



CITY OF GLENDALE, CALIFORNIA
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT
Planning Division

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June 19, 2013

Verdugo Hills Hospital
Attention: Leonard LaBella – President and CEO
1812 Verdugo Boulevard
Glendale, CA 91208

&

University of Southern California
Attention: Ladrena D. Dansby, PE – Senior Project Manager
Capital Construction Development
2200 Lambie Street
Los Angeles, CA 90033-9570

**RE: 1812 VERDUGO BOULEVARD
VARIANCE CASE NO. PVAR1311293**

Dear Mr. LaBella:

On June 19, 2013, the Planning Hearing Officer conducted and closed a public hearing, pursuant to the provisions of the Glendale Municipal Code, Title 30, Chapter 30.43, on your application for a standards variance to permit directional and informational signs that exceed allowable height and area, located at **1812 Verdugo Boulevard**, in the "C3" - Commercial Service Zone and "PPD" - Precise Plan of Development Overlay Zone, described as Lot 1, Tract 6976 and Parcels A and B of Parcel Map GLN 1073, in the City of Glendale, County of Los Angeles.

APPLICANT'S PROPOSAL

Standards Variance

- 1) Directional signs with a maximum area of 25 square feet.
- 2) Directional signs with a maximum height of eight feet above the adjacent driveway or parking surface.
- 3) Informational sign that is 5 foot 10 inches above the ground surface.

CODE REQUIRES

Standards Variance

- 1) No directional sign shall have an area greater than four square feet.
- 2) When located on a parking lot the height of a directional sign shall not exceed four feet above the adjacent driveway or parking surface.
- 3) Informational signs shall not extend more than three feet above the ground surface.

ENVIRONMENTAL RECOMMENDATION: The project is exempt from CEQA review as a Class 1 "Existing Facilities" exemption pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15301.

REQUIRED/MANDATED FINDINGS

After thorough consideration of the statements contained in the application, the plans submitted therewith, the report by the Community Development Department staff thereon, and the statements made at the public hearing with respect to this application, the Planning Hearing Officer has **GRANTED WITH CONDITIONS** your application based on the following:

A. That the strict application of the provisions of any such ordinance would result in practical difficulties or unnecessary hardship inconsistent with the general purposes and intent of the ordinance.

The hospital is located on a hillside lot. The existing signage makes it difficult for visitors and patients to locate parking and entrances to hospital buildings. There are two driveways that serve the project site separated by the existing buildings and parking lots. The hospital is broken up into several buildings that follow the slope of the hill, with one building being behind the other. Parking is located at the lower and upper levels of the hospital campus. The requested variances will improve the existing signage such that visitors and patients can quickly and easily find the necessary parking and services, especially as it relates to medical emergencies. The hospital is requesting to install several directional signs that are between 17 square feet and 25 square feet and have a height of six to eight feet. The zoning code establishes a maximum sign area for directional signs of four square feet and a maximum height of four feet above the parking surface. In order for the hospital signs to be effective, especially in times of patient emergencies and to comply with the state requirements for the signs specific to hospital uses, the directional signs have to be big enough for visitors and patients to easily find their way around the hospital campus. This cannot be achieved with a four square foot sign that is only four feet in height. For the reasons, the strict application of the zoning ordinance would result in practical difficulties and unnecessary hardship inconsistent with the general purposes and intent of the ordinance.

B. There are exceptional circumstances or conditions applicable to the property involved or to the intended use or development of the property that do not apply generally to other property in the same zone or neighborhood.

The hospital is constrained by minimum sign requirements established by the state that are in conflict with the city zoning code. In addition, there are exceptional circumstance due to the uphill slope condition of the subject property and its use as a hospital. The fact that the hospital is located on a hillside lot also negatively affects the visibility of the buildings and parking areas on the hospital campus. For these reasons, the directional signs need to be larger than what is permitted by code so that visitors and patients can quickly and easily find the necessary services, which is especially true in times of emergency. Due to the location of the hospital on a hillside lot and the need to comply with state requirements that are specific to hospital uses, there are exceptional circumstances and conditions applicable to the property involved that do not apply to other property in the same zone or neighborhood.

C. The granting of the variance will not be materially detrimental to the public welfare or injurious to the property or improvements in such zone or neighborhood in which the property is located.

The requested signs are necessary to improve access and circulation throughout the hospital campus. This issue is especially critical for patients requiring emergency services. The hospital has been at its present location for several years and no expansion of buildings or the

services provided at the hospital is proposed. The larger directional signs will provide enhanced visibility, especially in assisting patients to quickly find emergency medical services. As a result, the requested sign variances will not be materially detrimental to the public welfare or injurious to the property or improvements. Rather, the requested sign variances will improve public welfare by clearly identifying and providing enhanced direction to hospital services.

D. The granting of the variance will not be contrary to the objectives of the ordinance.

The Glendale Municipal Code regulates signs such that they are not intrusive to surrounding neighborhoods and provide a function for the subject tenant. The city's sign code is general and not specific to all uses in the city. The hospital is a unique use that provides an important service to the community. A four square foot directional sign that has a maximum height of four feet will not accomplish the specific needs of the hospital. In order to more effectively direct visitors and patients through the property the directional signs need to be larger than what is permitted by code. For these reasons, the granting of the variance is not contrary to the objectives of the ordinance.

SUMMARY OF PLANNING HEARING OFFICER'S DECISION

The Planning Hearing Officer was able to make all required findings for the variances due to the lots irregularly shaped and topography that slopes up from the street. In addition, the use is unique because it is used for a hospital and medical offices where it is important for patients and patrons of the hospital to be able to easily find emergency medical services and required medical offices. The size and height of the proposed directional signs will accomplish this goal without impacting the surrounding neighbors due to the location of the signs along the existing 500 foot long driveway that slopes up the hill and will not be visible from the street. The granting of the variance for exceeding the sign area and height for the proposed directional signs are warranted due to the need to improve the way finding throughout the hospital campus. The subject directional signs will be located along the existing driveway adjacent to parking lots and entrance ways to the hospital minimizing impacts to the surrounding properties.

CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL

APPROVAL of this Variance shall be subject to the following conditions:

- 1) That the development shall be in substantial accord with the plans submitted with the application and presented at the hearing except for any modifications as may be required to meet specific Code standards or other conditions stipulated herein to the satisfaction of the Planning Hearing Officer.
- 2) That all necessary permits (i.e., building, fire, engineering, etc.) shall be obtained from the Building and Safety Division, Permit Services Center and all construction shall be in compliance with the Glendale Building Code, Fire Code and all other applicable regulations.
- 3) That If any buildings, sidewalks, curb or gutter, fencing or landscape areas, etc., adjacent to the site are damaged during the course of construction on public or private property, the damage shall be repaired to the satisfaction of the Planning Hearing Officer for private property and the Director of Public Works for public property.
- 4) That the property shall be kept clean of weeds, trash, and graffiti.

APPEAL PERIOD, TIME LIMIT, LAPSE OF PRIVILEGES, TIME EXTENSION:

The applicant's attention is called to the fact that this grant is not a permit or license and that any permits and licenses required by law must be obtained from the proper City and public agency. Under the provisions of the Glendale Municipal Code, Title 30, Chapter 30.62, any person affected by the above decision has the right to appeal said decision to the Planning Commission if it is believed that the decision is in error or that procedural errors have occurred, or if there is substantial new evidence, which could not have been reasonably presented.

It is strongly advised that appeals be filed early during the appeal period and in person so that imperfections/incompleteness may be corrected before the appeal period expires. Any appeal must be filed on the prescribed forms within **15 days** following the actual date of the decision. Information regarding appeals and appeal forms will be provided by the Building and Safety Section upon request and must be filed with the prescribed fee prior to expiration of the 15-day period, on or before **July 5, 2013**, in the Permit Services Center, 633 East Broadway, Room 101.

GMC CHAPTER 30.41 PROVIDES FOR

TERMINATION: Every right or privilege authorized by a Variance shall terminate two years after the granting of such, unless the exercise of such right or privilege has commenced in good faith prior to such time, except as otherwise provided for.

CESSATION: A Variance may be terminated by the review authority upon any interruption or cessation of the use permitted by the Variance for one year or more in the continuous exercise in good faith of such right and privilege.

EXTENSION: Variances granted by such right or privilege may be requested one time and extended for up to a maximum of one additional year upon receipt of a written request from the applicant and demonstration that a reasonable effort to act on such right and privilege has commenced within the two years of the approval date. In granting such extension the applicable review authority shall make a written finding that neighborhood conditions have not substantially changed since the granting of such variance.

APPEAL FORMS available on-line

<http://www.ci.glendale.ca.us/planning/SubmittingAProject.asp>

To save you time and a trip - please note that some of our FORMS are available on-line and may be downloaded. AGENDAS and other NOTICES are also posted on our website.

TRANSFERABILITY

This authorization runs with the land or the use for which it was intended for and approved. In the event the property is to be sold, leased, rented or occupied by any person or corporation other than yourself, it is incumbent that you advise them regarding the conditions and/or limitations of this grant.

VIOLATIONS OF THESE CONDITIONS

Violations of conditions required by this determination may constitute a misdemeanor or infraction under Section 1.20.010 of the Glendale Municipal Code (GMC) and/or a violation of other local, State or Federal laws or regulations. Unless a specific penalty is provided, any person convicted

of a misdemeanor shall be punished by a fine not to exceed \$1,000.00, or imprisonment for a term not to exceed six months, or by both fine and imprisonment. Infractions are punishable by a fine not exceeding the sum of \$500.00 for each violation.

Violations of conditions required by this determination may be grounds for a revocation.

REVOCATION, CONTINUING JURISDICTION

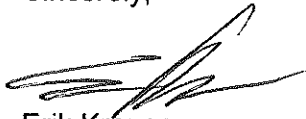
Section 30.64.020 – Revocation – The Community Development Department shall have continuing jurisdiction over variances and conditional use permits (individual cases heard and decided upon by the Planning Hearing Officer).

To consider the revocation, the Planning Hearing Officer shall hold a public hearing after giving notice by the same procedure as for consideration of a Variance at least 10 days notice by mail to the applicant or permittee. Continuing jurisdiction over any case is the purview of the Planning Hearing Officer, with concurrence by the Director of Community Development.

NOTICE – subsequent contacts with this office

The applicant is further advised that all subsequent contacts with this office regarding this determination must be with the Case Planner (*Bradley Collin at 818.548.3210*) first and then, the Planning Hearing Officer who acted on this case. This would include clarification, verification of condition compliance and plans or building permit applications, etc., and shall be accomplished **By Appointment Only**, in order to assure that you receive service with a minimum amount of waiting. You should advise any consultant representing you of this requirement as well.

Sincerely,



Erik Krause
Planning Hearing Officer

EK:sm

CC: City Clerk (K.Cortes); Police Dept. (T. Feeley/Z.Avila); City Attorney's Dept. (G. van Muyden/Y.Neukian); Fire Prevention Engineering Section-(D.Nickles); City Engineer and Traffic & Transportation Section (Roubik Golanian); Director of Public Works and General Manager for Glendale Water and Power (S.Zurn); Glendale Water & Power--Water Section (R.Takidin); Glendale Water & Power--Electric Section (M.Kelley/M.Jackson); Parks, Recreation and Community Services Dept. (Emil Tatevosian); Neighborhood Services (A.Jimenez); Integrated Waste Management Admin. (D.Hartwell); Maintenance Services Section Admin. (D.Hardgrove); Street and Field Services Admin.; Environmental Management (M.Oillataguerra); Tony Blakely-owner; and case planner – Bradley Collin.