPOSED SIGN PROGRAM SUMMARY

Use	Description	Height	Length
Anchor Tenant	Seafood City Supermarket only	Logo: 42" Letters: 36"	70% of Storefront

Major Tenant	Jollibee, Red Ribbon, Chowking, Laundromat	Logo: 42" Letters: 36" 42" (stacked)	70% of Storefront
Minor Tenant	7 smaller tenants	Logo: Proposed: 36" Recommended: 30" Letters: Proposed: 30" Recommended: 24" or 30" for two lines	70% of Storefront
Monument Sign	1 Jollibee sign along Carson Street	6'-9"	5' (Double-sided)
Pole Sign	1 Seafood City Supermarket sign located along Carson St.	Existing	Existing

III. Analysis

The proposed sign program will replace the current sign program that was approved on November 27, 2001. Staff has reviewed and evaluated the proposed sign program and concluded that the Sign Program, subject to staff recommended modifications, is appropriate and consistent with the general intent of the Carson Street Corridor.

Issues of Concern

The proposed sign program is tailored to fit the existing Jollibee monument sign and Seafood City Supermarket pole sign. However, the existing rectangular cabinet signs for the minor tenants do not meet the design guidelines and sustainable standards of the MU-CS zone as described in Section 9138.17(J)(6)(c). The proposed sign program addresses these older cabinet signs by requiring their removal if the business changes ownership or business name, or ceases to operate for more than six (6) months. As a means of encouraging early transition to channel letter signs, the City's Economic Development Group is proposing to financially assist the tenants with removal and replacement. Several meetings have been held with representatives from Seafood City, Inc. and Red Ribbon. These tenants have expressed interest in participating in the Commercial Rehabilitation Program. They have coordinated with the property owner and have submitted the new sign program as a means of allowing their respective signs and the upgrade of the remaining tenants.

Issues of Concern

It is staff's opinion that the sign program would be effective in maintaining long-term attractiveness of the shopping center, and recommends the following modifications to be included as conditions of approval:

- Update the Table of Contents to include the monument sign and pole sign;
- Address the existing two-line (stack copy) sign of Seafood City Supermarket;
- The height of minor tenant wall signs shall not exceed 30 inches for the logo or two lines of letters and 24 inches for single line letters;
- Limit wall signs to three distinct colors that match or complement the building colors;
- Clarify the maximum sign area and the length of each sign; and
- Window signs shall not exceed 15% of window area.

IV. Environmental Review

Pursuant to Section 15311, Accessory Structures, of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the proposed project is for a sign program and is "Categorically Exempt." No significant environmental impacts would result from this proposal.

V. Conclusion

It is staff's opinion that the proposed sign program for this shopping center is appropriate for the site as amended. It is staff's opinion that the revised sign program will not create any adverse effect, either visually or physically, to the site or adjacent properties.

V. Recommendation

That the Planning Commission:

APPROVE the sign program for the Seafood City Supermarket Shopping Center; and

- **WAIVE** a further reading and ADOPT Resolution No. _____, entitled, "A Resolution of the Planning Commission of the City of Carson granting approval of Sign Program No. 100-08 for a new sign program that replaces the existing sign program for the Seafood City Supermarket shopping center located at 131 W. Carson Street."

VI. Exhibits

1. Planning Commission Resolution.
2. Sign Program No. 100-08
3. Copies of sign program approved on November 27, 2001.

Prepared by: _____
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Reviewed by: _____
John F. Signo, AICP, Senior Planner

Approved by: _____
Sheri Repp, Planning Manager