



# Architectural Review Board

## Staff Report

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**Agenda Date:** August 15, 2013

**To:** Architectural Review Board

**From:** Elena Lee  
Senior Planner

**Department:** Planning and  
Community Environment

**Subject:** 180 El Camino Real (Stanford Shopping Center) [13PLN-232]:  
Request by Viking Sign Installations for Architectural Review of the replacement of two internally illuminated wall signs for a restaurant use (PF Chang). Environmental Assessment: Exempt from the provisions of CEQA, 15301 (Existing Facilities).

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### RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Architectural Review Board (ARB) recommend the Director of Planning and Community Environment approve the proposed project based upon the Architectural Review Findings (Attachment A) and conditions of approval (Attachment B) attached to the staff report.

### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The project is for the replacement installation of two halo illuminated wall signs. The signs are for an existing tenant, P.F. Chang. The subject store is located at the northwest corner of El Camino Real and Quarry Road. The one story approximately 9,000 sq. ft. building is also occupied by Wells Fargo on the western corner of the building. The triangular shaped building was designed to define and enhance the south facing public pedestrian plaza at the corner of Quarry Road and to enliven the El Camino Real frontage. The store's façade consists of glass storefront windows, metal panel, beige wall area, and clerestory windows along the top. This project has been brought before the ARB because the applicant is proposing channel letters that are taller than 10 inches.

The Stanford Shopping Center is subject to both the City's Sign Ordinance and a master sign program. While the signs conform to the City's Sign Ordinance in terms of maximum size, as stated above, the wall sign would not conform to the Stanford Shopping Center's master sign program. The program stipulates only one sign per storefront and limits the letter height to 10 inches. The shopping center management has approved of the proposed signage. There have now been several signs, approved through the ARB process, that do not meet the master sign program. Signage that is compliant with the City's Sign Ordinance but not the master sign program can be approved if recommended by the Architectural Review Board. Recent shopping center sign approvals recommended by the ARB include letter heights of greater than 10 inches.

## **DISCUSSION**

### Window/Wall Sign

The applicant proposes the installation of two channel letter wall signs above clerestory windows to replace two existing signs, one on the Quarry Road frontage and a second on the El Camino Real frontage. The two signs would be identical in size and materials, consisting of aluminum letter cans with painted satin white on face and satin black returns. A sample of the sign materials will be available for review at the ARB hearing. The signs would be halo illuminated with warm white LED fixtures installed into the wall. The signs would appear white during the day and would appear dark with a warm white glow during the evening, as illustrated on page 4 of the plan set (Attachment C). The illumination is similar to the approved sign for the new Flemings Restaurant at the shopping center. The letters would measure 18 feet 9 7/8 inches in length and 39 inches tall (with the underline), with a depth of 3 inches for the letters and 1 1/2 inches offset, for a total of 61.60 square feet. The letters by themselves would measure 26 1/2 inches tall. The proposed wall sign square footage is within the maximum allowed by the Sign Ordinance, which would allow a maximum size of 106 sq. ft. for the El Camino Real frontage and 98.8 square feet for the Quarry Road frontage. As discussed above, the master sign program for the Stanford Shopping Center allows for 10 inches as the maximum letter height. This proposal is the latest in a series of similar requests for taller letter heights for the shopping center. Staff believes that the proposed sign is appropriate in design, scale and size for the subject building and the shopping center.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW**


The project would be an alteration to an existing facility and new construction not exceeding 10,000 square feet qualifying for a Class 3 Categorical Exemption per section 15301 of the California Environmental Quality Act.

## **ATTACHMENTS**

- A. Architectural Review Findings
- B. Draft Conditions of Approval
- C. Project Plans (Board members only)

## **COURTESY COPIES**

Viking Sign Installations  
Simon Property Group

**Prepared by:** Elena Lee, Senior Planner 

**Reviewed by:** Amy French, AICP, Chief Planning Official

**ATTACHMENT A**  
**FINDINGS FOR APPROVAL**  
**ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD STANDARDS FOR REVIEW**  
180 El Camino Real, P.F. Chang  
File No. 13PLN-00232

The design and architecture of the proposed improvements, as conditioned, furthers the goals and purposes of the ARB ordinances as it complies with the Architectural Review findings, as required in Chapter 18.76.020 of the PAMC.

- 1) The design is consistent and compatible with the applicable elements of the city's Comprehensive Plan in that the proposed project is consistent with policies L-18: Encourage the upgrading and revitalization of selected Centers in a manner that is compatible with the character of surrounding neighborhoods; Policy L-26: Maintain Stanford Shopping Center as one of the Bay Area's premier regional shopping centers. Encourage any new development at the center to occur through infill, including development on existing surface parking lots. Policy B-22: Work with Stanford University to ensure that the Stanford Shopping Center is sustained as a distinctive, competitive, high quality regional shopping center.
- 2) The design is compatible with the immediate environment of the site in that the design is compatible with the architecture of other areas within the mall.
- 3) The design is appropriate to the function of the project in that it accommodates a retail use while encouraging the pedestrian attributes of the mall.
- 4) In areas considered by the Board as having a unified design character, the design is compatible with such character in that the space will be designed in a consistent manner with other remodeled areas of the mall.
- 6) The design is compatible with approved improvements both on and off the site in that the space is compatible with the newly designed and original spaces in the mall.
- 12) The materials, textures, colors and details of construction are an appropriate expression to the design and function and whether the same are compatible with the adjacent and neighboring structures, and functions in that the materials are of high quality and appropriately express the use of the space. The space incorporates similar details and colors of the surrounding spaces while still maintaining a unique design.

ARB standards #5, 8-11 and 13-15 are not applicable to the project.

**ATTACHMENT B**  
**CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL**  
180 El Camino Real (PF Chang)/File No. 13PLN-00232

**PLANNING DIVISION**

1. The project shall be implemented and shown on the plans dated received August 8, 2013 on file with the City of Palo Alto Planning Division except as modified by these conditions of approval.
2. A copy of the ARB approval letter shall be printed on the plans submitted for building permits (if required).
3. The two wall signs shall be halo illuminated.
4. Construction activities and all noise producing equipment shall comply with Chapter 9.10 (Noise) of the Palo Alto Municipal Code.
5. During construction, the site shall be kept clear of debris on a daily basis.
6. All landscaping located around the building shall be protected and maintained.