



# Board of Adjustment STAFF REPORT

AGENDA

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**TO:** CASA GRANDE BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT

**FROM:** James Gagliardi, City Planner

**MEETING DATE:** October 11, 2016

## REQUEST

**A. Request by Gunnar Langhus** on behalf of Casa Grande Holdings, LLC for the consideration of the following:

1. **DSA-16-00087: Variance request** to Sign Regulations applicable to the R-3 (Multi-Family Residential) zone district to allow:
  - a. A 12 sq. ft. low-profile sign, that is to be *perpendicular* to Peart Rd. where if low profile, a sign shall be *parallel* to the street per Section 603.3.B of City Sign Code.
  - b. Same low-profile sign to be entirely within public right of way (14.97 ft. from curb), where sign shall be placed a minimum of 20 ft. inward from front property line per Section 603.3.B. per City Sign Code.

## APPLICANT/OWNER

Gunnar Langhus, Project Manager  
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Phone: 503-245-7100  
Email: [gunnarl@amaa.com](mailto:gunnarl@amaa.com)

Casa Grande Holdings, LLC  
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Salem, OR 97302  
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Email: [Suzanne@z-vantage.com](mailto:Suzanne@z-vantage.com)

## HISTORY

September 4, 1973: The site was annexed with the passage of Ordinance No. 486, DSA-10 00182, and zoned R-3 (Multi-Family Residential) with the annexation.

May 1, 2014: Planning and Zoning Commission approves the Major Site Plan (DSA-14-00013) and Conditional Use Permit (DSA-14-00014) for *Caliche Senior Living*, an assisted living facility.

August 17, 2015: Ordinance No. 2927 (DSA-15-00068) was adopted by City Council dedicating the western 123 ft. of Caliche Senior Living property. Seventy feet was dedicated for Peart Rd. right of way, and 53 ft. was established as a public drainage channel easement upon the property.

July 12, 2016: Minor amendment to the Major Site Plan (DSA-16-00063) to modify the site entrance over the drainage channel along Peart to create a bridge-like appearance.

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

<b>Site Area</b>	4.87 acres
<b>Current Land Use</b>	Neighborhoods
<b>Existing Zoning</b>	R-3 (Multi-Family Residential)

**SURROUNDING LAND USE AND ZONING**

<b>Direction</b>	<b>General Plan 2020 Designation</b>	<b>Existing Zoning/Use</b>
<b>North</b>	<i>Neighborhoods</i>	R-3 (Multi-Family Residential) / Future Villas Plus by Mary T apartment homes
<b>East</b>	<i>Neighborhoods</i>	R-3 (Multi-Family Residential) / Future Villas Plus by Marty T apartment homes
<b>South</b>	<i>Neighborhoods</i>	B-1 (Neighborhood Business), Undeveloped.
<b>West</b>	<i>Neighborhoods</i>	Peart Rd. / PAD (G Diamond Ranch Planned Area Development, undeveloped commercially-designated property.

**AERIAL OF THE SITE**



## **OVERVIEW**

The City Sign Code determines a site's attached and detached signage allocation based on the zoning designation of the property. Caliche Senior Living, a 121-bed assisted living facility, currently under development, is within the R-3 (multi-family) zone district.

Per Section 603.3.B. per City Sign Code, the following is allowed for property within the R-3 zone:

- a. *One (1) non-illuminated sign per parcel not exceeding twelve (12) square feet in area giving the name, address, and use conducted on the property.*
- b. *Said sign shall be wall mounted, or low profile. If low profile (maximum height of 8 ft.), said sign shall be parallel to the street and shall not project into the front yard setback area.*

When the applicant began to erect a 6.5 ft. tall low-profile sign, 11.66 sq. ft. in area to display the name "Caliche Senior Living" (Exhibit A), staff reminded the applicant that signage is required by permit and where it's being placed is in conflict with the R-3 sign standards. Though the sign area and height complies with the City Sign Code, the sign's orientation and placement does not meet R-3 signage standards. The sign is perpendicular to the street, where the code states it is to be parallel. Also, the sign sits entirely within Peart Rd. right of way. Though signage can be permitted to be within the right of way with the consideration of an right of way encroachment permit; the requirement for the R-3 is that the sign is to be setback a minimum of 20 ft. from the front property line so as not to project into the property's "front yard setback" (Exhibit B).

Though the structure being constructed is 12 ft. X 6.5 ft., per Exhibit A, the area of sign is considered as consisting of only 11.66 sq. ft., meeting the 12 sq. ft. area limitation. This is based on the definition of "Area of Sign" in the City Sign Code. The location which the copy is placed is recessed and distinguished from the rest of the structure, resulting in the structure for the sign to not be counted towards the sign area.

## **CONFORMANCE WITH THE VARIANCE CRITERIA**

The applicant provided a narrative addressing the the variance criteria (Exhibit C).

In reviewing Variance requests, per Section 17.54 of the City Code, the Board of Adjustment shall find that the requests satisfy the considerations listed below. The applicant's response to these criteria as well as staff's analysis to each is provided.

- A. That there are special circumstances or conditions applicable to the property referred to in the application which do not prevail on other property in that zone;**

Applicant's response:

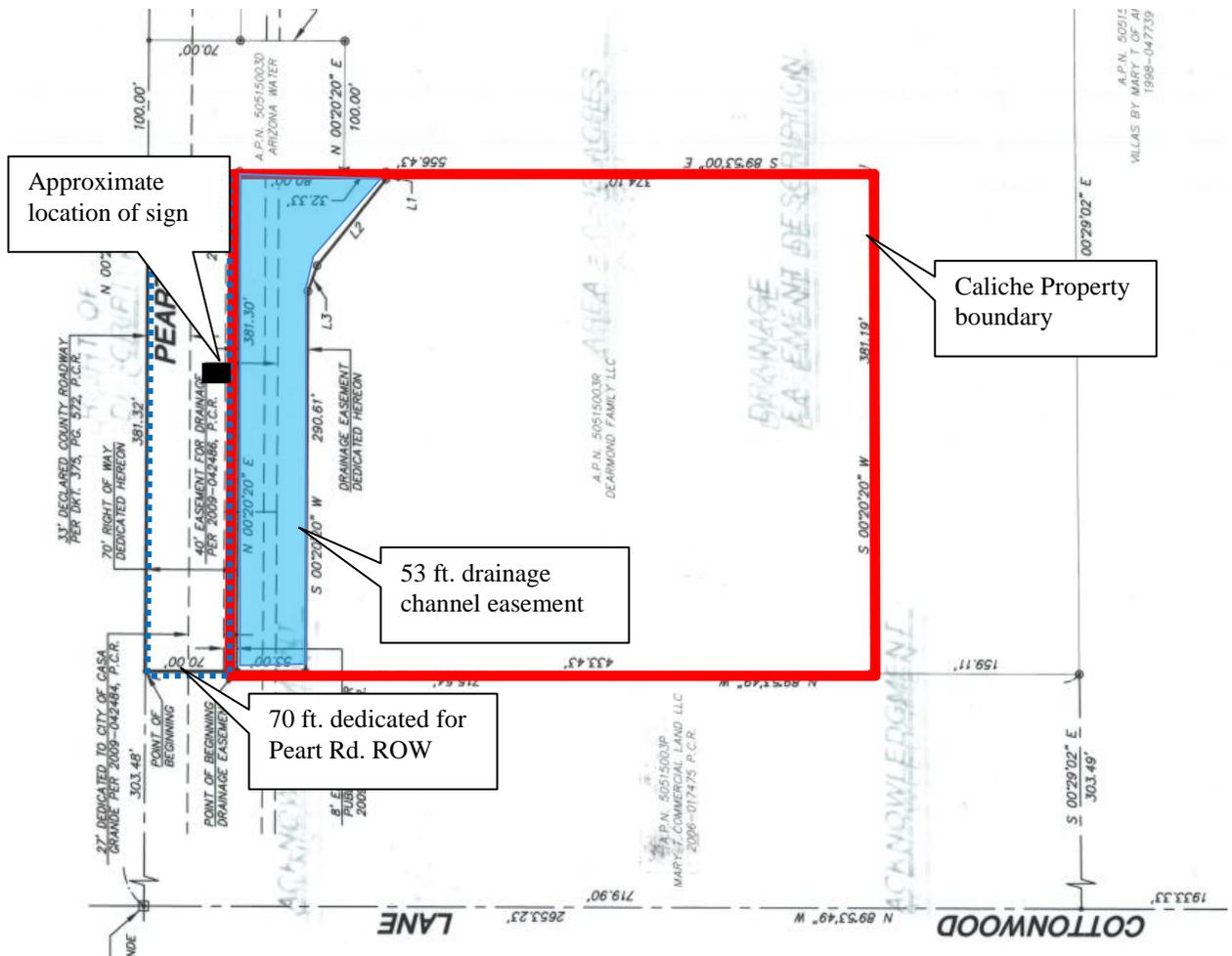
*A 20 ft. setback requirement is required in an R-3 zone (from the property line). The sign is located 54 ft. from the original property line prior to the land*

dedication . . .

Staff's analysis:

Though right of way dedication is typical of developing properties and wouldn't alone make this property unique; an additional special circumstance upon this property is that there was an additional requirement for a 53 ft. wide drainage easement along the front of the property. Though drainage channels are also typically constructed as part of development projects in order to carry developed flows across the property, the width of this channel is particularly substantial. Plus, the location is problematic with regard to where to place signage. The sign couldn't easily be placed a minimum of 20 ft. into the property because that could place it into the drainage channel. An option would be to place a low-profile sign 53 ft. into the property, on the other side of the channel; or provide a 12 sq. ft. wall sign on the building, 126 ft. away from the front property line; but either option would result in the loss of the sign's effectiveness.

Map of dedication excerpt



A special condition that would be applicable to this property, that doesn't prevail

on other properties within this zone district, is that the assisted living facility is not a typical R-3 use. Typically R-3 permits apartment complexes. This facility is allowed through the issuance of a Conditional Use Permit. The nature of Caliche Senior Living is more institutional than standard R-3 permitted uses. As a conditional use, there are special development considerations that can be placed upon it. The sign code does not provide special sign considerations for conditional uses, but through this variance process an exception can be afforded, if this is seen as a unique circumstance compared to standard development among R-3 properties.

**B. That the strict application of the regulations would work an unnecessary hardship and that the granting of the application is necessary for the preservation and enjoyment of substantial existing property rights**

Applicant's response:

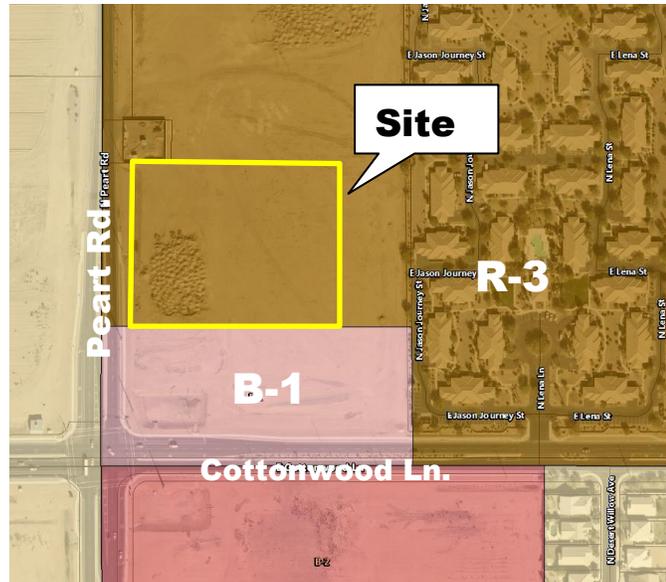
*The orientation of the signage . . . as perpendicular to Peart Road will allow for easier way finding for both residents . . . as well as . . . visitors . . .*

*The corner of Peart and Cottonwood . . . is a different zone and as zoned commercial would allow increased signage options as well as signage perpendicular to Peart Road and . . Cottonwood.*

*There is precedence of perpendicular signage existing on the adjacent properties in the area and directly on neighboring parcels that are zoned R-2 – again providing similar neighborhood context.*

Staff's analysis:

The applicant points out that the B-1 zoned property immediately to the south of this site, will develop with the allowance for more signage, since it is a commercially-designated property. Caliche Senior Living, which immediately abuts this commercial zone is afforded far less signage per the City Sign Code. The B-1 zone allows a 100 sq. ft. detached sign not to exceed 25 feet in height, either perpendicular or parallel; and can have wall signage at a ratio of 2 sq. ft. for every 1 ft. of elevation adjacent to a street.



Staff agrees that the relationship between this institutional type of use and future B-1 uses would be compatible in nature that some relaxing of the R-3 sign standards is appropriate.

Also, the presence of the aforementioned drainage channel that was referenced within the first criteria poses as a hardship in that it limits options for the site's signage.

The applicant indicates that nearby properties has perpendicular signage. This is true. Villas by Mary T, in the same R-3 zone district; was inadvertently approved for a perpendicular sign:



In the staff report for Villas by Mary T, there was reference to the site being allowed one low-profile sign, but nothing was mentioned about the requirement for the sign to be parallel.

A couple of nearby single-family residential subdivisions have perpendicular signage; such as the Wildwood subdivision south of Cottonwood Ln. along Peart Rd.:



This Wildwood sign was approved as its Planned Area Development zoning. The applicant makes a point that though these examples were permitted through other means, whether by their specific zone district; or through inadvertent approvals, Caliche Senior Living is not proposing signage that is out of character with other established signs in the area. Not permitting the variance to provide a similar type sign, could be considered hardship.

**C. That the granting of such application will not materially affect the health or safety of persons residing or working in the neighborhood and will not be materially detrimental to the public welfare or injurious to property or improvements of the neighborhood.**

Applicant's response:

*The signage decorative support includes . . . elements that are in character with the "bridge" and other decorative entry elements – providing harmony and cohesiveness in overall design within the community.*

*The sign is currently proposed to be 9 ft. 6 in. into the public R.O.W. . . . the proposed location is approximately 15 ft. from face of curb allowing clear visibility to access or turn onto Peart Road . . . allowing clear visibility both entering and exiting the site. Standard car lengths being just over 16 ft. in length generally will allow ample stacking and viability without materially affecting . . . safety of visitors and residents.*

*The sign location will not interfere with the location of the new sidewalk or the future roadway improvements and proposed location will allow for better overall visibility.*

Staff's analysis:

Staff agrees that the sign will not affect health or safety of persons in the neighborhood nor will it be detrimental to the public welfare. The signage is proposed to have many architectural embellishments to relate to the building's entry bridge and building.

Staff can support the sign being within the right of way with the issuance of a right of way encroachment permit. The applicant has submitted a permit and is awaiting approval, contingent upon the Board of Adjustment's consideration of the variance. Signs placed in the right of way should not impede with future road improvements, nor should it block visibility of oncoming pedestrians and vehicles. The sign is located in an area that will be out of the way from any future lane expansion. City Code section 17.52.160.C. states that at the intersection of each driveway with a street, a triangular area where corners are defined by two points on the right –of-way line, fifteen feet on each side of the centerline of the driveway and a point on the centerline ten feet outside of the right of way must be clear of unobstructed. The proposed sign placement is outside of this triangular visibility area.

### **PUBLIC NOTIFICATION**

Public hearing notification efforts for this request meet the requirement set out by City Code:

- A notice was published in the Casa Grande Dispatch on September 26, 2016.
- A notice was sent to all property owners within 300 ft. of the subject site on September 21, 2016.
- A public hearing sign was posted by the applicant on the subject site on September 23, 2016. An affidavit of this sign posting was provided and in the project folder.

### **Inquiries/Comments**

No inquires or comments have been received.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends the Board of Adjustment approve DSA-16-00087, the variance requests from Section 603.3.B of the City Sign Code to allow:

- a. A 12 sq. ft. low-profile sign, that is to be *perpendicular* to Peart Rd. where if low profile, a sign shall be *parallel* to the street per Section 603.3.B of City Sign Code.
- b. Same low-profile sign to be entirely within public right of way (14.97 ft. from curb), where sign shall be placed a minimum of 20 ft. inward from front property line subject to the following:

Condition:

- 1. Sign permit and right of way encroachment permit both must be approved

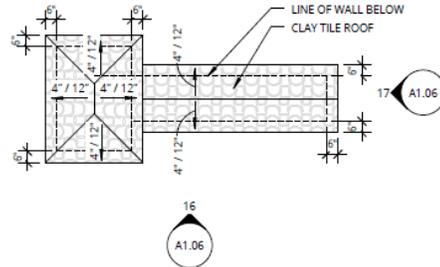
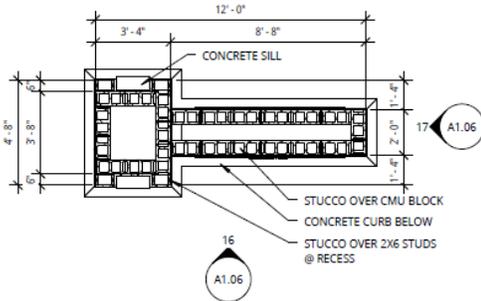
Technical Modifications:

- 1. Provide the location of and identify the front property line, parallel to Peart Rd on the site plan sign location typical.
- 2. Provide additional dimensions: The length of the sign (beyond the 4.06 ft. endcap), and the distance between the sign and the property line.
- 3. Revise corner visibility triangle on the site plan sign location typical to reflect the one, found in City Code section 17.52.450 and 17.52.160(C) which can be interpreted to show a distance 15 ft. in each direction from the center point of the driveway along the projected curb line, then ten feet back toward property then at an angle back to the point of beginning.

**Exhibits:**

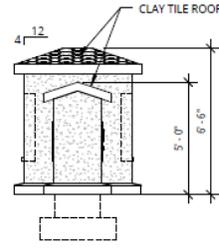
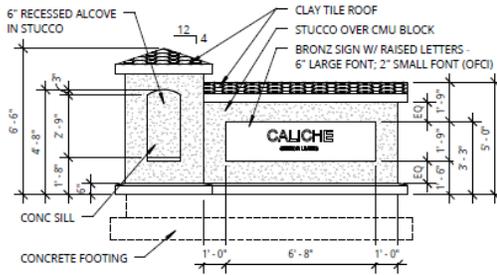
- Exhibit A – Sign details
- Exhibit B – ROW sign site plan
- Exhibit C – Applicant’s narrative

Exhibit A – Sign details



12 MONUMENT SIGN FLOOR PLAN  
A1.06 | 1/4" = 1'-0"

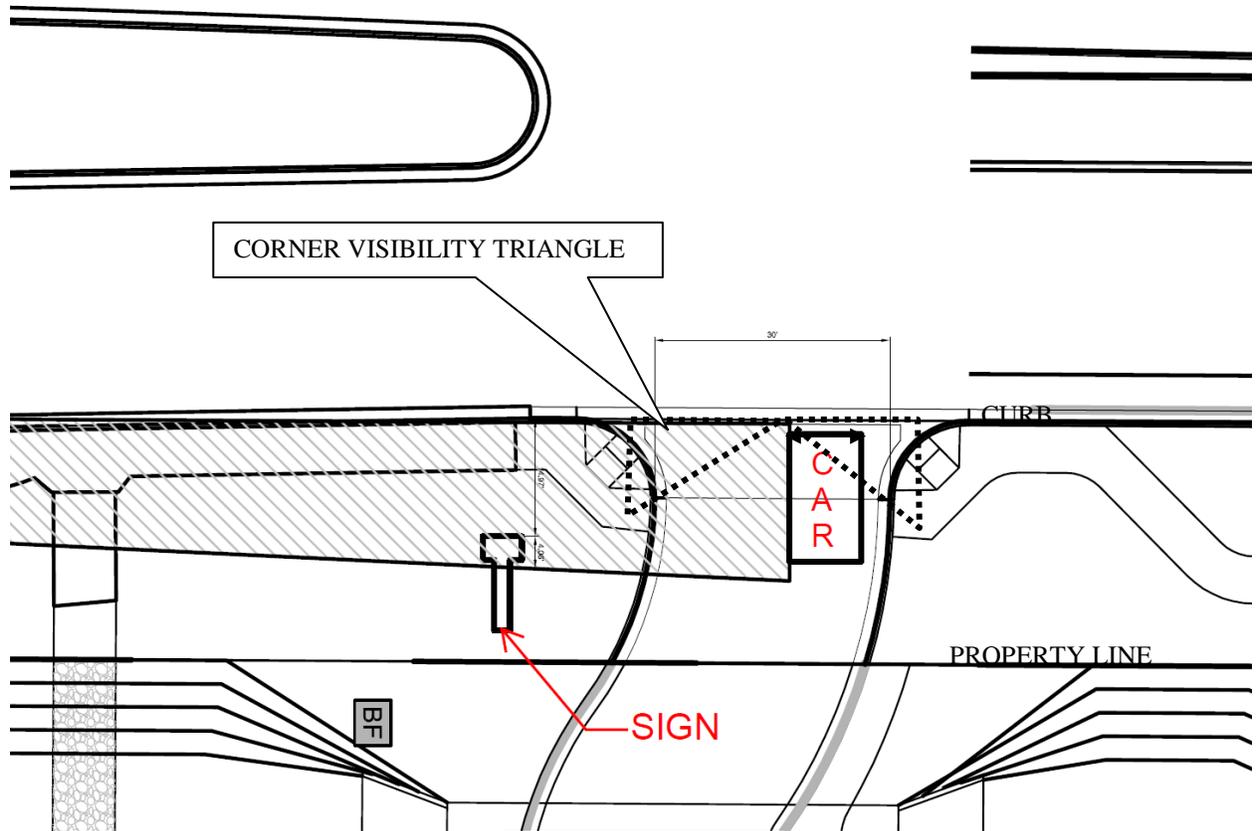
13 MONUMENT SIGN ROOF PLAN  
A1.06 | 1/4" = 1'-0"



16 MONUMENT SIGN ELEVATION - A  
A1.06 | 1/4" = 1'-0"

17 MONUMENT SIGN ELEVATION - B  
A1.06 | 1/4" = 1'-0"

Exhibit B – ROW Site Plan



## Exhibit C – Applicant’s Narrative



September 14, 2016

Jim Gagliardi  
City of Casa Grande  
510 E. Florence Blvd.  
Casa Grande, AZ 85122

**RE: BUILDING MONUMENT SIGN VARIANCE NARRATIVE**

Dear Jim:

We are requesting a variance and clarification for the following rules in regards to the monument sign. We will outline justification of criteria that there are special circumstances and conditions applicable to the property that do not prevail on other properties in the R-3 zone. That the strict application of the R-3 signage regulations would invoke unnecessary hardship and that granting the application is necessary for the preservation and enjoyment of substantial existing property rights. Finally, that the granting of the application will not materially affect the health or safety of persons residing or working in the neighborhood and will not be materially detrimental to the public welfare or injurious to property or improvements of the neighborhood.

Section 603

- a. One (1) non-illuminated sign per parcel not exceeding twelve (12) square feet in area giving the name, address and use conducted on the property.

**Request: Each sign (2 totals) is located on each side of the monument wall and is low profile. Each sign face is 11.77 sq. ft. or under the 12 sq. ft. maximum allowed.**

- b. Said sign shall be wall mounted, or low profile. If low profile, said sign shall be parallel to the street and shall not project into the front yard setback area.

**Request: The overall sign area dimensions are planned at 1'-9" tall by 6'-8" long or under the 12 sq. ft. maximum sign area allowed.**

**ARCHITECTURE  
INTERIORS  
URBAN DESIGN  
IDENTITY**

Ankrom Moisan Architects

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SEATTLE  
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Suite 300  
Seattle, WA 98101  
206.576.1600

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SAN FRANCISCO  
1014 Howard Street  
San Francisco, CA 94103  
415.252.7063

ankrommoisan.com

Justification:

- The signage decorative support includes decorative elements that are in character with the “bridge” and other decorative entry elements- providing harmony and cohesiveness in overall design within the community.
- The sign support base includes a decorative corner base element of 4’x8” x 3’- 4” at 6’-6” tall and a lower decorative support of 8’-8” in length by 2’-0” with width with a height of 5’-0” and is proportions to align with neighboring decorative elements. The material of the

signage support is proposed to be of stucco matching the building and other decorative elements within the project.

- The decorative support base is meant to work cohesively with the entry elements of the “bridge” over the required drainage way for storm water- a condition unique to this property in terms of overall sheer size and width.
- The orientation of the signage elements as perpendicular to Peart Road will allow for easier way finding for both residents of the community as well as potential visitors.
- While the proposed decorative monument sign is perpendicular with Peart Road, it could be considered parallel with Cottonwood Road if the R-3 zoned lot is considered a corner lot of the R-3 zone itself- allowing the signage to be oriented either perpendicular or parallel to the roads.
- The corner of Peart and Cottonwood road is a different zone and as zoned commercial would allow increased signage options as well as signage perpendicular to Peart Road and or Cottonwood Road. The proposed signage would allow more cohesiveness and continuity as the commercial lot is developed in the future and would allow better overall visibility of the project entry.
- There is precedence of perpendicular signage existing on the adjacent properties in the area and directly on neighboring parcels that are zoned R-3- again providing similar neighboring context.
- A 20 ft. setback requirement is required in an R-3 (from the property line). The sign is located 54' from the original property line prior to land dedication. The 70'-0" dedication for required drainage way puts unnecessary hardship on the property in terms of visibility from the street.
- The sign is currently proposed to be 9ft. 6" into public R.O.W. setback. We request your approval to allow the sign within the ROW with a revocable permit (and sign permit). The sign location will not interfere with the locations of the new sidewalk or the future roadway improvements and proposed location will allow for better overall visibility.
- While, the sign is slightly within site triangle distances as set forth by Major Arterial streets, the proposed location is



approximately 15' from face of curb allowing clear visibility to access or turn onto Peart Road. The sign is proposed approximately 15' from the curb of the drive aisle as well—again allowing clear visibility both entering and exiting the site. Standard car lengths being just over 16' in length generally will allow ample stacking and visibility without materially affecting health or safety of visitors and residents.

- The width of the overall drive access has been increased from a standard 24' to 30' overall again providing additional safety upon entering and or exiting the community.
- The signage code would allow for establishment of comprehensive sign plan as a process to define and increase signage standards within the development as a whole as alternate process for approval. However, we propose to keep the signage at more restrained R-3 standard in terms of what could be allowed in the commercial zone or the development of a comprehensive signage plan.
- The signage is proposed to as decorative elements associated to the overall building design and “bridge” entry feature to enhance the overall entry sequence to the site and enhances the overall neighborhood feel and connection of the project into the community.

We trust this request will clarify the variances requested and look forward to the hearing for decision. Please contact me if you need any further clarification or have any additional questions

ARCHITECTURE  
INTERIORS  
URBAN DESIGN  
IDENTITY

Sincerely,

Ankrom Moisan Architects, Inc.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Gunnar Langhus'.

Gunnar Langhus