



PLANNING COMMISSION STAFF REPORT

MEETING DATE: March 28, 2022

AGENDA ITEM TITLE: 1. Rivian Automotive, LLC Creative Sign Application – 232 G Street

AGENDA SECTION: Public Hearing

REQUEST:

The request is to approve a creative sign for Rivian Automotive, LLC, 232 G Street, per Section 16-10-90 of the Salida Municipal Code.

APPLICANT:

The applicant is Rivian Automotive, LLC as represented by Karen Heining and Diane French. The muralist is Mike Buckley.

LOCATION:

Northwest wall of the building at 232 G Street. Above Rivian future vehicle charging stations.



ZONING:

The site is split zoned Central Business District (C-2) and Industrial (I). The portion of the site zoned C-2 is within the Central Business Economic Overlay and the Historic Protection Overlay. The entire site is within the Creative District.

The Historic Protection Overlay (HPO) is described in Section 16-5-40 of the Code and its purpose is to ensure that development surrounding the historic district is compatible with the historic district. However the standards of the HPO address only new development and not signs.



PROCESS:

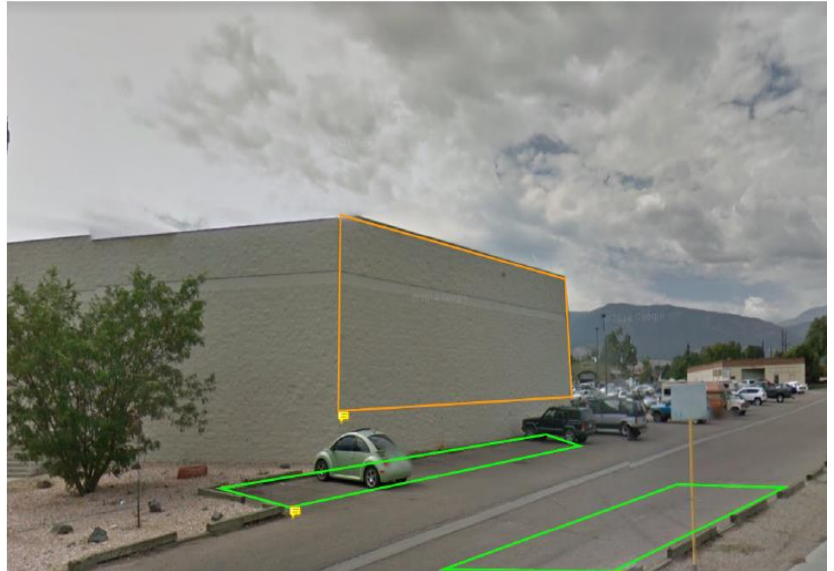
The purpose of the Creative Sign allowance is to encourage the use of signs that exhibit a high degree of thoughtfulness, imagination and inventiveness that due to their creative qualities, size or site constraints, would not be otherwise allowed under this code.

The Salida Municipal Code, Chapter 16, specifies that creative signs be reviewed by the City of Salida Planning Commission at a public hearing after fifteen days public notice. The Planning Commission may make a decision to approve, approve with conditions, deny, or remand the application back to the applicant for modification.

1. The property is located on the corner of 2nd street and G Street in the Central Business District (C-2) and Industrial (I) zone district. Safeway built the existing grocery store building in the 1970s. The site is not within the Downtown Historic District, but is partially within the Historic Protection Overlay (HPO). The purpose of the HPO is to ensure new structures are compatible with structures within the historic district. It is completely within the Salida Creative District designated by the state. The Creative District designation certifies our community as contributing to our state's economy through creativity, culture, and the arts. The mission of the Creative District is to promote, support, and expand existing creative industries with the purpose of driving economic growth and enhancing the quality of life.
2. This site is permitted 250 square feet of sign area based on the linear street frontage of the property. The one (1) illuminated pole sign and five (5) illuminated wall signs total 249.52 square feet. The proposed mural will total 1,400 square feet (70' x 20').



3. The mural will be painted on the wall that faces the northwest direction. The mural will be adjacent to the newly installed Rivian charging stations (green area) and public parking along the Monarch Spur Trail. It is approximately 55 feet from the Monarch Spur Trail to the face of the building where the mural will be located.



REVIEW STANDARDS (Section 16-10-90):

1. **Impact Review Standards.** No sign shall be approved under the Creative Sign Process that the Planning Commission finds:
 - a. Will have an adverse impact on adjacent properties. The sign shall not adversely affect neighboring property owners, business or residents and should be compatible with the uses, character and identity of the area in which it is displayed.
 - b. Create a dangerous condition. Granting the creative sign permit will not adversely affect public safety. The use of signs or attention-attracting devices should not significantly distract traffic on adjacent streets.
 - c. Distracts from the important architectural, natural or historic features of the building or neighborhood in which the sign is displayed.

APPLICANT'S RESPONSE: "There are no negative impacts from the mural installation, in regards to business or resident safety, or from a design aesthetic.

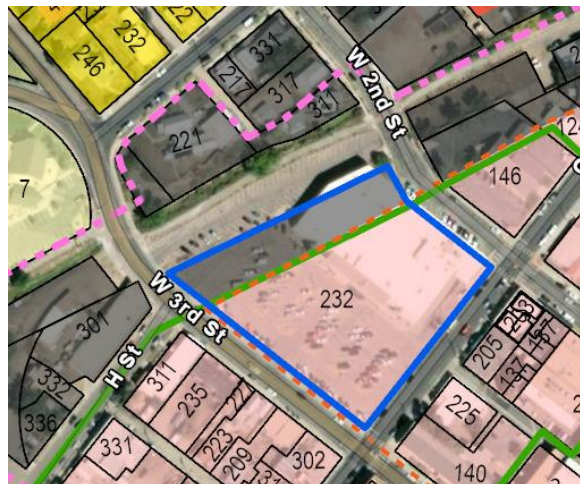
STAFF RESPONSE:

- The location of the proposed mural is setback from 2nd Street (the closest right of way) by approximately 60 feet. The mural will not be illuminated and will likely be most visible to pedestrians along the Monarch Spur Trail, users of the charging area, or users of the public parking area. It would be visible from the residences on the other side of the Monarch Spur Trail, those residences being between 2nd Street to 3rd street along I Street.

- The sign will not significantly distract from traffic along 2nd street. This street is a low volume and low speed corridor in the city. Speed limit through this area is 15 miles per hour (mph). The pedestrian crossing of the Monarch Spur Trail has substantial visibility with shark teeth painted in the road and a large reflective crosswalk sign along the right of way.



- The site is located in an area that is primarily commercial in nature with some residential units in the mix. It is adjacent to a public parking area and a pedestrian trail.
- The site and building spans both the Central Business District (C-2) and Industrial (I) zone districts. The zone district the mural will be in is the Industrial (I) zone district. The Creative District encompasses the mural area. Staff believes the proposed mural will not distract from the architecture of the building, instead it will liven up the imposing blank wall.



2. **Design Review Standards.** In addition to the Impact Review Standards, to approve a sign under the Creative Sign process, the Planning Commission must find that the unique and creative design of the sign will meet standards a, b and c or standard d:

- a. Constitute a substantial aesthetic improvement to the site and have a positive visual impact on the surrounding area that justifies departure from the parameters of Section 16-10-50 and/or 16-10-60.



APPLICANT'S RESPONSE: "The building exterior wall is currently rough brick, painted light gray. The Mural installation will add beautiful color, and richness to the parking lot space behind the Safeway building, and add visual interest to those passing along the Monarch Spur Trail."

STAFF RESPONSE: Staff believes the mural will enhance the aesthetic of the existing blank façade of the grocery store. Pedestrians along the Monarch Spur Trail will now have a stop along their way to admire the artwork and perhaps read the plaque behind the concept.

- b. Utilize and/or enhance the architectural or historic elements of the building or location where it is displayed in an historic, unique and/or creative manner that justifies departure from the parameters of Section 16-10-50 and/or 16-10-60.

APPLICANT'S RESPONSE: "The mural art will incorporate artistic elements and storytelling about Salida that could include interpretations of people, the region and the natural environment. The mural will celebrate the spirit of adventure, environmental stewardship, and the spirit of the local community."

STAFF RESPONSE: The proposed treatment to the grocery store wall will provide interest to the passerby, users of the electric charging stations, and public parking area. This is a key design ingredient for an active environment which has been long neglected as a space. This will create a uniqueness to the multifunctional area.

- c. Provide strong artistic character through the imaginative use of design, graphics, color, texture, quality of materials, scale and proportion uses, character, and identity of the area in which it is displayed.

APPLICANT'S RESPONSE: "The mural will be inspiring, colorful, thoughtful, inclusive, celebrate local culture, well - designed, and easy to maintain. While the mural will be adjacent to the Rivian charging location, there is no intention for any company branding on mural."

STAFF RESPONSE: The area the mural will be is currently a monotone gray color along the large imposing wall of the grocery store. The graphics and colors of the design will enhance the area to a more desirable place to be. Utilizing the entirety of the wall will be a good use of the area found within the Creative District of the city. The portrayal of stargazing is a notion Salida is very proud of with viewing the stars from our backyards.

- d. A Creative Sign may be appropriate to provide reasonable visibility of a business's main sign in some rare situations where topography, landscaping, existing buildings or unusual building design may substantially block visibility of the applicant's existing or proposed signs from multiple directions. Despite the possibility of a creative sign permit, visibility of a sign or attention-attracting device may not be possible.

APPLICANT'S RESPONSE: "No known obstructions to mural visibility."

STAFF RESPONSE: The existing signs along the 3rd street elevation are very visible and there is no landscaping or topography that blocks these signs. However the proposed creative sign provides interest for pedestrians on a completely alternate area of the site. This area which has been neglected for having a sizeable amount of foot traffic using the trail.

REQUIRED ACTIONS BY THE COMMISSION:

1. The Commission shall confirm that adequate notice was provided and a fee paid.
2. The Commission shall conduct a public hearing.
3. The Commission shall make findings regarding the proposed creative sign in order to ensure the use is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan, conforms to the Land Use Code, and is appropriate to its location and compatible with neighboring uses.

RECOMMENDED FINDINGS:

1. The applicable review criteria for all Creative Signs have been met.

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Based on the above findings, staff recommends APPROVAL of the request to create a mural upon the northwest wall face at 232 G Street.

RECOMMENDED MOTION:

That the recommended findings be made and the recommended action be taken.

Attachments: Application
Artwork
License Agreement
Published Notice