



Agenda Item #: \_\_\_\_\_

# Staff Report

## City of Manhattan Beach

**TO:** Honorable Mayor Fahey and Members of the City Council

**THROUGH:** Geoff Dolan, City Manager

**FROM:** Richard Thompson, Director of Community Development  
Alex Plascencia, Assistant Planner

**DATE:** October 18, 2005

**SUBJECT:** Consideration of a Planning Commission Approval of Proposed Revisions to Existing Sign Program for a Commercial Center Located at 1800-2010 Sepulveda Boulevard (Manhattan Center)

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### **RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff recommends that the City Council **RECEIVE** and **FILE** this report.

### **FISCAL IMPLICATION:**

There are no fiscal implications associated with the recommended action.

### **BACKGROUND:**

The subject property (Manhattan Center) is located at 1800-2010 Sepulveda Boulevard, at the northeast corner of 18<sup>th</sup> Street and Sepulveda Boulevard. The lot is approximately 127,735 square feet in area and is improved with a neighborhood serving commercial center built in 1955. The property is zoned CG (Commercial General) and located in Area District II.

Pursuant to Section 10.72.060 of the Manhattan Beach Municipal Code a sign program is required for this multi-tenant site. The purpose of a sign program is to establish uniform sign guidelines and sign area allocations for the buildings and uses on site in conformity with the sign code. This site has an approved sign program but the owner is required to submit this application because of proposed sign changes.

### **DISCUSSION:**

The subject application is requesting approval of an amendment to an existing Master Sign Program approved in 2000 (PC Resolution 00-12). The applicant has proposed changes to wall signs on Building A which contains several retail uses and modifications to the pole sign in front of Building A. All other buildings on this property are not part of this application. The proposed changes to Building A will reduce the sign area previously approved in 2000. The changes to the pole sign include: removal of the clock at the top of the pole sign and remodeling of the "Manhattan Center" sign to a contemporary style. The cabinet that holds the tenant names will be retained and re-used with no change in sign area.

The Planning Commission, at its regular meeting of September 28, 2005 **ADOPTED** Resolution No. PC 05-13 (5-0) approving the subject sign exception. Pursuant to M.B.M.C. Section 10.72.080 the following findings are made:

1. The proposed sign exception would not be detrimental to, nor adversely impact, the neighborhood or district in which the property is located. This is due to the fact that the wall sign square footage at "Building A" will be reduced and no change in sign area to the pole sign is proposed. The signs approved under the sign program will not obstruct visibility of the signs of other nearby businesses. The pole sign width will not be changed and will not adversely impact traffic visibility to the center.
2. The proposed sign exception is necessary in order that the applicant may not be deprived unreasonably in the use or enjoyment of their property; because the pole sign has existed on the property and removal of the pole sign is unreasonable. Further, the uniqueness of the property location at the bottom of a valley along Sepulveda Blvd and large lot size which accommodates several tenants makes the sign exception necessary so the applicant is not deprived unreasonably in the use of their property.
3. The proposed sign exception is consistent with the legislative intent of this title; because the sign program was previously approved by the Planning Commission, and the applicant is reducing the overall square footage of sign copy and no significant changes are made to the pole sign (except aesthetic elements). The sign program is consistent with the intent of a sign program because it establishes uniform sign guidelines and sign area allocations for all uses or buildings on a site.

The item was approved with conditions to maintain the existing width of the pole and that no cabinet signs be permitted on Building A. The applicant proposed widening the pole width from 4.5 ft to 8.5 ft. Staff found that widening the base of the pole would add bulk to the sign, and would be out of scale with the street. The Commission commented that northbound traffic on Sepulveda Boulevard turning into the center is heavy, and is concerned that visibility could be obstructed by widening the base of the pole for traffic entering the center along Sepulveda Blvd. The applicant was not present at the meeting and no members of the public spoke at the Planning Commission meeting nor were any written comments submitted.

**ALTERNATIVES:**

The alternatives available to the City Council include:

1. Remove this item from the “Consent Calendar” portion of the agenda and appeal the Planning Commission decision.

cc: Tom Harner, West America

**Attachments:**

Resolution PC 05-13

PC Minutes, 09/28/05

PC Staff Report, 09/28/05

Plans (separate/not available electronically)

Applicants Narrative and Findings (not available electronically)

Site Location Map

## RESOLUTION NO. PC 05-13

### RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF MANHATTAN BEACH APPROVING PROPOSED REVISIONS TO EXISTING SIGN PROGRAM FOR A COMMERCIAL CENTER LOCATED AT 1800 – 2010 SEPULVEDA BOULEVARD (Manhattan Center)

#### THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF MANHATTAN BEACH DOES HEREBY RESOLVE AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION 1. The Planning Commission of the City of Manhattan Beach hereby makes the following findings:

- A. The Planning Commission of the City of Manhattan Beach, on September 28, 2005, received testimony, and considered an application for consideration of proposed revisions to an existing sign program for an existing commercial center on the property located at 1800 – 2010 Sepulveda Boulevard in the City of Manhattan Beach.
- B. The Assessors Parcel Number for the property is 4166-020-034.
- C. The applicant for the subject project is West America, property owner.
- D. Pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), and the Manhattan Beach CEQA Guidelines, the subject project has been determined to be exempt (Class 1) as minor modifications to an existing facility per Section 15301 of CEQA.
- E. The project will not individually nor cumulatively have an adverse effect on wildlife resources, as defined in Section 711.2 of the Fish and Game Code.
- F. The property is located within Area District II and is zoned CG, Commercial General. The surrounding private land uses consist primarily of commercial uses, with single-family +residences to the east of the subject property.
- G. The General Plan designation for the property is General Commercial.
- H. Pursuant to M.B.M.C. Section 10.72.080 the following findings are made:
  1. The proposed sign exception would not be detrimental to, nor adversely impact, the neighborhood or district in which the property is located. This is due to the fact that the wall sign square footage at “Building A” will be reduced and no change in sign area to the pole sign is proposed. The signs approved under the sign program will not obstruct visibility of the signs of other nearby businesses. The pole sign width will not be changed and will not adversely impact traffic visibility to the center as the pole sign has existed on the property.
  2. The proposed sign exception is necessary in order that the applicant my not be deprived unreasonably in the use or enjoyment of their property; because the poles sign has existed on the property and removal of the pole sign is unreasonable. Further, the uniqueness of the property location at the bottom of a valley along Sepulveda Blvd and large lot size which accommodates several tenants makes the sign exception necessary so the applicant is not deprived unreasonably in the use of their property.
  3. The proposed sign exception is consistent with the legislative intent of this title; because the sign program was previously approved by the city planning commission, and the applicant is reducing the overall square footage of sign copy and no significant changes are made to the pole sign (except aesthetic elements), the sign exception is consistent with the legislative intent of this title. The sign program is consistent with the intent of a sign program by establishing uniform sign guidelines and sign area allocations for all uses or buildings on a site.
- I. The project shall otherwise be in compliance with applicable provisions of the Manhattan Beach Municipal Code.

## RESOLUTION NO. PC 05-13

J. This Resolution, upon its effectiveness, constitutes the Sign Exception approval for the subject project.

Section 2. The Planning Commission of the City of Manhattan Beach hereby **APPROVES** the subject Sign Exception for a revision to an existing sign program modifying the permitted amount of sign area, subject to the following conditions

### **Sign Program**

1. The project shall be constructed and operated in substantial compliance with the submitted plans as approved by the Planning Commission on September 28, 2005.
2. Cabinet signs shall not be allowed along the front façade of the tenants of “Building A” .
3. The base of the existing pole sign adjacent to “Building A” shall not be increased in width, due to safety concerns related to traffic visibility.
4. The total site sign area shall not exceed 1,232 square feet, including pole sign area being counted twice as specified by the current sign code.
5. This Sign Exception shall lapse two years after its date of approval, unless implemented or extended by the Planning Commission.
6. Pursuant to Public Resources Code section 21089(b) and Fish and Game Code section 711.4(c), the project is not operative, vested or final until the required filing fees are paid.
7. This Resolution includes all pertinent signage conditions of approval as specified in preceding Use Permits and sign reviews for the Manhattan Center, including PC Resolution No. 00-12 and PC Resolution No. 02-15.

SECTION 3. Pursuant to Government Code Section 65009 and Code of Civil Procedure Section 1094.6, any action or proceeding to attack, review, set aside, void or annul this decision, or concerning any of the proceedings, acts, or determinations taken, done or made prior to such decision or to determine the reasonableness, legality or validity of any condition attached to this decision shall not be maintained by any person unless the action or proceeding is commenced within 90 days of the date of this resolution and the City Council is served within 120 days of the date of this resolution. The City Clerk shall send a certified copy of this resolution to the applicant, and if any, the appellant at the address of said person set forth in the record of the proceedings and such mailing shall constitute the notice required by Code of Civil Procedure Section 1094.6.

**RESOLUTION NO. PC 05-13**

I hereby certify that the foregoing is a full, true, and correct copy of the Resolution as adopted by the Planning Commission at its regular meeting of September 28, 2005 and that said Resolution was adopted by the following vote:

**AYES:** Bohner, Lesser, Schlager, Simon,  
Chairperson Savikas

**NOES:**

**ABSTAIN:**

**ABSENT:**

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**RICHARD THOMPSON,**  
Secretary to the Planning Commission

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**Sarah Boeschen,**  
Recording Secretary

**CITY OF MANHATTAN BEACH**  
**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION**  
**SEPTEMBER 28, 2005**

1 A regular meeting of the Planning Commission of the City of Manhattan Beach was held on  
2 Wednesday, September 28, 2005, at 6:30 p.m. in the City Council Chambers, City Hall, 1400  
3 Highland Avenue.

4  
5 **ROLL CALL**

6  
7 Chairperson Savikas called the meeting to order.

8  
9 Members Present: Bohner, Lesser, Schlager, Simon, Chairperson Savikas  
10 Members Absent: None  
11 Staff: Richard Thompson, Director of Community Development  
12 Alex Plascencia, Assistant Planner  
13 Sarah Boesch, Recording Secretary  
14

15 **APPROVAL OF MINUTES** September 14, 2005

16  
17 Commissioner Lesser requested that page 6, line 18 be revised to read: "He indicated that ~~they~~  
18 ~~are~~ as a Commissioner he ~~are~~ is not in a position to second guess staff's opinion . . ."

19  
20 A motion was MADE and SECONDED (Lesser/Bohner) to **APPROVE** the minutes of  
21 September 14, 2005, as amended.

22  
23 AYES: Bohner, Lesser, Schlager, Chairperson Savikas  
24 NOES: None  
25 ABSENT: None  
26 ABSTAIN: Simon  
27

28 **AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION** None

29  
30 **BUSINESS ITEMS**

31  
32 **A. Consideration of Proposed Revisions to Existing Sign Program for a Commercial**  
33 **Center Located at 1800-2010 Sepulveda Blvd. (Manhattan Center)**

34  
35 Director Thompson indicated that staff received a call from the applicant stating that they would  
36 not be able to attend the meeting.

37  
38 Assistant Planner Plascencia summarized the staff report. He stated that there are four buildings  
39 on the site, and the changes are being proposed to the largest structure referred to in the plans as  
40 Building A. He indicated that the applicant is remodeling the structure, and the Sign Exception  
41 Application is proposed as part of the renovation to modernize and complement the new  
42 architectural style of the building. He commented that the architect is attempting to create a

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1 contemporary look with an eclectic mix of signs. He indicated that changes to the building will  
2 be to the front and back of the structure. He stated that the signs in front of the building will  
3 slightly change depending on the number of tenants. He said that the pole sign in front of  
4 Building A is proposed to be remodeled to a more contemporary style which will involve  
5 removing the clock at the top, and changing the font of "Manhattan Center" and widening out  
6 the base (doubling the width) which will form a vertical element going from the ground up to the  
7 top of the sign, but existing sign cabinet will be retained and the square footage of sign copy will  
8 stay the same.

9  
10 Assistant Planner Plascencia commented that subsequent to the first approval of a sign program  
11 for the subject site, the method for calculating square footage for pole signs has changed (1996).  
12 He said that the original method for calculating sign area was for each face of a pole sign to be  
13 counted once. He stated that under current standards, the square footage of each face of the sign  
14 is counted twice. He stated that the staff report reflects the new methodology for determining  
15 permitted signage. He clarified that the applicant proposes to widen the base of the sign from 4  
16 ½ feet to 8 ½ feet. He indicated that staff understands the goal of changing to a more modern  
17 design but has a concern that the sign, at the enlarged base, may be too massive and out of scale  
18 with the center. He said that staff has included a recommendation to retain the width of the base  
19 at its existing size. He stated that the applicant is reducing the overall square footage for the  
20 actual sign copy for the center compared to that which was originally approved, and the proposal  
21 is consistent with prior approvals, with the exception of the change in the size of the pole sign  
22 base. He indicated that staff recommends approval subject to the condition with the pole retain  
23 a base width of 4 ½ feet.

24  
25 In response to a question from Commissioner Bohner, Director Thompson said that the applicant  
26 though aware of staff's concern, requests approval of this application for an 8 ½ foot wide base  
27 as proposed. He commented, however, that the applicant has expressed a willingness to work  
28 with staff to arrive at possible alternative designs of the base but did not want to be limited to  
29 staff's recommendation for a width of 4 ¼ feet. He said that if the Commission agrees with  
30 staff's position, staff can work with the applicant to come to an agreement.

31  
32 In response to a question from Commissioner Simon, Director Thompson stated that staff is  
33 including the cabinet only and not the base in the calculation of square footage of sign area.

34  
35 Commissioner Schlager stated that it would be helpful if a more detailed proposed design were  
36 provided to assist the Commissioners in ruling on aesthetics of the sign.

37  
38 Commissioner Simon said that he has a concern with the wording of the last sentence of item B  
39 under the "Required Findings" on page 5 of the staff report which states: "Further, the proposed  
40 sign area is necessary for use of the property as a viable commercial center." He stated that he is  
41 not sure of the basis for such a statement for this application as opposed to future applicants who

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1 would rely on the same claim for their proposal.

2

3 Assistant Planner Plascencia commented that the idea of the language being included in item B  
4 is that visibility for a commercial center is clearly important.

5

6 Director Thompson suggested adding wording to the finding distinguishing this specific case as  
7 unique.

8

9 Commissioner Simon recalled with a previous application on this site that the visibility from  
10 Sepulveda Boulevard makes it more difficult for drivers to become aware of the center, which is  
11 unique to this particular site.

12

13 In response to a question from Chairperson Savikas, Assistant Planner Plascencia stated that the  
14 reason for the change in calculating pole sign area was to prevent commercial centers from  
15 having excessive signage, which creates undesirable sign “clutter” .

16

17 In response to a question from Commissioner Bohner, Assistant Planner Plascencia commented  
18 that there are no safety concerns that have been identified with a 4 ½ foot rather than an 8 ½ foot  
19 base for the pole sign, and the main concern of staff is the aesthetics.

20

21 Commissioner Lesser stated that he agrees with staff’s concern regarding the bulk of the  
22 proposed sign. He said that he is not sure whether aesthetic concerns are a sufficient standard by  
23 which to concur on staff’s recommended proposal. He said that his inclination is to support the  
24 application subject to limiting the width the pole sign to 4 ½ feet as suggested by staff.

25

26 Commissioner Simon stated that he agrees with the comments of Commissioner Lesser. He said  
27 that he feels the existing sign is large, and he concurs with the recommendation of staff to limit  
28 the bulk of the sign. He said that if the applicant really wanted to do something different they  
29 would have provided a more specific presentation of their ideas.

30

31 Commissioner Bohner stated that he does not have a problem with the base as proposed at 8 ½  
32 square feet provided there are no safety concerns or obstruction concerns for drivers on  
33 Sepulveda Boulevard. He commented that if the applicant is willing to compromise over an  
34 acceptable limit to the base of the sign, everyone would be satisfied. He said that he would  
35 approve the recommendations and would support allowing the staff to negotiate with the  
36 applicant to compromise regarding the width of the base. He commented that he would agree  
37 with Commissioner Lesser that he is not certain to what extent he can consider only the  
38 aesthetics of a proposal that does not fall into certain categories of other issues such as safety.

39

40 Commissioner Schlager commented that he feels less signage is preferable. He said that he  
41 would like to see more detailed drawings in order to visualize the proposal before he would

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1 approve changing the base significantly. He said that he would support staff’s recommendation.

2

3 Chairman Savikas commented that northbound traffic on Sepulveda Boulevard turning into the  
4 center was very heavy when she recently visited the center, and she is concerned with visibility  
5 for traffic with an increased width of the base of the sign. She commented that visibility is  
6 obstructed for traffic along Sepulveda with the current sign, and the obstruction could be  
7 increased if the base is widened. She said that she would support adopting the Resolution with  
8 staff’s recommendation.

9

10 Commissioner Simon commented that the existing sign is twice as large as would be permitted  
11 under the current guidelines because it was approved under the old standards. He said that the  
12 goal of the City to reduce pole signs should be enforced. He indicated that he would have to be  
13 convinced of the need before he would support allowing the sign to be larger. He said that he  
14 would be comfortable allowing staff to add finding language regarding the unique nature of the  
15 site.

16

17 Director Thompson pointed out that Condition 3 in the proposed Resolution requires that the  
18 base of the existing pole sign adjacent to Building A shall not be increased in width.

19

20 A motion was MADE and SECONDED (Lesser/Schlager) to **APPROVE** proposed revisions to  
21 existing sign program for a commercial center located at 1800-2010 Sepulveda Blvd. to also  
22 include the findings on page 5 of the staff report with amendments to item B indicating the  
23 unique nature of the property to justify allowing the changes to the pole sign.

24

25 AYES: Bohner, Lesser, Schlager, Simon, Chairperson Savikas

26 NOES: None

27 ABSENT: None

28 ABSTAIN: None

29

30 Director Thompson explained the 15-day appeal period and stated that the item will be placed on  
31 the City Council’s Consent Calendar for their review on October 18, 2005.

32

33

34

35

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38

**DIRECTOR’S ITEMS**

39

40 Director Thompson stated that the amendments to the Tree Ordinance were presented to the City  
41 Council at their last meeting. He said that the Council was in general support of the Ordinance

**PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES**

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1 except for the provision concerning maturity of trees and the calculation of the size of trees. He  
2 said that the issue will be returned to the Commission for further discussion at the October 26,  
3 2005 meeting.

4  
5 Chairman Savikas requested that staff ask an arborist to attend the meeting.

6  
7 Director Thompson stated that at the meeting of October 12, there will also be discussion of  
8 creating a maximum lot size on residential property as a method of addressing mansionization.

9  
10 **PLANNING COMMISSION ITEMS**

11  
12 In response to a question from Commissioner Lesser, Director Thompson suggested that anyone  
13 with questions regarding concern with construction or traffic delays along Morningside Drive  
14 contact the Community Development Department for the most current information at 802-5500.

15  
16 Chairperson Savikas pointed out that comments regarding concerns during construction can be  
17 brought up to the Metlox Oversight Committee, which meets monthly.

18  
19 Chairperson Savikas stated that the Hometown Fair will take place on October 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2005.

20  
21 **TENTATIVE AGENDA: October 12, 2005**

- 22  
23 A. Use Permit and Vesting Tentative Tract Map 061783 for Construction of 11 Residential  
24 Condominium units at 1617-1623 Artesia Boulevard

25  
26 **ADJOURNMENT**

27  
28 The meeting of the Planning Commission was **ADJOURNED** at 7:40 p.m. in the City Council  
29 Chambers, City Hall, 1400 Highland Avenue, to Wednesday, October 12, 2005, at 6:30 p.m. in  
30 the same chambers.

31  
32  
33  
34 \_\_\_\_\_  
35 RICHARD THOMPSON  
Secretary to the Planning Commission

34 \_\_\_\_\_  
SARAH BOESCHEN  
Recording Secretary

**CITY OF MANHATTAN BEACH  
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT**

**TO:** Planning Commission

**THROUGH:** Richard Thompson, Director of Community Development

**FROM:** Alex Plascencia, Assistant Planner

**DATE:** September 28, 2005

**SUBJECT:** Consideration of Proposed Revisions to Existing Sign Program for a Commercial Center Located at 1800 – 2010 Sepulveda Boulevard (Manhattan Center).

**RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends that the Planning Commission **ADOPT** the attached draft resolution **APPROVING** the subject application (Exhibit A).

**APPLICANT/PROPERTY OWNER**

West America  
8929 Wilshire Blvd., Ste 400  
Beverly Hills, CA 90211

**BACKGROUND**

The subject project site (Manhattan Center) is located at 1800 - 2010 Sepulveda Boulevard. The entire site is 433 feet by 295 feet and is located at the north east corner of 18<sup>th</sup> Street and Sepulveda Boulevard. The center is comprised of four separate buildings designated as “Buildings A, B, C and D” on the attached plans (Site Location Map, Exhibit B). Pursuant to Section 10.72.060 of the Manhattan Beach Municipal Code a sign program is required for this multi-tenant site. The purpose of a sign program is to establish uniform sign guidelines and sign area allocations for the buildings and uses on site in conformity with the sign code. This site has an approved sign program but the owner is required to submit this application because of proposed sign changes.

The property owner proposes to change the signage for the center as follows: 1) remodel the main pylon sign for the center and, 2) replace all of the front and rear wall signs for the main multi-tenant building (“Building A”), consistent with renovation work nearing completion (Exhibit C, applicant narrative).

A Master Use Permit and sign program were first approved for the site in 1993 in conjunction with remodeling of Building A’s façade in a retro style and expansion of the Manhattan Bread and Bagel restaurant (Resolution No.’s PC 93-4 and 93-5). In 2000, the applicant applied for a

Master Use Permit Amendment which incorporated a revised Sign Program and Sign Exception (Resolution No. PC 00-12, Exhibit D) which was sought in conjunction with re-leasing of the corner building (1800) which had been vacant for several months.

The 2000 amendment also included the merger of the main lot with the smaller corner property. Before the merger both lots had pole signs and with the merger, there were two pole signs on a single lot which was approved in Resolution PC 00-12.

The site’s existing main pole sign is located adjacent to Building A. It identifies the site as the “Manhattan Center” and advertises each of the tenants within this building (Radio Shack, Manhattan Bread and Bagel, etc.). The second pole sign is located to the south and identifies the tenant in Building D, First Coastal Bank.

### **LOCATION**

<u>Location</u>	1800 - 2010 Sepulveda Boulevard (See Vicinity Map).
<u>Legal Description</u>	Portion of Lots 6 & 7, Section 19, Partition of Property formerly of the Redondo Land Company
<u>Area District</u>	II

### **LAND USE**

<u>General Plan</u>	General Commercial
<u>Zoning</u>	CG, General Commercial
<u>Neighboring Zoning and Land Uses</u>	
North	CG: Office
South	CG: Office
East, across Cedar Ave.	RS: Single Family Residential
West , across Sepulveda Blvd.	CG: Hawthorne Suites & Retail

### **SIGN DETAILS**

	<u>Existing</u>	<u>Proposed</u>	
Pole Signs	2	2 (main sign remodeled)	
Wall Signs	8	10	
Building A	800 sq. ft.	758 sq. ft.	
Building B	88 sq. ft.	88 sq. ft.	
Building C	60 sq. ft.	60 sq. ft.	
Building D	49.5 sq. ft.	49.5 sq. ft.	
Pole Sign (Bldg A)	600 sq. ft.	526 sq. ft.	
Pole Sign (Bldg D)	72 sq. ft.	72 sq. ft.	
 <u>Total Countable Sign Copy</u>	 <u>Existing</u>	 <u>Proposed</u>	 <u>Allowed</u>
	1,669.5 sq. ft.	1,553.5 sq. ft.	867 sq. ft.

## **DISCUSSION**

The subject property is zoned “CG” (Commercial General) and is located in Area District II with a “Commercial General” designation in the General Plan (Exhibit E). The site has a lot area of approximately 2.93 acres (128,066 square feet) and, with the exception of residential property to the east, across Cedar Avenue, is adjoined by other commercial uses along Sepulveda Boulevard.

The property is characterized by four different buildings as noted on the plans. Building A is the largest building and is centered on the property. The owner plans to have up to ten tenants in this building, and currently has leases for Radio Shack, Patterson’s Cleaners, Village Runner and the Manhattan Bread and Bagel restaurant. Building B is on the north side of the property, adjoining Sepulveda and contains Rubios and Toni Maroni’s restaurants. Building C, on the east (upper) side of the property fronting on Cedar Avenue is improved with personal improvement/personal service uses. Lastly, Building D is the corner bank building, on the south side of the property adjacent to 18<sup>th</sup> Street. The only proposed sign changes in this application are for Building A and the main pole sign.

Generally the sign ordinance allows 2 square feet sign copy for each lineal foot of street frontage, or the longer of two frontages, if on a corner. This property has a frontage of 433’ feet -6” inches along Sepulveda which allows for 867 square feet of sign area for the entire site as shown in the graphic below.

The sign ordinance exempts certain signs which are minor from being counted toward sign area requirements . For example, one non-illuminated permanent window, wall door, or directory sign per business is permitted, not exceeding three square feet, with letter heights not exceeding four inches, limited to business identification, goods and service descriptions, hours of operation, address, telephone number.

## **PROPOSED SIGN PROGRAM/DETAILS**

### *Building A (1812- 1908 Sepulveda Blvd)*

Building A will have structure improvements on the front façade. The total aggregate of sign area for all tenants will be reduced from 407 square feet (approval in 2000) to 347 square feet. No window signs will be permitted under the new sign program other than small exempted signs that are not counted towards the area allowance. Two new tenant spaces will be created within the existing building as part of the approved 2005 remodel.

The signs at the rear of the building direct customers into the stores and will not change in square footage. The allotted number of sign area is 9 square feet (PC Resolution No. 00-12) per tenant with the exception of tenants at 1834 and 1836 which will have 7.5 square feet as proposed with this application. These signs encourage use of rear entrances and the rear parking lot where most parking spaces are located. These signs will remain non-illuminated.

The pole sign for Building A will also be modified as part of this approval. The overall amount of sign copy will be slightly reduced from 150 square feet to 131.5 square feet per side (Based on

current code however, this is counted as 300 square feet for existing sign and 263 square feet as proposed). However, in remodeling the sign the applicant proposes to broaden the base of the pole from 4.5 feet to 8.5 feet. This broadened base would extend upwards 29.5 feet, to the same height as the existing pole sign, forming a vertical rectangular design element. The clock at the top of the pole sign will be removed, and the font of “Manhattan Center” will change and decrease in size giving a contemporary style to the sign. The cabinet that holds the tenant names will be retained and re-used with no change in sign area. Staff has concerns about the size and mass of the pole sign as proposed. The shape of the sign is similar to a monument sign, yet this sign, being 30 feet in height is a pole sign. This width and mass will be imposing and out of scale. Staff recommends that the width of the base be retained at its existing size and not enlarged.

*Buildings B (2000 – 2008 Sepulveda) , C (2007 – 2011 Cedar) and D ( 1800 Sepulveda)*

No changes are proposed for Buildings B and C and all of the past approvals remain unchanged. The approved sign square footage for Building D is 443 square feet as shown in the attached table. In 2002, a Master Use Permit amendment to allow a new drive-up teller use was approved for the bank currently at this location based on the sign approval from 2000 (PC Resolution No. 02-15).

*Pole Sign Square Footage Calculation*

In 1996 the City revised its sign ordinance. One notable change was in the methodology used to calculate allowed sign square footage for pole signs. The change was intended to discourage new pole signs and excess signage. Previously each face of the pole sign was counted once. However, with the code change, each side of a double-sided pole sign is now counted twice. For example, if each side is 100 square feet, then the sign square footage counted towards the maximum permitted is 200 square feet per side, or 400 square feet total.

This is important in considering the subject application because the initial sign program approval (1993) was prior to this code change. The applicant is not increasing the square footage of either pole sign with this application. What will change is how staff calculates the square footage towards the amount of signage allowed and how this calculation is represented on the new sign program. This change will serve to update and more accurately represent the current sign ordinance. Staff supports this because the intent of the prior approvals is still the same since the sign cabinet and amount of signage will not increase.

Staff also recommends no cabinet signs be permitted on Building A as consistent with the applicant’s proposal. Cabinet signs can be bulky in size and can detract from the style of the building and architecture. This still gives enough flexibility for the center to maintain eclectic signage the applicant’s building design is trying to achieve.

**REQUIRED FINDINGS**

Overall staff finds the application and proposal meets the purpose and intent of the sign ordinance. There will be no change to the tenant sign area on either of the pole signs on the property. The new Building A pole sign will provide business identification for its tenants while complementing the façade improvements for Building A. The new signs will provide an

attractive and orderly appearance and will not obstruct visibility for signs of other nearby businesses.

As required by MBMC 10.72.080 Staff believes the following findings are hereby made:

A. The proposed sign exception would not be detrimental to, nor adversely impact, the neighborhood or district in which the property is located. This is due to the fact that the wall sign square footage at “Building A” will be reduced and no change in sign area to the pole sign is proposed. The signs approved under the sign program will not obstruct visibility of the signs of other nearby businesses.

B. The proposed sign exception is necessary in order that the applicant may not be deprived unreasonably in the use or enjoyment of their property; because the pole sign has existed on the property and removal of the pole sign is unreasonable. Further, the proposed sign area is necessary for use of the property as a viable commercial center.

C. The proposed sign exception is consistent with the legislative intent of this title; because the sign program was previously approved by the city planning commission, and the applicant is reducing the square footage and no changes are made to the pole sign, the sign exception is consistent with the legislative intent of this title. The sign program is consistent with the intent of a sign program by establishing uniform sign design guidelines and design area allocations for all uses and or buildings on a site.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION**

Pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), and the Manhattan Beach CEQA Guidelines, the subject project has been determined to be exempt (Class 1) as a minor modification to the use of an existing facility per Section 15301 of CEQA.

## **CONCLUSION**

The applicant is reducing the total overall site square footage, and Staff feels this is consistent with the scope of the original approval. Staff recommends the design of the pole sign be reduced in mass and bulk by maintaining the base at its existing size. The applicant’s proposal is for eclectic signage for the center. Staff concurs with this approach, because variation in sign type and style is visually interesting. However, Staff also recommends that cabinet signs be prohibited on Building A, consistent with the applicant’s proposal. Cabinet signs can be bulky in size and detract from the architecture and design of the building.

## **ATTACHMENTS**

Exhibit A: Draft Resolution  
Exhibit B: Site Location Map  
Exhibit C: Applicants Narrative (NAE)  
Exhibit D: Resolutions 00-12 (NAE)  
Plans (NAE)

NAE: not available electronically

cc: Tom Harner, Applicant

## **Manhattan Center**

1802-1812 N. Sepulveda Blvd  
Manhattan Beach, CA 90266

Sign Exception Proposal  
August 15, 2005

Contact: Britton Glynn  
Glynn Designbuild, Inc.  
310-821-0198

## **Project Description**

Manhattan Center currently hosts businesses which range from service oriented (Patterson Cleaners), retail (Radio Shack, Village Runner), food and beverage take-out (Manhattan Bread & Bagel Co., Rubio's, Toni Maroni's), a dance studio, professional offices, and a Bank. There are currently six available units that are planned to be leased to retail oriented establishments.

The hours of operation for the retail tenants are generally between 9:00 and 6:00 with peak hours in the late afternoon and on weekends. These tenants are generally open every day of the week. The hours of operation for food and beverage take-out and the service oriented establishments are generally between 10:00 and 8:00 with peak hours during lunch and dinner. These tenants are generally open every day of the week. The professional offices generally operate between 9:00-5:00 with steady occupancy throughout week days. The bank is open during business hours during the week days with moderate customer flow at all times of the day. Peak hours are at noon and 5:30.

There are four detached structures on the property designated as:

**Building A** (large center building that fronts Sepulveda Blvd and is located between Rubio's and the Bank - 18,747 sf).

**Building B** (Rubio's and Toni Marionis - 4,070 sf)

**Building C** (building at the rear of the lot fronting Cedar Ave - 6,340 sf)

**Building D** (Bank at the corner of 18th St and Sepulveda - 7,400 sf)

The lot fronting Sepulveda Blvd is 433'-6" wide (not including the sidewalk between the bank and Eighteenth Street). Therefore, the allowable square footage for signage is 867 sf for the entire property. There is an existing signage square footage of 886.36 sf for the entire property. We would like to actually reduce our signage square footage to less than 850.00 sf for the entire property in order to create a more contemporary clean look for the project.

As part of our signage re-development, we would like to retain the existing Manhattan Center pole sign and alter it with cosmetic adjustments only. The new sign cabinet will remain the same size as the existing in length, depth, and height and signage square footage. Because the site is in one of Sepulveda's valleys, the pole sign is important for our tenant's visibility.

## **Manhattan Center**

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## **Findings**

Manhattan Center is dedicated to working with each tenant on an individual basis to insure a cohesive 'look' for the entire property while still allowing each tenant to display their individual personality through their signage design.

Although Manhattan Center hosts a range of business types; from service oriented (Patterson Cleaners), retail (Radio Shack, Village Runner), food and beverage take-out (Manhattan Bread & Bagel Co., Rubio's, Toni Maroni's), a dance studio, professional offices, and a Bank we would like to limit the types of signs to:

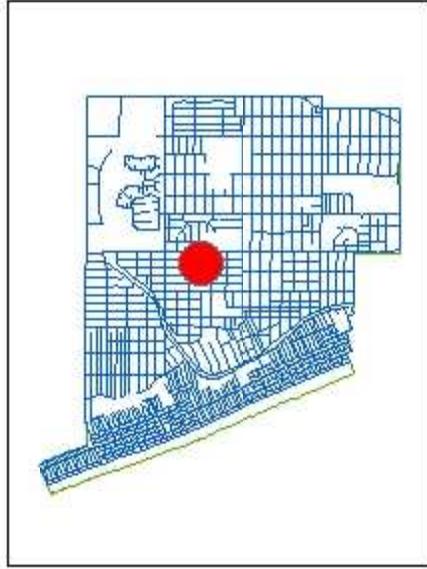
**A.** Painted steel letters welded to the front of architectural steel awnings that are going to be bolted in key locations to the building in the final stages of construction. These signs will be backlit by hiding a fluorescent tube light on the inside of the awning (not visible from below) and lighting the wall, creating a silhouette of the steel letters at night. We believe this type of signage is innovative and tasteful.

**B.** Painted signs will be allowed where the building offers small goose-neck lighting from the top of the parapet. These signs will be front-lit to add variation to the sign types.

**C.** Some of the existing tenants would like to continue to use their existing raised letter signs that are lit from within (i.e., Radio Shack). We believe that a mix of sign types provides more personality to the property and we would like to allow this possibility.

**D.** Pole Sign. As part of our signage re-development, we would like to retain the existing Manhattan Center pole sign and alter it with cosmetic adjustments only. The new sign *cabinet* will remain the same size as the existing in length, depth, and height and signage square footage. Because the site is in one of Sepulveda's valleys, the pole sign is important for our tenant's visibility. The existing structure will not be altered in any way.

# Vicinity Map 1800 Sepulveda Blvd



Legend:

- RS - Residential Single Family
- CG - General Commercial

