



STAFF REPORT

Meeting Type: City Council
Meeting Date: June 3, 2024
From: Kelly O'Neill Jr., Development Services Director
Subject: PUBLIC HEARING: Cedar Park Entry Sign Variance Request

DECISION TO BE MADE:

This public hearing is intended for the City Council to consider approval, approval with conditions, or denial of the City of Sandy Parks and Recreation Department's request for a sign variance for Cedar Park.

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT:

The City of Sandy had a sign variance committee for a short period of time, but the committee has been defunct since at least March 2017. As we all know, staffing an ad hoc committee is especially challenging when the committee only meets once or twice a year. City Council is the appealing body of the sign variance committee, so instead of holding a meeting before the non-functioning sign variance committee, staff believes that the best scenario would be to bring this sign variance request directly before City Council.

The property has a zoning classification of Medium Density Residential (R-2) with a Flood, Slope, Hazard (FSH) overlay. The applicant is proposing the sign location be entirely outside the FSH overlay area, therefore no additional review criteria is required. Because the property is owned by the City and planned for a community park, the application was reviewed under **Section 15.32.030.E Commercial and Institutional Uses within Residential Zones.**

PURPOSE / OBJECTIVE:

The City of Sandy Parks and Recreation Department is requesting a variance for their new Cedar Park sign located at the main entrance at Meinig Avenue. The sign is a freestanding sign with an eighteen (18) inch high base made up of stone facing with a stone cap. The stone base measures twenty-eight (28) feet in length and provides a sitting area along the length of the base as a seating/respice area. The signage is located atop the stone base area and is comprised of forty-two (42) inch high steel letters that spell out 'CEDAR PARK'. The letters are painted a dark bronze (earth-tone color), and the stone is proposed as a local grey basalt.

APPLICABLE CRITERIA/ANALYSIS:

Section. 15.32.030. Signs allowed in residential zones—Permits required.

E. *Commercial and Institutional Uses within Residential Zones.*

1. *Number.* Only one sign is allowed for a development or complex, even if more than one tax lot or ownership is included in the development, except that if a development has more than one access point, one additional sign may be located at a major public access point located on a different public road.

Staff Response: The applicant is proposing one sign at this time.

2. *Type.* The sign may be freestanding or on-building.

Staff Response: The applicant is proposing the sign to be freestanding.

3. *Area.* The maximum sign face area is 32 square feet.

Staff Response: The applicant is proposing an 88 square foot sign (see Section 15.32.210 Definitions - Area).

4. The maximum height for a freestanding sign is five feet.

Staff Response: The applicant is proposing the sign to be five feet in height.

The applicant exceeds the maximum sign face area for a freestanding sign for an institutional use and therefore requires a variance. The size of the applicant's sign face was reviewed following the description on how to determine sign face area outlined in Section 15.32.210. Definitions.

Section 15.32.210 Definitions - Area, sign face means:

- A. The area of sign enclosed in a frame or cabinet is determined based on the outer dimensions of the frame or cabinet surrounding the sign face. Sign area does not include foundations, supports, or other essential structures which are not serving as a backdrop or border to the sign.
- B. When a sign is on a base material and attached without a frame, the dimensions of the base material are to be used, unless it is clear that part of the base contains no related display or message.
- C. When signs are constructed in individual pieces attached to a building wall, sign area is determined by a perimeter drawn around all the pieces.
- D. For sign structures containing multiple modules oriented in the same direction, the modules together are counted as one sign face.
- E. The maximum surface area visible at one time on a round or three-dimensional sign is counted to determine sign area.

Based on the above description of how to quantify the sign face area, the applicant is fifty-six (56) square feet over the maximum allowed sign face area for an institutional use.

Section. 15.32.150. Variances to standards.

There may be rare instances where a combination of strict application of the standards in this chapter and/or public safety concerns may preclude use of signs as a communication medium for a primary frontage. In these cases, it may be appropriate to vary a particular standard to enable a property owner to utilize signs in a manner similar to others in a district.

- A. To request a variance, an applicant shall submit a completed sign variance application and appropriate review fee.
- B. The Sign Review Committee shall hold a public meeting on the application.
- C. **To approve a sign variance request, the Sign Review Committee must find that the requested variance is consistent with the intent of the signage regulations for the zoning district is requested for, and the sign is of a reasonable size. The Committee shall balance business needs with the community aesthetics.**
- D. The Sign Review Committee may impose such conditions on the approval as necessary to achieve the purposes of these regulations.
- E. Unless appealed, the Sign Review Committee's decision shall be the final decision of the city.
- F. Appeals to the Sign Review Committee's decisions shall be decided by the City Council, and the City Council's decision shall be the final decision of the city.
- G. Where a sign approved through these variance procedures is not installed within 12 months, the variance approval shall expire, and all work must fully comply with these regulations as amended to that date.

The validity of the sign variance shall be reviewed based on the material requirements above and the review criteria in Section 15.32.150.(C).

BUDGET IMPACT:

None, except the cost to construct the sign.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends the City Council weigh the merits of the sign variance request and decide if the variance shall be approved or denied.

SUGGESTED MOTION LANGUAGE:

Staff suggests that any motion agreed upon reflects the language and reasoning found in Section 15.32.150.(C) above.

LIST OF ATTACHMENTS/EXHIBITS:

- Exhibit A. Application
- Exhibit B. Sign Renderings
- Exhibit C. Site Plan