

**AGENDA MEMO - PLANNING**

DOWNTOWN DESIGN REVIEW COMMITTEE MEETING DATE: DECEMBER 20, 2011

DEPARTMENT: PLANNING

ITEM DESCRIPTION: ARC-44020 – APPLICANT: APPLICANT/OWNER: RETAIL 110, INC., ET AL.

**** STAFF RECOMMENDATION(S) ****

CASE NUMBER	RECOMMENDATION	REQUIRED FOR APPROVAL
ARC-44020	Staff recommends DENIAL. If approved, subject to conditions:	

**** CONDITIONS ****

ARC-44020 CONDITIONS

Planning

1. Conformance to the sign elevations and documentation as submitted and date stamped 11/29/11 in conjunction with this request, except as modified herein.
2. All signage, including temporary signage, shall have proper permits obtained through the Building and Safety Department.
3. An Encroachment Permit shall be approved and obtained prior to installation of any sign projecting into the public right-of-way.
4. Minor modifications may be approved by the Urban Design Coordinator of the Department of Planning.
5. All City Code requirements and design standards of all City departments must be satisfied, except as modified herein.

Staff Report Page One**December 20, 2011 - Downtown Design Review Committee Meeting****** STAFF REPORT ******PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

This is a request for a master sign plan design review for retail shops associated with an existing Mixed Use development (Soho Lofts) at 900 South Las Vegas Boulevard. The property is located within the Las Vegas Boulevard Scenic Byway Overlay District.

Phase I of the master sign plan proposes 14 wall signs, one awning sign and nine projecting signs to be attached to the north, south, east and west elevations of the building at the ground level. The typical wall sign proposed will include and match the existing approved signage for the existing Convenience Store in Suite 120 facing Hoover Avenue. The typical wall sign is approximately 52 square feet, contains a cabinet with rounded corners and a brushed aluminum finish, and features lettering with exposed neon and neon banding around the cabinet. Depending on the sign, additional messages will consist of black vinyl lettering and white exposed neon. Sign E is atypical—it is approximately 26 square feet in size with a similar brushed aluminum cabinet, but the lettering (“Globe Salon”) is blue and does not contain exposed neon but instead is illuminated by neon tubing within the cabinet.

The typical projecting sign will be attached to the building near the entrance to each tenant space approximately 8-10 feet above the sidewalk. Each double-faced sign will be approximately four square feet in area, have a trapezoidal shape and brushed aluminum finish, and feature lettering matching each tenant’s logo. The signs project approximately 1.5 feet from the building but will not extend beyond any building popout. These signs are not proposed to be internally illuminated; however, the plan allows direct external illumination at the owner’s discretion.

Phase II of the plan is not a part of this proposal, but is shown on the plans as part of a complete sign plan that can be modified for future approval. It would include installation of two 672 square-foot electronic message consoles to be located on the west and east elevations no higher than the parking garage levels. The units are proposed to display on-premise and off-premise advertising and non-commercial messages. Alternatively, the plan contemplates adding two 192 square-foot signs to the corners of the building for the same purposes.

As the signage’s design does not comply in part with the provisions of the Las Vegas Scenic Byway Overlay District, the proposed master sign plan cannot be supported. If the request is denied, signage for the ground floor must be redesigned and presented again to the DDRC to meet Condition #8 of ARC-40353.

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ISSUES

- Approval is sought only for signage labeled as Phase I, which includes Signs A through O and nine projecting signs located on the north, east and west elevations. Signage labeled as Phase II is not part of this request and would be brought forward for consideration in a detailed update to the proposed plan at a future date.
- A Waiver is requested to allow a minimum sign separation distance of 14 feet where at least 50 feet is required for projecting signs less than 10 feet above the ground that are less than 65 square feet. Staff recommends approval of the waiver.
- A Waiver is requested to allow no illumination on the projecting signs where 75% neon/animation is required. Staff recommends denial of the waiver.
- A Waiver is requested to allow less than 75% neon illumination and/or animation for a proposed wall sign at Suite 130 (Sign E—currently Globe Salon). Staff recommends denial of the waiver.
- A Waiver is needed to allow up to 71% of the eligible wall coverage for tenant signage where Title 19.10.100 requires no more than 50 percent coverage. Staff recommends approval of the waiver.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

<i>Related Relevant City Actions by P&D, Fire, Bldg., etc</i>	
01/21/04	The City Council approved a Special Use Permit (SUP-3352) for a proposed Mixed Use Development with 112 residential units and approximately 4,000 square feet of retail space at the southwest corner of Las Vegas Boulevard and Hoover Street. The Planning Commission and staff recommended approval.
08/26/10	The Planning Commission approved a Special Use Permit (SUP-38842) for a proposed 3,937 square-foot Urban Lounge with outdoor dining area at 900 South Las Vegas Boulevard, Suite 140. Staff recommended approval.
12/14/10	The Downtown Design Review Committee approved a request for a Signage Design Review (ARC-40353) for an existing General Personal Service at 900 South Las Vegas Boulevard, Suite 130, subject to submittal of a master sign plan for the site. The approval included a Waiver of the 75% neon illumination and/or animation standard. Staff recommended denial.
	The Downtown Design Review Committee approved a request for a Signage Design Review (ARC-40354) for an existing Convenience Store at 900 South Las Vegas Boulevard, Suite 120. Staff recommended approval.
02/08/11	The Planning Commission approved a Special Use Permit (SUP-40115) for a Beer/Wine/Cooler Off-Sale Establishment within a proposed 1,370 square-foot Convenience Store at 900 South Las Vegas Boulevard, Suite 120. Staff recommended approval.

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<i>Most Recent Change of Ownership</i>	
04/03/09	A deed was recorded for a change in ownership.

<i>Related Building Permits/Business Licenses</i>	
01/13/11	A building permit (176889) was issued for a non-illuminated projecting sign at 900 South Las Vegas Boulevard, Suite 130. A final inspection was approved 04/22/11.
01/13/11	A building permit (176890) was issued for an illuminated wall sign at 900 South Las Vegas Boulevard, Suite 120. A final inspection was approved 04/22/11.

<i>Pre-Application Meeting</i>	
11/17/11	A pre-application meeting was held with the applicant to discuss submittal requirements for a master sign plan application. The following issues were discussed: • The master sign plan is in response to the DDRC's request for a sign plan addressing the entire mixed use development. Included would be signage previously approved by the DDRC. • The proposed master sign plan would cover the ground floor of the building, although additional electronic message unit signs would be proposed in a future phase of signage that would require additional DDRC approval. • Wall signs would follow a basic template of a rectangular aluminum background with colored lettering and neon attached. • A similar template is proposed for projecting signs at each tenant space. A horizontal lettering orientation is preferred by staff. • Phase II signage was presented for discussion by the DDRC. This signage consists of electronic message cabinets that could be affixed to the parking garage face on the east and west elevations and corners of the building. • A Waiver is requested to allow a minimum sign separation distance of 14 feet where at least 50 feet is required for projecting signs less than 10 feet above the ground that are less than 65 square feet. • A Waiver is requested to allow no illumination on the projecting signs where 75% neon/animation is required. • A Waiver is requested to allow less than 75% neon illumination and/or animation for a proposed wall sign (Globe Salon).

<i>Field Check</i>	
11/23/11	The site contains an existing high-rise building with ground level commercial facing Las Vegas Boulevard and Hoover Avenue. Previously permitted signage has been installed along Hoover Avenue.

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<i>Surrounding Property</i>	<i>Existing Land Use Per Title 19.12</i>	<i>Planned Land Use Designation</i>	<i>Existing Zoning District</i>
Subject Property	Mixed Use	MXU (Mixed Use)	C-2 (General Commercial)
North	Undeveloped	MXU (Mixed Use)	C-2 (General Commercial)
	Office, Other Than Listed		
South	Parking Lot for Mixed Use	MXU (Mixed Use)	C-2 (General Commercial)
	Restaurant		
East	Parking Lot	MXU (Mixed Use)	C-2 (General Commercial)
West	Office, Other Than Listed	MXU (Mixed Use)	C-2 (General Commercial)
	Undeveloped		

<i>Master Plan Areas</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Compliance</i>
Master Plan Area			
Downtown Centennial Plan	X		Y
<i>Special Purpose and Overlay Districts</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Compliance</i>
Special Purpose and Overlay Districts			
DCP-O (Downtown Centennial Plan Overlay District) (18b – The Las Vegas Arts District)	X		Y
Las Vegas Boulevard Scenic Byway Overlay District	X		N
Las Vegas Redevelopment Plan Area	X		Y

DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS

Wall Signs:

<i>Signs A-O (excluding E)</i>	<i>Allowed</i>	<i>Provided</i>	<i>Compliance</i>
Maximum Coverage	50% of eligible sign area (Up to 616 SF)	Up to 629 SF	N
Maximum Area	1,500 SF	52 SF	Y
Maximum Height	Up to 20 feet above parapet	20 feet above sidewalk	Y
Maximum Projection	4 feet	8 inches	Y
Illumination	75% neon and/or animation (internal/external)	75% neon and/or animation (internal/external)	Y

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<i>Sign E</i>	<i>Allowed</i>	<i>Provided</i>	<i>Compliance</i>
Maximum Coverage	50% of eligible sign area (Up to 163 SF)	Up to 228 SF	N
Maximum Area	1,500 SF	26 SF	Y
Maximum Height	Up to 20 feet above parapet	17.5 feet above sidewalk	Y
Maximum Projection	4 feet	5 inches	Y
Illumination	75% neon and/or animation (internal/external)	Less than 75%	N

<i>Signs P & Q</i>	<i>Allowed</i>	<i>Provided</i>	<i>Compliance</i>
Maximum Coverage	50% of eligible sign area (Up to 3,600 SF)	672 SF	Y
Maximum Area	1,500 SF	672 SF	Y
Maximum Height	Up to 20 feet above parapet	Approx. 84 feet above sidewalk	Y
Maximum Projection	4 feet	N/A	N/A
Illumination	75% neon and/or animation (internal/external)	100%	Y

Projecting Signs:

	<i>Allowed</i>	<i>Provided</i>	<i>Compliance</i>
Maximum Number	1 per entrance	9 signs/9 entrances	Y
Maximum Area	1,500 SF	4 SF	Y
Maximum Height	Less than 20 feet above parapet	12 feet above sidewalk	Y
Minimum Setback	8-foot projection into ROW	No setback; 1.5 projection	Y
Minimum Clearance	8 feet to bottom of sign	8 feet to bottom of sign	Y
Illumination	Internal/external/EMU; 75% neon and/or animation	None	N

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<i>Sign</i>	<i>Sign Type</i>	<i>50% Eligible Area</i>	<i>Proposed Tenant Signage Area</i>	<i>Sign Area</i>	<i>Allowed Height</i>	<i>Height</i>	<i>Illumination</i>
A	wall	191.40 SF	271.80 SF	52 SF	24 feet above sidewalk	20 feet	75%
B	wall	162.50 SF	227.50 SF	52 SF	24 feet above sidewalk	20 feet	75%
C	wall	162.50 SF	227.50 SF	52 SF	24 feet above sidewalk	20 feet	75%
D	wall	615.89 SF	628.60 SF	52 SF	24 feet above sidewalk	29 feet	75%
E	wall	162.50 SF	227.50 SF	26 SF	24 feet above sidewalk	20 feet	Less than 75%
F	wall	162.50 SF	227.50 SF	52 SF	24 feet above sidewalk	20 feet	75%
G	wall	185.00 SF	259.00 SF	52 SF	24 feet above sidewalk	20 feet	75%
H	wall	156.25 SF	218.75 SF	52 SF	24 feet above sidewalk	20 feet	75%
I	awning	117.50 SF	43.00 SF	52 SF	24 feet above sidewalk	20 feet	75%
J	wall	156.25 SF	218.75 SF	52 SF	24 feet above sidewalk	20 feet	75%
K	wall	145.00 SF	203.00 SF	52 SF	24 feet above sidewalk	20 feet	75%
L	wall	137.50 SF	192.50 SF	52 SF	24 feet above sidewalk	20 feet	75%
M	wall	155.00 SF	217.00 SF	52 SF	24 feet above sidewalk	20 feet	75%

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N	wall	186.25 SF	260.75 SF	52 SF	24 feet above sidewalk	20 feet	75%
O	wall	186.25 SF	260.75 SF	52 SF	24 feet above sidewalk	22 feet	75%
P	wall	3,600 SF	3,600 SF	672 SF	84 feet	N/A	75%
Q	wall	3,600 SF	3,600 SF	672 SF	84 feet	N/A	75%
PRJ	projecting	Per tenant area	Per tenant area	4 SF	24 feet above sidewalk	12 feet	None

Waivers		
Requirement	Request	Staff Recommendation
75% neon illumination and/or animation per sign	No illumination on projecting signs; less than 75% on Wall Sign E	Denial
Minimum separation of 50 feet for signs less than 65 SF that are below 10 feet vertical height from sidewalk	Minimum 14 feet separation between projecting signs	Approval
Maximum wall coverage shall not exceed 50% of eligible wall signage area	Up to 71% coverage	Approval

ANALYSIS

The subject property is located within the Las Vegas Scenic Byway Overlay District, which was established to preserve and enhance the unique scenic qualities of Las Vegas Boulevard through the regulation of signage along this corridor. Signage is subject to the requirements of Title 19.10.160 as well as 19.08 for signs in the C-2 (General Commercial) Zoning District. Although only the east side of the property faces Las Vegas Boulevard, the codes governing the Scenic Byway Overlay are applicable to the entire parcel.

Two signs (one wall sign and one non-illuminated projecting sign) have already been approved and installed on the north elevation of the building, which faces Hoover Avenue. The proposed signs would have a similar design to the existing signs. A master sign plan for the mixed use development was required as a condition of the approval of the non-illuminated sign at Suite 130.

Staff Report Page Eight**December 20, 2011 - Downtown Design Review Committee Meeting**

The proposed typical wall signage meets Scenic Byway Overlay standards, including the 75% neon and/or animation. Sign E, which is smaller, does not meet the minimum illumination standard and will require a waiver. It is recommended that the design be altered to either match that of the typical wall sign or to meet the 75% requirement. A Waiver of Title 19.10.100 is required to allow wall coverage limits to exceed the 50% maximum of the eligible tenant signage area. As the elevation areas proposed are appropriate for tenant signage on a large building such as this one and the proposed signs are much less in area (52 square feet) than the tenant space allows, staff recommends approval.

The proposed projecting signs are allowed by Title 19.10.100 to extend up to eight feet perpendicular to the building wall to which they are attached. The signs comply with this requirement, projecting approximately 1.5 feet from the building. If approved as part of this request, and if determined that the signs encroach into the public right-of-way, an encroachment permit must be approved before the signs can be installed. The signs also meet the minimum clearance height of eight feet from the ground. In addition to the lack of neon illumination and/or animation, the projecting signs are in most cases separated by less than 50 feet, which also requires a waiver. As the signs are needed to identify tenants at the pedestrian level, and the size and placement of the signs does not contribute to clutter along the north and west elevations, the waiver can be supported.

Although Phase II signage is not presented for approval in this request, it should be noted that off-premise signs are not allowed in Scenic Byway Overlay District and that any commercial messages must pertain only to services offered on the property.

FINDINGS

While the proposed signage design is compatible in size and aesthetics with other signage in the area, staff cannot support the lack of illumination on the proposed projecting signs or Sign E, as it is not in conformance with the Scenic Byway Overlay District objectives. Properties along the Scenic Byway should carry the neon-illuminated theme around each side of the building, not just on the side facing Las Vegas Boulevard. Staff therefore recommends denial of the master sign plan, subject to conditions. If approved, each individual sign must be reviewed by the Department of Planning staff against the approved master sign plan during the building permit process. If denied, signage for the ground floor must be redesigned and presented again to the DDRC to meet Condition #8 of ARC-40353.