



CITY OF GLENDALE, CALIFORNIA

Community Development  
Planning

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May 1, 2019

Anthony Wrzosek  
R.D. Olsen Development  
520 Newport Center Drive, Suite 600  
Newport Beach, CA 92660

**RE: 199 NORTH LOUISE STREET  
VARIANCE CASE NO. PVAR 1903165  
(GLENDALE MARRIOTT RESIDENCE INN)**

Dear Mr. Wrzosek:

On May 1, 2019, 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 Variance to allow the installation of two wall signs where one is permitted on each wall which directly faces a street, in the "DSP" - Downtown Specific Plan Downtown "Art and Entertainment" District Zone, located at **199 North Louise Street**, described as Lots 33, 34, 35 and Portions of Lot 36, W. S. Knott Tract, in the City of Glendale, County of Los Angeles.

APPLICANT'S PROPOSAL

(1) To allow the installation of two wall signs on a new hotel facing Louise Street.

CODE REQUIRES

(1) One wall sign is permitted on each wall which directly faces a dedicated street, dedicated alley, mall, or parking area; provided, however, that no more than one (1) accessory wall sign shall be permitted per each dedicated street, dedicated alley, mall, or parking area.

ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION

An addendum to the certified 2006 Program DSP EIR was prepared to evaluate the hotel project's development within the context of the DSP Final Program EIR. The current proposal involves the installation of new signs on the new hotel, and therefore, would not result in any new environmental impacts.

## 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 strict application of the provisions of the ordinance would result in practical difficulties or unnecessary hardship inconsistent with the general purposes and intent of the ordinance. The subject site is located in the Downtown Specific Plan (DSP), Downtown "Art and Entertainment" District. This area contains a wide mix of commercial land uses including: retail, service uses, restaurants, offices, and entertainment uses where signs are displayed on buildings to adequately promote and identify businesses within the Downtown Specific Plan. The intent of the sign ordinance is to preserve and protect property values, create a more attractive business climate and enhance and protect the physical appearance of the community. Also, the ordinance is intended to reduce advertising obstructions that may contribute to traffic accidents and reduce hazards that may be caused by overhanging or projecting over public rights-of-way. In summary, the purpose of having sign regulations is to control visual clutter and safeguard life, safety, property and public welfare.

To strictly apply the sign regulations by not allowing two wall signs facing a street will result in unnecessary hardship inconsistent with the intent of the ordinance because the project would not be able to reasonably identify the new hotel within the Downtown area. As proposed, the two wall signs on the ground floor facing Louise Street will provide adequate visibility for both westbound traffic on Wilson Avenue and northbound vehicles on Louise Street. The hotel's main vehicular entry is located southeast of the property. Thus, the wall sign above the driveway entry will provide clear identification to direct traffic to the entrance drive. Without the additional wall sign on the east elevation facing Louise Street, the hotel will greatly decrease the visibility for oncoming vehicles and pedestrians traveling northbound on Louise Street. Similarly, the wall sign proposed on the northeast corner, close to the hotel's main entry will provide adequate visibility and clearly identify the hotel for westbound traffic.

The new hotel development has 195 feet of frontage along Louise Street, which would allow a maximum 195 square-foot wall sign. The applicant is proposing two wall signs that are 34.32 square feet each, well below the maximum amount of sign area permitted for this frontage. The difference between what the Code allows and the proposed number of wall signs, is not significant when considering the size of the building and neighborhood context. Given the building's wide frontages (195 feet of linear frontage along Louise Street and 147 feet of frontage along Wilson Avenue), installing two wall signs facing Louise Street (above the driveway entrance and at the northeast corner) that are separated by approximately 133 feet is reasonable and does not create visual clutter, which is the intent of the Sign Ordinance. To deny the variance request, the project will not enjoy the same exposure and visibility as other properties within the same area in the Downtown.

**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.**

There are exceptional circumstances or conditions applicable to the property that does not apply generally to other property in the same zone or neighborhood. The intended use of the building is a hotel located in the Downtown Specific Plan. The site is adjacent to an area identified as a paseo in the DSP and an approximate 50-foot tall building on the south side and a service alley to the east. These are unique conditions, which dictate the natural orientation for the hotel entrances (driveway and main entrance) on the east side of the property. Therefore, the proposed signs facing Louise Street warrant adequate sign identification on the building. To deny the variance and comply with Code would limit the building to only one wall sign facing Louise Street and result in limited exposure and identification because of existing surrounding buildings. The existing 50-foot high building abutting the property to the south would conceal portions of the building along the east elevation and obstruct identification for northbound vehicles and pedestrians on Louise Street and, the existing historic YMCA building across Louise Street also conceals portions of the building along the east elevation. Given the various building heights in the area and the site's limited street exposure in this Downtown location, the two proposed wall signs will help the hotel achieve appropriate identification and visibility, along Louise Street where the building's main and driveway entrances are located.

The proposed hotel use differs from other single-use, typical buildings in this neighborhood. While the hotel features a variety of indoor and outdoor common area amenities that would not typically be found in other commercial land uses in the vicinity, the project is a single-tenant building occupied entirely by the hotel use as opposed to a multi-tenant building. Installing one large wall sign on the ground floor facing Louise Street would be difficult since the building maximizes fenestration and open space and minimizes wall space. Additionally, due to design detailing and fenestration on the upper floors, the amount of available wall space devoted to one, 195 square-foot wall sign is reduced. Given the constraints imposed by the building design and its single-occupancy use, it is reasonable to allow one additional wall sign, which combined with the area of the other proposed wall sign along the east elevation are well under the total square-footage permitted by the sign regulation.

**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 granting of the variance to allow installation of two wall signs facing Louise Street will not be detrimental to the public welfare or injurious to the property or improvements in the neighborhood. The Police Department, the Traffic and Transportation Section nor the City's Engineering Section cited safety hazards related to the signs and none are anticipated. Obtaining a sign permit and the subsequent inspections will ensure proper installation of the proposed signs to eliminate potential safety issues. The wall sign above the driveway will have an approximate 18-foot height clearance and a 15-foot height clearance for the other sign at the northeast corner to avoid being a pedestrian obstruction or a visual obstruction for motorists. Further, because the building has wide frontages, the project results in fewer signs, and therefore reduced sign clutter. As proposed, the project meets the intent of the ordinance and its minimal use of signs does not constitute visual clutter. The new hotel is designed to reference the Spanish Revival style. The proposed signs are simple in appearance and are complementary to the style of the building.

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

The granting of the variance will not be contrary to the objectives of the ordinance. Sign regulations are intended to create more attractive business climate, protect and enhance the appearance of the community, and reduce obstructions that may lead to safety hazards. While two wall signs are proposed on the building, the total 68.64 square feet of wall sign area proposed for two signs (34.32 square feet each) is well below the 195 square-foot area allowed.

The project is located in the Downtown Specific Plan - Downtown "Art and Entertainment" District, where a hotel use is permitted. The project is located on the southwest corner of a commercial corridor and home to a variety of commercial uses. The project site is also in close proximity to the retail and office activity areas including the Glendale Galleria and the Americana at Brand. The proposed signs would be compatible with the types of signs permitted for other businesses of comparable size and scale. In addition, the proposed signs are appropriate for the use and location of this property in a Downtown commercial district. The remaining signs proposed on the building are designed to comply with the Sign Ordinance. The project meets the objective of the Downtown Specific Plan in that it promotes pedestrian activity and places special emphasis on visual interest. The signs are consistent with the objective of the City's Sign Ordinance and Downtown Specific Plan to promote an attractive business climate.

**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.) including individual sign permits and encroachment permits, shall be obtained from the Building and Safety Division and all construction shall be in compliance with the Glendale Building Code and all other applicable regulations.
3. That if any buildings, sidewalks, curb, or gutter, fencing or landscaping areas, etc., adjacent to the site are damaged during the course of construction on public or private property, the damage shall be required to the satisfaction of the Planning Hearing Officer for private property and the Director of Public Works for public property.
4. That the development shall comply with the conditions specified in the Public Works Engineering memo dated March 12, 2019.
5. That the landscape areas shall be maintained in good condition with live plants and free of weeds and trash.



6. That the premises shall be made available to any authorized City personnel (Fire, Police, Neighborhood Services, etc.) for inspection to ascertain that all conditions of approval of this variance area complied with.

### APPEAL PERIOD

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 fifteen (15) days following the actual date of the decision. Information regarding appeals and appeal forms will be provided by the Permit Services Center (PSC) or the Community Development Department (COD) upon request and must be filed with the prescribed fee prior to expiration of the 15-day period, on or before **May 16, 2019**, at the Permit Services Center (PSC), 633 East Broadway, Room 101, Monday thru Friday 7:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m., or at the Community Development Department (COD), 633 East Broadway, Room 103, Monday thru Friday 12:00 p.m. to 5 p.m.

**APPEAL FORMS available on-line:** <http://www.glendaleca.gov/appeal>

### TRANSFERABILITY

### GMC CHAPTER 30.41 PROVIDES FOR

#### Termination

Every right or privilege authorized by a Variance shall terminate two (2) 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

Variations granted by such right or privilege may be requested one time and extended for up to a maximum of one (1) 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 (2) 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.

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 one thousand dollars (\$1,000.00), or imprisonment for a term not to exceed six (6) months, or by both fine and imprisonment. Infractions are punishable by a fine not exceeding the sum of five hundred dollars (\$500.00) for each violation. Violations of conditions required by this determination may be grounds for a revocation.

#### **REVOCAION, CONTINUING JURISDICTION**

Section 30.64.020 – Revocation – The Community Development Department shall have continuing jurisdiction over variances (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 ten (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 (Milca Toledo at 818-937-8181) 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,



Bradley Collin  
Planning Hearing Officer  
BC:MT:sm

CC: City Clerk (K.Cruz); Police Dept. (A.Jenks/Z.Avila); City Attorney's Dept. (G. van Muyden/Y.Neukian); Fire Prevention Engineering Section-(J.Halpert); Traffic & Transportation Section (Larry Tan/S. Vartanian); General Manager for Glendale Water and Power (S.Zurn); Glendale Water & Power--Water Section (G. Tom/S. Boghosian); Glendale Water & Power--Electric Section (V. Avedian/B. Ortiz); Parks, Recreation and Community Services Dept. (T. Aleksanian); Neighborhood Services Division (Rene Sada); Integrated Waste Management Admin. (D. Hartwell); Maintenance Services Section Admin. (D. Hardgrove); Street and Field Services Admin.; Engineering and Environmental Management (C.Chew/R. Villaluna); and case planner and case planner – Milca Toledo