

ZONING STAFF REPORT

November 22, 2017



PREPARED FOR THE URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION

Project Address: 10202 Rustling Birch Road
Project Name: Grand Arbor Reserve Apartments
Application Type: Approval for Comprehensive Design Review of Signage
Legistar File ID # [49460](#)
Prepared By: Matt Tucker, Zoning Administrator

The applicant is requesting Comprehensive Design Review for signage at the 200-unit Apartment building. The project is comprised of two 100-unit three-story buildings, attached with a centrally-located single-story common area between the residential buildings, on a 4.62-acre lot. This property is located in the Traditional Residential-Urban 1 (TR-U1) zoning district.

Pursuant to Section 31.043(4)(b), the UDC shall apply the following criteria upon review of an application for a Comprehensive Sign Plan:

1. *The Sign Plan shall create visual harmony between the signs, building(s), and building site through unique and exceptional use of materials, design, color, any lighting, and other design elements; and shall result in signs of appropriate scale and character to the uses and building(s) on the zoning lot as well as adjacent buildings, structures and uses.*
2. *Each element of the Sign Plan shall be found to be necessary due to unique or unusual design aspects in the architecture or limitations in the building site or surrounding environment; except that when a request for an Additional Sign Code Approval under Sec. 31.043(3) is included in the Comprehensive Design Review, the sign(s) eligible for approval under Sec. 31.043(3) shall meet the applicable criteria of Sec. 31.043(3), except that sign approvals that come to Comprehensive Design Review from MXC and EC districts pursuant to 31.13(3) and (7) need not meet the criteria of this paragraph.*
3. *The Sign Plan shall not violate any of the stated purposes described in Sec. 31.02(1) and 33.24(2).*
4. *All signs must meet minimum construction requirements under Sec. 31.04(5).*
5. *The Sign Plan shall not approve Advertising beyond the restrictions in Sec. 31.11 or Off-Premise Directional Signs beyond the restrictions in Sec. 31.115.*
6. *The Sign Plan shall not be approved if any element of the plan:*
 - a. *presents a hazard to vehicular or pedestrian traffic on public or private property,*
 - b. *obstructs views at points of ingress and egress of adjoining properties,*
 - c. *obstructs or impedes the visibility of existing lawful signs on adjacent property, or*
 - d. *negatively impacts the visual quality of public or private open space.*
7. *The Sign Plan may only encompass signs on private property of the zoning lot or building site in question, and shall not approve any signs in the right of way or on public property.*

Signage Permitted per Sign Ordinance

Summarizing Section 31.14(4), This development is considered an *apartment*, which allows non-illuminated wall signage for identification purposes, not to exceed 12 square feet, with a maximum of two wall signs allowed. The requested ground sign is located at the corner of Rustling Birch Rd and Sugar Maple Lane. The City's sign code

regulates the allowable size of signage with a “net area” calculation, and calculates the fee for ground signs with a “gross area calculation.

Proposed Signage requiring CDR exception

Single-sided ground sign as identification sign for apartment building

Net area: $6' \pm (w) \times 3' \pm (h) = 18 \pm \text{sq. ft.}^*$

Gross area: $8' (w) \times 8' (h) = 64 \text{ sq. ft.}^{\wedge}$

All other signage complies with MGO 31.

(Net area “three box” measurement as submitted in the application is not correct, per Sec. 31.03)*

(\wedge Gross area has not been provided, but will likely measure to be less than 64 sq. ft.)

Staff Comments

The requested sign is proposed in lieu of the two permissible wall signs, with placement at the prominent corner of the development. No other identification signs are requested. Given the architectural design, building placement (setback), and size of the development, wall signs would likely not be visible or identifiable from the surrounding streets. A ground sign is a better solution. The placement and size is appropriate for a development of this size and scale, and is in keeping with what would otherwise be similar if the project were two detached residential buildings (a residential building complex), which is how the development appears from the streets. The signs are of a high quality design and generally match or compliment the architecture of the building. **Staff has no objection to the CDR request and recommends the UDC find the standards for CDR review have been met.**

Notes:

- The net area “three box” method is not correctly calculated, and must be corrected with the final submittal,
- The gross area must be provided with the final submittal,
- The lot also includes a neighborhood/subdivision identification sign, which exists, and no changes are proposed. The final CDR document must also include detail of this sign.