

ZONING STAFF REPORT

April 11, 2018



PREPARED FOR THE URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION

Project Address: 702 N. Midvale Blvd.

Project Name: Hilldale Mall

Application Type: Approval for an Alteration to an Approved Comprehensive Design Plan

Legistar File ID # [43668](#)

Prepared By: Chrissy Thiele, Zoning Inspector

Reviewed By: Matt Tucker, Zoning Administrator

The applicant is requesting an amendment to a previously approved Comprehensive Design Review. The original approval to allow signage for spaces along Hilldale Way (the pedestrian mall) and allowing certain tenant spaces to have a third wall sign, which UDC approved September 7, 2016. This property is Zoned PD.

Pursuant to Section 31.43(4)(d), MGO, any changes to the approved plan must first be approved by the UDC using the full Comprehensive Design Review (CDR) process under Sec. 31.043(4)(a):

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.*

Wall Signs Permitted per Sign Ordinance: Summarizing Section 31.07, wall signs may be attached flat to or affixed parallel with a distance of not more than 15 inches from the wall. No sign affixed flat against a building wall shall extend beyond any edge of such wall. **There shall be one signable area for each façade facing a street or parking lot 33 feet in width or greater. For buildings with more than one tenant, each tenant is allowed a signable area as reasonably close to its tenant space as possible. Standard net area allows for 30% of the signable area.** In no case shall the sign exceed 120 sq. ft. in net area.

Proposed Signage: The proposed wall sign is to act as a directory sign for the tenants located in the lower level of Hilldale, giving customers an idea of where to enter the building to find them, as well as to advertise their business. The space of the wall sign will fit the entire signable area, and the location of the sign is not in a qualifying signable area. Dimensions of the overall sign was not provided.

Staff Comments: The lower level tenants do not have any exterior signage on the building, and the only way to locate where to access their spaces is on the map found on one of the wayfinding signs on the lot, not located near the lower level entrance. The sign is also somewhat set back from the street, intended more for pedestrian traffic to identify access to the lower level stores. Individual panels are a set color, creating a striking diagonal pattern for the on the overall sign and the generic images and uniform text create a unified look amongst the different tenants. The sign is to be non-illuminated. **Staff has no objection to the CDR request and recommends the UDC find the standards for CDR review have been met.**

Signable Area defined in Sign Ordinance: One designated area of the facade of the building up to the roof line that is free of doors, windows (for purposes of this definition, spandrel panels or other non-vision glass used as an exterior building material are not considered windows) or other major architectural detail, that extends no higher than the juncture of the wall and the roof.

Proposed Wall Signage: Hilldale would like the ability to have window storefronts as an optional location for tenants to mount their wall signs, instead of the façade surrounding the windows. These signs may not cross from the window onto the façade, and can only cross mullions dividing the windows. These signs cannot exceed 30% of the tenant storefront windows. Various styles of window signs are suggested, and the three-dimensional signs will require approval from the property owner before permits can be issued. Hilldale is also requiring two-dimensional window signs obtain property owner approval, but do not require permits.

Staff Comments: These styles of signs are unique to Madison, having approved only a few somewhat similar signs in the past (e.g. Park Bank on East Main Street). Usually these types of signs are of high design and high quality material and give the storefront an original look. **Staff has no objection to the CDR request and recommends the UDC find the standards for CDR review with the condition that tenant signage on windows not exceed a maximum of 80 sq. ft.**

Notes: For final sign-off, the applicant shall provide dimensions for individual tenant panels on the directory sign.