

AGENCY:	City of Fort Bragg
MEETING DATE:	May 17, 2023
PREPARED BY:	Humberto Arellano
PRESENTED BY:	Humberto Arellano

AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY REPORT

APPLICATION NO.: Sign Permit 3-23

OWNER: Surjit Kumar

APPLICANT: Fremont Sign Company

AGENT: Rajinder Bhachu

LOCATION: 1004 S. Main Street

APN: 018-120-20-00

ZONING: Coastal - Highway Visitor Commercial

APPEALABLE PROJECT: **May be appealed to City Council. May be appealed to the California Coastal Commission.**

PROJECT BACKGROUND / DESCRIPTION

The Applicant wishes to update the signs at 1004 S. Main Street to reflect the new name of the gas station. The Applicant submitted a sign permit application to the Community Development Department, which proposed changes to five existing signs on the property. All of the existing signs conform with the Coastal Land Use and Development Code (CLUDC), except for Sign E which does not conform with the CLUDC.

As the Applicant's proposed plans for Sign A, Sign B, Sign C, and Sign D conform with the CLUDC, on March 20, 2023, the Community Development Department approved the sign permit for these signs (see Attachment 1).

However, the height of the existing Sign E does not conform with the CLUDC, and the Applicant wants to retain this non-conforming sign. The current sign is 12.3 feet and the proposed height is 12.3 feet. However, the maximum allowed height of a free-standing pole sign in the Coastal Zone is 6 feet.

Staff offered to work with the Applicant and make Sign E more conforming to the Code by allowing it to be 8-feet high and still be attached to the existing 12-foot posts. This

complies with past practice which allows the City to approve a face change on an existing non-conforming sign as long as it is brought into more conformance.

The Applicant declined the offer and asked to bring this sign review forward to the Planning Commission. The Applicant expressed concern for both reduced visibility due to a lower sign and the increased cost associated with replacing the sign.

RELEVANT CODE

According to Table 3-12 in Section 17.38.070, the maximum allowed height of a freestanding sign in a commercial zone is 6 feet.

TABLE 3-12 - SIGN STANDARDS FOR COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL ZONES

Allowed Sign Types	Maximum Sign Height	Maximum Number of Signs Allowed per Parcel	Maximum Sign Area
Ground-mounted and Ground-floor Signs			
Awning (17.38.080.B)	Below roof (1)	Single tenant site or structure: 3 of any combination of allowed sign types per primary structure frontage. Site or structure with two or more tenants: two (2) of any allowed sign types per business frontage.	Maximum sign area per parcel. The total sign area on a parcel shall comply with the following requirements. 1. 2 sf for each 3 linear ft of primary building frontage. 2. 0.5 additional sf for each linear foot of secondary building frontage. 3. Each use is allowed a total sign area of at least 25 sf regardless of frontage length. 4. The total sign area per use shall not exceed 100 sf. Maximum sign area per
Freestanding (17.38.080.C)	6 ft		
Projecting, Wall (17.38.080.E, 17.38.080.G)	Below roof (1)		

According to Section 17.38.090(B), an administrative exception may be granted by the Planning Commission if the following findings are made:

B. Exceptions. An administrative exception to the requirements of Subsection A may be granted by the Commission, provided that the Commission shall make the following findings:

1. The new proposed sign is significantly more conforming in height and/or area than the existing sign.
2. By approving the new sign, the exception will eliminate the existing nonconforming sign.
3. The non-conforming sign shall be brought into conformance with the sign ordinance within five years of the application date.

PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION

1. Allow the proposed sign to be 8-feet high concurrent with current practice and the Code, or
2. Approve an exception to the height limitation requirement for the proposed freestanding sign associated with Sign Permit SP 3-13, that conforms with the Code by allowing the sign to be somewhere between 8 feet and 12' 3" tall.

ALTERNATIVE ACTIONS

1. Provide direction to staff.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends establishing a height limitation for the freestanding sign for Sign Permit 3-23 (3-23), that conforms with the following findings:

1. The new proposed sign must be more conforming in height and/or area than the existing sign.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Sign Permit Application dated 2/17/2023
2. Proposed Plans