



ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD  
DRAFT MINUTES: October 18, 2018  
City Hall/City Council Chambers  
250 Hamilton Avenue  
8:30 AM

**Call to Order/Roll Call**

Present: Chair Wynne Furth, Vice Chair Peter Baltay, Board Members Alexander Lew, Osma Thompson and Robert Gooyer.

Absent: None.

Chair Furth: Good morning, and welcome to the October 18, 2018, meeting of the Architectural Review Board of the City of Palo Alto. Would you call the roll, please?

[Roll Call]

**Oral Communications**

Chair Furth: Now is the time for oral communications from any member of the public wishing to speak on a matter not on the agenda, but within the scope of our responsibilities. I have no cards, and I see no members of the public who aren't affiliated with item 2, so we will note that.

**Agenda Changes, Additions and Deletions**

Chair Furth: Any agenda changes, additions or deletions, staff?

Jodie Gerhardt, Manager of Current Planning: No.

**City Official Reports**

**1. Transmittal of 1) the ARB Meeting Schedule and Attendance Record, and 2) Tentative Future Agenda items.**

Chair Furth: ARB meeting schedule and attendance record. That's item 1.

Ms. Gerhardt: Yes, on the schedule, we do have two subcommittee items after the hearing.

Chair Furth: Yes.

Ms. Gerhardt: And then, you'll see for future agenda, we have the 3128 El Camino Real, which is exterior modifications to the McDonald's. That would be going forward. And then, we'll have a discussion on the comp plan policies as they relate to the ARB. There's also one other project, 744 San Antonio. There are some minor revisions to the approved Marriott that will be coming to you. The wireless projects shown here are not quite ready, so those will come on a different day. Thank you.

Chair Furth: Great. And do you have a tentative date for our discussion of *ex parte* communications?

Ms. Gerhardt: I am still working with the attorneys and I will get you that date.

Chair Furth: Thank you. All right, so, we have meetings scheduled on November 15th, December 6th and December 20th.

Board Member Thompson: What's the study for?

Chair Furth: *Ex parte* communications, talking to people outside the board meetings about their projects that are coming before the board or have already been heard by the board. Thanks.

Board Member Thompson: Thanks.

## Action Items

- 2. PUBLIC HEARING / QUASI-JUDICIAL. 1841 Page Mill Road [18PLN-00213]: Recommendation on Applicant's Request for Approval of a Master Sign Program With Sign Exceptions to Allow for new Monument Signs, Directory Signs, and Directional Signs. Environmental Assessment: Exempt From the Provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) in Accordance With Guideline Section 15311 (Accessory Structures). Zone District: RP (Research Park). For More Information Contact Project Planner Garrett Sauls at [Garrett.Sauls@cityofpaloalto.org](mailto:Garrett.Sauls@cityofpaloalto.org).**

Chair Furth: All right. We have one full-board public hearing item this morning. It concerns 1841 Page Mill Road, the corner of Page Mill and, I guess, (inaudible), turning into Foothill. It's quasi-judicial. It's a request for a recommendation on the applicant's request for approval of a master sign program with sign exceptions to allow for new monument signs, directory signs and directional signs. The applicant is Stanford University. The project is exempt from provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act. The zoning district is the Research Park. Mr. Sauls?

Garrett Sauls, Project Planner: Thank you, Chair Furth. My name is Garrett Sauls, I've been working with the City of Palo Alto Planning Department with Corporate Sign Company on this application. This application is here before you today. It's a roughly 10 1/2 acre site with about 185,000 square foot office and research and development park. The proposal is to improve and provide improvements to about 16 total signs on the site, as well as to modify an existing Master Sign Program that they have from 2003. On those applications are two existing monument signs, one along Page Mill Road, the other along Porter Drive, along the flagpole portion of the lot. There is one existing sign that has been approved through an exception on Page Mill Road that is adjacent to the vehicle entry sign. There are seven directory signs located within the complex that will serve to identify the tenant locations at the respective buildings, and there are six directional wayfinding signs that they are looking to provide improvements for, as well. The reason that we are here at the ARB for this application is that many of the signs that are proposed do not meet the sign code allowances. The challenges that really kind of impact this site is, given its size and nature, the sign code doesn't really accommodate for a lot of the signs that they are looking to do on the site that will provide more visibility for the tenants, as well as provide for better ability to travel through the site and be more noticeable, have better vehicular wayfinding signs. It ought to be easier to direct visitors to the site, throughout the site. Looking at the history of the site, back in 1985, the sign that was approved, the second tenant side along Page Mill Road was originally approved in 1985. In 1994, the site received its first Master Sign Program, and in 2003, they had modified that sign program to mostly what you're seeing here today in the packet. Looking at the site again, the biggest challenge -- like I mentioned earlier -- is that you have a very large sign, in the sign code, allows monument signs only about 27 square feet with a height of five feet in total. That makes it very difficult for vehicles passing along Porter Drive and Page Mill Road to notice the signs at that site. In addition, a lot of the adjacent properties have around two to three different tenants located on the site, whereas this one has more than a handful, so, fitting in all those different tenants on larger vehicular signs that are going to be visible from Page Mill Road and Porter Drive are going to be very challenging for those who are coming up to the site, to actually be able to notice what tenants are located there. Some of the key

considerations, again, is really just that the sign code, the reason that they're really applying for this application is that they're doing a site-wide change with multiple tenants. Usually, sign applications are respected to individual tenants. And then, in particular with this application, they are looking to exceed what is allowed within the Municipal Code for what you have in the sign code for directional signs, directory signs, and freestanding monument signs. The goals of what they are trying to establish here is to have standardized heights and dimensions for the sign, as well as to update the signage so that they can more accurately reflect some of the existing improvements that they are going to be doing on the site, to which the tenant and applicant can speak a little bit more to that. If you look here at the slides, you have some existing pictures of the site. Just kind of looking through, you see some of them, they vary in height and scale with what you have on the site today. That makes it challenging for people driving through to try and notice where the signs are, and where the tenant is located once they've gone into the complex. Looking along here, this is additionally the sign that is along Page Mill Road, the second tenant sign as you're driving up. Doesn't really have a whole lot of conflicts as you're driving into the site in terms of a line of sight as you're coming up to the turn-in. It was important to highlight some of the things they are doing. It's going to be very challenging to see as you're driving up. There's vegetation, there is a light pole, there's trees. There's also an electrical utility box further down that really obscures the visibility of the sign that is being proposed today. Just kind of looking through, you have a little bit more examples of how the size of the signs don't necessarily scale appropriately to the building, and they are providing the new sign, where that at least serves to identify the tenant more easily. Ultimately, the recommendation from staff is to approve the application as it has been proposed. Staff believes that the proposal does not, while it does exceed the sign code, it would more appropriately relate to the site as, again, it is a significantly large site, and what they have served to do is try to prevent more opportunities for people who are driving through the site to be able to notice the tenants, see where they are located at, and have better ability to understand which way to go. That's it.

Chair Furth: Are there questions of staff before we hear from the applicant? Alex.

Board Member Lew: Yes. First off, I have a question. My recollection is that Stanford does not allow wall signs in the Research Park. If you could clarify that for me.

Mr. Sauls: Yeah, so, none of the signs proposed in the application are going to be any wall signs. The only signs that they have are lettering, so address labeling is all they're doing. And those generally aren't reviewed under a planning application.

Ms. Gerhardt: And also, to be clear that that's a Stanford policy, a landowner policy, but not a City regulation.

Board Member Lew: Thank you.

Chair Furth: If some of these...? Do they have unused wall sign allowances? Or have they used up all their square footage no matter where they put the sign?

Mr. Sauls: Thank you. They don't, from when I looked at the site the other day, I didn't see any wall signs existing on the site. They effectively would have allowable wall sign square footage to use. What they are proposing to do right now is just exceeding individually those allowances within the sign code. For the freestanding signs and directory signs and directional signs, they are exceeding what is the allowable square footage for the area, and a number of them are exceeding the allowable height allowances. For directional and directory signs, there are no limitations indicated in the municipal code for how many signs there can be. Those were their special purpose signs, so they have somewhat of a different allowance.

Chair Furth: How many extra square feet of signage, monument signage are they asking for?

Mr. Sauls: Looking at what they are proposing, the sign along Porter Drive is 60 square feet. That's the one along the flagpole portion of the lot...

Chair Furth: Right.

Mr. Sauls: ...so, that is asking for a 33 square foot additional. The one along Page Mill Road is 104 square feet. You can see in the packet also that they have existing signs that they are actually reducing in total size, mostly from what is being proposed. Looking at the tenant ID sign, they're looking to propose a 58 square foot sign, and what is allowed is a 27 square foot sign. In addition, given that they are modifying that existing exception, how we generally treat a modification to a non-conforming structure is that it is essentially a brand-new structure, so they would be getting an exception for having an additional sign along Page Mill Road, which would modify the existing exception, basically. For directory signs, you're allowed four square feet in area and eight feet in height, and they are asking for 20 square feet. For directional signs, you're allowed six square feet and three feet in height, and they're asking for about a seven foot tall wayfinding sign and a roughly 12 to 15 square foot directional sign, based on how many panels are on those.

Chair Furth: Thank you. May we hear from the applicant? You'll have 10 minutes to make your presentation. We won't start it until you've got your electronic materials up.

Bryan Panian, Corporate Sign Systems: Hi, good morning. My name is Bryan, from Corporate Sign Systems. We are the...

Chair Furth: I'm sorry, Bryan, we need your first and last name, and we need the spelling for our transcriber.

Mr. Panian: All right. [States and spells name.] We are the contractor for the project. We are a design-build shop out of Santa Clara. I think that Garrett did a great job covering our goals. I want to have a brief presentation that really...First point, before we even get into this, is that what we're trying to do is modify existing. We're not building anything new, and in many cases, we are asking for slightly larger or even reducing square footage. The goal is to update these old, dated signs to a more modern architectural sign appearance. We're trying to clean up and organize the layouts for better legibility and visibility, as Garrett said, for vehicle traffic and pedestrian traffic. We're trying to justify the tenant names, enlarge the address so that it's more visible for, you know, the purpose of these signs. We're trying to also create uniformity throughout the park. Many of these signs vary in size, height. We're trying to create a standard for the tenant so that everyone's sign is the same, everybody gets the same amount of square footage for their name. It's a little all over the place right now. We're trying to create a uniform appearance. It's both for the wayfinding of the pedestrians and the vehicles. Right now, the wayfinding signs are little ground monument signs that point directions. We're trying to replace those with a pole sign that can point people in different directions throughout the property. That gives us some flexibility. Rather than just a single face pointing left or right, we can use a four-axis system. Really, the whole goal is to...Updating the signage is one part in a larger effort to update and beautify the property. After me, Michelle from Hudson will come and speak to the additional things that they're trying to do on the property, making updates for beautifying it. This is a quick rendering I had for the existing sign. This is the primary monument along Page Mill. The existing sign is at the top. This is sort of my photoshop rendering of the intent for what the new sign would appear. You can sort of see how we're trying to increase the size of the address, justify the tenant names so they are more easily legible, readable, and just sort of clean it to a more updated and newer appearance. This is an example of all of the signage throughout the property. The goal, in general. That's really, I think, all I have to say. You know, we provided our drawings. I hope that they speak for themselves. The goal...I'm sorry, do you have a question for me, or...?

Chair Furth: No, I was just going to say...

Mr. Panian: Okay.

Chair Furth: ...if that's the end of your presentation, if you would stay there for just a minute, do any members of the Board have questions? Board Member Thompson.

Board Member Thompson: For your signage type item F, which is the seven-foot-tall one...

Mr. Panian: Yes.

Board Member Thompson: ...I see in the site plan that it's not in the path of travel necessarily. Will it be located...? I just wanted to confirm if it's in the path of travel.

Mr. Panian: Those are next to all the walkways on the, in the pedestrian...from the parking lot, it's on the pathways into the buildings.

Board Member Thompson: It is?

Mr. Panian: Yes.

Board Member Thompson: People would have to pass under them.

Mr. Panian: Well, it's going to be in the landscape adjacent to the walkway or the sidewalk.

Board Member Thompson: Okay.

Mr. Panian: And that was the reason for the seven foot, is to allow any clearance in case there would be any, you know, nobody bump their head on it.

Board Member Thompson: Okay.

Mr. Panian: But, it wouldn't be on or protruding into the walkway. It would be adjacent to, like, in the landscaping.

Board Member Thompson: The sign wouldn't, if there was...

Mr. Panian: You'd have to walk into the landscape to touch the sign, or bump the sign.

Board Member Thompson: Sure, but the flag part that's rotated, that could potentially overhang onto the path of travel?

Mr. Panian: Well, we would orient it in a way that it would not. We can control the direction of them. You can have it flag into the landscape but point the other direction.

Board Member Thompson: Okay.

Mr. Panian: With an arrow.

Board Member Thompson: Okay.

Mr. Panian: Does that kind of make sense?

Board Member Thompson: It does.

Mr. Panian: We would be sure not to put the flags out into the walkway. Let's put it that way.

Board Member Thompson: You can, but there are height restrictions for that.

Mr. Panian: Okay.

Board Member Thompson: Accessibility height restrictions.

Mr. Panian: Right.

Board Member Thompson: We can talk about that later. And then, so, reflective white vinyl, that doesn't happen in sign A or sign B. I was just wanting to confirm where that happens.

Mr. Panian: Our plan is also to update the accessible parking signs in the property, the handicapped parking, and we pulled that from the package per Garrett's request. It really didn't account for, or, you know...It's just updating a code sign. It's replacing existing and it didn't count towards...

Chair Furth: We don't usually do that, yes.

Mr. Panian: ... square footage or anything. It didn't count. It's called out still as a usage, but we pulled that page. I'm sorry it's...It's a ghost sign, in a way.

Board Member Thompson: Okay. The reflective white vinyl was only for the blue.

Mr. Panian: That's correct.

Board Member Thompson: It's not used anywhere else.

Mr. Panian: That's correct.

Board Member Thompson: Okay. That was my confusion. Thank you.

Vice Chair Baltay: Good morning.

Chair Furth: Board member Baltay.

Vice Chair Baltay: I don't see any provisions for lighting of these signs except what already exists on the site. I'm presuming that you're intending to leave the existing ground-mounted lights to illuminate these signs.

Mr. Panian: Yes.

Vice Chair Baltay: I'd like you to clarify, and be really clear: Are any of these signs internally illuminated?

Mr. Panian: None of the signs are internally illuminated, no.

Vice Chair Baltay: Is there any change to the exterior illumination on the signs.

Mr. Panian: Not per my scope. Maybe Michelle can answer that. No. The plan is, yes, to reuse the existing ground illumination.

Vice Chair Baltay: Thank you.

Chair Furth: Any other questions of the applicant? Okay. Does anybody else wish to speak?

Mr. Panian: Michelle? Okay, thank you.

Chair Furth: You have seven minutes.

Michelle Hernandez, Hudson Pacific Properties: Hi, I'm Michelle Hernandez [Spells name]. I'm with Hudson Pacific Properties. We manage the properties. I just wanted to explain that in addition to directional signage, this is part of a huge enhancement project for the buildings, and actually the project. I just wanted to kind of give you an idea of what we have been doing, and what we're going to continue

doing, and this is part of the project. We actually just did a renovation of the amenity area. We spent \$2 million on that to enhance the property. We just got approval to upgrade the landscaping area throughout the property, as well, and we are painting the exterior of the building, as well. And then, this is part of that project, as well. We're spending probably, like, over \$3 million on enhancing the project, so this is in addition to that scope, as well. As far as directional signage.

Chair Furth: Thank you. Any questions of Ms. Hernandez? Okay, thank you very much.

Ms. Hernandez: Thank you.

Chair Furth: We'll let you know if we have further questions as we discuss this. Commissioner Baltay. Board member Baltay.

Vice Chair Baltay: Thank you, Wynne. For the staff. I wonder if you could clarify for us what the findings are we need to make for the sign exception. I just want to put it out there as we discuss this.

Mr. Sauls: Thank you. Finding #1 for the exception is there are exceptional, extraordinary circumstances or conditions applicable to the property involved that do not apply generally to the property in the same district. What I had indicated in that section was basically that given the size of the site and the number of tenants that are on the site, it would be very challenging to really provide adequate signage that's going to both meet the sign code allowances, as well as what the applicant is wanting to have. Do you have a question?

Vice Chair Baltay: I'm just making sure I understand you clearly. You're saying that it's the number of tenants, is why we would justify the finding?

Mr. Sauls: The number of tenants as well as the size of the site, based on what's allowed for the side code, yes.

Vice Chair Baltay: Okay, good, thank you.

Mr. Sauls: The second finding is that the granting of the application is necessary for the preservation and enjoyment of a substantial property right of the applicant and to prevent unreasonable property loss or unnecessary hardships. In that sense, again, it would be very challenging for the applicant to meet the sign code allowances and still provide adequate visibility for their tenants as people are moving throughout the site, as well as to more adequately provide directional understanding of where to go. Like Bryan had mentioned, it would be very challenging, or it gives them some flexibility with the new pole-mounted directional wayfinding signs, to more adequately or correctly point in the direction where someone might need to go. And then, the last finding is that the granting of the application will not be detrimental or injurious to property or improvements in the vicinity and will not be detrimental to the public health, safety, general welfare or convenience. All the signs that are proposed are going to be on the owners' property, so there's not going to be anything that's going to be projecting onto any of the public right-of-way or anything that's going to be obstructing visibility, as it's been proposed.

Vice Chair Baltay: Thank you.

Chair Furth: Okay. I would note that if you look at packet page 29, when these findings were made some years ago for the existing signs, it was -- I'm sorry, it's page 28 -- it was also noted that this property is next to the Hetch Hetchy right-of-way, so it has no visibility on that side, on that frontage. Most corner lots have at least two frontages, which gives them more opportunity for signage under our code, but this one is hidden by a lot of oleanders, or whatever it is they're planting out there these days. It's not oleanders, is it? Dense vegetation.

Board Member Lew: I just looked at it this morning. It's a very dense grove of oak trees.

Chair Furth: Sorry. I looked at it, too, but I was not paying enough attention to the vegetation. Anyway, it's obscured. You come around the corner and you come upon it very rapidly, and you don't, really, you don't even see the buildings. You don't even know there's going to be Page Mill Hill. I have a question for the applicants. Are you now de-emphasizing Page Mill Hill as the name of this parcel?

Mr. Panian: It is going to become a bit more of a, just side note, as you can see. We're going to have a standard little branding, "Page Mill Hill," that's almost like a footnote now. I think it becomes less premiere as a title, if I'm right, Michelle...?

Ms. Hernandez: Yes.

Mr. Panian: Yeah.

Chair Furth: I'm asking because when you have a multi-tenant property like this, you can emphasize the name of the building, which is what you would do in a high-rise, urban street. You know, you wouldn't...You don't have every tenant. You get the Pan-Am building, or whatever. The address, you tell people to go to the Pan-Am building. And you decided not to tell people to go to Page Mill Hill, that it's more effective to use addresses and names? Question?

Ms. Hernandez: Sorry. We actually use Page Mill Hill. Yes, we do. We reference it as Page Mill Hill.

Chair Furth: It's fine print now.

Mr. Panian: It is reduced in size. That's right. But, it's still a branding deemed for the site, but maybe reduced from what's existing, yes.

Chair Furth: But you do publicize the site as Page Mill Hill. Is that right?

Ms. Hernandez: The site?

Chair Furth: You do publicize the site as Page Mill Hill?

Ms. Hernandez: Correct.

Chair Furth: Thank you. Who would like to start? Go ahead, Peter. Well, I'll say something briefly, which is, we have two issues before us. One is an aesthetic one concerning the design of your...primarily aesthetic, concerning the design of your proposed sign. The other one is the request to allow exceptions from our existing code, which we're only allowed to do if we can make these findings because the California courts have said, otherwise, we're being arbitrary and capricious and denying due process. So, we need to take those findings seriously. Okay. Who would like to begin? Robert.

Board Member Gooyer: Okay. This one is, I don't know. I was having a...I like the monument signs, or I should say they're a big improvement as to what you've got there, so I don't really have that much of a problem with those. I guess where I get bogged down a bit is there just seemed to be so many of them. I mean, you've got areas for, just to show an address, you've got, you know, you've got a 15 square foot sign that shows five addresses. To me, that just seems excessive. I mean, I understand you said it's a large property, but still. On the monument signs, at the entry I can see when you're driving down Page Mill, where you have to catch it, you have to, you know, because you're looking for somebody. Once you're on the property, you pretty much know where you're going, so I don't see the need to have each individual address, for it to have its own sign. I mean, once you're on the campus and you're doing five miles an hour, it's not like you have to quickly note what the address is. I just think it's overkill. And the exceptions, I don't know. The way they're written, they are just so vague, I have a hard time seeing the justification of those. At this point, I'm a little up in the air. Like I said, I can accept the larger two monument signs, but the rest of it, I have a problem with.

Chair Furth: Alex.

Board Member Lew: Thank you for your presentation, and I did look at the site today. I think I do agree that the monument signs on Page Mill Road are really too low, given that location and the speed of the traffic and the existing landscaping. I can support a larger sign there. I think the design of the existing primary monument sign is really, is very difficult to read, so I think your proposed revision does help. In considering the exceptions, I did look at 1001 Page Mill Road, which is a comparable sized site, and looked at how they broke up the address. They just used one address for all four buildings on the site, so I did consider that project and compare that to your project. I am willing to support the project and exceptions. I think the language that staff had drafted here troubled me a little bit, just one part of it, which is I think justifying it, that the parcel is larger than the others. And when I looked at the zoning maps, I saw lots of large parcels, and parcels even larger, so I think I would...My inclination would be to use the old findings with the Hetch Hetchy reservoir, the dense planting of oak trees, and limited access points to the site as justifications for having the larger monument sign. The other signs, I don't feel...I'm not crazy about the directional signs, but they are internal to the site. I'm generally willing to support those. That's all that I have on this particular one. Thank you.

Chair Furth: Thank you. Board member Baltay.

Vice Chair Baltay: Good morning. Thank you for the presentation. I concur with Alex's comments and can support the project and make the necessary findings for it, including the sign enhancement exception. I had three items I would make recommendations on because I think they are internal and small. Sign D6 is a numerical sign on the side of a building and specified to be 24-inch letters. I just don't think that fits. When I was out there at least, I didn't see where it was going to go. Sign...

Chair Furth: Excuse me, too big, too small?

Vice Chair Baltay: Too big. The sign is, as I read your plans, D6 is listed at 24-inch tall letters, and I think that just doesn't fit. I thought 12 inches would fit. They have a spandrel panel there, it's about 15 inches tall, as best I can tell. You may just want to check that. It doesn't really affect my ability to make the findings. Sign D4, that's on the canopy of, what I would call the back building, the one you approach from the flagpole. There, you are showing the letters on your drawing mounted above the canopy, and I thought they would be better below canopy where they are currently. Just be more visible. Again, it doesn't really affect my findings, but it's a recommendation. The last one is sign D1. Again, it's numbers on the building to the left as you first enter from Page Mill, and they are listed at 18 inches, and again, they just seem too large. It might be worth reviewing those things. Otherwise, I can vote to recommend approval. Thank you.

Chair Furth: Board member Thompson.

Board Member Thompson: Hi there. Yeah, I'm mostly in concurrence with my fellow board members. Signs E and F, because I did ask about sign F, if it was in the path of travel. I notice that E is also one of those that's sort of like a post with, kind of these flags come out. As you have them drawn, they are not compliant for accessibility. You need at least 6-foot-8 clearance underneath the lowest flag for accessibility reasons. And then, also, the base needs to be high enough for cane detection. As they are right now, they would not be okay. And I know it's not our job to check for accessibility, but these signs aren't typically supposed to be this tall, from what I understand. If you're going to make them tall, you have to make them compliant. That was the big outlier for me. And I was worried about the contrast of the letters with the coloring, but if you're not using the white vinyl on the stainless, I think you're fine. It's just black on the stainless. I think that's good enough contrast. I'd be willing to approve it so long as we make a condition that these also are accessible. Other than that, I have no other comments.

Chair Furth: Thank you. I do think that the new...Thank you for your presentation. I do think the new 1801-1899 monument sign is a big improvement over what you have right now. It's much more visible.

Do we have a new fire department regulation? Is that why we have great big numbers on buildings all over town now? Is that a public safety issue?

Mr. Sauls: Yeah, so, from what I've noticed in a lot of sign applications recently is that they are having larger address numbers on their side, so I wouldn't be surprised that Fire is having them...

Chair Furth: Downtown, you see a lot of new signage.

Mr. Sauls: Yeah, it is larger, and has numbers on each building, too. It's not just one whole campus number.

Chair Furth: It is a complicated site plan. There was a time when law firms were seen as an unsuitable use for the research park, but that clearly is long gone. One of the things that I'm having trouble with is the relationship between the Gibson Dunn sign and the numeric sign. Right now, I don't feel that they look as if they were planned at the same time or by the same person, and I don't see that improving a lot here. Do any of my colleagues have any thoughts on that? They are nodding their heads. I'm looking at sheet number 5. And I understand that you probably have a principal tenant who is entitled to their own sign, and I don't have a problem with that. But, I do have a problem with relationship of these two signs. Is Gibson Dunn going to not appear then on the other sign? They're not one of the tenants listed in the directional sign?

Mr. Panian: They are. I believe that...Like I say, we're updating existing, so this one, the larger Gibson Dunn, is the premiere...

Chair Furth: Right.

Mr. Panian: ...tenant sign.

Chair Furth: They are your anchor tenant, they're your Macy's.

Mr. Panian: Yes, exactly. And then, you're going to have one at their primary entry to the building that indicates, you know, the smaller tenant, so when you're at their front door, you know this is the building that you're entering for Gibson Dunn.

Chair Furth: But they won't be listed on the 1801-1899 sign?

Mr. Panian: Oh, I see what you mean. I see. For, like, redundancy on that road. That's a good question. That is yet to be determined. You can...

Chair Furth: All right. I think it's not really...I was curious, but...I don't think as presented these signs match your intention to have an integrated sign program that shows that Page Mill Hill is a planned, thought-out, sign project. I don't know what my colleagues might suggest, if they agree with my concern, as a way to remedy that. But it doesn't work now. Or what thoughts you might have. Or why you did it the way you did it.

Vice Chair Baltay: Can I ask? It seems to me that they are both on a stainless background with black letters of the same typeface and the material underneath is a concrete base. Is that right?

Mr. Panian: You mean the Page Mill letters, or...? I'm sorry...

Vice Chair Baltay: The two signs...

Chair Furth: Signs A and B.

Vice Chair Baltay: I'm not (inaudible) when I see such a big difference in design. They are clearly different signs, but to me, if the materials are identical...

Board Member Gooyer: But not really because the sign A, the 1801, for instance, is different than the D sign 1801. They're not coordinated.

Chair Furth: I think it has to do with the size of the typeface, I think it has to do with the design. Right now, they look really...

Board Member Gooyer: It's piecemeal.

Chair Furth: ...uncoordinated, and this design, I agree with you, that it has materials that are the same, but it doesn't seem to have been designed by the same designer with the same assignment.

Mr. Panian: We are using a consistent font for the address numbers throughout. We do have consistent materials for the white concrete base, the stainless steel. A consistent color scheme.

Chair Furth: It seems to me, looking at it -- and I am the person up here with no design credentials -- a really strong feature of your new monument sign is that white border on the left. And it's missing here, and I think this would work better if it had a white border, or something.

Board Member Lew: The sign B, I think is meant to coordinate with the C signs, the tenant signs. And I understand that there's an overlap. I get that.

Chair Furth: Yeah.

Board Member Gooyer: And B is a larger C sign. I understand that.

Chair Furth: But that's not what you experience driving down Page Mill, and that's how this is going to be seen.

Board Member Lew: If we could go back to, I think there's an existing photo with those signs in perspective from the sidewalk.

Mr. Sauls: I can pull that up real quick.

Board Member Lew: Thank you.

Mr. Panian: Mr. Lew is correct, that D and C are more...I'm sorry, B and C correlate their tenant signs, not really...

Chair Furth: This is an extended version...

Mr. Panian: Correct, because it's your premiere tenant. It's just an enlargement of... [crosstalk]

Chair Furth: It's a very distinguished law firm. I'm not arguing.

Mr. Panian: Yes. But I understand how you're saying it varies from the primary monument, but that is because it...

Board Member Gooyer: (inaudible) how close they are to each other.

Chair Furth: You see them at the same time as you drive down.

Board Member Thompson: But what better relationship can you have if they're the same materials, and the same font, and the same lettering, and the same massing?

Chair Furth: The same design...I mean, you don't see the text when you start down. You see the relative presence and shape of the signs. I think this is the problem. It's an extended version of sign C instead of something that is designed, not just choice of materials and font, but in relationship to sign A. In my view.

Vice Chair Baltay: Respectfully, I don't see it. To me, if you started bringing the concrete up on one side or the other, giving it slight asymmetry like the front, you're just being a little bit derivative. I mean, the monument sign is a lesser sign. It's still not as much design as the main entry sign, comparing A and B. What gave me pause when I was out there and thinking about all of this is that the big monument sign on the road, sign B, is fully 15, 18 inches taller than what's there currently. And it does make it more dominant than sign A1 or A2. And that gave me pause. I thought about it for quite a while. Actually stood around and measured, and looked, and my opinion was that driving down the road, the main entry sign was still the more dominant sign, which is as it should be. I recognize what she's saying. It could be slightly different, but I think it's fine, ultimately.

Chair Furth: Any other comments? Does somebody...?

Board Member Thompson: I think that is a fair point that you bring up, Board member Baltay, that if you look at this view, the...As it exists currently, does the Gibson Dunn Crutcher sign, is that currently taller than the entry? The sort of A sign replacement?

Vice Chair Baltay: I'd say they are about the same right now. When I was walking around, they both come up mid chest height.

Board Member Thompson: Would you agree with that, applicant? Bryan?

Mr. Panian: Let me check. We've got the existing measurements. The Gibson is taller than the primary monument currently. However, if you look at our package for sign type A2, the primary alignment -- excuse me -- the plan is to increase the height of the street-facing concrete, to raise that up and make it more premiere. We're going to build that concrete up. I'm looking at our page 11, so, we're going to go to a slightly higher...The Gibson is about 48 inches and this would be about 50 inches on the street side. Because when you look at this, the primary monument is very low, and it's a slanted entry on the landscape, so the left side is much taller than...I'm sorry, the right side, deeper down, is much taller. But, we're trying to bring the presence out closer to the street so that you do notice it as you're driving. That's where we want to put the large address numbers and bring the tenants out a little bit that way. We're going to build that up, and the idea is to cut the concrete back, move everything up toward the street a little bit more. Raise the concrete up so that it does become a little bit more premiere than the Gibson Dunn. You don't see the Gibson Dunn as, "Oh, this is the premiere," or "this is the monument sign." It just becomes, this is maybe the primary tenant, whereas the monument stands out more to address the property as a whole.

Board Member Thompson: Okay. And then, the sign A replacement, that height is about the same.

Mr. Panian: That's correct, yeah.

Ms. Gerhardt: If I may, if you take a look at page 9, there are measurements for the existing and the proposed sign A, and also, if you take a look at page 12, then you'll see the measurements for sign B.

Vice Chair Baltay: Wynne, if I could, perhaps something to address your concern, Robert, is that the tenant monument sign B really should be about 12 or 18 inches lower. Should be really not taller than the...

Board Member Gooyer: Yeah, I mean, the reality of it is you've got 10 tenants on the primary sign A, yet the single premiere tenant -- if you want to call it -- sign is bigger than the other one. I mean, that just seems overkill.

Vice Chair Baltay: That was my first reaction, looking at it. I'm just, thinking about it now, thinking about what Wynne was saying, by lowering it, you'll also enhance a horizontal proportion...

Board Member Gooyer: Plus, I mean...

Vice Chair Baltay: ...which would probably help tie these together from a design point of view.

Board Member Gooyer: Usually, let's face it. From a signage standpoint, signage is designed to let people know where something is. And in most cases, you make it bigger because if someone is driving along and they're not sure if they want to come into your store, your business, or whatever the case, they go, "Oh, such-and-such, let's go there." This is a law office. I mean, you pretty much know you're going there. This is not a, "Hey, for the heck of it, let's just drop into the local law office and see what's going on." I mean, this just seems overkill also for the type of tenant that it is. And I mean, like I said, I like the initial sign, but this one is just way too big. And in fact, even the monument signs seem excessive. Again, like I said, you're on campus, you're doing five miles an hour, I don't think you need a monument sign for a -- as you call it -- a smaller tenant. That's why I said, this whole thing just seems overkill.

Mr. Panian: You're right, and to address that, we're not building new or just modifying existing. For the Gibson Dunn sign, the idea was to pull that top off...

[crosstalk]

Board Member Gooyer: ...not building new could also mean you can trim down and...

Mr. Panian: Certainly yes. And I agree with you. Yes. Definitely. If that would be a provision that you would allow, we'd be happy to do that. The idea and the intent was just to modify existing.

Board Member Gooyer: It's the same thing. Figure the, as you call it, the secondary sign is, by proportion to the person next to this, like, almost four feet high. That just seems awfully excessive, again, for, like I said, if you're driving 10 miles an hour between four buildings, or four... (inaudible) little one, for all intents and purposes, four buildings on campus, it just seems overkill to me.

Mr. Panian: And I...I'm sorry.

Chair Furth: Go ahead.

Mr. Panian: I guess my comment to that is that there are, those signs are already there, so maybe it's already overkill, and maybe we're just trying to...We're not trying to add to those. We're just trying to update them, modify them.

Chair Furth: Okay, so, I think that...

Mr. Panian: Unify them.

Chair Furth: ...I could say that...I think that my colleagues' comments have helped me because part of what bothers me is that this tenant sign is way too big compared to the Page Mill Hill sign. If you reduce its height, which will make it more horizontal, which will help with the proportions -- because that's one of the things that's not very lovely right now -- I would be happy.

Vice Chair Baltay: If we said no more than 48 inches for all the signs B and C, that would change the proportion. Is there...?

Board Member Gooyer: Yeah, I'd be willing to see something like, for sign B, literally proportionately, two sign C's next to each other, or something. It's the same height, but it's twice as wide. Or something of that nature. It's still subservient to the A sign, which I think it should be.

Vice Chair Baltay: If you just leave it no bigger than what's there now, it's now 48 inches at the high side.

Board Member Gooyer: Well, but, I mean...Yeah. But, I mean, you could change the style slightly to make it look like the new one. But, yeah, something...

Vice Chair Baltay: Well, the new design, except we're changing the 65 inch dimension to 48 inches.

Board Member Gooyer: Right. Right.

Vice Chair Baltay: And then, you might as well do the same thing on the other C signs if you're trying...  
[crosstalk]

Board Member Gooyer: Oh, I agree. I think those are excessive, also.

Vice Chair Baltay: One of them is 54, a couple of them are 48. But, just do them a favor and say no more than 48 inches anywhere. On signs B and [crosstalk].

Board Member Gooyer: I think that would be a big improvement.

Chair Furth: I think that would work. Would that work for the applicant?

Mr. Panian: Yeah. And, in a way, that is what we were trying to do with the sign type C. On our page 15, you can see one of the existing signs is 54 inches tall. We wanted to bring everything down to 48. Some are smaller; some are taller. We said, let's just cap it at 48 and make them all the same.

Chair Furth: We support you in that effort, it looks like. Do we need to...? It sounds like we have a consensus to approve with that condition, and with slightly different findings. Do we need anything else about the redesign of sign E-F to comply with the disability requirements? Accessibility?

Board Member Thompson: Accessibility. Yeah. Because Finding #3 discusses public safety, welfare, and currently... [crosstalk]

Chair Furth: Well, it's also, since you have caught it...I think staff wants to say something.

Ms. Gerhardt: If that's going to raise the total height of the sign, is that okay? Would just be the question. I mean, it will be caught by our building department, ultimately. They will ensure that it is ADA accessible. But, if it raises up the whole sign, are we still okay with that?

Chair Furth: Does that...? Does that increase the non-conformity of the existing sign plan?

Male??: Yes, it will.

Board Member Thompson: I mean, it's already four feet higher than what was allowed, so I guess it would be...

Chair Furth: What's our justification for these high signs under our code? What's our justification for this? This isn't about visibility from the street on a difficult site. This is internal, why can't they do conforming directional signs? That's not a rhetorical question. It's a question we have to answer in order to grant the exception.

Mr. Sauls: The three foot tall sign that would be allowed would be very difficult to be seen as you're traveling through the site in a vehicle. As you're traveling through the site in a vehicle, having something that's a little taller up will be more appropriate and providing for better travel throughout the site.

Chair Furth: Is this because of the grading, because of the way the parking lots are laid out? I mean, why doesn't everybody get a variance?

Mr. Sauls: The other thing to note is that the site gradually slopes away from Page Mill Road towards the adjacent properties, so, as you're kind of going through, kind of driving in, almost at an angle -- like so -- rather than just kind of at a straight-facing direct...

Chair Furth: One thing I notice is when you look at the parking lot, which is internal, the big, sort of u-shaped parking lot, the visibility is terrible. It would be very confusing to try and figure out where to go. I don't think it was designed to have principal access by strangers that way.

Board Member Lew: Wynne, I think, to answer your question, I think it is the layout of the...

Chair Furth: Of the site.

Board Member Lew: ...of the site. And I think the code, the directional signs allowed by code, we see them elsewhere on the Research Park. Basically, there's a very small sign that says, like, "Deliveries," and that's all that they're trying to...

Chair Furth: Because they don't want anybody on site.

Board Member Lew: Right. Anyway, I think that the sign code doesn't really address a very complicated site like this. And it's come up before, say, like, with the shopping center. How do you navigate to find the right store? I think there is a rationale for that.

Board Member Thompson: And I think it also doesn't have to be for all signs. I think it just has to be the signs that intrude on the path of travel.

Mr. Panian: Okay.

Board Member Thompson: I think your sign rendering on page 18 might be okay. I mean, I'm not the building department, I can't say that, but it doesn't look like it's intruding on the path of travel. But, in your site plan, you have a few in the parking lot where somebody could easily walk up to that, walk under it, and that would be a problem.

Mr. Panian: I think, ideally, it would be best to create uniformity, though, and consistency. Make them all ADA compliant. Because that's the goal here. Rather than having varying heights, just create a standard so your eyes, you're always looking where the sign is. You know?

Board Member Thompson: At the same place. That makes sense.

Mr. Panian: And to address Mr. Gooyer again, is that the directional signs will help declutter the park. Right now, there are ground directional signs that are less than three feet that are rather large and bulky. The idea is maybe those are covered by landscape, difficult to see. The idea is to remove those and do a higher pole that is less intrusive or less...

Board Member Gooyer: I don't mind them being off the ground a little bit. I understand you don't want them, you know, a foot off the ground.

Mr. Panian: Yeah.

Board Member Gooyer: It just seems like an excessive amount of space to show, you know, five addresses.

Mr. Panian: I understand. And...

Board Member Gooyer: And you could also...I mean, you could easily say, whatever, you know, 1841, 1881, 1891, you know, 1, 2, 3, with one arrow, or something. Rather than individual placards for each one. That's what I was getting at. That it just seemed excessive in size. But it is an internal sign, so...

Chair Furth: Okay, yeah. That's where I end up, too.

## **MOTION**

Chair Furth: Would somebody like to make a motion, or is there further discussion?

Board Member Lew: Okay, I will make a motion that we recommend approval of the project to the Planning Director, with the following requirements: One is that sign types B and C have a maximum height of 48 inches; that sign type...is it E? Is that the directional one?

Board Member Thompson: It's E and F.

Board Member Lew: E and F meet the accessibility requirements for height clearance.

Board Member Thompson: And cane detection.

Board Member Lew: And...

Chair Furth: As drawn, it doesn't meet the cane detection.

Board Member Lew: Okay. Thank you for that. And that we modify the findings. We're going to say, instead of, in the draft language for finding exception #1, the language says [reading] *the project parcel is exceptionally large in comparison to the other RP-zoned parcel surrounding the site*, that we change that to be more similar to the language used in existing finding, which references the Hetch Hetchy easement, and the dense oak woodland landscaping on the Junipero Serra frontage.

Vice Chair Baltay: I will second that motion.

Chair Furth: Any further discussion? All in favor say aye? All opposed? Hearing none, the project is recommended for approval. Thank you.

## **MOTION PASSED WITH A VOTE OF 5-0.**

Mr. Panian: Thank you for your time today. Appreciate it.

## **Study Session**

Chair Furth: There will be no study session.

## **Approval of Minutes**

Chair Furth: The minutes were received so late that we will not try to act on them today, so that matter is continued.

## **Subcommittee Items**

Chair Furth: We now have two subcommittee items. One of them is 2609 Alma Street, which is a review of aspects of a previously-approved project. The second is 250 Sherman Avenue. We will adjourn as a board and...oh, I'm sorry.

### **Board Member Questions, Comments or Announcements**

Chair Furth: Board questions, comments or announcements?

Board Member Lew: I want to announce that the North Ventura Coordinated Area Plan met for the first time last night.

Chair Furth: Yes.

Board Member Lew: They are going to have two community workshops next year for the broader public, and there are going to be four in-progress meetings with the Council over the initial part of the plan, to keep the Council updated on that. There will be lots of opportunities to share what's going on. And there were lots of members of the public who were not on the committee who are interested in the project, so there's pretty broad participation and interest in the project.

Chair Furth: That's good news for all of us. We certainly hear from people in that neighborhood as we do this piece-by-piece review. Also, we received an invitation from V-Ware. Did you all get that? VMware? To a design workshop...? What is it? I couldn't quite figure out what it was.

Board Member Lew: Yes, I thought that, too. I wasn't really sure where that was coming from.

Chair Furth: Maybe staff could give us some guidance. I'll send you the invitation. It was sent to us as ARB members. At least some of us.

Board Member Thompson: I did not get it.

Chair Furth: We'll send it to you.

Vice Chair Baltay: Maybe I can [crosstalk] thing of group interest, perhaps. I attended the preliminary hearing on 788...

Board Member Lew: San Antonio.

Vice Chair Baltay: ...San Antonio Road. That's a housing development. I took away one thing that's not related to that project, but the Council had a lot of discussion about parking and lift parking. I heard a clear consensus from the Council that stacking lift parking, things like that, shouldn't be considered for every parking use. They clearly said things we've been saying, about the need for quick, temporary parking, families with children coming home not being able to use the stacker lifts. They were really questioning and probing on what was the appropriate use of those stackers. Which is something we struggle with all the time. I found it reassuring to hear them not saying stackers are perfect for every situation.

Chair Furth: Thank you. When you said "lift parking," I thought you meant as opposed to Uber drop-off.

Ms. Gerhardt: Board members, related to the VMware invitation, it looks like it's a community event that they are putting on November 1st. Innovations for good, the opportunity and responsibility for tech, is the title of it. If people wanted to attend, we just need to make sure whether we have a quorum or not.

Chair Furth: There is an exception for...One is allowed to attend meetings that have a majority of the Board, but there are conditions under which you do it. We should...If anybody is going to go, we should let staff know and be sure we know what those conditions are.

Board Member Lew: Staff, does VMware have any applications coming to the Board? Is there anything in the works?

Ms. Gerhardt: I believe they had some smaller revisions that came in that, I want to say they are approved, and I can double-check that.

Board Member Lew: Okay. Thank you.

Chair Furth: Thank you. Then the Board as a whole is adjourned.

**Adjournment**