



ZONING DIVISION STAFF REPORT

March 24, 2023

PREPARED FOR THE URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION

Project Address: 5710 - 5910 Mineral Point Road
Project Name: TruStage
Application Type: Approval for an Alteration to an Approved Comprehensive Design Review
Legistar File ID # [76643](#)
Prepared By: Chrissy Thiele, Zoning Inspector

The applicant is requesting an amendment to a previously approved Comprehensive Design Review. The Urban Design Commission approved the original Comprehensive Design Review on February 9, 2022. This lot is zoned SE and is adjacent to Mineral Point Road (6 lanes, 40 mph) and South Rosa Road (2 Lanes, 30 mph). The proposed amendment relocates the wall signs lower on the building, as well as requests commissioners reconsider the sign lighting, and provides updated designs for the ground and oversized directional signs on the site.

Pursuant to Section 31.043(4)(b), MGO, 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.*

Ground Signs Permitted by Sign Ordinance: This zoning lot is allowed up to two ground signs with a combined net area of 144 sq. ft., and a maximum height of 11 feet for monument-style signs, based off of the prevailing speeds and number of traffic lanes. The ordinance also allows for lots with frontage 500' or more, as well as a vehicle entrance on that frontage, to have an additional monument-style ground sign, no larger than eight feet in height, with 32 sq. ft. per side, located at each vehicle entrance.

Proposed Ground Signage: The applicant is proposing two, 8.75 feet tall monument-styled ground signs, each with a total net of 74 sq. ft. per sign (identifiers A.1 and I.1). Each sign would be located next to a driveway entrance, one on Mineral Point Road and another on South Rosa Road. Each sign has the same design and material for the base, and each face is made of routed aluminum with push thru acrylic letters, like the other ground signs approved in the original CDR.

Staff Comments: The site is over 27 acres, has three buildings with three different offices, and four driveway entrances for parking on the site (three on Mineral Point, and one on South Rosa Road). There are currently two ground signs of this size and height on Mineral Point Road, which UDC approved in the original CDR. The applicant is requesting two more for the remaining driveway entrances for uniformity, as well as assisting with direction to visitors and deliveries. These driveway entrances currently have the outdated directional signage. The proposed larger signs will provide additional tenant panels for future businesses that may lease building space on the site. The ground signs appear compliant in height and size individually, but as the sign ordinance only allows for two ground signs on the lot, a CDR is required. The design of the signs will match the previously approved ground and wayfinding signage, keeping the uniform look. **Recommendation: Staff has no objection to the CDR request and recommends the UDC find the standards for CDR review have been met. This recommendation is subject to further testimony and new information provided during the hearing.**

Parking Lot Signage Permitted per Sign Ordinance: Summarizing MGO Section 31.03(2) and 31.044(1)(l), parking lot directional signage is necessary for safety or prompting traffic flow to a location on the premises on which the sign is located. These signs can be a maximum size of three sq. ft. with a maximum height of ten ft., and two signs per street frontage. These types of signs are exempt from permits.

Parking lot regulation signs, on the other hand, designate the condition of use or identity of such parking areas. These signs can be a maximum of nine sq. ft. and require a ten-foot setback from the property line.

Proposed Signage: The applicant is requesting for three directional signs, larger than the three sq. ft. allowed per code. Signs B, C, and D.1 will be located inside the lot, to direct vehicles and pedestrians on the site. These signs would have an overall height of 6' 5", and have a net area of 9.25 sq. ft. per side. These signs are similar in material and design as the other proposed and previously approved ground signs on site.

Staff Comments: The applicant is proposing to update the rest of the existing directional signage within the lot, keeping with the uniform look. The wayfinding signage is necessary to assist vehicles on the site navigate the large lot to their appropriate location, as well as pedestrians that may be new to the campus, or visitor who ended up parking in a different area. The design of the signs will match the previously approved ground and wayfinding signage, keeping the uniform look. **Recommendation: Staff has no objection to the CDR request and recommends the UDC find the standards for CDR review have been met. This recommendation is subject to further testimony and new information provided during the hearing.**

Wall Signs Permitted per Sign Ordinance: Summarizing MGO Section 31.07, there shall be one signable area for each façade facing a street or parking lot 33 feet in width or greater. For a single occupancy, stand-alone, non-residential building with twenty-five thousand (25,000) square feet or more in floor area, the maximum net area of all wall signs shall be thirty percent (30%) of the signable area. In no case shall a wall sign exceed one hundred twenty (120) square feet in net area.

Proposed Signage: The applicant is proposing two wall signs, one on the east elevation facing South Rosa Road and one on the west elevation facing the driveway entrance to the site. Both signs would be located above the second story, mounted to the metal screen architectural feature on the building face. Each sign appears to have a total net area of 84.91 sq. ft., however boxing needs to be provided to confirm this. The signs would consist of internally illuminated individual channel letters.

Staff Comments: The applicant is proposing lowering previously approved wall signs above the second story of the building, to provide more visibility to pedestrians and vehicles driving on Mineral Point Road. The metal architectural feature is not considered a signable area, so CDR approval is required. The applicant is also requesting that UDC reconsider the lighting approved for the sign. For consistency across the sign package and to eliminate lighting concerns, especially with the signs mounted high on the building, the Commission previously approved halo lit lighting for the building and retaining wall signage. The signage that was previously mounted high on the building has now come down, so the proposed wall signs would be the only building wall signage. The proposed signs are to be mounted on the architectural metal detail, which does not have a solid surface for the halo lighting to illuminate from. Overall, staff is supportive of the request to change the illumination method, given the removal of the signage mounted high on the building, the proposed signage being located below the third story, and the difficulty in maintaining effective halo lighting with a non-solid background.

Recommendation: Staff has no objection to the CDR request, including the change in lighting from halo lit to internal illumination, and recommends the UDC find the standards for CDR review have been met. This recommendation is subject to further testimony and new information provided during the hearing.

Other signage shown:

- Sign E is already installed, but artwork is submitted to show uniformity with other directional signs.
- Sign 5.3 was previously approved in the first CDR application, but updated drawings are shown because of the name change. The sign net area is smaller than the previously approved sign.
- Sign 5A.3 was previously approved in the first CDR application, but updated drawings are shown because of the name change. The sign net area is smaller than the previously approved sign.

Staff Conditions/Required Plan Revisions:

- The applicant shall provide boxing for sign net area in final CDR document.
- Future building wall signage will be required to be reviewed as an alteration to the CDR.