



# City of Costa Mesa

## Inter Office Memorandum

**TO:** CITY COUNCIL AND PLANNING COMMISSION  
**CC:** TOM HATCH, GARY ARMSTRONG, AND JAY TREVINO  
**FROM:** WILLA BOUWENS-KILLEEN, ZONING ADMINISTRATOR  
**DATE:** AUGUST 4, 2016  
**SUBJECT:** ZONING ADMINISTRATOR DECISION(S)

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "W. Bouwens-Killeen", written over the "FROM:" line of the memorandum.

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This is to advise you of the following decision(s) made by the Zoning Administrator within the last week. Project descriptions have been kept brief for this notice. Please feel free to contact me by e-mail at [willa.bouwens-killeen@costamesaca.gov](mailto:willa.bouwens-killeen@costamesaca.gov) if you have any questions or would like further details.

**ZA-16-22**                      **535, 555 and 575 Anton Boulevard**

Amendment to Planned Sign Program (ZA-00-03) to allow two additional penthouse signs for a total of six penthouse signs (425 square feet maximum copy area per building; 6 feet maximum height for signs; and 9 feet maximum height for logos) for the three office towers located at the South Coast Metro Center. The signs are integrated with improvements to the three office towers that include an architectural feature connecting the penthouse to the building elevation on two sides with a PVC formed white color band and halo lighting.

Approved, subject to conditions of approval.

Comments received: None.



# CITY OF COSTA MESA

P.O. BOX 1200 • 77 FAIR DRIVE • CALIFORNIA 92628-1200

DEVELOPMENT SERVICES DEPARTMENT

August 4, 2016

Marianne Warner  
Truemark Inc. DBA JB 3D  
731 N. Main Street  
Orange, CA 92868

**RE: ZONING APPLICATION ZA-16-22  
AMENDMENT TO PLANNED SIGN PROGRAM  
535, 555 AND 575 ANTON BLVD. (South Coast Metro Center)**

Dear Ms. Warner:

Review of the planned signing program for the above-referenced project has been completed. The application, as described in the attached project description, has been approved, based on the findings and subject to the conditions of approval and code requirements (attached). The decision will become final at 5 p.m. on August 11, 2016, unless appealed by an affected party, including filing of the necessary application and payment of the appropriate fee or called up for review by a member of the Planning Commission or City Council.

If you have any questions regarding this letter, please feel free to contact the project planner, Minoo Ashabi at (714) 754-5610, or at [minoo.ashabi@costamesaca.gov](mailto:minoo.ashabi@costamesaca.gov).

Sincerely,

WILLA BOUWENS-KILLEEN, AICP  
Zoning Administrator

Attachments: Project Description/ Findings  
Conditions of Approval, Code Requirements  
Approved Conceptual Plans

cc: Engineering  
Fire Protection Analyst  
Building Safety Division

McCarthy Cook and Co.  
535 Anton Blvd., Suite 150  
Costa Mesa, CA 92626

## **PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

The applicant requests an amendment to the existing planned signing program (PSP) to allow new locations for penthouse signs and logos at two high-rises at The Met (former South Coast Metro Center – 535, 555, and 575 Anton Blvd.). The property is zoned Planned Development Commercial (PDC) and is developed with three office towers, three parking structures, and surface parking. The surrounding area includes the 405 freeway to the south, the Experian campus to the east, and the Enclave Apartments to the north.

The original PSP was approved in 1984. An amendment to PSP was approved on March 2, 2000 that allowed the following penthouse signs:

- Three logo signs (one per building) facing south (405 Freeway) – 9'-0" maximum height
- Six penthouse signs (internally illuminated) at opposite elevations – four facing east and west and two facing north – 425 square feet maximum area and 6'-0" max height.

The request is not to increase the area or number of the signs but to allow logos and signs on the same elevations. The proposal also includes a blade band that adds a vertical element to the elevations of the building with halo lighting and wraps around the sign band at the penthouse locations.

## **ANALYSIS**

Pursuant to Section 13-120 of the Zoning Code, signs may be authorized as part of a PSP even if they do not conform to all specific regulations of the Sign Ordinance. A PSP is intended to provide maximum incentive and latitude to encourage variety and good design, and to allow response to special circumstances, but shall not be used to circumvent the objectives of the Sign Ordinance.

The applicant requests an amendment to allow signs and logos facing east and west on two towers (535 and 575 Anton Blvd.) and not on opposite elevations as currently allowed by the PSP. The tower immediately adjacent to the 405 Freeway (555 Anton Blvd.) will continue to utilize the existing penthouse signs for tenant signage and no other alteration to the building or the penthouse sign band is proposed.

The proposed elevation upgrades and penthouse signs are part of extensive improvements the applicant is proposing for The Met. The signs will be installed as sign bands that extend from the 4<sup>th</sup> level to the penthouse and allow for installation of two signs at the penthouse level of the buildings. The proposed height for the penthouse sign will maintain the overall heights of the buildings at 170'-6" feet (below 180 feet AGL as required by North Costa Mesa Specific Plan).

The proposed improvements that includes an accent fin to the two high rises and penthouse signs will be visible from the freeway and adjacent properties. The LED strip

along the building edge includes LED strips with 160 lumens per foot. This will result in a glowing edge with the light sources not visible and with minimal light dissemination to the surroundings and nor will they generate any safety impacts. The blade includes a PVC extension and film over the windows to enhance the building elevation and unify the penthouse to the side elevations. The sign bands are intended to allow recognition of the major tenants of the buildings as well as an upgrade to the aesthetics of the office towers.

### **General Plan Consistency**

The proposed sign design and exterior improvements are consistent with 2015-2035 General Plan Land Use Objectives LU-3.6 that promotes revitalization of aging commercial centers by working with property owners, developers, local businesses, and other community organizations to coordinate efforts; and LU-3.8 that encourages new development reflect existing design standards, qualities, and features that are in context with nearby development and surrounding residential neighborhoods.

### **FINDINGS**

- A. The proposed project complies with Costa Mesa Municipal Code Section 13-29(e) because:
1. The project allows for a compatible and harmonious relationship between the proposed building and site development, and uses, and the building and site developments, and uses that exist or have been approved for the general neighborhood. The proposed penthouse signs are compatible in size, location, and general design with the existing on-site signs.
  2. Safety and compatibility of the design of buildings, parking area, landscaping, luminaries and other site features which may include functional aspects of the site development such as automobile and pedestrian circulation have been considered. The proposed penthouse signs and the halo band along the elevations do not include any direct light source and provide halo lighting. These signs are located over 170 feet above the ground and will not have any safety impacts.
  3. Compliance with any performance standards as prescribed elsewhere in this Zoning Code are met. With approval of the amendment to Planned Signing Program, the proposed signs will not be enlarged or allow more intensity; the amendment allows signs and logos on the same sign band and at 90 degree elevations instead of opposite elevations. The new locations will complement the proposed sign band on the elevations and ties the penthouse signs with the rest of the building.
  4. The project is consistent with the General Plan in that the proposed penthouse signs are compatible with the design, location, and scale of the building and other on-site signs.
  5. The planning application is for a project-specific case and is not to be construed to be setting a precedent for future development. The planned signing program

was designed specifically for the project site taking into consideration the site's building configuration and vehicular access.

- B. The planned signing program substantially complies with Costa Mesa Municipal Code Section 13-29(g)(8) because:
1. The proposed sign is consistent with the intent of the Chapter VIII - Signs -- of the Zoning Code and the General Plan. The proposed signs provide additional identification for the businesses, yet maintain an uncluttered aesthetic environment. Furthermore, the signs will not adversely impact traffic safety.
  2. The proposed signs are consistent with other on-site signage, taking into account sign style and shape, materials, letter style, colors, and illumination. In addition, the proposed signs will complement the dimensions and design of the buildings and is size, location and color.
  3. The proposed signs are compatible with the materials, colors, and design of the buildings. The signs and sign band will modernize the two office buildings.
  4. Approval does not constitute a grant of special privilege or allow substantially greater visibility than what the standard sign provisions allow or what other similar properties in the area enjoy. With approval of the amendment to Planned Signing Program, the proposed signs will not be enlarged or allow more intensity; the amendment allows signs and logos on the same sign band and at 90 degree elevations instead of opposite elevations. The new locations will complement the proposed sign band on the elevations and unifies the penthouse signs with the rest of the building.
- C. The project has been reviewed for compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the CEQA Guidelines, and the City environmental procedures, and has been found to be categorical exempt under Section 15311, Class 11, Accessory Structures, of the CEQA Guidelines.
- D. The project is exempt from Chapter XII, Article 3 Transportation System Management, of Title 13 of the Costa Mesa Municipal Code.

### **CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL**

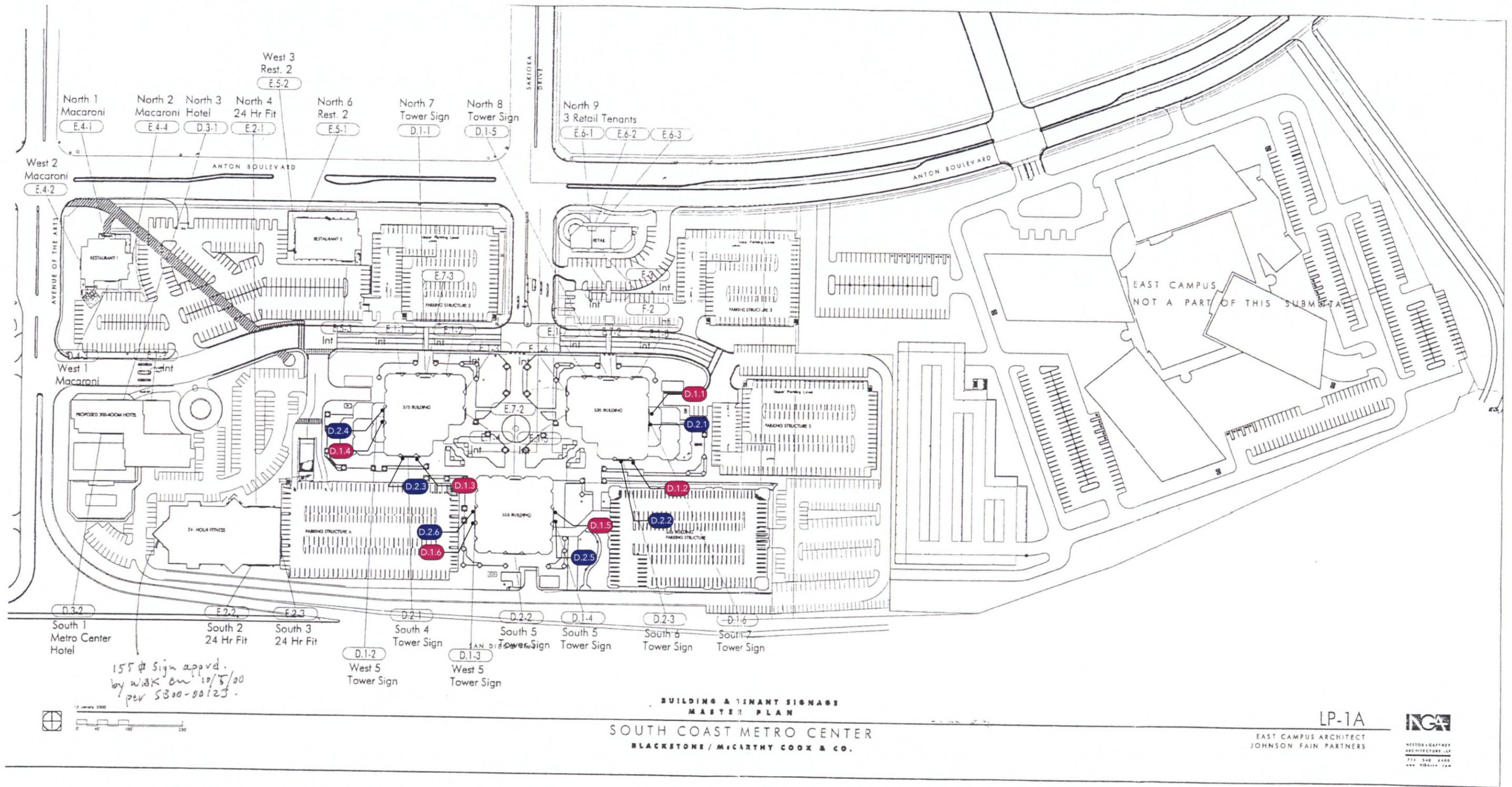
- Plng.
1. The sign shall be installed and maintained in conformance with the approved plans for ZA-16-22.
  2. Any modification, addition, or deletion to the approved planned signing program shall be reviewed by the Zoning Administrator to determine if an amendment to the planned signing program is necessary.
  3. The intensity of the lights at the side bands shall be examined upon installation by the Planning Division; any required changes shall be satisfied per requirements by the Development Services Director.

4. The planned signing program may be referred to the Planning Commission for modification or revocation at any time if the conditions of approval have not been complied with, or if, in the opinion of the Development Services Director or his designee, any of the findings upon which the approval was based are no longer applicable.

### **CODE REQUIREMENTS**

The following list of federal, state and local laws applicable to the project has been compiled by staff for the applicant's reference. Any reference to "City" pertains to the City of Costa Mesa.

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|-------|---|
| Plng. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. All contractors and subcontractors must have valid business licenses to do business in the City of Costa Mesa. Final inspections, final occupancy and utility releases will not be granted until all such licenses have been obtained.</li><li>2. Approval of the zoning action is valid for one year and will expire at the end of that period unless building permits are obtained or the applicant applies for and is granted an extension of time.</li><li>3. Permits shall be obtained for all signs according to the provisions of the Costa Mesa Sign Ordinance.</li></ol>  |
| Bldg. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>4. Comply with the requirements of the following adopted codes Code, 2013 California Building Code, 2013 California Electrical code, 2013 California Green Building Standards Code and 2013 California Energy Code (or the applicable adopted, California Building code California Electrical code, California Green Building Standards and California Energy Code at the time of plan submittal or permit issuance ) and California Code of Regulations also known as the California Building Standards Code, as amended by the City of Costa Mesa. Each building address shall have plans submitted separately for review and approval.</li></ol> |



155 # sign appvd.  
by WSK on 10/5/00  
per SB00-00123.

BUILDING & TENANT SIGNAGE  
MASTER PLAN  
SOUTH COAST METRO CENTER  
BLACKSTONE / MCARTHY COOK & CO.

LP-1A  
EAST CAMPUS ARCHITECT  
JOHNSON FAIR PARTNERS  
NGA  
NESTOR GAFFNEY  
ARCHITECTURE LLP  
711 540 4100  
www.nga.com

letter # (.) #  
graphic exhibit  
actual number  
of signs of  
this type

SIGN LEGEND:

- D.1 PENTHOUSE SIGN - LETTERS
- D.2 PENTHOUSE SIGN LOGO

NOTE: BOTH SIGN TYPES D1 AND D2 ARE PERMITTED TO EXIST PER ELEVATION OR ONE OR THE OTHER ARE ALLOWED PER ELEVATION.

blg sign  
74.10.01

## INDEX OF SIGN TYPES

Sign Type Number	Description	Graphic Schedule Page No.	Sketch
D.1	Penthouse Sign - Dimensional Letters Internally Illuminated 6'-0" Letter Height, Maximum 425 Square Feet - Copy Area, Max per Building Permitted on two adjoining faces of Building as Illustrated or opposite elevations	14	
D.2	Penthouse Sign - Logo Only Internally Illuminated 9'-0" Maximum Height Area must be deducted from other Penthouse Sign Allotments	14	
E.1	Wall Mounted Sign - Office Towers Dimensional Letters Average Letter Height = 12 inches Not visible to external streets. Black or Brass Metal Lettering.	15	