

## ZONING DIVISION STAFF REPORT

May 12, 2021



PREPARED FOR THE URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION

**Project Address:** 150 Bella Vista Drive  
**Project Name:** Vista West  
**Application Type:** Approval for Comprehensive Design Review of Signage  
**Legistar File ID #** [64917](#)  
**Prepared By:** Chrissy Thiele, Zoning Inspector  
**Reviewed By:** Matt Tucker, Zoning Administrator

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The applicant is requesting Comprehensive Design Review of signage for a new senior housing and assisted living facility, which is part of a large zoning lot that includes UW's clinic, offices, restaurants, and retail establishments. This parcel is located in the Commercial Corridor – Transitional (CC-T) district, and abuts Tree Lane (2 lanes, 30 mph), while the rest of the zoning lot has frontage on Mineral Point Road (4 lanes, 40 mph) and South Gammon Road (4 lanes, 35 mph). Currently there are 13 approved ground signs in this zoning lot, however they are all under different ownership. The applicant is requesting approval for one ground sign and an above canopy sign.

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 128 sq. ft., and a maximum height of 10' 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 one double-sided monument styled ground sign on a zoning lot that already has more than two ground signs. The sign has an overall height of 7' 4" and a net area of 26.69 per side, making the total net area 53.38 sq. ft.

**Staff Comments:** The proposed ground sign would be compliant in size if the parcel was not part of a larger zoning lot. However, as stated earlier, this zoning lot has a total of 13 approved ground signs, but under different ownership and therefore not controlled by this CDR. The ground sign will be located by the driveway entrance off of Tree Lane, and will be the only sign identifying the building from the street. The sign is of high quality design and material, with the base using the same masonry used on the building, and the font and color will match the proposed above canopy sign. **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.**

**Permitted per Sign Ordinance:** Summarizing Section 31.071(4), in lieu of a wall sign on the principal building, a sign may be displayed on a detached canopy if the canopy does have a signable fascia, and, if the sign's maximum net area does not exceed ten percent (10%) of the total area of an imaginary vertical plane measured from the upper edge of the canopy to the lowest point of the canopy on the face the sign will be attached, excluding any supporting structures.

**Proposed Signage:** The applicant is requesting for the sign to be mounted above the detached canopy. The proposed sign will be made of internally-illuminated individual channel letters 2' in height, and will have a total net area of 35.83 sq. ft.

**Staff Comments:** The proposed sign would be permitted had the canopy been designed to be attached to the building, however the canopy is designed to be detached from the building, and is located about 5' away from the building entrance. The design of the canopy also prevents any canopy fascia signage due to lack of a signable on the fascia of the canopy. In addition, the building has limited signable areas for a wall sign at the main entrance because of the various architectural details on the building. The design of the sign is the same as the font and color found on the ground sign, and identifies the entrance of the building without being obtrusive. **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.**

**Notes:**

- Applicant will correct measurements of net area for the ground sign.
- It should be noted in the final CDR "Future signage submittals not specifically addressed by this document shall comply with the standards of Chapter 31."